FOREIGN AFFAIRS
MARCH/APRIL 2018 • VOLUME 97 • NUMBER 2 • LETTING GO

HOW WASHINGTON GOT CHINA WRONG

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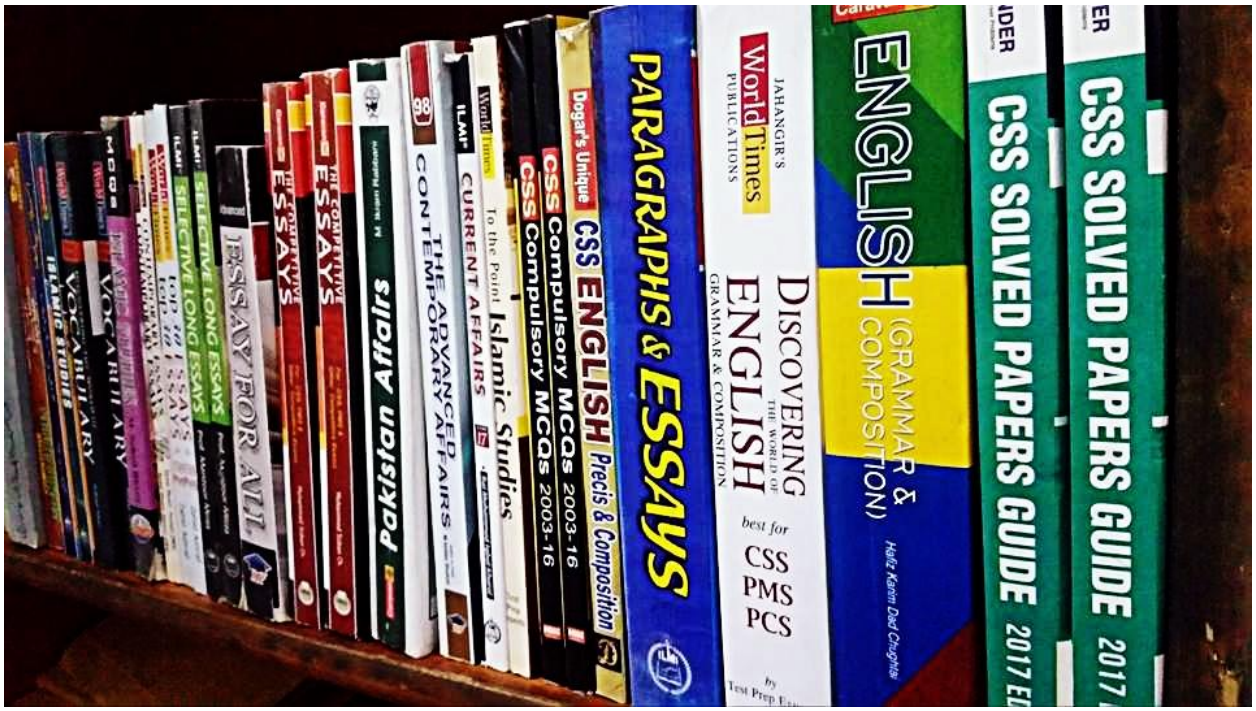
MARCH/APRIL 2018

Letting Go

Trump, America, and the World



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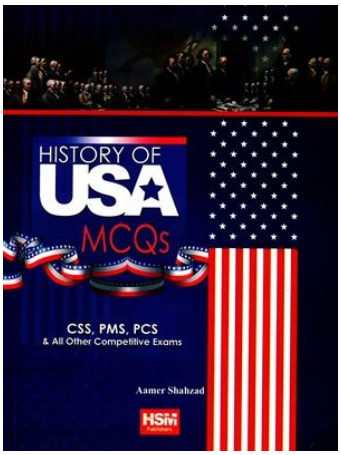

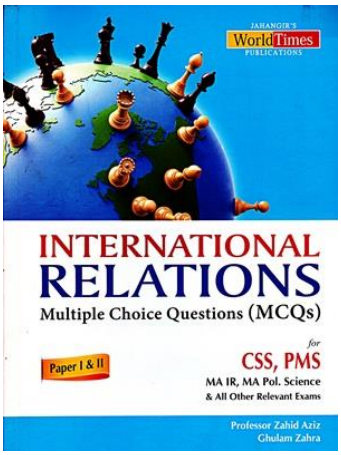

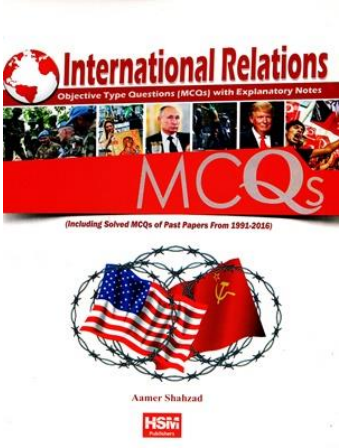

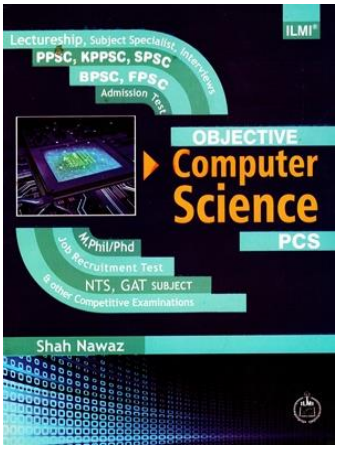

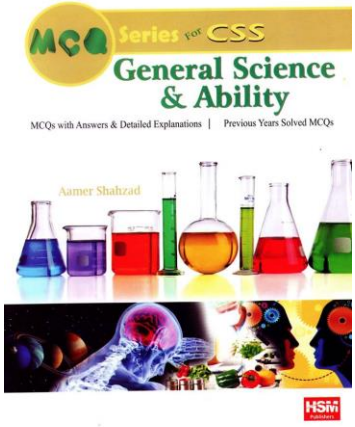

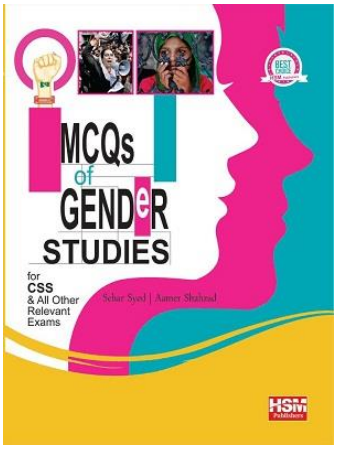

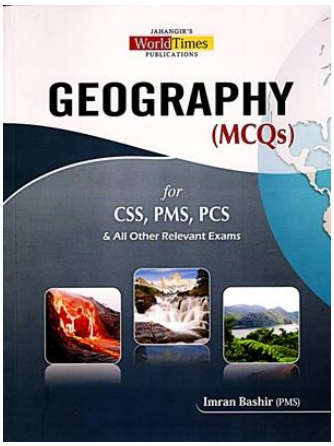

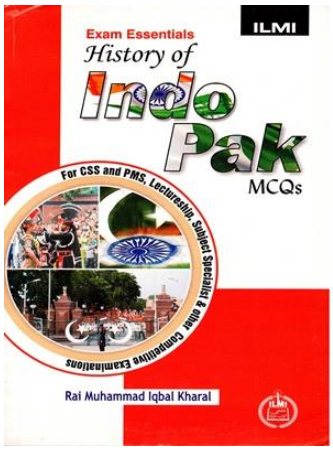

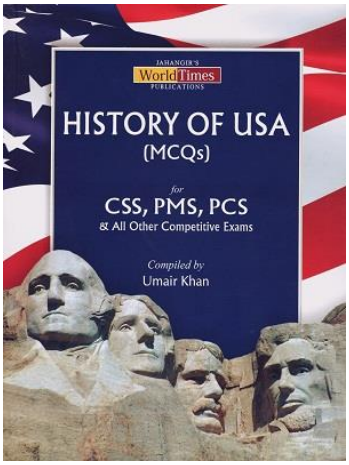

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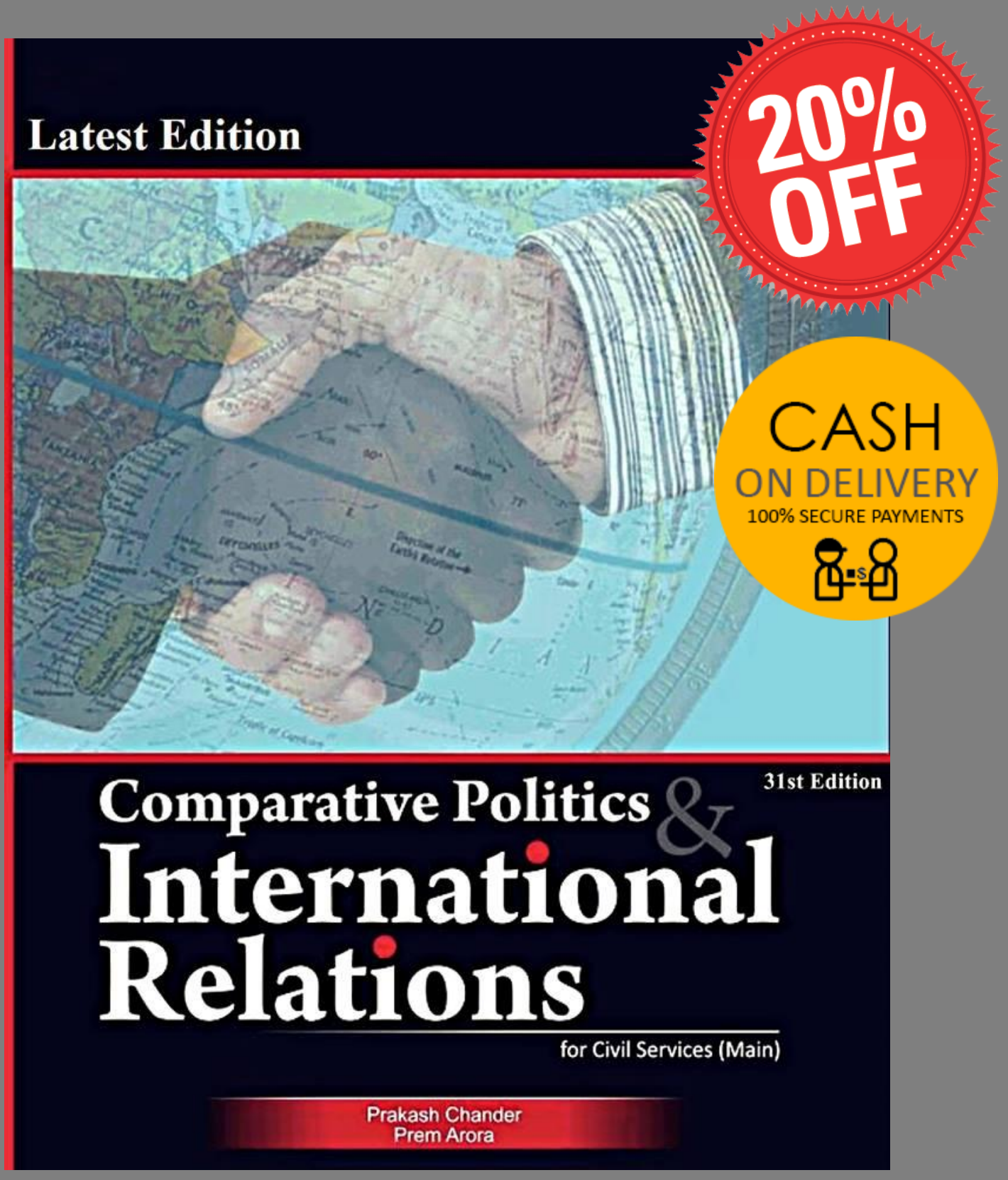

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March/April 2018

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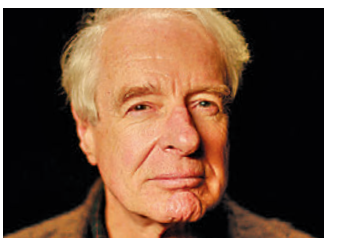
CONTRIBUTORS

In 2011, **JAKE SULLIVAN** became the youngest-ever director of policy planning at the U.S. State Department. The next year, the Obama administration sent him to Oman for the first of many top-secret meetings that would lay the foundation for the Iran nuclear deal. A former adviser to both Hillary Clinton and Joe Biden, Sullivan is now a fellow at the Carnegie Endowment for International Peace and a visiting lecturer at Yale. In "The World After Trump" (page 10), he argues that the liberal international order is more resilient than it appears.

In 1998, after graduating from college, **SARAH MARGON** moved to Budapest, where she worked with refugees from the war in Kosovo. She went on to work at the Open Society Institute, Oxfam America, and the Center for American Progress and served as a foreign policy adviser to Democratic Senator Russ Feingold of Wisconsin. Margon is currently the Washington director for Human Rights Watch. In "Giving Up the High Ground" (page 39), she argues that the Trump administration is accelerating a global decline in the respect for human rights.

One of the United States' preeminent political philosophers, **MICHAEL WALZER** has focused his work on the importance of social context for conceptions of justice and the practical implications of moral philosophy. His 1977 book, *Just and Unjust Wars*, examined the moral basis for war and the ethical limitations that apply to those who wage it. A professor emeritus at the Institute for Advanced Study, Walzer explores the distinctions between the right and the wrong kinds of whistle-blowing in "Just and Unjust Leaks" (page 48).



ADAM HOCHSCHILD has spent his career in search of instances when, as he once put it, "people felt a moral imperative to confront evil." He has written about South African race relations, survivors of the Soviet gulag, British antislavery activists, conscientious objectors to World War I, and Americans who volunteered to fight in the Spanish Civil War. His 1998 book, *King Leopold's Ghost*, which detailed Belgian colonialism in the Congo, won the Mark Lynton History Prize. In "Stranger in Strange Lands" (page 150), Hochschild examines the life and work of Joseph Conrad.

LETTING GO

Nobody really knew what to expect when Donald Trump became U.S. president. Would he disrupt the status quo or maintain it? Blow himself up or escape unscathed? One year in, the answer is yes.

If you squint, U.S. foreign policy during the Trump era can seem almost normal. But the closer you look, the more you see it being hollowed out, with the forms and structures still in place but the substance and purpose draining away.

The best analogy might be to health care—something else the administration came in hell-bent on overhauling, only to find it more difficult than expected. In foreign policy, too, the Trump administration came to power promising a revolution. But the White House has failed to kill the existing approach outright and has grudgingly contented itself with hopes that it will die of neglect anyway.

In the board game Diplomacy, the rules state that "if a player leaves the game, or otherwise fails to submit orders," the player's country is deemed to be in "civil disorder." The country's pieces stand in place, defend themselves if attacked, and let the game proceed around them. That's basically what's happening with the United States now.

Confronted with this unprecedented situation, Eliot Cohen concedes that to date, the administration's foreign policy might be considered "a highly erratic, obnoxious version of the Republican normal." But he argues that this is because the bill for the administration's unconventional behavior has not yet arrived.

Jake Sullivan examines the surprising resilience of the liberal international order, which has managed to take a licking and keep on ticking—so far. Other countries appreciate what the United States created, even if Washington doesn't.

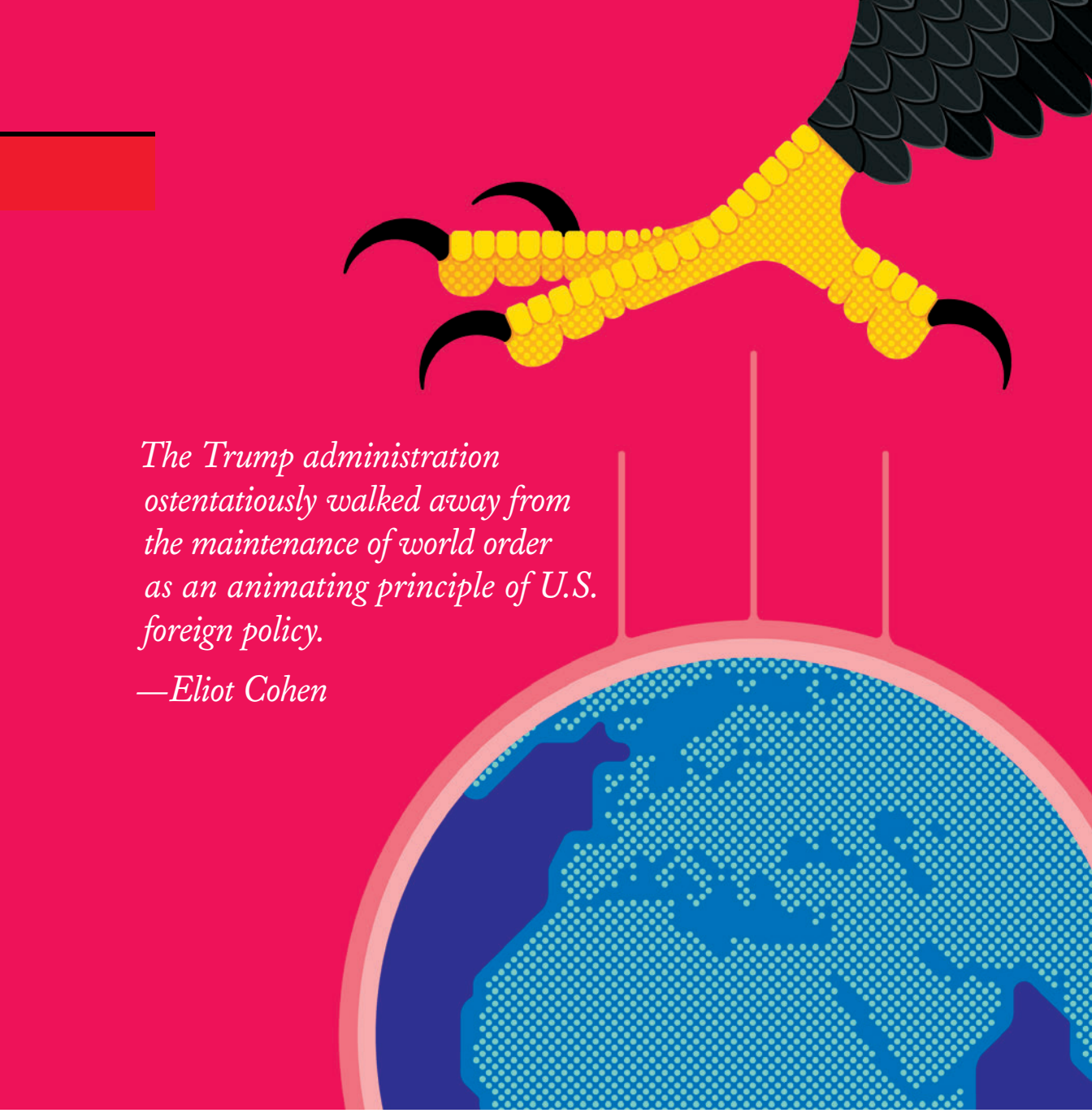
Barry Posen suggests that consciously or not, the Trump administration is following a new grand strategy, one of illiberal hegemony. It has "pared or abandoned many of the pillars of liberal internationalism" but "still seeks to retain the United States' superior economic and military capability and role as security arbiter for most regions of the world."

Adam Posen sees the global economy moving forward calmly and steadily, with broad-based growth finally kicking in. But here, too, problems have been deferred, and a prolonged abdication of U.S. leadership will cause real trouble.

And Sarah Margon traces the decline of human rights as a concern in this White House, as even the pretense of caring about other countries' misbehavior has been dropped and the president embraces a new crop of friendly tyrants.

Trying to rule the world by dominance rather than persuasion has not worked well in the past, and there is little doubt that if tried again, it will fail again. The rules of Diplomacy note that civil disorder does not have to be permanent: "A player who temporarily fails to submit orders may, of course, resume play if he returns to the game and still has some units left." What the world will look like when that eventually happens is anybody's guess.

—Gideon Rose, Editor



The Trump administration ostentatiously walked away from the maintenance of world order as an animating principle of U.S. foreign policy.

—Eliot Cohen

Trump's Lucky Year

Why the Chaos Can't Last

Eliot A. Cohen

When Donald Trump became president of the United States, many wondered just how abnormal his administration, and particularly his foreign policy, would be. After all, as a candidate, Trump had evinced a partiality for foreign strongmen, derided U.S. allies as a gang of freeloaders, proposed banning Muslims from entering the United States, sneered at Mexicans, and denounced free-trade agreements such as the North American Free Trade Agreement and the nascent Trans-Pacific Partnership, while demonstrating little understanding of most other dimensions of international politics. Scores of former senior Republican foreign policy officials, myself included, repudiated his candidacy on the grounds of both his character and his bent toward populist isolationism. His inaugural address confirmed fears that he viewed the world in darkly narrow, zero-sum terms. "We've made other countries rich while the wealth, strength, and confidence of our country has dissipated over the horizon," he said. He went on: "From this day forward, it's going to be only America first. America first."

ELIOT A. COHEN is Robert E. Osgood Professor of Strategic Studies at Johns Hopkins University and the author of *The Big Stick: The Limits of Soft Power and the Necessity of Military Force.*

Being in office has done little to moderate Trump's belligerent rhetoric, improve his commitment to facts, or alter his views on trade and international agreements. Over the course of 2017, he insulted foreign leaders on Twitter, openly undermined his secretary of state, and attacked the FBI and the CIA. He continued to praise dictators, such as Egyptian President Abdel Fattah el-Sisi and Philippine President Rodrigo Duterte, and refused to mention Article 5 of the North Atlantic Treaty—which enshrines the idea that an attack against one NATO member is an attack against all—when visiting NATO headquarters in Brussels. His subordinates gamely echoed the promise of "America first," assuring both the public and themselves that Trump's use of that phrase had nothing to do with Charles Lindbergh's isolationist and anti-Semitic America First Committee, founded in 1940.

Still, the world did not blow up. World War III did not break out. A case can be made that all things considered, Trump has ended up being a highly erratic, obnoxious version of the Republican normal. He has been strong on defense (he increased the Pentagon's budget, although not as significantly as it had hoped), willing to use force (he launched cruise missiles at Syria as punishment for its use of chemical weapons), and committed to allies (enthusiastically in the case of Israel and Japan, grudgingly in the case of the Europeans). Although he has been more of an economic nationalist than some might like, the thinking goes that he remains within the bounds of GOP tradition.

Yet this reassuringly non-apocalyptic foreign policy was a product of good

Adult supervision? Trump with Mattis and Kelly at the White House, October 2017

YURI GRIPAS / REUTERS

fortune, not restraint, and of the resistance of subordinates rather than the boss' growth. Trump was remarkably lucky in 2017. He did not experience any external shocks and paid no visible price for alienating the United States' friends. But at the same time, no part of the world is conspicuously better off for his efforts. Instead, the preexisting fissures in the international system are either the same or getting worse; no U.S. adversary is noticeably weaker, and some are getting stronger; and the president's behavior has devalued the currency of the United States' reputation and credibility. Sooner or later, his luck will run out. And when it does, the true costs of the Trump presidency will become clear.

IT COULD HAVE BEEN WORSE

In some ways, 2017 demonstrated the sheer difficulty of reversing the massive postwar governmental consensus on U.S. foreign policy. To be sure, in its pronouncements, the Trump administration ostentatiously walked away from the promotion of human rights and the maintenance of world order as animating principles of U.S. foreign policy. Speaking at the UN, Trump himself identified the sovereignty, security, and prosperity of the American people as his sole objectives. But congressional mandates and the sheer inertia of previous policies got in the way of "America first." And so human rights violators were still sanctioned, the United States agreed to ship antitank missiles to Ukraine, and relations with Mexico were uneasily patched up. The executive branch predominates in foreign policy, but Congress set limits, particularly with regard to Russia, and the courts had their say, blocking Trump's attempt to rewrite U.S. immigration law by executive fiat.

In addition to the intrinsic limits on presidential power, there was the resistance of what some of Trump's supporters darkly call "the deep state." This is a misnomer: there is no U.S. equivalent of what the Turkish military was 30 years ago, or what the Pakistani military and intelligence service remain today. The United States does not even have what the British historian Ronald Robinson termed "the official mind," the suffocating convictions of a mandarin class of career professionals. But there is no doubt that career diplomats, intelligence officials, civil servants, and military leaders share a deeply rooted consensus about U.S. foreign policy and security. And this consensus unquestionably diverges from Trump's worldview in its support for free trade, U.S. alliances (particularly NATO), and the U.S.-led global order. Many of Trump's senior political appointees do not share his worldview. Moreover, the Trump administration has been one of the slowest on record to fill positions—candidates for less than 40 percent of the key roles had been confirmed by the end of 2017. (Trump had roughly 300 officials confirmed by the end of his first year in office, whereas, for example, U.S. President George W. Bush had nearly 500.) As a result, there has been plenty of room for officials to continue the policies they prefer rather than pursue those that might please the president.

The internal feuding and incompetence of some of Trump's staff have made the machinery of government even less responsive to the White House. Trump may have succeeded in real estate and entertainment, but he has no experience in bending vast and complex organizations to his will. The informal nature of his directives has practically invited passive resistance, such as when the service chiefs and his own secretary of defense politely ignored his tweet about banning transgender individuals from serving in the military. Trump has experienced the very limitations on his power that President Harry Truman anticipated for his successor, Dwight Eisenhower: "He'll sit here, and he'll say, 'Do this! Do that!' And nothing will happen. . . . He'll find it very frustrating."

Some have put their faith in the administration's "grownups"—Secretary of State Rex Tillerson and the three generals, John Kelly (White House chief of staff), James Mattis (secretary of defense), and H. R. McMaster (national security adviser). These officials, the argument goes, have placed their guiding and restraining hands on the shoulders of the impulsive and poorly read commander in chief. This argument has some merit. After all, Mattis genially talked Trump out of advocating torture by suggesting that he always got more out of prisoners by offering them beer and cigarettes—a mild but effective fib, given that generals do not usually interrogate jihadists. When the memoirs are finally written, we may learn of more disasters averted in this way. Of the grownups, Tillerson is the least important, his background as the reclusive CEO of ExxonMobil having turned out to be poor preparation for leading the State Department and explaining U.S. foreign policy to the American people. He also appears to have the least influence with Trump.

The benign junta, as it were, of Kelly, Mattis, and McMaster is a different matter: closer to the president and more visibly respected by him. But there are important differences among them.

McMaster has been the most visibly at odds with the president when it comes to Russia, but he also most overtly endorses Trump's view of international politics as a jungle. Kelly is clearly more sympathetic to Trump's views on immigration, the press, and congressional oversight than the others. And Mattis shoulders a unique burden: running the largest organization in the United States, which limits the time he can spend reining in his errant boss. Furthermore, because Mattis understands that he is the main barrier between Trump and a truly catastrophic military decision, he will likely hold his dissents in reserve. In other words, the generals may not always be inclined to curb Trump's worst instincts, for in some cases, they share them, albeit to a milder degree. And being human, they, too, can be distracted, exhausted, and outmaneuvered. They form at best a partial, and not necessarily a permanent, brake.

What is not known is what will happen if and when the president decides on a course of action that his advisers deem deeply dangerous but nonetheless legal. With over a century of drilled obedience to the commander in chief under their collective belt, the generals might not be willing to subvert decisions with which they disagree, as other wily political appointees have done in the past (the most important case being James Schlesinger's quiet maneuvering as secretary of defense to ensure that U.S. President Richard Nixon could not make any wild moves without his authorization). Nor is it clear how many of the grownups will stay beyond two years. McMaster and Tillerson could conceivably exit before the end of 2018, and their replacements would probably be even less likely to resist the president's impulses.

A YEAR OF TRUMP

For the Trump administration, 2017 was a year of adjusting, however haphazardly, to a world that many inside and outside the president's camp consider increasingly dangerous. There was no major crisis along the lines of the Bay of Pigs or 9/11, but enough disturbing events are in train.

Throughout Trump's first year in office, North Korea continued developing nuclear weapons and the intercontinental ballistic missiles it would need to carry them to the United States. Fiery rhetoric on both sides (including Trump's threats of "fire and fury") and heightened sanctions on Pyongyang did not bring the confrontation any closer to resolution. And through its rhetoric and continued military buildup, including in the South China Sea, China made clear that it would not act as the United States' sheriff in East Asia. Meanwhile, McMaster's insistence on the denuclearization of North Korea and his repeated talk of "preventive war" made peaceful and honorable accommodation seem further off than ever. In the coming year, the United States will face a choice: either war (by accident or plan) aimed at disarming or even overthrowing the North Korean regime or a humiliating abandonment of the reddest of redlines.

As the year unfolded, it became increasingly apparent just how actively Russia had intervened in the 2016 U.S. presidential election. Allegations about the Trump team's possible connections to Moscow dominated the news, as federal prosecutors doggedly pursued senior campaign officials and even secured a plea bargain from Trump's dismissed national security adviser, Michael Flynn. Meanwhile, the president remained

remarkably cordial toward Russian President Vladimir Putin and apparently ordered no retaliation for Moscow's astonishing effort to disrupt U.S. politics and discredit the United States' democratic processes. Ultimately, Congress and the State Department overrode the White House to impose more sanctions on Russia. But the situation remains unstable: the antitank missiles that the United States sent to Ukraine will surely kill Russians, and Putin is unlikely to react well to that. And a Europe increasingly preoccupied with its own populist and secessionist movements presents more opportunities for Russian subversion.

In April, Trump hosted Chinese President Xi Jinping at his Florida resort, Mar-a-Lago, and in November, Xi reciprocated in Beijing. The state visits were successful in the sense of being cordial and theatrical, but Trump's National Security Strategy, released in December, still identifies China as one of the United States' major competitors, and the president continued complaining about China's trade surpluses and failure to rein in North Korea. The administration's consistent support for Japan, including its decision to increase sales of advanced weaponry to Tokyo, is unlikely to warm the relationship with China. Nor is its standoff with North Korea: Beijing's apprehension about what might happen on the Korean Peninsula, reflected in Chinese military aircraft patrolling close to South Korea and the quiet preparation of refugee camps near the North Korean border, suggests that a U.S.–North Korean conflict could expand into something much larger. In the meantime, China's steady acquisition of military power, its menacing posture toward Taiwan, and its use of economic aid and investment as a tool of geopolitics are accelerating. China's rise is, if anything, more disturbing than it was a year ago.

In the ongoing war against jihadists, the Trump administration scored a major success by completing the campaign to help Iraq eliminate the physical footprint of the Islamic State, or ISIS. Although Trump was quick to take credit—and his administration did indeed increase resources and lift restrictions on U.S. military commanders—at most his administration expanded and accelerated an effort launched by the Obama administration. At the end of the year, ISIS no longer held territory in Iraq, but this did not destroy the group any more than killing Osama bin Laden finished off al Qaeda. The contest with jihadists will go on well after the Trump presidency, and the administration has not articulated a clear strategy for success. Meanwhile, vast swaths of Mosul, Iraq's second-largest city, lie in ruins. Shiite militias are operating there and in other predominantly Sunni regions of the country. And in October, the Iraqi government seized the contested governorate of Kirkuk, a move that shocked and angered the United States' Kurdish allies.

Next door in Syria, the regime of Bashar al-Assad has won its war for survival thanks to assistance from Iran, Hezbollah, and Russia, while U.S.-backed rebels found themselves isolated and outgunned. Israel now faces an emboldened Hezbollah and the possibility of a more permanent Iranian military presence in Syria. Trump did improve relations with Egypt, but, reflecting Russia's new assertiveness in the Middle East, the Egyptian government is now buying Russian military hardware and allowing Russian military aircraft to deploy from

Egypt. For that matter, the Israeli prime minister spent more time in Moscow than he did in Washington in 2017. Trump inherited these predicaments from his predecessor, but he did not, and perhaps could not, turn them around.

In the Persian Gulf, Trump more firmly aligned the United States with Saudi Arabia and the smaller Gulf states and against Iran. He signaled his desire to walk away from the Iran nuclear deal and showed little interest in the ferocious proxy war that the Arab states are waging in Yemen against Iran. The administration appears to be placing its bets on the new Saudi crown prince, Mohammed bin Salman, an ambiguous figure who is promising to open opportunities for women and modernize his society while aggressively confronting Iran and shaking down wealthy members and associates of the royal family. The administration has been noticeably silent about such excesses, as well as about the de facto Saudi kidnapping of the Lebanese prime minister in November.

On trade, shortly after taking office, Trump decisively dropped the Trans-Pacific Partnership. (Large international economic arrangements led by China took its place.) More consequentially, he began renegotiating the North American Free Trade Agreement, which he had repeatedly threatened to abandon altogether. Even though Trump promised to replace multilateral trade agreements with bilateral ones, he has failed to follow through. Indeed, he denounced the free-trade agreement with South Korea even as the United States prepared to potentially wage war alongside that country. Taken together, these actions made the United States appear less committed to an open international trading order than China. And Trump's approach to trade will likely alienate old friends, such as Canada, and critical allies, such as South Korea.

Elsewhere, crises percolated, most notably in Venezuela, as a state of over 30 million people continued its decline into chaos. But in Latin America (with the exception of Mexico), as in other parts of the world, there was not so much friction as absence: the United States was simply not playing much of a role one way or another. And throughout his first year, Trump acquired a global reputation for being unreliable, temperamental, and deceitful. According to the Pew Research Center, 93 percent of Swedes polled said they had confidence in U.S. President Barack Obama, but only ten percent said they felt the same about Trump. Of course, this may say more about Sweden than the United States, but in Canada, Germany, and the United Kingdom, the numbers were almost as bad. And foreign officials have begun talking openly about how, in the words of Chrystia Freeland, Canada's minister of foreign affairs, "our friend and ally has come to question the very worth of its mantle of global leadership." The costs of such a deterioration in U.S. standing are long term. They may not be visible yet, but they will come into the open in a moment of acute stress.

Meanwhile, the Trump administration has not solved any of the problems it inherited, nor does it appear to have any solutions in view. After denouncing excessive involvement abroad, it increased, not decreased, the deployment of forces to active war zones. In Afghanistan, for example, Trump raised the number of U.S. troops with no clear objective beyond

persistence. Other moves were dramatic but essentially meaningless. The administration's unilateral recognition of Jerusalem as Israel's capital was bemoaned by foreign policy experts, but there is no evidence that Abu Dhabi, Cairo, or Riyadh cared much about it. At most, it was a minor pinprick to an Israeli-Palestinian peace process that had flatlined years before.

TROUBLE AHEAD

If Trump's first year was unnerving but largely uneventful, there is reason to think his second will be considerably more difficult. Not only are foreign policy challenges beginning to pile up; a year of the Trump administration has left the United States in a worse position to handle them.

The conflict with North Korea is moving toward some kind of climax. It is entirely plausible that Kim Jong Un, the country's supreme leader, will order the test of a nuclear-armed ballistic missile in 2018. In response, the United States might shoot down a test missile, even if it is unarmed. Such a move, or some minor incident in territorial waters or along the demilitarized zone, could degenerate into a devastating war. One hundred years after the end of World War I, it is wise to remember that small violent events can trigger much, much larger ones. The United States, having declared that it will not accept a nuclear-armed North Korea, might very well use force to make its word good. The public statements of Trump and McMaster do not indicate any interest in a strategy of containment and pressure over the long term. Even the more cautious Mattis has spoken of "storm clouds" gathering over the Korean Peninsula. One way or another, this crisis will come to a head by the beginning of 2019. It may end with a body blow to U.S. prestige and reputation, as Washington accepts what it has declared to be an unacceptable danger. Or it could devolve into a war that kills hundreds of thousands, even millions, of people.

Conflict with Russia has also become more likely. The curious tension between the president's sympathetic rhetoric and his administration's more hostile actions has increased the risk that a contemptuous and irritated Russia will poke back in eastern Europe. The Kremlin's anxieties about legitimacy in the midst of economic stagnation exacerbate the situation. At the same time, the United States could find itself in fights with Iran and in a more adverse relationship with China.

The combination of these and other tensions, and not just each individually, constitutes a second source of worry. If any conflict goes hot, Washington's antagonists in other realms will exploit the opening. U.S. President Franklin Roosevelt could conceive and execute strategy against Japan and Germany simultaneously, but Trump is no Roosevelt, and the polarized United States of 2018 is not the unified United States of 1942. "One war at a time," as President Abraham Lincoln supposedly cautioned William Seward, his pugnacious secretary of state, who was keen for a fight with the United Kingdom. A United States preoccupied with combat on, say, the Korean Peninsula would probably be less aggressive in containing Russia in Europe. And if foreign leaders know one thing about the Trump administration, it is that it seems uniquely incapable of focusing.

The final source of instability for U.S. foreign policy in 2018 will be domestic.

Elections in November may cost the Republicans control of one or both houses of Congress. There are also likely to be major developments in the investigations led by former FBI Director Robert Mueller, now the special counsel looking into Russia's interference in the 2016 election and any possible links between the Trump campaign and Russia. These could be indictments of senior figures in the administration or Mueller's firing by Trump. Watergate took over two years from the break-in to President Richard Nixon's resignation. There may be no crime here and no resignation or impeachment, but the rhythm feels similar. Moreover, these elections and investigations are taking place against the backdrop of a polarized and angry electorate. The resulting turmoil will affect the conduct of foreign policy by giving antagonistic powers openings to take advantage of a country consumed with domestic scandals or by tempting a desperate president to look elsewhere for glory or distraction. Nixon launched a celebratory tour of the Middle East in June 1974, shortly before the House Judiciary Committee recommended his impeachment to the full House. Trump, who is, if nothing else, a masterly reality television showman, might choose to divert attention in a more dramatic fashion.

Trump appears to believe that he achieved great things during his first year in office and that his critics have been proved both vicious and wrong. In fact, he has demoralized the institutions of the U.S. government on which he depends. He has disappointed anyone, at home or abroad, who expected him to mature. He is exhausting his first group of appointees, and he does not have much of a backup bench. And perhaps worst of all, he thinks he knows what he is doing. He does not seem to realize that he has not faced any tests comparable to the 9/11 attacks or the 2008 recession, and there is no reason to believe that he has developed the knowledge or judgment to handle such a challenge when it does arise. What he attributes to genius, most observers correctly attribute to luck. And there is a good chance that 2018 will be the year his luck runs out.

The World After Trump

How the System Can Endure

Jake Sullivan

The warnings started long before Donald Trump was even a presidential candidate. For at least a decade, a growing chorus of foreign policy experts had been pointing to signs that the international order was coming apart. Authoritarian powers were flouting long-accepted rules. Failed states were radiating threats. Economies were being disrupted by technology and globalization; political systems, by populism. Meanwhile, the gap in power and influence between the United States—the leader and guarantor of the existing order—and the rest of the world was closing.

Then came Trump's election. To those already issuing such warnings, it sounded the death knell of the world as it was. Even many of those who had previously resisted pessimism suddenly came to agree. As they saw it, the U.S.-led order—the post–World War II system of norms, institutions, and partnerships that has helped manage disputes, mobilize action, and govern international conduct—was ending for good. And what came next, they argued, would be either an entirely new order or a period with no real order at all.

But the existing order is more resilient than this assessment suggests. There is no doubt that Trump represents a meaningful threat to the health of both American democracy and the international system. And there is a nonnegligible risk that he could drag the country into a constitutional crisis, or the world into a crippling trade war or even an all-out nuclear war. Yet despite these risks, rumors of the international order's demise have been greatly exaggerated. The system is built to last through significant shifts in global politics and economics and strong enough to survive a term of President Trump.

This more optimistic view is offered not as comfort but as a call to action. The present moment demands resolve and affirmative thinking from the foreign policy community about how to sustain and reinforce the international order, not just lamentations about Trump's destructiveness or resignation about the order's fate. No one knows for certain how things will turn out. But fatalism will become a self-fulfilling prophecy.

The order can endure only if its defenders step up. It may be durable, but it also needs an update to account for new realities and new challenges. Between fatalism and complacency lies urgency. Champions of the order must start working now to protect its key elements, to build a new consensus at home and abroad about needed adjustments, and to set the stage for a better approach, before it's too late.

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A RESILIENT ORDER

In a world where the major trends seem to spell chaos, it is fair to place the burden of proof on those who claim that the current order can continue. Yet well before

Missing link: Trump at an ASEAN summit in the Philippines, December 2017

JONATHAN ERNST / REUTERS

Trump, it had already demonstrated its capacity to adapt to changes in the nature and distribution of power. Three basic factors account for such resilience—and demonstrate why the emphasis now should be on protecting and improving the order rather than planning for the aftermath of its demise.

First, most of the world remains invested in major aspects of the order and still counts on the United States to operate at its center. The passing of U.S. dominance need not mean the end of U.S. leadership. That is, the United States may not be able to direct outcomes from a position of preeminent economic, political, and military influence, but it can still mobilize cooperation on shared challenges and shape consensus on key rules. In the years ahead, although Washington will not be the only destination for countries seeking capital, resources, or influence, it will remain the most important agenda-setter.

Some context is important. The U.S.-led order was built at a unique moment, at the end of World War II. Europe's and Asia's erstwhile great powers were reduced to rubble, and a combination of dominance abroad and shared economic prosperity at home allowed the United States to serve as the architect and guarantor of a new order fashioned in its own image. It had not just the material power to shape rules and drive outcomes but also a model many other countries wanted to emulate. It used the opportunity to build an order that benefited itself as well as others, with clear advantages for populations at home and abroad. As the international relations scholar G. John Ikenberry has put it in this magazine, the resulting system was "hard to overturn and easy to join." The end of the Cold War and the fall of the Soviet Union served to reinforce and extend American preeminence.

This precise state of affairs was never going to last forever. Other powers would eventually rise, and the basic bargain would one day need to be revisited. That day has arrived, and the question now is, do other countries want a fundamentally different bargain or simply some adjustments? A comprehensive 2016 RAND analysis found that few powers display an appetite for dismantling the international order or transforming it into something unrecognizable. And while Trump's election has forced countries to contemplate a world without a central role for the United States, many still view the president as an aberration and not a new American normal, especially given that the United States has bounced back before.

Even China has concluded that it largely benefits from the order's continued operation. Around the time of Trump's inauguration, breathless reports interpreted Chinese President Xi Jinping's comments on an open international economy and climate change as indicators that China planned to somehow take over for the United States. But what Xi was really signaling was that China does not want near-term radical change in the global system, even as it seeks to gain more influence by taking advantage of the vacuum left by Trump. And to the extent that Beijing has set out to construct its own parallel institutions, particularly when it comes to trade and investment, thus far these institutions largely supplement the existing order rather than threatening to supplant it.

Other emerging powers chafe at certain features of the order, and some seek a more prominent place in institutions such as the UN Security Council. Yet rhetorical flourishes aside, they, like China, talk in terms of reform rather than replacement—and their continued participation sends a similar message. For example, leaders of the major emerging powers eagerly accepted U.S. President Barack Obama's invitation to join the first Nuclear Security Summit, in 2010; less eagerly but still willingly, they joined the global sanctions regime against Iran's nuclear program. Richard Fontaine and Daniel Kliman of the Center for a New American Security quote a Brazilian official who captured a broader sentiment among emerging powers: "Brazil wants to expand its room in the house, not tear the house down." And indeed, Brazil has taken on a leading role in defending important aspects of the order, such as the multistakeholder system for Internet governance. Emerging powers' quest for a greater voice in regional and global institutions is not a repudiation of the order but evidence that they see increasing their participation as preferable to going a different way.

FROM DOMINANCE TO LEADERSHIP

The second factor accounting for the order's resilience is that the United States has managed the transition from dominance to leadership more effectively than most appreciate. Over the past decade, U.S. diplomacy has facilitated a shift from formal, legal, top-down institutions to more practical, functional, and regional approaches to managing transnational issues—"coalitions of the willing" (in the real, non-Iraq-war sense of the term). This shift has not only expanded the prospects for shared problem solving; it has also made the rules-based order less rigid, and therefore more lasting.

Consider climate change. Formal legal structures, such as the Kyoto Protocol, which failed largely because the United States refused to participate and emerging

powers were exempt, have given way to less formal structures, such as the Paris climate accord. Unlike Kyoto, Paris achieved broad-based participation because its substantive commitments are voluntary and states have flexibility in how to meet them. It can survive a temporary U.S. withdrawal because other countries had already factored their targets into their national energy plans and because the United States can meet or exceed its own targets even without the help of Washington (points Brian Deese, a former climate adviser to Obama, has made in this magazine).

On nuclear proliferation, formal Nuclear Nonproliferation Treaty review conferences have not advanced the ball on new legal norms. But during the negotiations that led to the Iran nuclear deal, the P5+1 (the five permanent members of the UN Security Council plus Germany) joined together to develop a rules-based plan to address a major global proliferation problem. The resulting agreement, the Joint Comprehensive Plan of Action, involved practical commitments from the negotiating parties but also incorporated key international institutions—the International Atomic Energy Agency and the Security Council—for oversight and enforcement. And although Trump may eventually withdraw from the agreement, the broad participation and buy-in that it achieved, and the fact that it is working as intended, have thus far constrained him from doing so, despite his claim that it is "the worst deal ever."

On trade and economics, although universal rule-making in the World Trade Organization has stalled, "plurilateral" and regional initiatives of various shapes and sizes have proliferated, from the East African Community to Latin America's Pacific Alliance. The United States is not party to some of these platforms, but it has helped promote them with technical and diplomatic support. Viewed from this perspective, Beijing's establishment of the Asian Infrastructure Investment Bank is largely in line with the "variable geometry" that the United States has encouraged. (Washington erred in resisting the AIIB rather than working to shape its standards.) And on global health, the World Health Organization has recognized the need for more flexible arrangements to deal with major health crises, including public-private partnerships, such as the Global Fund to Fight AIDS, Tuberculosis and Malaria and Gavi, the Vaccine Alliance. Meanwhile, various emerging regional and subregional arrangements are playing larger roles in local problem solving.

One could add other examples to the list, but the point is this: the overall trend toward practicality and flexibility, encouraged by the United States, has generated more resilience in the rules-based order. For one thing, more practical and flexible approaches are better suited to handle the diffuse and complex nature of transnational challenges today. For another, the rest of the world can continue to participate even when the United States pulls back. The new structures are designed to extract greater participation and contributions from a greater number of actors in a greater number of places—even when the most important of those actors temporarily relinquishes its leadership role.

There is a concern about whether this trend will water down rules. But the record so far suggests this is not the case. For example, the 11 nations currently pursuing the Trans-Pacific Partnership without U.S. participation might produce a trade agreement with weaker labor or environmental provisions than those in

the U.S.-brokered version, which the Trump administration withdrew from last year. But those provisions would still represent an improvement over existing rules, and a new baseline against which future rules would be measured. Nor is this broader trend mutually exclusive with action in the UN system. The rise of informal mechanisms of cooperation has not detracted from basic global standard-setting on issues such as civil aviation. To the contrary, the informal and the formal can be mutually reinforcing. Progress conceived in smaller formats outside the UN system can help catalyze universal action.

BINDING TRUMP

Finally, although Trump has created a temporary vacuum of global leadership and keeps raising questions about his basic fitness for office, he has thus far been unable to do the level of systemic damage in foreign affairs that he threatened on the campaign trail. He has—again, thus far—been constrained by Congress, by his own national security team, and by reality.

Consider the U.S. alliance system, a central feature of the U.S.-led order. Trump continues to deride U.S. allies as free riders. But Washington's policy toward its alliances in both Europe and Asia has been marked more by continuity than change. Trump's advisers have helped ensure that, as have outside advocacy and congressional oversight. And European leaders have sought to sustain the alliance, despite their misgivings about Trump, by working around him. Similarly, whatever the administration's desire to ease pressure on Russia for violations of Ukraine's territorial integrity—a foundational norm of the rules-based order—Congress overwhelmingly approved new sanctions, tying Trump's hands. (The administration subsequently surprised most observers by announcing that it would provide lethal assistance to Ukraine, a move pushed by top members of Trump's national security team.)

Perhaps most important, Trump has found that whatever his contempt for the rules-based order, he needs it. Here he follows a line of American politicians who have chafed at perceived limits on U.S. freedom of action but ultimately recognized that the order protects and advances U.S. interests. To counter North Korea, he needs both strong Asian alliances and a working relationship with Beijing (contrary to everything he said during the campaign). To defeat the Islamic State (also known as ISIS), he needs the allies and partners that made up the coalition, built during the Obama administration, that helped eject ISIS from Mosul and Raqqa. Trump has therefore been forced to embrace elements of the order he would rather dismiss.

Trump's own lack of focus has helped. The international relations expert Thomas Wright is correct to warn that "since World War II, the foreign policy of every administration has been defined by the character and opinions of its president," not anybody else. And Trump's worst impulses may yet win out, with disastrous consequences. But unlike his predecessors, Trump has displayed relatively little interest in translating his impulses into consistent policy actions. That can potentially allow the system around him, including voices outside government, to play a more powerful constraining role than usual.

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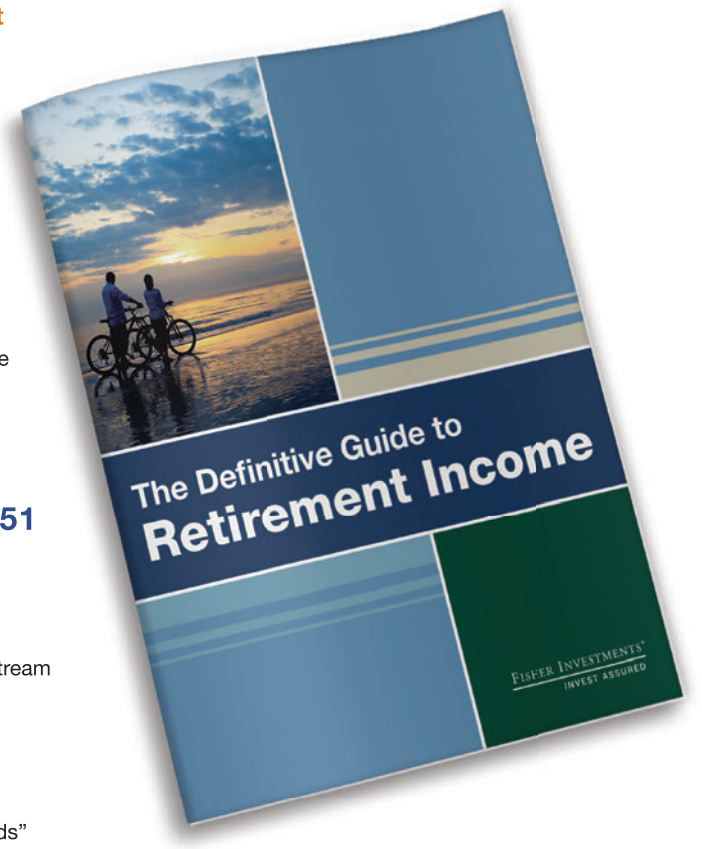

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ORDER BEGINS AT HOME

The system's resilience should not be the end to a comforting story; it should be the starting point of a badly needed effort to reinforce and update the international order and address the real threats to its long-term viability. That must begin with the most serious challenge today: growing disillusionment with some of its core assumptions. This disillusionment has been stoked by forces of nativism and illiberalism, but it is rooted in the lived experience of many who have seen few promised benefits flow to them.

The United States built the order on three foundational propositions: that economic openness and integration lead to greater and more widely shared prosperity; that political openness, democratization, and the protection of human rights lead to stronger, more just societies and more effective international cooperation; and that economic and political openness are mutually reinforcing. All three propositions are now contested.

As the political scientists Jeff Colgan and Robert Keohane have argued in these pages, the link between globalization and shared prosperity is no longer clear. The current international economic system is "rigged," in their telling, and a new set of rules is needed to better advance the interests of middle classes around the world. Meanwhile, a growing reaction in the West treats global integration as a threat to national identity and economic vitality.

On the merits of the open political model, democracy is now on the defensive—from within, thanks to self-inflicted wounds and the gathering strength of populist political parties, and from without, thanks to what the National Endowment for Democracy calls the "sharp power" of authoritarian states, a mix of strategies to undermine political pluralism and open elections. Russian President Vladimir Putin's interference in the U.S. presidential election likely helped secure Trump's victory, and in the years ahead, Russian "active measures" and Chinese influence operations will continue seeking to destabilize democratic systems.

And when it comes to the interaction between economic and political reform, the Chinese Communist Party has been trying to prove—including to receptive audiences in developing-world governments—that economic openness is perfectly compatible with a closed political system. Unlike the Soviet Union, which relatively few aspired to emulate, China offers what many see as an attractive alternative. Xi has described his country's model as a "new option for other countries." Audiences in Africa and Asia, and even some in Europe, are paying attention.

These trends preceded Trump, and they are now being compounded by new threats to democracy, including a wholesale assault on the very idea of truth. But they are not irreversible. The year 1989 did not bring the end of history in one direction; neither did 2016 in the other.

The liberal part of the rules-based international order has always been imperfect and will remain so. As Ikenberry has pointed out, the current order is actually a blend of the traditional Westphalian system (founded on state sovereignty) and a more liberal variant that emerged first with British hegemony in the nineteenth century and then deepened under U.S. leadership in the twentieth. This combination has always involved an uneasy balance between sovereignty and

noninterference, on the one hand, and universal values and multilateral cooperation, on the other. A shift in emphasis toward the former does not spell the end of the entire order.

Moreover, the developments of the past two years—Brexit, Trump's election, the rise of right-wing parties in Europe, foreign interference in democratic politics—have served as a wake-up call. There are new and urgent conversations in Western democracies not just about how to resist pressure from abroad but also about how to address social and economic dislocations at home and the distributional consequences of globalization and automation. Whether this brings about a genuine recovery of strength for liberal democracy over time remains to be seen. But there are promising signs. Trump's excesses have generated energetic efforts to push back against them. In Europe, the EU has proved more cohesive, and its economic foundation stronger, than most anticipated, and although populist movements continue to make some progress, they have also met considerable resistance (as the French far-right candidate Marine Le Pen discovered). Democratic nations have not lost the wherewithal to manage and alleviate the strains of authoritarian populism. If the West can succeed in restoring some of the appeal of the democratic model, the weaknesses and contradictions in the authoritarian model—which, after all, rests on the systematic suppression of basic human freedoms and is usually accompanied by debilitating corruption—will come back into sharper focus. In this regard, the major disconnect between Beijing's outward projection of confidence and its deep insecurity at home is telling.

TROUBLE FROM WITHOUT

Along with weaknesses within the West, the order is facing challenges from without, starting with renewed great-power competition. Indeed, the Trump administration's National Security Strategy explicitly makes competition—in opposition to order—an organizing principle. It taunts previous administrations for seeing great powers as "benign actors and trustworthy partners" and assuming that "competition would give way to peaceful cooperation." But the Trump team is wrong to frame this as an either-or proposition. As a prescriptive matter, abandoning the postwar order is a strange concession for a status quo power to make, since the order's existence is a major competitive advantage. Defending it, and mobilizing its assets, is essential for contending with Russia and China. And as a predictive matter, it is by no means inevitable that great-power competition will upend the order in the foreseeable future. To understand why this is the case, it's necessary to distinguish between the two primary great-power competitors.

Russia under Putin does want to undermine U.S. leadership, as well as the cohesion of Washington's democratic allies. But so far, the Kremlin has proved to be more of a spoiler than an existential threat. Yes, Putin brazenly violated Ukraine's territorial integrity, but he was met with a common transatlantic response that kept him from pulling Kiev back into Moscow's orbit, as well as with new NATO forward deployments to resist further Russian aggression. Yes, Putin's intervention in Syria assisted Syrian President Bashar al-Assad's butchery on an industrial scale and gave Russia a brokering role there, but that has not

translated into a broader role as security manager for the region, and it likely never will. And on the global level, Russia simply does not have the power to decisively shift the course of international trade and investment regimes or scuttle multilateral efforts to deal with such challenges as climate change. That will be increasingly true going forward, given Russia's fragile economy and unfavorable demographic trends. The United States has to avoid the trap of underestimating Putin, but also the temptation to overestimate him.

China is a different story. It has far greater capacity to upend the global order—but will be cautious in attempting to do so in the near term. For all of Xi's rhetoric, China cannot be expected to replace the United States at the center of a newly constituted order. As the China scholar David Shambaugh has noted, Beijing remains a "partial power." Its basic global strategy has been to act, to borrow a phrase from the former U.S. official Robert Zoellick, as amended by Hillary Clinton as secretary of state, as a "selective stakeholder," picking and choosing which responsibilities to take on based on a narrow cost-benefit analysis. This strategy proceeds from the assumption that the United States will remain the burden bearer of last resort.

China will clearly seek greater influence in the operation and evolution of the order. Other emerging powers will, too. That will require adjustments by both the United States and emerging powers, but not something fundamentally new.

That still leaves the question of whether China's competitive posture in its region will over time translate into a more fundamental global challenge—especially if Beijing succeeds in building a sphere of influence in East Asia. That China aims to change the balance of power in Asia, reducing the United States' role and increasing its own, is evident in its military buildup, its activities in the South China Sea, its coercive economic diplomacy, and the expansion of its influence through such efforts as the Belt and Road Initiative. And the Trump administration is helping in this cause, by neglecting Asian security and economic institutions.

But the United States and its partners have plenty of cards to play. The demand for an enduring U.S. presence in Asia, from key treaty allies and others resistant to Chinese hegemony, will likely block any aspirations Beijing has for an Asian Monroe Doctrine, or anything close to it. Even in areas where China has made significant strides, such as the South China Sea, the United States and its partners still have the capacity to protect regional prerogatives and global norms such as freedom of navigation and unimpeded lawful commerce. Ultimately, a return to an effective Asia strategy, anchored in Washington's historical alliances and contemporary partnerships, could sustain the U.S. role in Asia and manage regional competition while promoting global cooperation with Beijing.

Finally, the paroxysms of violence across the arc of instability from North Africa to South Asia have led some observers to conclude that disorder in the Middle East could threaten the entire global order. But Middle Eastern instability has been a feature, not a bug, of the system since the fall of the Ottoman Empire after World War I. In just one

30-year stretch—the period from the early 1970s to the first decade of this century—the region saw the Yom Kippur War, the Lebanese civil war, the Iranian Revolution, the dawn of the modern age of terrorism with the siege of Mecca, the Soviet invasion of Afghanistan, the Iran-Iraq War, the first Lebanon war, two Palestinian intifadas, the Persian Gulf War, the war in Iraq, and a Yemeni civil war.

Today, it is true that the combination of weak state structures, violent ideologies, and Iranian-Saudi competition has transformed a number of local conflicts into a regional crisis. In addition to the horrific human toll, this has had the spillover effects of sending refugees flowing to Europe and inspiring jihadist attacks across the West. At the same time, the United States is no longer as willing or able to play the external role it played before, for reasons relating to both the supply side (reduced U.S. willingness to invest resources, especially troops) and the demand side (reduced regional enthusiasm for U.S. involvement). Yet the roiling waters of the Middle East have not swamped the whole system. U.S.-led efforts against ISIS have rolled back the biggest threat to the international community, the existence of a terrorist state in the heart of the Middle East. Europe is learning to manage the refugee crisis. And despite Tehran's advances on several fronts, the basic power politics of the region tilt toward the eventual emergence of an uneasy, sometimes messy balance between Iran and its proxies on one side and a Saudi-led Sunni bloc on the other. Effective statecraft can help manage, contain, and reduce regional instability over time.

A WINDOW OF OPPORTUNITY

None of this is an argument for complacency. In Washington, checking Trump's destructive instincts requires constant work, which will only get harder as he looks more often to the global stage to score points. And the internal constraints often come down to a few individuals who could easily be replaced by less responsible voices. Internationally, the difficulties are accelerating, not abating, among them the technology-driven challenge to state supremacy itself. The resilience of the rules-based order offers just a window of opportunity to get things right. It will eventually close.

Many of the most crucial steps require that the United States get its own house in order, which would create more fertile ground for consensus building on national security. But there is also a clear task for foreign policy leaders, in both parties: to strengthen and adapt the postwar international order so that it responds to current needs and reflects new realities but still secures a central U.S. role. That will require new ideas and productive advocacy to ensure that globalization delivers more widely shared prosperity. It will require effectively managing strategic competition with Russia and China by protecting U.S. prerogatives without descending into all-consuming rivalry or outright conflict. And it will require convincing governments and citizens around the world that in spite of the current president, a strong majority of Americans remain committed to working closely with other nations to secure shared interests through common action and rules.

A temporary American absence is survivable; sustained American absence is not. In the long run, the international

order will still need leadership, even in the best-developed areas of international cooperation. Who is going to make sure that countries increase their emissions reductions under the Paris accord when the next round of pledges comes in 2023? Who is going to pull the world powers together to execute a follow-on agreement to the Iran nuclear deal? American leadership is even more critical in emerging areas where the rules have not yet been developed or where previous solutions no longer work. How will updated trade and investment arrangements account for the endurance of state-managed economies, the changing nature of work, and rising income inequality? What should be done to counter trends in state fragility that could lead to even more profound migration flows in the future? What new norms will govern cyberspace and artificial intelligence?

The world cannot count on undifferentiated collective action. Nor can it count on China, which has neither the instincts nor the inclination to take on such a role in the foreseeable future. The United States is the only country with the sufficient reach and resolve, and something else as well: a historical willingness to trade short-term benefits for long-term influence. It has been uniquely prepared to accept a leadership role of an international order in which it feels as though the maxim from Thucydides' famous Melian Dialogue is often inverted: the strong suffer what they must and the weak do what they can.

All of this underscores the United States' window of opportunity. Taking advantage of this window does require getting past the current presidency, which is why Trump must not be handed another term. The difference between one and two terms of Trump might not be 1*x* versus 2*x*, but more like 1*x* versus 10*x*. For one thing, Obama needed two terms to get to the ideas he campaigned on in 2008, and if the same proves true for Trump, his second term could be cataclysmic. For another, his reelection would confirm that Trumpism is in fact the new normal in the United States, not an aberration, causing other countries to take more decisive steps to rearrange their relationships and commitments. It would be an especially severe blow to the long-term health of U.S. alliances; many of the United States' friends would more seriously contemplate following through on German Chancellor Angela Merkel's comment about going their own way. On the other hand, the election of a new president in 2020 would say something quite different—and allow the United States to resume its leadership role.

The U.S. foreign policy community should prepare for this world after Trump. It is tempting to conclude that all hope is lost. That conclusion, however, is not only unproductive; it is also wrong. In every dimension—from technology to security, development to diplomacy, economic dynamism to human capital—the United States' advantages are still significant. The opportunity remains to reconstitute the old consensus on new terms.

The Rise of Illiberal Hegemony

Trump's Surprising Grand Strategy

Barry R. Posen

On the campaign trail, Donald Trump vowed to put an end to nation building abroad and mocked U.S. allies as free riders. "'America first' will be the major and overriding theme of my administration," he declared in a foreign policy speech in April 2016, echoing the language of pre–World War II isolationists. "The countries we are defending must pay for the cost of this defense, and if not, the U.S. must be prepared to let these countries defend themselves," he said—an apparent reference to his earlier suggestion that U.S. allies without nuclear weapons be allowed to acquire them.

Such statements, coupled with his mistrust of free trade and the treaties and institutions that facilitate it, prompted worries from across the political spectrum that under Trump, the United States would turn inward and abandon the leadership role it has played since the end of World War II. "The US is, for now, out of the world order business," the columnist Robert Kagan wrote days after the election. Since Trump took office, his critics have appeared to feel vindicated. They have seized on his continued complaints about allies and skepticism of unfettered trade to claim that the administration has effectively withdrawn from the world and even adopted a grand strategy of restraint. Some have gone so far as to apply to Trump the most feared epithet in the U.S. foreign policy establishment: "isolationist."

In fact, Trump is anything but. Although he has indeed laced his speeches with skepticism about Washington's global role, worries that Trump is an isolationist are out of place against the backdrop of the administration's accelerating drumbeat for war with North Korea, its growing confrontation with Iran, and its uptick in combat operations worldwide. Indeed, across the portfolio of hard power, the Trump administration's policies seem, if anything, more ambitious than those of Barack Obama.

Yet Trump has deviated from traditional U.S. grand strategy in one important respect. Since at least the end of the Cold War, Democratic and Republican administrations alike have pursued a grand strategy that scholars have called "liberal hegemony." It was hegemonic in that the United States aimed to be the most powerful state in the world by a wide margin, and it was liberal in that the United States sought to transform the international system into a rules-based order regulated by multilateral institutions and transform other states into market-oriented democracies freely trading with one another. Breaking with his predecessors, Trump has taken much of the "liberal" out of "liberal hegemony." He still seeks to retain the United States' superior economic and military capability and role as security arbiter for most regions of the world, but he has chosen to forgo the export of democracy and

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No retreat: U.S. marines in Afghanistan, July 2017

OMAR SOBHANI / REUTERS

abstain from many multilateral trade agreements. In other words, Trump has ushered in an entirely new U.S. grand strategy: illiberal hegemony.

NO DOVE

Grand strategy is a slippery concept, and for those attempting to divine the Trump administration's, its National Security Strategy—a word salad of a document—yields little insight. The better way to understand Trump's approach to the world is to look at a year's worth of actual policies. For all the talk of avoiding foreign adventurism and entanglements, in practice, his administration has remained committed to geopolitical competition with the world's greatest military powers and to the formal and informal alliances it inherited. It has threatened new wars to hinder the emergence of new nuclear weapons states, as did its predecessors; it has pursued ongoing wars against the Taliban in Afghanistan and the Islamic State (or ISIS) in Iraq and Syria with more resources and more violence than its predecessors. It has also announced plans to invest even more money in the Department of Defense, the budget of which still outstrips that of all of the United States' competitors' militaries combined.

When it comes to alliances, it may at first glance seem as if Trump has deviated from tradition. As a candidate, he regularly complained about the failure of U.S. allies, especially those in NATO, to share the burden of collective defense. However uninformed these objections were, they were entirely fair; for two decades, the defense contributions of the European states in NATO have fallen short of the alliance's own guidelines. Alliance partisans on both sides of the Atlantic find complaints about burden sharing irksome not only because they

ring true but also because they secretly find them unimportant. The actual production of combat power pales in comparison to the political goal of gluing the United States to Europe, no matter what. Thus the handwringing when Trump attended the May 2017 NATO summit and pointedly failed to mention Article 5, the treaty's mutual-defense provision, an omission that suggested that the United States might not remain the final arbiter of all strategic disputes across Europe.

But Trump backtracked within weeks, and all the while, the United States has continued to go about its ally-reassurance business as if nothing has changed. Few Americans have heard of the European Reassurance Initiative. One would be forgiven for thinking that the nearly 100,000 U.S. troops that remained deployed in Europe after the end of the Cold War would have provided enough reassurance, but after the Russian invasion of Ukraine in 2014, the allies clamored for still more reassurance, and so was born this new initiative. The ERI is funded not in the regular U.S. defense budget but in the Overseas Contingency Operations appropriation—the "spend whatever it takes without much oversight" fund originally approved by Congress for the global war on terrorism. The ERI has paid for increased U.S. military exercises in eastern Europe, improved military infrastructure across that region, outright gifts of equipment to Ukraine, and new stockpiles of U.S. equipment in Europe adequate to equip a U.S. armored division in case of emergency. At the end of 2017, Washington announced that for the first time, it would sell particularly lethal antitank guided missiles to Ukraine. So far, the U.S. government has spent or planned to spend $10 billion on the ERI, and in its budget for the 2018 fiscal year, the Trump administration increased the funding by nearly $1.5 billion. Meanwhile, all the planned new exercises and deployments in eastern Europe are proceeding apace. The U.S. military commitment to NATO remains strong, and the allies are adding just enough new money to their own defense plans to placate the president. In other words, it's business as usual.

In Asia, the United States appears, if anything, to be more militarily active than it was during the Obama administration, which announced a "pivot" to the region. Trump's main preoccupation is with the maturation of North Korea's nuclear weapons program—a focus at odds with his campaign musings about independent nuclear forces for Japan and South Korea. In an effort to freeze and ultimately reverse North Korea's program, he has threatened the use of military force, saying last September, for example, "The United States has great strength and patience, but if it is forced to defend itself or its allies, we will have no choice but to totally destroy North Korea." Although it is difficult to tell if Pyongyang takes such threats seriously, Washington's foreign policy elite certainly does, and many fear that war by accident or design is now much more likely. The Pentagon has backed up these threats with more frequent military maneuvers, including sending long-range strategic bombers on sorties over the Korean Peninsula. At the same time, the administration has tried to put economic pressure on North Korea, attempting to convince China to cut off the flow of critical materials to the country, especially oil.

Across the Pacific, the U.S. Navy continues to sustain a frenetic pace of

operations—about 160 bilateral and multilateral exercises per year. In July, the United States conducted the annual Malabar exercise with India and Japan, bringing together aircraft carriers from all three countries for the first time. In November, it assembled an unusual flotilla of three aircraft carriers off the Korean Peninsula during Trump's visit to Asia. Beginning in May 2017, the navy increased the frequency of its freedom-of-navigation operations, or FONOPS, in which its ships patrol parts of the South China Sea claimed by China. So busy is the U.S. Navy, in fact, that in 2017 alone, its Seventh Fleet, based in Japan, experienced an unprecedented four ship collisions, one grounding, and one airplane crash.

During his trip to Asia in November, Trump dutifully renewed U.S. security commitments, and Prime Minister Shinzo Abe of Japan seems to have decided to allow no daylight between him and the president, including on North Korea. Given Trump's litany of complaints about the unfairness of U.S. trade relationships in Asia and his effective ceding of the economic ground rules to China, one might be surprised that U.S. allies in the region are hugging this president so closely. But free security provided by a military superpower is a difficult thing to replace, and managing relations with one that sees the world in more zero-sum economic terms than usual is a small price to pay.

The Trump administration has increased its military activities across the Middle East, too, in ways that should please the critics who lambasted Obama for his arm's-length approach to the region. Trump wasted no time demonstrating his intent to reverse the mistakes of the

past. In April 2017, in response to evidence that the Syrian government had used chemical weapons, the U.S. Navy launched 59 cruise missiles at the air base where the attack originated. Ironically, Trump was punishing Syria for violating a redline that Obama had drawn and a chemical weapons disarmament agreement that Obama had struck with Syria, both of which Trump pilloried his predecessor for having done. Nevertheless, the point was made: there's a new sheriff in town.

The Trump administration has also accelerated the war against ISIS. This Pentagon does not like to share information about its activities, but according to its own figures, it appears that the United States sent more troops into Iraq and Syria, and dropped more bombs on those countries, in 2017 than in 2016. In Afghanistan, Trump, despite having mused about the mistakes of nation building during the campaign, has indulged the inexplicable compulsion of U.S. military leaders ("my generals," in his words) to not only remain in the country but also escalate the war. Thousands of additional U.S. troops have been sent to the country, and U.S. air strikes there have increased to a level not seen since 2012.

Finally, the administration has signaled that it plans to confront Iran more aggressively across the Middle East. Trump himself opposed the 2015 nuclear deal with Iran, and his advisers appear eager to push back against the country, as well. In December, for example, Nikki Haley, the U.S. ambassador to the UN, stood in front of debris from what she claimed was an Iranian missile and alleged that Tehran was arming rebels in Yemen, where Iran and Saudi Arabia are engaged in a proxy war. Behind the scenes, the Trump administration seems to have been at least as supportive of the Saudi intervention in Yemen as was its predecessor. The Obama administration lent its support to the Saudis in order to buy their cooperation on the Iran deal, and given that Trump despises that agreement, his backing of the Saudis can be understood only as an anti-Iran effort. Barring a war with North Korea—and the vortex of policy attention and military resources that conflict would create—it seems likely that more confrontation with Iran is in the United States' future.

The Trump administration's defense budget also suggests a continued commitment to the idea of the United States as the world's policeman. Trump ran for office on the proposition that, as he put it on Twitter, "I will make our Military so big, powerful & strong that no one will mess with us." Once in office, he rolled out a defense budget that comes in at roughly 20 percent more than the 2017 one; about half the increase was requested by the administration, and the other half was added by Congress. (The fate of this budget is unclear: under the Budget Control Act, these increases require the support of the Democrats, which the Republicans will need to buy with increased spending on domestic programs.) To take but one small example of its appetite for new spending, the administration has ramped up the acquisition of precision-guided munitions by more than 40 percent from 2016, a move that is consistent with the president's oft-stated intention to wage current military campaigns more intensively (as well as with an expectation of imminent future wars).

Trump also remains committed to the trillion-dollar nuclear modernization

program begun by the Obama administration. This program renews every leg of the nuclear triad—missiles, bombers, and submarines. It is based on the Cold War–era assumption that in order to credibly deter attacks against allies, U.S. nuclear forces must have the ability to limit the damage of a full-scale nuclear attack, meaning the United States needs to be able to shoot first and destroy an adversary's entire nuclear arsenal before its missiles launch. Although efforts at damage limitation are seductive, against peer nuclear powers, they are futile, since only a few of an enemy's nuclear weapons need to survive in order to do egregious damage to the United States in retaliation. In the best case, the modernization program is merely a waste of money, since all it does is compel U.S. competitors to modernize their own forces to ensure their ability to retaliate; in the worst case, it causes adversaries to develop itchy trigger fingers themselves, raising the risk that a crisis will escalate to nuclear war. If Trump were truly committed to America first, he would think a bit harder about the costs and risks of this strategy.

PRIMACY WITHOUT A PURPOSE

Hegemony is always difficult to achieve, because most states jealously guard their sovereignty and resist being told what to do. But since the end of the Cold War, the U.S. foreign policy elite has reached the consensus that liberal hegemony is different. This type of dominance, they argue, is, with the right combination of hard and soft power, both achievable and sustainable. International security and economic institutions, free trade, human rights, and the spread of democracy are not only values in their own right, the logic goes; they also serve to lure others to the cause. If realized, these goals would do more than legitimate the project of a U.S.-led liberal world order; they would produce a world so consonant with U.S. values and interests that the United States would not even need to work that hard to ensure its security.

Trump has abandoned this well-worn path. He has denigrated international economic institutions, such as the World Trade Organization, which make nice scapegoats for the disruptive economic changes that have energized his political base. He has abandoned the Paris climate agreement, partly because he says it disadvantages the United States economically. Not confident that Washington can sufficiently dominate international institutions to ensure its interests, the president has withdrawn from the Trans-Pacific Partnership, launched a combative renegotiation of the North American Free Trade Agreement, and let the Transatlantic Trade and Investment Partnership wither on the vine. In lieu of such agreements, Trump has declared a preference for bilateral trade arrangements, which he contends are easier to audit and enforce.

Pointing out that recent U.S. efforts to build democracy abroad have been costly and unsuccessful, Trump has also jettisoned democracy promotion as a foreign policy goal, aside from some stray tweets in support of anti-regime protesters in Iran. So far as one can tell, he cares not one whit about the liberal transformation of other societies. In Afghanistan, for example, his strategy counts not on perfecting the Afghan government but on bludgeoning the Taliban into negotiating (leaving vague what exactly the Taliban would negotiate). More generally, Trump has often praised

foreign dictators, from Vladimir Putin of Russia to Rodrigo Duterte of the Philippines. His plans for more restrictive immigration and refugee policies, motivated in part by fears about terrorism, have skated uncomfortably close to outright bigotry. His grand strategy is primacy without a purpose.

Such lack of concern for the kinder, gentler part of the American hegemonic project infuriates its latter-day defenders. Commenting on the absence of liberal elements in Trump's National Security Strategy, Susan Rice, who was national security adviser in the Obama administration, wrote in December, "These omissions undercut global perceptions of American leadership; worse, they hinder our ability to rally the world to our cause when we blithely dismiss the aspirations of others."

But whether that view is correct or not should be a matter of debate, not a matter of faith. States have long sought to legitimate their foreign policies, because even grudging cooperation from others is less costly than mild resistance. But in the case of the United States, the liberal gloss does not appear to have made hegemony all that easy to achieve or sustain. For nearly 30 years, the United States tested the hypothesis that the liberal character of its hegemonic project made it uniquely achievable. The results suggest that the experiment failed.

Neither China nor Russia has become a democracy, nor do they show any sign of moving in that direction. Both are building the military power necessary to compete with the United States, and both have neglected to sign up for the U.S.-led liberal world order. At great cost, Washington has failed to build stable democratic governments in Afghanistan and Iraq. Within NATO, a supposed guardian of democracy, Hungary, Poland, and Turkey are turning increasingly authoritarian. The European Union, the principal liberal institutional progeny of the U.S. victory in the Cold War, has suffered the loss of the United Kingdom, and other member states flaunt its rules, as Poland has done regarding its standards on the independence of the judiciary. A new wave of identity politics—nationalist, sectarian, racist, or otherwise—has swept not only the developing world but also the developed world, including the United States. Internationally and domestically, liberal hegemony has failed to deliver.

WHAT RESTRAINT LOOKS LIKE

None of this should be taken as an endorsement of Trump's national security policy. The administration is overcommitted militarily; it is cavalier about the threat of force; it has no strategic priorities whatsoever; it has no actual plan to ensure more equitable burden sharing among U.S. allies; under the guise of counterterrorism, it intends to remain deeply involved militarily in the internal affairs of other countries; and it is dropping too many bombs, in too many places, on too many people. These errors will likely produce the same pattern of poor results at home and abroad that the United States has experienced since the end of the Cold War.

If Trump really wanted to follow through on some of his campaign musings, he would pursue a much more focused engagement with the world's security problems. A grand strategy of restraint, as I and other scholars have called this approach, starts from the premise that the United States is a very secure country and asks what few things could jeopardize that

security. It then recommends narrow policies to address those potential threats.

In practice, restraint would mean pursuing a cautious balance-of-power strategy in Asia to ensure that China does not find a way to dominate the region—retaining command of the sea to keep China from coercing its neighbors or preventing Washington from reinforcing them, while acknowledging China's fears and, instead of surrounding it with U.S. forces, getting U.S. allies to do more for their own defense. It would mean sharing best practices with other nuclear powers across the globe to prevent their nuclear weapons from falling into the hands of nonstate actors. And it would mean cooperating with other countries, especially in the intelligence realm, to limit the ability of nihilistic terrorists to carry out spectacular acts of destruction. The United States still faces all these threats, only with the added complication of doing so in a world in which its relative power position has slipped. Thus, it is essential that U.S. allies, especially rich ones such as those in Europe, share more of the burden, so that the United States can focus its own power on the main threats. For example, the Europeans should build most of the military power to deter Russia, so that the United States can better concentrate its resources to sustain command of the global commons—the sea, the air, and space.

Those who subscribe to restraint also believe that military power is expensive to maintain, more expensive to use, and generally delivers only crude results; thus, it should be used sparingly. They tend to favor free trade but reject the notion that U.S. trade would suffer mightily if the U.S. military were less active. They take seriously the problem of identity politics, especially nationalism, and therefore do not expect other peoples to welcome U.S. efforts to transform their societies, especially at gunpoint. Thus, other than those activities that aim to preserve the United States' command of the sea, restraint's advocates find little merit in Trump's foreign policy; it is decidedly unrestrained.

During the campaign, Trump tore into the United States' post–Cold War grand strategy. "As time went on, our foreign policy began to make less and less sense," he said. "Logic was replaced with foolishness and arrogance, which led to one foreign policy disaster after another." Many thought such criticisms might herald a new period of retrenchment. Although the Trump administration has pared or abandoned many of the pillars of liberal internationalism, its security policy has remained consistently hegemonic. Whether illiberal hegemony will prove any more or any less sustainable than its liberal cousin remains an open question. The foreign policy establishment continues to avoid the main question: Is U.S. hegemony of any kind sustainable, and if not, what policy should replace it? Trump turns out to be as good at avoiding that question as those he has condemned.

The Post-American World Economy

Globalization in the Trump Era

Adam S. Posen

In the aftermath of World War II, the United States set about building a global, rules-based economic order. At the heart of that order, it put the liberal values of free trade and the rule of law. Over the next seven decades, the order, backed by U.S. power and bolstered by its growing legitimacy among other countries, prevented most economic disputes from escalating into mutually destructive trade wars, let alone military conflict. That allowed even the smallest and poorest countries to develop their social and economic potential without having to worry about predation by stronger neighbors. By taking much of the fear out of the global economy, the U.S.-led order allowed market decisions to be driven by business, not bullying.

Today, that order is under threat. U.S. President Donald Trump has rejected the idea that the world's economies all benefit when they play by the rules. Instead, he has decided that putting "America first" means withdrawing from supposedly bad deals, on which he believes the system is based. So far, Trump has failed to follow through on his most destructive ideas. But the damage has already begun to show. His administration has hobbled the World Trade Organization, encouraged China and other autocratic regimes to lean on their smaller neighbors for economic loyalty, undercut agreements on tax evasion and climate change, and pushed even major U.S. allies to negotiate free-trade and cross-border investment deals without the United States.

If the United States continues its retreat from economic leadership, it will impose serious pain on the rest of the world—and on itself. Unless the Trump administration chooses to launch a full-blown trade war, the consequences will not come immediately. But a sustained U.S. withdrawal will inevitably make economic growth slower and less certain. The resulting disorder will make the economic well-being of people around the world more vulnerable to political predation and conflict than it has been in decades.

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WELCOME TO THE CLUB

One of the great lessons of economic history is that bullying is bad for prosperity. Good institutions—the rule of law, clear property rights, stable means of exchange, efficient tax collection, the provision of public goods, checks on official corruption—are the fundamental prerequisites for sustained economic growth. The benefits of such institutions should not be oversold. They do not lead inexorably to prosperity or democratic freedom. But without them, long-term saving and investment, which form the backbone of growth, cannot be maintained.

The U.S.-led postwar order extended these kinds of institutions to the international economic sphere, at least in part.

The best way to think about the rules-based order is as a club that promotes a common set of beliefs to which its members adhere: the ability to export to, import from, and invest in markets around the world should not be determined by military power or alliance structures; other countries' economic growth should be welcomed, not treated as a threat; property rights should be secure from invasion, expropriation, or theft; and technical knowledge should flow freely, subject to the enforcement of patents and trademarks. Together, these values provide the basis for sustained investment and business relationships, as well as household income growth.

The club offers some shared facilities, for which dues are collected. These start with the institutions founded at the Bretton Woods Conference in 1944—the International Monetary Fund (IMF), the World Bank, and what became the World Trade Organization (WTO)—but go far beyond them. The order maintains common systems for settling transactions, converting currencies, invoicing in widely accepted units, and applying tariffs and customs rules. It also establishes forums where experts can meet to discuss specialized topics and groups that set international standards, such as ICANN (the Internet Corporation for Assigned Names and Numbers). Critically, the club's facilities now include frameworks for settling international commercial disputes.

The club includes some mutual insurance against both man-made and natural disasters. In part, this takes the form of development assistance and emergency aid, which flow disproportionately to poorer members. But it also involves cooperation in the face of financial crises or economic depression, both of which can spread if the entire community does not work together to fix problems, even if they initially affect only one member. The liquidity provided by the U.S. Federal Reserve in emergencies is essential to such financial firefighting.

The club analogy is not perfect. Although the members are nation-states, underlying each state are millions of people, households, and businesses. These, not the states' rulers, are the ultimate beneficiaries of the global economic order. That is what gives the liberal order its ethical weight.

LEADING FROM THE MIDDLE

All these attributes are in large part the result of U.S. leadership. But if the United States chairs the club, that does not mean it can issue commands or demand loyalty. Washington cannot force a state to become a member; it can only make membership more attractive than remaining outside the club. Nor can it easily restrict what a member government does within its own country or in areas outside of the order's agreed values, short of issuing a credible threat to kick that country out of the system. But if such threats come too often or seem too arbitrary, then other members will fear for their own status and band together to resist U.S. pressure. Finally, the United States can collect club dues only to the degree that members think that membership is worth it and that others are paying roughly their fair share.

This reality contradicts the widespread but misguided belief that the United States provides global public goods while others free-ride, let alone Trump's view that the global system

has played American voters for fools. In reality, the United States supplies by itself only two essential aspects of the economic order. First, Washington extends an umbrella of security guarantees and nuclear deterrence over U.S. allies. Second, the U.S. military ensures free navigation of the seas and airspace for commerce, subject to some international rules that are largely set by the United States. Both of these are classic public goods in that one actor, the United States, provides them, and can do so essentially on its own, and every country benefits, whether or not it contributes.

In fact, when it comes to the rest of the order's institutions and benefits, the United States has often been the one free-riding in recent years. It has frequently failed to pay its dues to international organizations on time, as others do. It has spent a far smaller share of its GDP on aid than other wealthy countries. It has failed to respond adequately to climate change, even as other countries have begun to shift toward greener growth. It has behaved irresponsibly by excessively deregulating its financial system and its mortgage market, despite pressuring other countries to curtail their own growth for the sake of stability.

This reality is the opposite of the concern voiced by Trump's "America first" slogan. The United States has been given a pass on many responsibilities precisely because it leads the system and other countries want it to keep doing so.

So far, the benefits of U.S. leadership have been large enough that other countries are willing to ignore a certain amount of hypocrisy. But at some point, if the United States goes from occasional free-riding to ostentatiously violating the rules, the system itself will be imperiled. The United States has to want to lead, and the other members have to want it to do so.

Thus, U.S. leadership is not the inevitable result of the relative size of the U.S. economy and the U.S. military. Over the last 70 years, it has persisted even as the share of the world economy made up by the U.S. economy has shrunk from 50 percent to 25 percent. Policymakers should not fear that China or the EU will replace Washington as the global economic leader as their economies surpass that of the United States. So long as the U.S. economy remains very large (which it will) and at the technological frontier (which it probably will), and the United States maintains its commitment to globally attractive values, the country will be capable of remaining the leader.

It is a tribute to the appeal of the liberal rules-based order—and to Washington's ability to position itself as at least better than the alternative—that U.S. leadership has retained such indulgent support.

DO THEY REALLY MEAN IT?

Washington's retreat will not immediately send the world into recession. Unless the Trump administration decides to mount an actual trade war with China or Mexico, it may not even do any obvious harm over the next year or two. This is partly because even major economic policies take time to affect economies as a whole. It is also because the global economy is in the midst of an extremely broad and balanced recovery. That breadth makes the current expansion the most resilient of any since at least the 1980s. All the engines of the world economy are running well, mostly without

Enjoy it while it lasts: at the New York Stock Exchange, December 2017

ANDREW KELLY / REUTERS

overreliance on debt in either the private or the public sector.

Other countries are also mostly taking a wait-and-see approach to Trump's threats to the global economic system. The administration's National Security Strategy, which was released in December, challenges almost all the fundamental aspects of the United States' global role and the values that the country has professed for the last 70 years. It breaks down the wall between economics and national security and explicitly commits the U.S. government to bilateral bullying instead of enforcing and obeying the rules. Advancing what it calls "principled realism," the strategy promises to "integrate all elements of America's national power—political, economic, and military." The United States will "pursue bilateral trade agreements" rather than broad ones, a recipe for economic coercion rather than cooperation.

Some skepticism over the Trump administration's course is justified, since past administrations have rarely followed any stated strategy consistently. What is more, even if the document does reflect Trump's intentions, a number of factors—the midterm elections later this year, unexpected developments from the ongoing investigations into possible coordination between the Trump campaign and the Russian government, pushback from Congress, even reasoned persuasion by the president's economic advisers and world leaders—could stop the administration from following this mistaken path.

If that strategy really does guide U.S. policy, however, then it will do serious harm. The United States would restrict access to its market in a variety of arbitrary ways, by blocking foreign investment, withdrawing from trade agreements, imposing "buy American"

restrictions on government purchases, and politicizing financial supervision and access to international payments systems. Inevitably, given greater political discretion over the economy, some U.S. politicians will demand payments, perhaps even bribes, from companies for proceeding with normal commercial transactions. All but the last already occur to some limited degree, but successive U.S. administrations since World War II have pushed against these tendencies at home and abroad. Reversing that approach would hurt the United States' economic productivity and its citizens' purchasing power. At least as important, it wouldn't stop there. Adopting such policies would encourage autocrats to follow suit and even democratic allies to retaliate in kind.

Finally, the extent of the damage will depend on how willing and able other governments are to uphold the values and structures of the current system: China and the EU, primarily, but also other major economies that have long supported the rules-based order, such as Australia, Canada, Japan, and Mexico. In all likelihood, there will be no immediate disaster, because the system offers benefits to members who voluntarily comply with its rules. Even without the United States, almost all the other members of the order still publicly subscribe to its stated values: open markets, equal treatment of all members for economic purposes, and the peaceful settlement of disputes.

Some of the shift away from U.S. economic leadership predates the Trump administration. Since the global financial crisis, widespread disdain has emerged for the excesses of turbocharged Anglo-American financialized capitalism, especially its unfettered speculative flows and unchecked accumulation of private wealth. In many countries, this backlash has led to greater tolerance for state-owned enterprises (reinforced by China's example of state-led growth), the protection of special interests from trade competition, and the promotion of companies with their headquarters in their home country as national champions. All of these can have positive effects in moderation, but the current trend is likely to go too far without the restraint that comes when the United States enforces the rules. Even under the Obama administration, the United States was slow to put new issues, such as women's empowerment, refugee resettlement, Internet privacy, and environmental concerns, on the international agenda. Yet the best way to deal with these issues would be to bring other countries' concerns about the United States' errors to a discussion at the G-20. For other countries to give up on U.S. leadership, let alone for the United States itself to abandon the system, would only worsen these problems.

The most immediate response to the Trump administration's retreat has come on trade. The prospect of the United States' withdrawal from the global trading system has spurred several large economies to conclude bilateral or regional trade agreements. In the past year, the EU has all but concluded substantive trade deals with Canada, Japan, Singapore, and Vietnam, and it has accelerated negotiations with Mexico and the South American trading bloc Mercosur. With surprising speed, the 11 nations remaining in the Trans-Pacific Partnership after the United States withdrew in early 2017

have moved forward with much of the agreement, with Australia and Japan taking the lead. Regional trade talks in Asia and Africa involving China and negotiations among Latin American countries have also gained pace; although these types of negotiations tend to result in lower-quality agreements that would allow only limited liberalization and resolve few regulatory issues, they will divert trade from elsewhere, including the United States.

The Trump administration has begun attacking international institutions from NATO to the UN. By blocking the appointment of new trade-dispute judges to sit on the WTO's seven-member appellate body, the administration is preventing the WTO from functioning normally. Here, the rest of the world has been slower to respond. A few world leaders, such as Argentine President Mauricio Macri, who defended the WTO at the organization's biennial meeting in December, have spoken out. Canada has filed a WTO case against the many unilateral trade measures the Trump administration is pursuing, which may set a precedent for action by other countries. But most have remained silent, possibly because they do not wish to provoke Trump into directly withdrawing from or further attacking the organization.

Some nontrade aspects of the liberal rules-based order can continue to function in the absence of U.S. leadership. Most institutions and forums will not work as well, or as consistently, or as adaptably, but they will persist. The systems that allow international financial cooperation have been largely spared from attack so far, in part because of the Federal Reserve's legal independence. Yet without U.S. leadership, even these regimes will be vulnerable to future economic shocks. In the event of a major downturn, large countries will likely fail to act together if the United States does not contribute. The system is not designed to withstand a full-on assault by Washington. If Trump wants to tear down the order, it will be difficult for other countries to limit the damage.

BEGGAR-THY-NEIGHBOR

Left-wing critics of the U.S.-led liberal economic order often argue that the system encourages countries to race to the bottom, exploiting poorer populations along the way. This criticism has particular merit when it comes to environmental protections and labor rights, areas in which the United States does not do enough domestically and so lowers global standards. But until recently, a combination of peer pressure and formal agreements encouraged by the United States had increasingly limited the extent to which countries undercut one another. Over the last decade, international efforts, led in part by the Obama administration working through the G-20, had begun to rein in two of the most pernicious beggar-thy-neighbor policies, currency manipulation and the creation of tax havens.

If the U.S. government walks away from its leadership role, this picture will change dramatically. Today, tax competition largely takes the form of constructive pressure to bring rates and coverage somewhat in line with those of comparable economies. The United States, along with some other countries, is disadvantaged under the current system, but only international cooperation has a hope of plugging the holes rather than just driving every country's revenues

down. If the United States tries unilaterally to use its tax code to attract corporate headquarters away from other countries, the incentives to race to the bottom by allowing tax evasion will strengthen. The tax bill signed by Trump in December has many complex provisions, but overall, it appears to privilege domestic production in a way likely to both reduce economic efficiency and promote tax conflict internationally.

More broadly, either opportunistic multinational companies will pit countries against one another as governments compete to attract jobs or countries will designate national champions that will demand protection and subsidies. Either way, companies' shareholders will capture more of national incomes, shifting resources away from individual taxpayers and workers and shrinking governments' abilities to deal with social issues and invest in long-term projects. Beggar-thy-neighbor policies will beggar everyone.

Another goal of the postwar liberal order was to give the governments of developing countries a voice. Global governance has never been truly equal; the United States and other major countries have always played a dominant role. And deadlock often stymies institutions in which all member countries have an equal vote, such as at the WTO. But the IMF, the World Bank, and other multilateral development institutions have generally applied consistent criteria across countries when apportioning lending and aid, authorized by their collective membership.

In contrast, in a world in which national security links and bilateral relationships displace general rules and multilateral institutions, aid and crisis financing will grow increasingly politicized. Whether a developing country gets access to financing might come to depend on whether it sits inside a major country's sphere of influence and is willing to accept (or unable to resist) political domination by that country. The IMF and the World Bank will remain, but without backing from rich countries, they will likely not be able to counterbalance this kind of politicization in large parts of the world.

To avoid facing such political pressures, many emerging-market countries will make renewed attempts to hedge against situations in which they need assistance by keeping larger currency reserves, even if that comes at the cost of domestic investment. They will also try to secure patrons who will promise them relatively unconditional assistance when it is needed. With those promises in hand, countries will have less need of help from international institutions and thus will be more willing to keep international monitors out of their decisions. This combination will make financial crises more frequent and, by interfering with international cleanup efforts, more likely to do lasting political and economic damage. The division between middle-income countries and countries that remain poor will grow even starker as inconsistencies in the system will hurt the poorest and smallest countries the most.

THE POST-REALITY ECONOMY

Less obvious but no less destructive effects of the U.S. withdrawal from economic leadership will come on the macroeconomic side. These have begun with recent efforts to compromise economic statistics. The United States has always taken pride in the fact that it

relies on independent agencies to report data about its economy. That has allowed it to press other countries to disclose information properly and promptly, given rise to a set of definitions and techniques to help them do so, and created the basis for formal agreements on economic surveillance among technocrats. Objective, standardized economic data allow policymakers to adjust their policies based on more than gut feelings or salesmanship. The Organization for Economic Cooperation and Development and the IMF, with strong support from the United States, help develop and maintain this statistical regime; their regular reports on member countries' policies and performance give voters and investors independent expert assessments to consider.

Yet over the past year, British and U.S. politicians have begun to disparage their own technocrats' findings. In London, government ministers have dismissed official agencies' skeptical analyses of Brexit, and in Washington, Republican members of Congress have rejected legally required assessments of legislation by the Congressional Budget Office and the Joint Committee on Taxation. In some cases, they have even attempted to prevent analyses and data from being released to the public. Politicians will always present numbers in a rosy light and push back against criticism, often with some justification. But when they demand loyalty over objectivity and suppress findings they do not like, they legitimate tactics that were once the preserve of autocrats. Other self-interested politicians will follow this lead. It is impossible to put a number on the damage this could do by allowing wrong-headed policies, distorting

and deterring investment by raising uncertainty, and reducing the ability of publics to hold their governments accountable.

As the United States turns away from the liberal rules-based order and economic decisions grow more intertwined with political power, uncertainty will rise and returns on investment will fall. Governments will work to trap investment at home, either to create domestic jobs or to fund a corrupt political system. Those efforts will always come at an economic cost. If they did not, governments would not have to prevent money from flowing abroad. Policies that restrict foreigners' ability to invest in a particular country are more of a mixed bag. Limits on some kinds of foreign investment can help prevent destabilizing surges of capital into and out of economies. But such policies can easily go too far since foreign direct investment brings a wide range of benefits for advanced and developing economies alike.

If governments begin to restrict capital flows, investors will find it harder to diversify their investments across the global economy. That will expose households and businesses to greater losses from volatility within their particular country or region. Laws that make it more difficult for households to get their savings into or out of an economy will reduce the level of investment and shift it toward more liquid assets, such as cash and government bonds. Worthwhile business ventures will struggle to raise capital.

Wealthy but aging societies in Europe, North America, and Northeast Asia need to invest in growing emerging-market countries to sustain their retirement incomes. Emerging economies need investment from wealthier countries to build roads, bridges, and hospitals; develop Internet and other communications networks; and train doctors, teachers, and other professionals. But if politicians and national security threats interfere with investment between countries or among different sectors of the economy, that win-win exchange will become more tenuous, leaving both retirees and workers around the world worse off.

TRADE ON

The international free-trade regime forms the most visible—and the most reviled—aspect of the postwar economic order. But it is here that U.S. withdrawal might actually do the least harm. The United States is more dispensable to the rules-based trading regime than it is in other economic spheres, and the other major trading countries are responding to U.S. withdrawal by deepening their own trade agreements. International trade has persisted throughout recorded human history, even when some global economies have left the system (as China did from the mid-fifteenth century to the mid-eighteenth century, Japan did from the mid-seventeenth century to the mid-nineteenth century, and the Soviet Union did throughout its existence). Trade can be limited, but never completely squelched.

U.S. withdrawal will still hurt. Countries have already begun to shift their trade flows, supply chains, and business relations away from the U.S. market. This process will only accelerate as the United States retreats. Although the U.S. economy's sheer size will make

it impossible for other countries to completely divert trade around it, that size will also worsen the global economic losses from the United States' withdrawal.

If the United States entirely abandons the global free-trade system, the result will be a massive reduction in the size of global markets. That would leave consumers with less variety and worse quality in the products they buy, leave companies less able to take advantage of economies of scale, and leave countries more likely to diverge from the common technologies and standards that make modern life possible. Global competition would wither. The United States itself would suffer as companies pursued opportunities in places where new trade deals expanded markets and the politics were more favorable. Among the biggest losers would be Americans themselves, as they would soon pay more than they do now for almost everything and miss out on the new jobs and growth that would otherwise have come from the rise of developing economies.

As the leader of the global economic order, the United States has, albeit insufficiently, pushed to enshrine tougher standards for anticorruption, environmental protection, and human rights in major trade deals such as the Trans-Pacific Partnership. There is still room for improvement, but trade deals without the United States, especially those that include China but not the EU, will likely score far worse on all these counts. Even the EU may compromise more readily than before when it becomes the leading high-income economy in the global trading system. Without the United States to counterbalance it, Brussels will be tempted to sell out its values for economic gain. It may restrict the spread of biotechnologies and agricultural innovations, as many EU countries have an anti-science opposition to them; attempt to split up the Internet in order to advantage European companies in search, shopping, and social networking; and acquiesce to demands from Beijing to transfer militarily useful technology or recognize its territorial claims in return for preferential access to Chinese markets. The United States has sometimes failed to stand on principle on these matters, but U.S. leadership with European support remains the only way to make any progress on such issues. Otherwise, the incentives for each major economy will be to pander and compromise.

THE HOUSE THAT WE BUILT

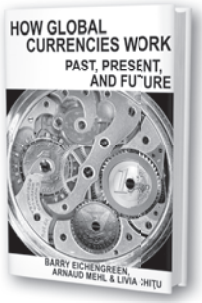
The United States has at times failed to live up to its ideals as the leader of the liberal economic system. That failure has grown more frequent since 9/11, as many Americans have felt threatened by the growth of terrorism and the economic rise of China. That trend also reflects a recurrent nativism in the U.S. electorate and Congress that predates—and contributed to—Trump's election. The United States has played too dominant a role in some areas of global economic discussion and been reluctant to allow other countries to help set the agenda, partly in an effort to pander to domestic nationalists by maintaining the symbolism of dominance. But far worse than a lackluster leader is one that abandons its role altogether or even works actively to subvert the system's values. A return to bullying would only harm economic growth.

The United States' motivation for building the postwar economic system

was as much preventing conflict as promoting growth. In setting out the rules by which all members would conduct business, the architects of the system hoped to separate economic from military competition. U.S. withdrawal need not result in economic or physical wars, but it will raise the risk of stumbling into conflict by accident. Without agreed-on rules, even minor economic disputes have the potential to set off escalating counterattacks. If the norm of separation between economic and military confrontations breaks down, economic frictions, such as Chinese theft of intellectual property or restrictions on trade with a nuclear Iran or North Korea, could turn into outright conflict.

It is plausible that as the United States retreats and thereby weakens its economy, the Trump administration will blame the economic damage not on its own actions but on foreign governments, creating a self-perpetuating cycle of anger. When other major countries step forward to preserve the open economic order, or defend themselves against U.S. economic aggression, Washington may interpret that as an attack on U.S. primacy. The Trump administration might even misinterpret the current forbearance by China or the EU as a sign of weakness and an invitation to escalate confrontations.

Today, a smaller share of the world's population than ever lives in poverty, and a larger share than ever lives a middle-class existence. This is not solely the result of China's astonishing rise. In Chile, Ethiopia, India, Indonesia, South Korea, Vietnam, and the countries of the former Soviet Union, economic growth has brought hundreds of millions of people out of what amounted to subsistence or little better. This miracle took place without conquest or even much conflict, and with greater protections for private property and human rights than ever before. The liberal order constructed and led by the United States made such progress possible by giving countries, businesses, and individuals the opportunity to build their economic lives without fear of a foreign power taking away what they had made. That U.S. leadership has not, as some have charged, hurt the United States. The country's rampant inequality and wage stagnation are largely the result of domestic political choices and failures. A world in which the United States ceases to lead—or, worse still, attacks—the system it built will be poorer, nastier, less fair, and more dangerous for everyone.



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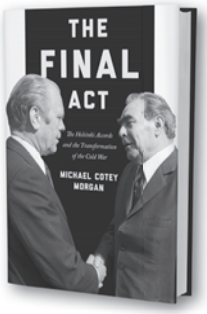

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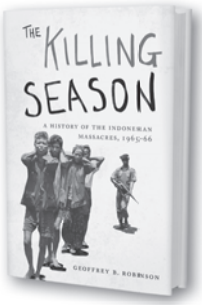

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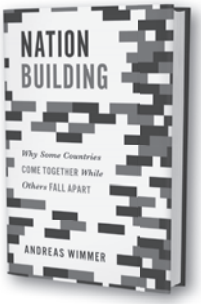

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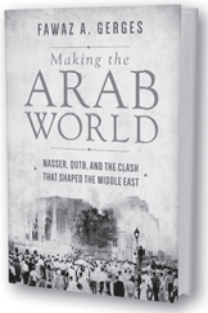

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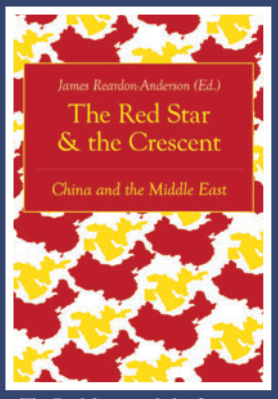

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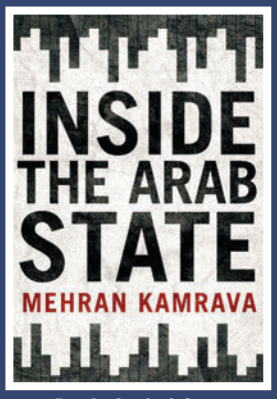

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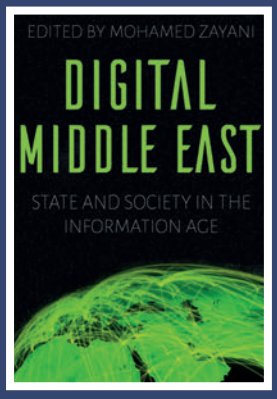

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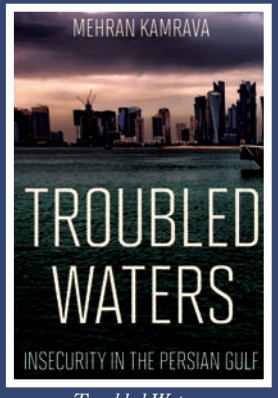

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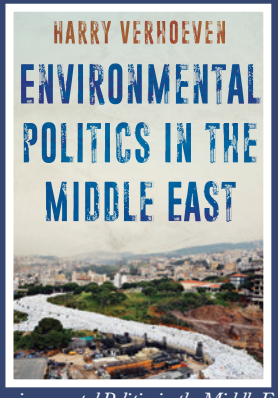

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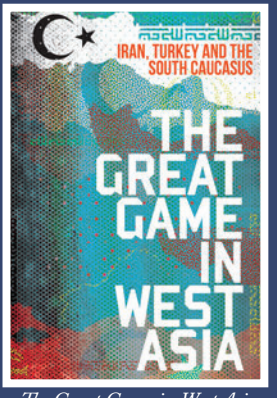

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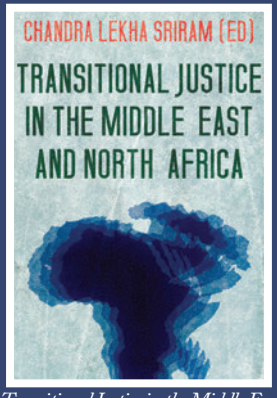

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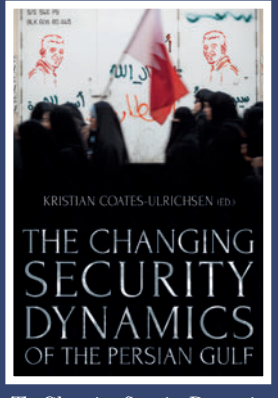

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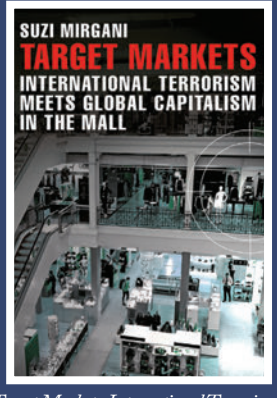

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Giving Up the High Ground

America's Retreat on Human Rights

Sarah Margon

No U.S. president has spoken about human rights the way Donald Trump has. During the campaign, he praised Saddam Hussein for his approach to counterterrorism in Iraq: "He killed terrorists. He did that so good. They didn't read them the rights. They didn't talk. They were a terrorist. It was over." He promised to loosen the restrictions on interrogating terrorism suspects: "I would bring back a hell of a lot worse than waterboarding." He went out of his way to compliment Russian President Vladimir Putin's abusive rule: "In terms of leadership, he is getting an A." And in a television interview shortly after his inauguration, when asked why he respected Putin—"a killer," in the interviewer's words—Trump responded, "We've got a lot of killers. What, do you think our country's so innocent?"

As president, he has kept at it. Last April, he chose to congratulate Turkish President Recep Tayyip Erdogan for winning a disputed referendum that expanded his authoritarian rule. In a call that same month, he spoke to Philippine President Rodrigo Duterte, whose bloody campaign under the guise of a "war on drugs" has taken the lives of over 12,000 Filipinos. Trump praised Duterte for doing an "unbelievable job on the drug problem." When they met in Manila in November, Trump laughed heartily after Duterte cut off questions from reporters and called them "spies"—this in a country where journalists and activists sometimes end up dead. Before heading to China, Trump congratulated President Xi Jinping, who had just further cemented his repressive rule at a Communist Party congress, for his "great political victory."

All U.S. presidents have, to varying degrees, downplayed or even overlooked concerns about human rights in order to get things done with unsavory foreign partners. But none has seemed so eager as Trump to align with autocrats as a matter of course. The harm goes beyond mere words. In country after country, the Trump administration is gutting U.S. support for human rights, the rule of law, and good governance, damaging the overarching credibility of the United States. Within the United States' borders, meanwhile, the Trump administration has unleashed an assault on nondiscrimination and equal justice.

Even before Trump was elected, human rights were under attack across the globe. With crisis, conflict, and instability gripping much of the world, repressive leaders from Ethiopia to Russia to Thailand have used these developments to justify tightening their hold on power—cracking down harder on dissent while rejecting the rule of law and flouting international norms. Now, with Trump in office, there's little reason to believe that such initiatives will be met with much criticism or consequences from the United States. Indeed, the Trump administration's chaotic and

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virtually values-free approach to foreign policy is bolstering this global deterioration while corroding the institutions and alliances needed to reverse it.

WRONG ON RIGHTS

The first year of Trump's presidency was marked by a frenzy of activity on domestic issues. His administration instituted harsh new immigration rules that are ripping apart families and communities. Between late January and early September 2017, the total number of immigrants arrested inside the country (versus at the border) increased by 43 percent compared with the number arrested during the equivalent time period under President Barack Obama in 2016. These are people who have been uprooted from communities where they have families and deep ties. The president has also issued a series of travel bans, all of which use classic scapegoating tactics and bigotry to incite fears about Muslims and refugee-resettlement programs. Although the courts blocked the original and most draconian versions of this ban, in late 2017, they did allow a revised version to proceed.

The president has empowered bigots by making racially charged statements, including referring to white supremacists marching in Charlottesville, Virginia, as "very fine people." He has sought to end what he calls the "very dangerous anti-police atmosphere in America," which is a direct rebuke to activists calling for racial justice in policing. He has also gravely harmed women's rights by attacking reproductive choice, halting an equal-pay measure, and weakening protections against gender-based violence on college campuses.

On foreign policy, meanwhile, the administration has dismissed or damaged the global human rights framework. Under Trump, the United States has walked away from (or threatened to walk away from) a number of vital global commitments, institutions, and initiatives that would provide an opportunity to share the burden of combating global challenges while respecting rights. The administration has threatened to withdraw from the UN Human Rights Council, largely because the Palestinian territories (and therefore Israel) are a permanent item on its agenda. It's true that the council has flaws, but it has also successfully documented and exposed many human rights issues of concern to U.S. law and policymakers. Walking away would not only weaken the council but also limit the available avenues for Washington to promote human rights. From the UN's negotiations on the compact for global migration to the Paris agreement on climate change, the Trump administration has repeatedly suggested multilateral institutions are of no use to the United States, even though the country was instrumental in creating the UN, as well as many of the norms and laws that guide thinking about human rights today.

When it comes to human rights, symbolism matters, and under this administration, human rights activists have been made to feel as though they aren't important. The president and his top national security officials have met with very few frontline activists and have held very few meetings with civil society before or during overseas trips—a practice that previous presidents often used so as to hear directly from ordinary citizens about the challenges they were facing.

Words matter, too, and Trump's fulsome praise of strongmen, many of

UMIT BEKTAS / REUTERS

Roughed up: police detaining a demonstrator during a protest in Ankara, February 2017

whom he has hosted at the White House with great fanfare and little condemnation, has been taken by many as permission for brutality. Last April, he congratulated Egyptian President Abdel Fattah el-Sisi, a military dictator who has overseen a vicious crackdown on government critics, for doing "a fantastic job." The next month, counter to a promise made to the White House, Sisi signed a draconian law regulating civil society. Perhaps he was emboldened by Trump's comment in Saudi Arabia a week earlier: "We are not here to lecture—we are not here to tell other people how to live." On that same visit to Saudi Arabia, Trump told Hamad bin Isa al-Khalifa, the king of Bahrain, "There won't be strain with this administration," which the Bahraini regime evidently viewed as a green light to intensify repression. As Nabeel Rajab, an imprisoned Bahraini activist (and member of Human Rights Watch's Middle East advisory committee), has written, "It was no coincidence that days later, Bahraini police used the deadliest force we have seen in decades, killing five protesters."

Similarly, politicians looking to discredit the free press have latched on to the term "fake news," one of Trump's favorite phrases. In Syria, President Bashar al-Assad rejected an Amnesty International report documenting the brutal killing of 13,000 military prisoners, saying, "You can forge anything these days. We are living in a fake-news era." In Myanmar, where security forces have undertaken a campaign of ethnic cleansing against Rohingya Muslims, a government official went so far as to say, "There is no such thing as Rohingya. It is fake news." The term has become a catch phrase for government officials in China, the Philippines, Russia, and Venezuela who wish to shield themselves from scrutiny

and create a climate of fear that vilifies dissenting voices. Indeed, according to the Committee to Protect Journalists, which has been keeping a database of imprisoned journalists since the early 1990s, the number of people charged with reporting "false news" rose to a record high in 2017.

THE WAR ON WOMEN

Perhaps it should not be surprising that a man who was caught on tape bragging about sexual assault has put in place policies that set back the rights of women and girls around the world. But the swiftness of the rollback has been startling. In keeping with Republican tradition, the Trump administration has cut off U.S. funding for the UN Population Fund, which provides lifesaving maternal care for women, falsely claiming that it promotes forced abortions. And the reversal of so many domestic policies in support of gender equality no doubt undermines U.S. credibility overseas when it comes to empowering women and girls.

But perhaps the greatest threat to women will come from Trump's expansion of the so-called Mexico City policy, also known as "the global gag rule," a long-standing policy of Republican administrations that imposes conditions on health-care organizations receiving U.S. aid. To keep their U.S. funding, these organizations must certify that they are not using their other funds to provide abortions (except in cases of rape, incest, or to save a woman's life) and that they are not offering information about or referrals for abortions or advocating them. Otherwise, they lose all their U.S. funding. In one of his first acts as president, Trump dramatically expanded the scope of funds affected by this restriction, raising the amount of aid at stake from $600 million to $9 billion.

The United States is by far the world's largest health donor, so the rule will inflict untold harm on women, girls, and their families. It will likely hinder hard-fought progress on health care in poor and middle-income countries, particularly those that rely heavily on U.S. resources. Affected health programs may have to cut not only their family-planning offerings but also services linked to child health, including vaccinations and the prevention and treatment of HIV/AIDS, malaria, and tuberculosis.

As research by Human Rights Watch in Africa has found, the new rule already means fewer health services of all types, not just the loss of safe abortion care. To take one example, Family Health Options Kenya, an organization set to lose U.S. funds, has curtailed outreach services such as family planning, cervical cancer testing, and HIV testing for impoverished communities, and it has already closed one clinic. Organizations in Kenya that have no choice but to agree to the new restrictions because they depend on these funds worry that more women will die from unsafe abortions, a leading cause of maternal mortality in the country. In Uganda, the policy presents a difficult choice for organizations with multiple public health campaigns: Should they keep the funds and focus just on fighting HIV/AIDS, or should they reject the funds and work to end injuries and deaths from back-alley abortions?

Trump's policy is not only an assault on women's health; it is also likely to be self-defeating. A 2011 Stanford University study found that when a more

limited version of the Mexico City policy was last in place, during the George W. Bush administration, sub-Saharan Africa actually saw abortions increase. This happened particularly in parts of the continent that had few health-care options and relied heavily on U.S. funds. Although the researchers could not conclusively explain this uptick, their leading interpretation was that an overall decline in family-planning resources led to more unplanned pregnancies and more abortions. It stands to reason that an expanded version of the policy will lead to even more preventable maternal deaths, due to an increase in both unplanned pregnancies and unsafe abortions—to say nothing of its effect on efforts to combat HIV/AIDS, malaria, and child malnutrition.

ON THE WARPATH

Because the United States is the world's preeminent military power, its use of force is watched closely, especially when the White House has unequivocally pushed for a greater reliance on hard power. Indeed, the Trump administration has increased defense spending while reducing foreign aid. It has reversed a policy to phase out the use of cluster bombs, a particularly indiscriminate explosive. It has signed secret changes that undo the Obama administration's more restrictive policies regarding the use of drone strikes and commando raids, a shift that will inevitably lead to less transparency and accountability and more civilian deaths. It has also accelerated arms sales, including to governments with poor track records on human rights, and has signaled its intention to loosen restrictions on arms exports—a shortsighted move that would prioritize economic interests over values.

In the fight against the Islamic State, or ISIS, the Trump administration has demonstrated a noted antipathy toward the laws of war. As a candidate, Trump promised to "bomb the shit out of" ISIS, and as president, he has lessened the White House's oversight of air strikes in Iraq and Syria while giving commanders in the field more control, even as they shifted to more intense urban warfare.

In recent years, the Department of Defense has sought to make the details of its campaign against ISIS somewhat more transparent. The Pentagon regularly publishes information on its website about war costs, and even posts videos of air strikes. It also publishes a monthly report examining civilian casualties. But over the last year, human rights groups, the UN, and journalists have found growing evidence that a dramatically higher number of civilians are being killed by U.S. forces or U.S.-led coalition forces in Iraq and Syria (as well as Afghanistan) than what is officially reported. In some cases, these investigations have found serious violations of the laws of armed conflict. An exhaustive inquiry by *The New York Times Magazine* concluded that the campaign against ISIS may be the least transparent war in recent U.S. history. The magazine reported that one civilian is killed for every five coalition air strikes—more than 31 times the rate the coalition has acknowledged.

Parts of this strategic shift began during the Obama administration. In December 2016, the Pentagon removed the requirement for a "strike cell" in Baghdad, which had served as a collection point for information about planned

targets for air strikes in Iraq—an extra check to avoid civilian casualties. But the Trump administration exacerbated the problem by speeding up the tempo of operations without doing enough to mitigate civilian harm. The Pentagon also failed to consistently ensure that there had been adequate checks on intelligence collection before approving an air strike, and it has used munitions and firepower generally not considered appropriate for urban warfare. Investigations to assess allegations of civilian harm in the aftermath of a lethal strike have become deeply inadequate, hampered in part by the lack of a clear process for gathering information from those closest to the ground, such as local activists, emergency responders, and nongovernmental organizations.

SAVING THE SYSTEM

Human rights concerns have always competed with national security considerations. For too long, Washington has adopted policies in the name of protecting national security that come at the expense of human rights, forgetting the long-term costs of doing so. The Obama administration's arms sales to Saudi Arabia, despite the Saudi-led coalition's unlawful air strikes against civilians in Yemen, is a prime example of the harm this approach can do, with thousands of civilians killed and anti-American sentiment on the rise in the country. Another is the CIA's secret post-9/11 torture and rendition program, which the Bush administration launched in violation of international obligations and U.S. law and which has undermined Washington's credibility on human rights. But even as the United States struggled with how and when to promote human rights, there was always a common understanding that doing so was a key part of what defined the United States—and what Americans believed was the right thing for their government to do.

Not so under Trump. Although some lower-level U.S. officials appear committed to keeping human rights a priority, others have concluded that this may be impossible. In November, for example, Elizabeth Shackelford, a U.S. Foreign Service officer who most recently served in Kenya, resigned from the State Department in protest, writing, "Our government has failed to demonstrate a commitment to promoting and defending human rights and democracy." No one who is actually running U.S. foreign policy seems to believe that the advancement of fundamental rights should be one of its central pillars.

Given the United States' historically spotty record on promoting human rights, there are those who think that other governments can pick up the slack. But in reality, the loss of the United States as a champion, however inconsistent its support can be, is likely to further encourage governments to treat their citizens poorly, confident that no meaningful rebuke will follow. It is also likely to create a leadership vacuum, and the countries that aim to fill it—such as China, Iran, Russia, and Venezuela—will no doubt seek to spread their no-strings-attached approach to global affairs.

So what is to be done? Realistically, the next few years are likely to be hard on human rights. But despite the absence of U.S. leadership, there have been some bright spots, with rights-minded countries stepping up. At the UN Human Rights Council, for example, the Netherlands managed to overcome opposition

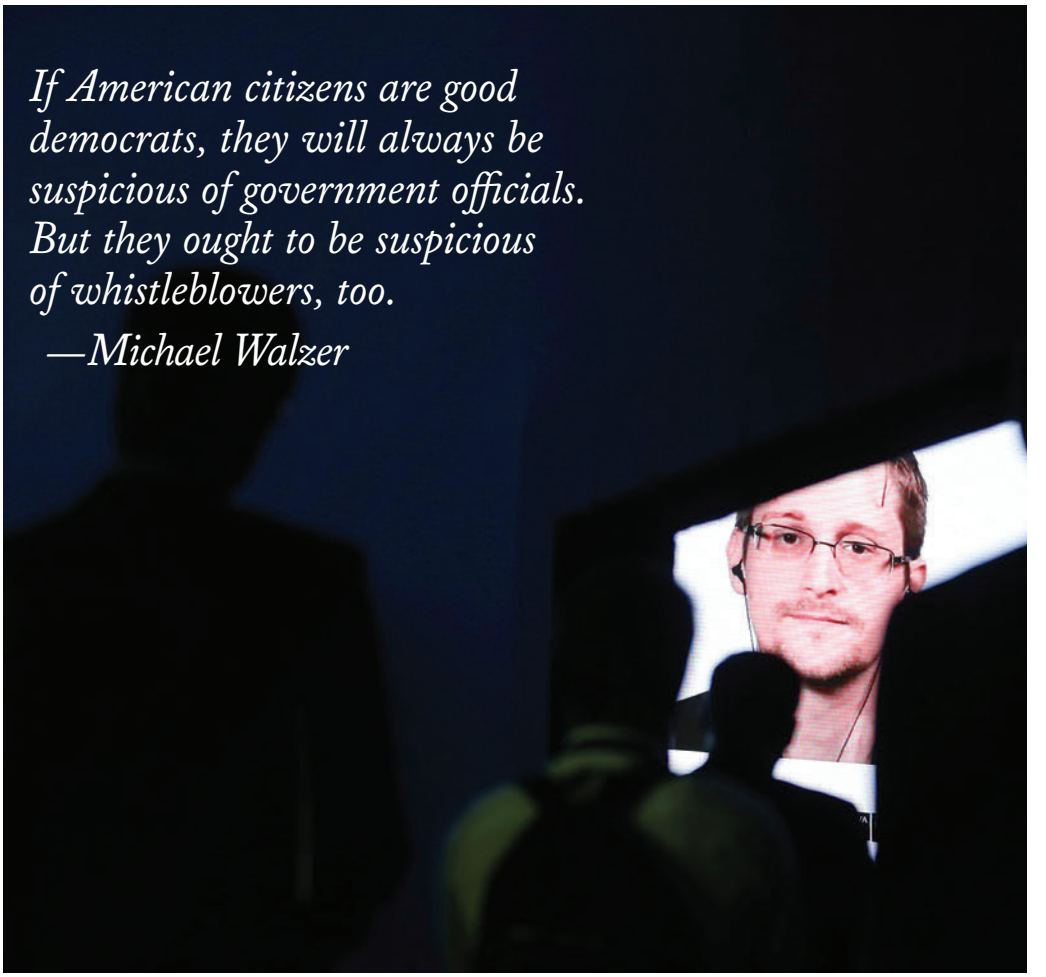
from Saudi Arabia, the United Arab Emirates, and the United States to launch an independent investigation into the Saudi-led campaign in Yemen. Similarly, Iceland took the lead in drafting and collecting support from 38 other countries for a joint statement at the council condemning Duterte's bloody "war on drugs." As long as Trump is in power, such ad hoc coalitions of like-minded countries will need to become the norm.

There is also much that other parts of the U.S. government can do to protect human rights. Just as some cities and states have decided to comply with the Paris climate agreement despite the federal government's withdrawal, they can also find ways to protect immigrants caught up in the Trump administration's dragnet and keep families and communities intact.

Congress, for its part, has already resisted a number of presidential initiatives in the interest of human rights. In May, a bipartisan group of 15 senators sent Trump a letter urging him to "ensure that America remains a leader in advocating for democracy and human rights." Congressional committees are using aid allocations and authorization bills to push back against the executive branch. Individual members of Congress are drafting legislation, holding hearings, and meeting with foreign officials to stand up for human rights in the Democratic Republic of the Congo, Egypt, Russia, and elsewhere. In December, the Treasury Department, under pressure from Congress, imposed sanctions on 13 individuals—from Belgium, China, the Dominican Republic, Gambia, Guatemala, Israel, Myanmar, Nicaragua, Pakistan, Russia, Serbia, Sudan, and Uzbekistan—for corruption and human rights abuses.

But these efforts can only go so far. Petition gathering by like-minded countries is less effective without the most powerful country on earth. State and local governments can only do so much to work around the federal government. And although Congress controls the power of the purse, it has far less influence on foreign policy than the executive branch. And all the while, the White House's attacks on immigrants, health care, minority communities, and the justice system will continue to diminish American credibility on human rights overseas. Simply put, unless it changes course dramatically, the Trump administration—and the president himself—will remain one of the greatest threats to human rights in decades.

ESSAYS



RAFAEL MARCHANTE / REUTERS

Just and Unjust Leaks

When to Spill Secrets

Michael Walzer

All governments, all political parties, and all politicians keep secrets and tell lies. Some lie more than others, and those differences are important, but the practice is general. And some lies and secrets may be justified, whereas others may not. Citizens, therefore, need to know the difference between just and unjust secrets and between just and unjust deception before they can decide when it may be justifiable for someone to reveal the secrets or expose the lies—when leaking confidential information, releasing classified documents, or blowing the whistle on misconduct may be in the public interest or, better, in the interest of democratic government.

Revealing official secrets and lies involves a form of moral risk-taking: whistleblowers may act out of a sense of duty or conscience, but the morality of their actions can be judged only by their fellow citizens, and only after the fact. This is often a difficult judgment to make—and has probably become more difficult in the Trump era.

LIES AND DAMNED LIES

A quick word about language: "leaker" and "whistleblower" are overlapping terms, but they aren't synonyms. A leaker, in this context, anonymously reveals information that might embarrass officials or open up the government's internal workings to unwanted public scrutiny. In Washington, good reporters cultivate sources inside every presidential administration and every Congress and hope for leaks. A whistleblower reveals what she believes to be immoral or illegal official conduct to her bureaucratic superiors or to the public. Certain sorts of whistle-blowing, relating chiefly to mismanagement and corruption, are protected by law; leakers are not protected, nor are whistleblowers who reveal state secrets.

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Before considering the sorts of official deception where the stakes are high and the whistleblower's decisions and the public's judgment of them are especially difficult, it's important to look at the way secrets and lies affect everyday politics, where the dilemmas are simple—and, most of the time, not much is at stake. Consider the many politically engaged men and women who insist that they are not running for office even while they are secretly raising money and recruiting help for a campaign. They don't want assaults on their records to begin before they have developed the resources they will need to counterattack. Citizens expect deception of this sort and commonly see through it: the practice is tolerable even if it is not fully justifiable.

But what about a candidate who tries to conceal political positions she has held in the past or who lies about her policy commitments for the future? Someone inside the candidate's campaign who exposes such lies is disloyal, but the disclosure is certainly not unjust. The leaker is a good citizen even though she may not be a desirable colleague in a conventional political enterprise.

Now imagine a politician who is particularly ruthless: she wins the election and then uses the power of the government to destroy records of her previous actions, removing documents from archives and threatening people who know too much. Anyone breaking the silence or leaking the documents would be a public hero—and a welcome colleague to the vast majority of citizens who are sure that they would never destroy records or threaten anyone. Self-aggrandizing deception and ruthless attempts to cover it up invite moral exposure.

But now consider a politician who shouts lies at election rallies and solicits money from unsavory characters in order to defeat a particularly awful opponent—a neo-Nazi, for example, who threatens to dismantle the institutions of democratic government. Here is a politician with dirty hands. She has gotten her hands dirty for a good cause—but the good cause doesn't wash them clean. She is a lying and possibly corrupt politician. Still, I wouldn't defend someone inside her campaign who exposed the lies or revealed the source of the campaign funds and claimed something like a Kantian categorical imperative. "I had to do it," the leaker might say. "No, you didn't," I would respond. Lying to one's fellow citizens and seeking funds that the candidate doesn't dare talk about are certainly practices that should not be generalized. If all candidates acted in that way (and far too many do), democracy itself would be at risk. But if democratic institutions were already at risk,

most citizens would want to make an exception for a politician they were sure would defend those institutions—even if she did not adhere to democratic norms while seeking office.

THE SECRET SHARER

Government secrets and deceptions are equally common but often harder to judge than the secrets and deceptions of individual candidates or elected officials. A relatively easy case can help establish some of the contours. It was militarily necessary and therefore justified for the U.S. government to keep the date of the 1944 D-Day invasion secret from the Germans and, in order to ensure secrecy, to withhold the information from almost everyone else, too. Governments justifiably conceal such information from anyone who does not need to know it. Similarly, Washington's and London's efforts to deceive the Germans about the location of the invasion were also justified, as were all the lies that officials told as part of those efforts. Providing that information to the press would not have been a good thing to do; in fact, someone who revealed it would probably have been charged with treason.

But contemporary U.S. military operations often do invite whistleblowing—as in cases in which the people being kept in the dark are not U.S. enemies, who know a good deal about what's going on since their operatives or soldiers are already engaged with American ones. Rather, it's the American people who don't know. Think of drone attacks or special operations that the public has never been told about, in places that most Americans have never heard of; recent U.S. military activities in Niger offer a good example. Soldiers die, and officials struggle to explain the mission—and, with even greater difficulty, the reasons for concealing it in the first place. In the wake of such incidents, it's plausible to argue that the truth should have been revealed earlier on by someone with inside knowledge. The whistleblower in this case would be a good citizen, one might argue, because the use of force abroad should always be the subject of democratic debate. Still, such a disclosure might not be justified if the operation was defensible—necessary for national security, for example, or intended to help people in desperate trouble—and if blowing the whistle would shut down any prospect of success. A disclosure might also be unjustified if it put the lives of U.S. operatives or armed forces at risk. Government officials usually claim that both

the operation and U.S. personnel have been endangered. The case at hand, they regularly insist, is just like D-Day.

But U.S. leaders often choose secrecy for a very different reason: they fear that an operation would not survive public scrutiny or a democratic decision-making process. Or an operation has been debated and democratically approved but has taken on a different character in the field. Mission creep is common and often results in an entirely new mission, different from the one that citizens debated and Congress voted on. The new mission may be strategically and morally justifiable, but the democratic process has been cut short or avoided altogether. If the operation is kept secret, however, Americans don't know that it hasn't been democratically authorized; they don't know that it is going on at all. And obviously, they can't weigh official justifications, since they have never heard a government official justify the operation.

U.S. leaders often choose secrecy out of fear that an operation would not survive a democratic decision-making process.

By contrast, a potential whistleblower knows that the operation is going on and that it hasn't been democratically authorized. But who is she to judge its strategic or moral value? In recent years, many government whistleblowers have been very young people—members, perhaps, of a generation of "digital natives," who believe that everything should be revealed. But government employees and contractors take oaths or sign agreements that commit them to obey secrecy rules; their superiors and fellow workers trust them to protect the confidentiality of their common enterprise, whatever it is.

If the enterprise is clearly illegal or monstrously immoral, a government employee or contractor should certainly break that promise, violate the trust of her coworkers, and blow the whistle. Officials or operatives engaged in illegal or immoral activities don't deserve her protection. This argument is similar to one often made in the case of humanitarian intervention: if a massacre is going on, anyone who can stop it should stop it, regardless of the costs imposed on the killers. If the U.S. government is engaged in an illegal and immoral operation, anyone who can stop it should.

Consider a rough analogy. U.S. soldiers are required by international law and by the Uniform Code of Military Justice to refuse to obey illegal commands—and they should assume that monstrously immoral

commands are always illegal. Discipline and obedience are more crucial to a military than they are to a civilian bureaucracy, and yet soldiers are commanded to disobey illegal orders even on the battlefield. Citizens might excuse a soldier who obeyed an illegal order under coercion or who evaded rather than defied the order—as did the U.S. soldiers at the 1968 My Lai massacre in Vietnam who shot into the air, deliberately missing the civilians they had been ordered to kill. There are civilian equivalents of this kind of evasion, such as slowing down the work required to prepare for an operation or doing the work so badly that the operation has to be postponed or canceled. Whistle-blowing, by contrast, is closer to deliberate disobedience on the battlefield.

There is a difference between the two contexts, however: a soldier often has to decide whether to obey in an instant; a whistleblower has more time. Bureaucracies move slowly, so a whistleblower, thinking about a clearly illegal or immoral operation, can appeal to her superiors to stop the operation. She can deliberate at length about the costs of what she is preparing to do. She can talk to coworkers whom she trusts (although there probably won't be any). Publicly blowing the whistle may mean losing her job and perhaps going to prison. Yet assuming she has exhausted the options for internal dissent, this is her obligation. And if she blows the whistle, her fellow citizens should recognize the value of what she has done, after the fact.

But what if the operation isn't clearly illegal or morally monstrous? What if there are arguments to support it, and the would-be whistleblower has heard them, even though her fellow citizens haven't? How can she claim the right to judge the official account of what's going on and the justifications of her coworkers and superiors, many of whom have more experience than she has? Such a situation is very different from the case of a soldier on the battlefield, who can see pretty clearly the meaning of what she is being ordered to do—who might even look into the eyes of the innocent civilians she has been told to kill.

Whistle-blowing generally involves decision-making under conditions of uncertainty. Americans elect officials and ask them (and their appointees) to make decisions under those conditions. These officials may not be any more qualified than ordinary citizens, but they have been given and they have accepted a charge and the responsibilities that go with it—which include, crucially, the obligation to worry about the consequences of their decisions. Officials have at their

disposal a multitude of researchers, analysts, and advisers, who presumably reduce the uncertainty and help with the worrying. By contrast, a whistleblower is usually alone; her uncertainties are private, and the public cannot know how much she worries. Indeed, one of the things the public should be concerned about is how well a whistleblower understands the uncertainties. Is she a good worrier? It can be dangerous when whistleblowers make their decisions on the basis of some ideological fixation or long-standing prejudice. That's a danger for officials, too—but they are being watched by coworkers (and, to an extent, by Congress and the media), whereas whistleblowers act in the shadows.

A WHISTLE IN THE DARK

Does it make a difference if whistleblowers are (or claim to be) conscientious? "Conscience" originally meant what the word suggests: "co-knowledge," shared, as the early Protestants said, between a man and "his God." But in the case of a whistleblower, the knowledge is uncertain and limited to the individual: good enough, perhaps, to justify someone's refusal to serve in the military, but not good enough to justify decisions that affect large numbers of other people. I am sure that many whistleblowers have consciences, but they have to defend their actions in other terms.

If American citizens are good democrats, they will always be suspicious of government officials, and that will make them receptive to the information that whistleblowers provide. But they ought to be suspicious of whistleblowers, too. Citizens may not need to know the information that a whistleblower provides—indeed, the whistleblower might be acting for profit or publicity and not out of a desire for more democratic decision-making or a concern for law and morality. Sometimes, however, whistle-blowing opens a debate that should have started long before and exposes government activities that many citizens strongly oppose.

Imagine a military or intelligence operation that originally made a lot of sense and that the government has successfully defended to the public but that has expanded in ways that U.S. citizens didn't anticipate and haven't been told about. The operation now requires a degree of force far greater than officials had originally planned for, and its geographic range has expanded. The potential whistleblower knows what is going on, and she knows that there hasn't been anything resembling a democratic decision. Is that enough knowledge to justify revealing details about the operation to the media? Probably not: she has to make some judgment about the character of the expanded operation, and she has to consider the possible consequences of her revelations—and she is, remember, no better a judge than anyone else.

Arguably, the goal of empowering citizens by supplying them with crucial but secret information justifies whistle-blowing—as long as there are good reasons to believe that secrecy isn't a legitimate requirement of the mission and as long as the revelation results in no negative consequences for U.S. personnel in the field. Those two qualifications, however, will probably mean that whistle-blowing can-

not be justified in many cases. But now imagine that the expanded operation involves terrible brutality or potential danger to civilians abroad or in the United States. And the whistleblower believes that ordinary Americans would recognize the brutality or the danger, and so she isn't merely acting on her own judgment: she is assuming that most of her fellow citizens would judge the situation in the same way—and giving them the chance to do so.

This is the best way to think about whistle-blowing: it involves a kind of moral risk-taking, and it can be justified only after the fact, if other citizens recognize its morality. Of course, its morality will always be contested, with government officials arguing that an important mission has been undercut and that agents in the field have been endangered. This might be true, or it might be a lie, which would justify further whistle-blowing. The whistleblower herself is counting on her fellow citizens to defend her judgment—to affirm it, in fact, and say, "Yes, this is an operation that we should have been told about, and it is one that we would have rejected." If most of her fellow citizens agree—or, rather, most of those who are paying attention, since majority rule would not work here—then exposing the operation was likely justified.

Soldiers are obligated to disobey illegal orders; civil servants are not obligated to blow the whistle when they see wrongdoing.

The case is the same if U.S. citizens are both the objects of the operation and the ones from whom it is being concealed. The best-known contemporary American whistleblower, the former National Security Agency contractor Edward Snowden, revealed the large-scale surveillance of Americans by their own government. He bet that most of his fellow citizens would not think that the danger they faced was great enough to warrant such a massive invasion of their privacy. With some difficulty, I can imagine circumstances in which large-scale secret surveillance by an otherwise democratic state might be justifiable or at least defensible. But what Snowden revealed was an operation that could not be justified by any actually existing danger; this was something that American citizens needed to know about. Unfortunately, however, Snowden revealed much more than what Americans needed to know—and not only to his fellow citizens: in addition to sharing secrets about the surveillance of American citizens with journalists from *The Washington Post* and *The Guardian*, he

provided the *South China Morning Post* with information about U.S. intelligence operations against non-American targets in mainland China. That disclosure put Americans at risk, and Snowden had no reason to believe that what the United States was doing in China was either illegal or immoral—or anything other than routine.

Judgments in cases like this one will obviously be shaped by political views, but not, one hopes, by partisan loyalties. Many liberals and Democrats, along with some conservatives and a few Republicans, condemned the domestic surveillance that Snowden revealed and defended his decision to do so. The first year of the Trump administration, however, has seen many leaks that have derived from and invited partisanship. Consider the leaked details of the president's May 2017 conversation with Russian officials in the Oval Office, after he had fired FBI Director James Comey, who had been investigating whether Donald Trump's election campaign had coordinated with the Kremlin. "I just fired the head of the FBI. He was crazy, a real nut job," Trump said, according to a source quoted by *The New York Times*. "I faced great pressure because of Russia. That's taken off." *The Washington Post* reported that during the same meeting, Trump shared highly classified information with the Russians that "jeopardized a critical source of intelligence on the Islamic State." The leakers to the *Times* and the *Post* certainly meant to raise questions about the president's competence on foreign policy. Americans who already doubted Trump's abilities welcomed the leak. The president's supporters obviously did not.

There is no way to make an objective judgment here—not, at least, about the leakers. But the journalists who reported this and many other leaks, and who worked hard to make sure of their accuracy, were doing their job and ought to be commended. They did not confront a moral dilemma. Leaks of this sort are grist for the mill of a free press.

BUREAUCRATIC OUTLAWS

As for whistle-blowing, as opposed to leaking, a truly detached and fully informed observer would probably be able to make an objective judgment about any particular revelation. But that sort of judgment isn't likely in the fraught world of politics and government—although a consensus might take shape, slowly, over time, as in the case of the Pentagon Papers: it seems likely that most Americans have come to believe that the military analyst Daniel Ellsberg did the right thing

in sharing the documents with the press. Whistleblowers such as Ellsberg appeal to their fellow citizens, and there really isn't any further appeal to make. If the citizens don't agree among themselves about the justifiability of the disclosure, there can be no definitive verdict.

But suppose that most Americans recognize the brutality or the danger that has driven the whistleblower to act. Her action was justified, but she has violated the commitments she made when she took her job, and she may have broken the law. When soldiers disobey an illegal order, they are in fact obeying the official army code. But there is no official code that orders civil servants to refuse to keep secrets about an illegal or immoral operation. Soldiers are obligated to disobey; civil servants are not obligated to blow the whistle. They are, however, protected from official retaliation and punishment by the Whistleblower Protection Act of 1989 if they reveal a range of illegal government actions: gross mismanagement, the waste of public funds, or policies that pose a substantial and specific danger to public health and safety.

Democracies live uneasily with secrecy, and governments keep too many secrets.

If whistleblowers are fired or demoted for revelations such as those, they can file an appeal to the U.S. Merit Systems Protection Board. These appeals are most often denied—but not always. In 2003, Robert MacLean, an employee of the Transportation Security Administration, told an MSNBC reporter that in an effort to reduce spending on hotels, the TSA would be removing air marshals from many long-distance flights. He was subsequently fired. After appealing the decision—first to the MSPB, then to a federal appeals court—he was finally reinstated in 2013. The Supreme Court upheld that decision in 2015. It was a rare judicial victory for whistle-blowing.

But blowing the whistle on government action abroad or on security-related surveillance at home isn't protected by the Whistleblower Protection Act. And revealing classified information is not legal even if public health and safety are at issue. If a whistleblower reveals secrets that the government doesn't believe should be revealed, she has broken the law, regardless of her intentions or public sentiment about her actions. She is a disobedient civil servant, a bureaucratic outlaw.

Citizens might well consider her action a form of civil disobedience. But an act must meet certain conditions for that term to apply. First,

the whistleblower must have tried to convince a superior that the government's operation was illegal or immoral. Before going outside the government, she must have done the best she could inside, among her coworkers. Second, she must act in person and in public, without any attempt to hide who she is—even though this means that she won't see any more secrets. Many leaks can come from a single concealed leaker, but whistle-blowing is almost certainly a one-time act. If internal dissent doesn't work, then going public is a kind of principled resignation. Third, the whistleblower must take responsibility for the revelation she has made; she must not hand secret documents to agents about whose subsequent behavior she can't be reasonably confident. She has a purpose for blowing the whistle, and she has to do her best to make sure that her purpose, and no other, is served. Snowden initially chose *The Guardian*, *The Washington Post*, and *The New York Times* (among other media outlets) as venues for his leaked secrets, and this seems the right kind of choice since these are newspapers whose publishers have had, along with a desire to sell papers, a long-standing commitment to democratic government. But Snowden showed less careful judgment in choosing to share information with the *South China Morning Post*, an organization that he had no reason to believe was committed to democratic decision-making in the United States.

A similarly flawed judgment also affected the case of another well-known American whistleblower, Chelsea Manning, who in 2010 provided a massive trove of classified diplomatic cables to WikiLeaks. In contrast to newspapers with long records of public service, WikiLeaks is the wrong kind of intermediary between a whistleblower and the American people. Its directors may or may not have democratic commitments, but they also have narrowly partisan and personal aims, about which the public has learned a great deal in recent years.

TOUGH CALLS

A civil whistleblower is making the same appeal to her fellow citizens that civil rights activists in the 1960s made—in similar defiance of the law and with a similar willingness to accept legal punishment. Whistleblowers can and probably should be punished for revealing state secrets, even if the secrecy is unjust. Judges and juries should try to make the whistleblower's punishment fit her crime, and her crime must be weighed against the government's subversion of the democratic

process and the illegality and immorality of the revealed operation: the more significant the subversion and the greater the brutality or danger, the milder the sentence should be.

There must be some punishment for people who break secrecy laws, to serve justice when someone blows the whistle recklessly and to deter others from doing so. The fear of punishment focuses the mind and forces a potential whistleblower to think hard about what she is doing. Citizens should respect a whistleblower's willingness to pay the price of her disobedience, and at the same time, they should make their own judgments about whether what she did was right or wrong. Her action may require a complicated verdict: for example, perhaps she was right to open the democratic debate but wrong in her assumption of what the outcome of the debate should be. In any case, the public owes her a reflective response—not knee-jerk hostility or knee-jerk support.

Democracies live uneasily with secrecy, and governments keep too many secrets. Greater transparency in government decision-making would certainly be a good thing, but it has to be fought for democratically, through the conventional politics of parties and movements. Whistle-blowing probably does not lead to greater transparency; in the long run, it may only ensure that governments bury their secrets more deeply and watch their employees more closely. Still, so long as there are secrets, whistle-blowing will remain a necessary activity. Whistleblowers have a role to play in a democratic political universe. But it is an unofficial role, and one must recognize both its possible value and its possible dangers.

The China Reckoning

How Beijing Defied American Expectations

Kurt M. Campbell and Ely Ratner

The United States has always had an outsize sense of its ability to determine China's course. Again and again, its ambitions have come up short. After World War II, George Marshall, the U.S. special envoy to China, hoped to broker a peace between the Nationalists and Communists in the Chinese Civil War. During the Korean War, the Truman administration thought it could dissuade Mao Zedong's troops from crossing the Yalu River. The Johnson administration believed Beijing would ultimately circumscribe its involvement in Vietnam. In each instance, Chinese realities upset American expectations.

With U.S. President Richard Nixon's opening to China, Washington made its biggest and most optimistic bet yet. Both Nixon and Henry Kissinger, his national security adviser, assumed that rapprochement would drive a wedge between Beijing and Moscow and, in time, alter China's conception of its own interests as it drew closer to the United States. In the fall of 1967, Nixon wrote in this magazine, "The world cannot be safe until China changes. Thus our aim, to the extent that we can influence events, should be to induce change." Ever since, the assumption that deepening commercial, diplomatic, and cultural ties would transform China's internal development and external behavior has been a bedrock of U.S. strategy. Even those in U.S. policy circles who were skeptical of China's intentions still shared the underlying belief that U.S. power and hegemony could readily mold China to the United States' liking.

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The era of good feelings: Xi and Obama in California, June 2013

KEVIN LAMARQUE / REUTERS

Nearly half a century since Nixon's first steps toward rapprochement, the record is increasingly clear that Washington once again put too much faith in its power to shape China's trajectory. All sides of the policy debate erred: free traders and financiers who foresaw inevitable and increasing openness in China, integrationists who argued that Beijing's ambitions would be tamed by greater interaction with the international community, and hawks who believed that China's power would be abated by perpetual American primacy.

Neither carrots nor sticks have swayed China as predicted. Diplomatic and commercial engagement have not brought political and economic openness. Neither U.S. military power nor regional balancing has stopped Beijing from seeking to displace core components of the U.S.-led system. And the liberal international order has failed to lure or bind China as powerfully as expected. China has instead pursued its own course, belying a range of American expectations in the process.

That reality warrants a clear-eyed rethinking of the United States' approach to China. There are plenty of risks that come with such a reassessment; defenders of the current framework will warn against destabilizing the bilateral relationship or inviting a new Cold War. But building a stronger and more sustainable approach to, and rela-

tionship with, Beijing requires honesty about how many fundamental assumptions have turned out wrong. Across the ideological spectrum, we in the U.S. foreign policy community have remained deeply invested in expectations about China—about its approach to economics, domestic politics, security, and global order—even as evidence against them has accumulated. The policies built on such expectations have failed to change China in the ways we intended or hoped.

THE POWER OF THE MARKET

Greater commercial interaction with China was supposed to bring gradual but steady liberalization of the Chinese economy. U.S. President George H. W. Bush's 1990 National Security Strategy described enhanced ties with the world as "crucial to China's prospects for regaining the path of economic reform." This argument predominated for decades. It drove U.S. decisions to grant China most-favored-nation trading status in the 1990s, to support its accession to the World Trade Organization in 2001, to establish a high-level economic dialogue in 2006, and to negotiate a bilateral investment treaty under U.S. President Barack Obama.

Trade in goods between the United States and China exploded from less than $8 billion in 1986 to over $578 billion in 2016: more than a 30-fold increase, adjusting for inflation. Since the early years of this century, however, China's economic liberalization has stalled. Contrary to Western expectations, Beijing has doubled down on its state capitalist model even as it has gotten richer. Rather than becoming a force for greater openness, consistent growth has served to legitimize the Chinese Communist Party and its state-led economic model.

U.S. officials believed that debt, inefficiency, and the demands of a more advanced economy would necessitate further reforms. And Chinese officials recognized the problems with their approach; in 2007, Premier Wen Jiabao called the Chinese economy "unstable, unbalanced, uncoordinated, and unsustainable." But rather than opening the country up to greater competition, the Chinese Communist Party, intent on maintaining control of the economy, is instead consolidating state-owned enterprises and pursuing industrial policies (notably its "Made in China 2025" plan) that aim to promote national technology champions in critical sectors, including aerospace, biomedicine, and robotics. And despite repeated promises, Beijing has resisted pressure from Washington and elsewhere to level the playing field for foreign

companies. It has restricted market access and forced non-Chinese firms to sign on to joint ventures and share technology, while funneling investment and subsidies to state-backed domestic players.

Until recently, U.S. policymakers and executives mostly acquiesced to such discrimination; the potential commercial benefits were so large that they considered it unwise to upend the relationship with protectionism or sanctions. Instead, they fought tooth and nail for small, incremental concessions. But now, what were once seen as merely the short-term frustrations of doing business with China have come to seem more harmful and permanent. The American Chamber of Commerce reported last year that eight in ten U.S. companies felt less welcome in China than in years prior, and more than 60 percent had little or no confidence that China would open its markets further over the next three years. Cooperative and voluntary mechanisms to pry open China's economy have by and large failed, including the Trump administration's newly launched Comprehensive Economic Dialogue.

THE IMPERATIVE OF LIBERALIZATION

Growth was supposed to bring not just further economic opening but also political liberalization. Development would spark a virtuous cycle, the thinking went, with a burgeoning Chinese middle class demanding new rights and pragmatic officials embracing legal reforms that would be necessary for further progress. This evolution seemed especially certain after the collapse of the Soviet Union and democratic transitions in South Korea and Taiwan. "No nation on Earth has discovered a way to import the world's goods and services while stopping foreign ideas at the border," George H. W. Bush proclaimed. U.S. policy aimed to facilitate this process by sharing technology, furthering trade and investment, promoting people-to-people exchanges, and admitting hundreds of thousands of Chinese students to American universities.

The crackdown on pro-democracy protesters in Tiananmen Square in 1989 dimmed hopes for the emergence of electoral democracy in China. Yet many experts and policymakers in the United States still expected the Chinese government to permit greater press freedoms and allow for a stronger civil society, while gradually embracing more political competition both within the Communist Party and at local levels. They believed that the information technology revolution of

the 1990s would encourage such trends by further exposing Chinese citizens to the world and enhancing the economic incentives for openness. As U.S. President Bill Clinton put it, "Without the full freedom to think, question, to create, China will be at a distinct disadvantage, competing with fully open societies in the information age where the greatest source of national wealth is what resides in the human mind." Leaders in Beijing would come to realize that only by granting individual freedoms could China thrive in a high-tech future.

But the fear that greater openness would threaten both domestic stability and the regime's survival drove China's leaders to look for an alternative approach. They took both the shock of Tiananmen Square and the dissolution of the Soviet Union as evidence of the dangers of democratization and political competition. So rather than embracing positive cycles of openness, Beijing responded to the forces of globalization by putting up walls and tightening state control, constricting, rather than reinforcing, the free flow of people, ideas, and commerce. Additional stresses on the regime in this century—including an economic slowdown, endemic corruption in the government and the military, and ominous examples of popular uprisings elsewhere in the world—have spurred more authoritarianism, not less.

Events of the last decade have dashed even modest hopes for China's political liberalization.

Indeed, events of the last decade have dashed even modest hopes for political liberalization. In 2013, an internal Communist Party memo known as Document No. 9 explicitly warned against "Western constitutional democracy" and other "universal values" as stalking-horses meant to weaken, destabilize, and even break up China. This guidance demonstrated the widening gap between U.S. and Chinese expectations for the country's political future. As Orville Schell, a leading American expert on China, put it: "China is sliding ineluctably backward into a political climate more reminiscent of Mao Zedong in the 1970s than Deng Xiaoping in the 1980s." Today, an ongoing crackdown on journalists, religious leaders, academics, social activists, and human rights lawyers shows no sign of abating—more than 300 lawyers, legal assistants, and activists were detained in 2015 alone.

Rather than devolving power to the Chinese people, as many in the West predicted, communications technologies have strengthened the

hand of the state, helping China's authorities control information flows and monitor citizens' behavior. Censorship, detentions, and a new cybersecurity law that grants broad government control over the Internet in China have stymied political activity inside China's "Great Firewall." China's twenty-first-century authoritarianism now includes plans to launch a "social credit system," fusing big data and artificial intelligence to reward and punish Chinese citizens on the basis of their political, commercial, social, and online activity. Facial recognition software, combined with the ubiquity of surveillance cameras across China, has even made it possible for the state to physically locate people within minutes.

THE DETERRENT OF PRIMACY

A combination of U.S. diplomacy and U.S. military power—carrots and sticks—was supposed to persuade Beijing that it was neither possible nor necessary to challenge the U.S.-led security order in Asia. Washington "strongly promot[ed] China's participation in regional security mechanisms to reassure its neighbors and assuage its own security concerns," as the Clinton administration's 1995 National Security Strategy put it, buttressed by military-to-military relations and other confidence-building measures. These modes of engagement were coupled with a "hedge"—enhanced U.S. military power in the region, supported by capable allies and partners. The effect, the thinking went, would be to allay military competition in Asia and further limit China's desire to alter the regional order. Beijing would settle for military sufficiency, building armed forces for narrow regional contingencies while devoting most of its resources to domestic needs.

The logic was not simply that China would be focused on its self-described "strategic window of opportunity" for development at home, with plenty of economic and social challenges occupying the attention of China's senior leaders. American policymakers and academics also assumed that China had learned a valuable lesson from the Soviet Union about the crippling costs of getting into an arms race with the United States. Washington could thus not only deter Chinese aggression but also—to use the Pentagon's term of art—"dissuade" China from even trying to compete. Zalmay Khalilzad, an official in the Reagan and both Bush administrations, argued that a dominant United States could "convince the Chinese leadership that a challenge would be difficult to prepare and extremely risky to pursue." Moreover, it was

unclear whether China could challenge U.S. primacy even if it wanted to. Into the late 1990s, the People's Liberation Army (PLA) was considered decades behind the United States' military and those of its allies.

Against this backdrop, U.S. officials took considerable care not to stumble into a confrontation with China. The political scientist Joseph Nye explained the thinking when he led the Pentagon's Asia office during the Clinton administration: "If we treated China as an enemy, we were guaranteeing an enemy in the future. If we treated China as a friend, we could not guarantee friendship, but we could at least keep open the possibility of more benign outcomes." Soon-to-be Secretary of State Colin Powell told Congress at his confirmation hearing in January 2001, "China is not an enemy, and our challenge is to keep it that way."

China has set out to build its own set of regional and international institutions.

Even as it began investing more of its newfound wealth in military power, the Chinese government sought to put Washington at ease, signaling continued adherence to the cautious, moderate foreign policy path set out by Deng. In 2005, the senior Communist Party official Zheng Bijian wrote in this magazine that China would never seek regional hegemony and remained committed to "a peaceful rise." In 2011, after a lively debate among China's leaders about whether it was time to shift gears, State Councilor Dai Bingguo assured the world that "peaceful development is a strategic choice China has made." Starting in 2002, the U.S. Defense Department had been producing a congressionally mandated annual report on China's military, but the consensus among senior U.S. officials was that China remained a distant and manageable challenge.

That view, however, underestimated just how simultaneously insecure and ambitious China's leadership really was. For Beijing, the United States' alliances and military presence in Asia posed unacceptable threats to China's interests in Taiwan, on the Korean Peninsula, and in the East China and South China Seas. In the words of the Peking University professor Wang Jisi, "It is strongly believed in China that . . . Washington will attempt to prevent the emerging powers, in particular China, from achieving their goals and enhancing their stature." So China started to chip away at the U.S.-led security order

in Asia, developing the capabilities to deny the U.S. military access to the region and driving wedges between Washington and its allies.

Ultimately, neither U.S. military power nor American diplomatic engagement has dissuaded China from trying to build a world-class military of its own. High-tech displays of American power in Iraq and elsewhere only accelerated efforts to modernize the PLA. Chinese President Xi Jinping has launched military reforms that will make Chinese forces more lethal and more capable of projecting military power well beyond China's shores. With its third aircraft carrier reportedly under construction, advanced new military installations in the South China Sea, and its first overseas military base in Djibouti, China is on the path to becoming a military peer the likes of which the United States has not seen since the Soviet Union. China's leaders no longer repeat Deng's dictum that, to thrive, China will "hide [its] capabilities and bide [its] time." Xi declared in October 2017 that "the Chinese nation has gone from standing up, to becoming rich, to becoming strong."

THE CONSTRAINTS OF ORDER

At the end of World War II, the United States built institutions and rules that helped structure global politics and the regional dynamics in Asia. Widely accepted norms, such as the freedom of commerce and navigation, the peaceful resolution of disputes, and international cooperation on global challenges, superseded nineteenth-century spheres of influence. As a leading beneficiary of this liberal international order, the thinking went, Beijing would have a considerable stake in the order's preservation and come to see its continuation as essential to China's own progress. U.S. policy aimed to encourage Beijing's involvement by welcoming China into leading institutions and working with it on global governance and regional security.

As China joined multilateral institutions, U.S. policymakers hoped that it would learn to play by the rules and soon begin to contribute to their upkeep. In the George W. Bush administration, Deputy Secretary of State Robert Zoellick memorably called on Beijing to become "a responsible stakeholder" in the international system. From Washington's perspective, with greater power came greater obligation, especially since China had profited so handsomely from the system. As Obama emphasized, "We expect China to help uphold the very rules that have made them successful."

In certain venues, China appeared to be steadily, if unevenly, taking on this responsibility. It joined the Asia-Pacific Economic Cooperation organization in 1991, acceded to the Nuclear Nonproliferation Treaty in 1992, joined the World Trade Organization in 2001, and took part in major diplomatic efforts, including the six-party talks and the P5+1 negotiations to deal with nuclear weapons programs in North Korea and Iran, respectively. It also became a major contributor to UN counterpiracy and peacekeeping operations.

Yet Beijing remained threatened by other central elements of the U.S.-led order—and has increasingly sought to displace them. That has been especially true of what it sees as uninvited violations of national sovereignty by the United States and its partners, whether in the form of economic sanctions or military action. Liberal norms regarding the international community's right or responsibility to intervene to protect people from human rights violations, for example, have run headlong into China's paramount priority of defending its authoritarian system from foreign interference. With a few notable exceptions, China has been busy watering down multilateral sanctions, shielding regimes from Western opprobrium, and making common cause with Russia to block the UN Security Council from authorizing interventionist actions. A number of nondemocratic governments—in Sudan, Syria, Venezuela, Zimbabwe, and elsewhere—have benefited from such obstruction.

China has also set out to build its own set of regional and international institutions—with the United States on the outside looking in—rather than deepening its commitment to the existing ones. It has launched the Asian Infrastructure Investment Bank, the New Development Bank (along with Brazil, Russia, India, and South Africa), and, most notably, the Belt and Road Initiative, Xi's grandiose vision for building land and maritime routes to connect China to much of the world. These institutions and programs have given China agenda-setting and convening power of its own, while often departing from the standards and values upheld by existing international institutions. Beijing explicitly differentiates its approach to development by noting that, unlike the United States and European powers, it does not demand that countries accept governance reforms as a condition of receiving aid.

In its own region, meanwhile, Beijing has set out to change the security balance, incrementally altering the status quo with steps just

small enough to avoid provoking a military response from the United States. In the South China Sea, one of the world's most important waterways, China has deftly used coast guard vessels, legal warfare, and economic coercion to advance its sovereignty claims. In some cases, it has simply seized contested territory or militarized artificial islands. While Beijing has occasionally shown restraint and tactical caution, the overall approach indicates its desire to create a modern maritime sphere of influence.

In the summer of 2016, China ignored a landmark ruling by a tribunal under the UN Convention on the Law of the Sea, which held that China's expansive claims in the South China Sea were illegal under international law. U.S. officials wrongly assumed that some combination of pressure, shame, and its own desire for a rules-based maritime order would cause Beijing, over time, to accept the judgment. Instead, China has rejected it outright. Speaking to a security forum in Aspen, Colorado, a year after the ruling, in July 2017, a senior analyst from the CIA concluded that the experience had taught China's leaders "that they can defy international law and get away with it." Countries in the region, swayed by both their economic dependence on China and growing concerns about the United States' commitment to Asia, have failed to push back against Chinese assertiveness as much as U.S. policymakers expected they would.

TAKING STOCK

As the assumptions driving U.S. China policy have started to look increasingly tenuous, and the gap between American expectations and Chinese realities has grown, Washington has been largely focused elsewhere. Since 2001, the fight against jihadist terrorism has consumed the U.S. national security apparatus, diverting attention from the changes in Asia at exactly the time China was making enormous military, diplomatic, and commercial strides. U.S. President George W. Bush initially referred to China as a "strategic competitor"; in the wake of the September 11 attacks, however, his 2002 National Security Strategy declared, "The world's great powers find ourselves on the same side—united by common dangers of terrorist violence and chaos." During the Obama administration, there was an effort to "pivot," or "rebalance," strategic attention to Asia. But at the end of Obama's time in office, budgets and personnel remained focused on other regions—there were, for example, three times as

many National Security Council staffers working on the Middle East as on all of East and Southeast Asia.

This strategic distraction has given China the opportunity to press its advantages, further motivated by the increasingly prominent view in China that the United States (along with the West more broadly) is in inexorable and rapid decline. Chinese officials see a United States that has been hobbled for years by the global financial crisis, its costly war efforts in Afghanistan and Iraq, and deepening dysfunction in Washington. Xi has called on China to become "a global leader in terms of comprehensive national strength and international influence" by midcentury. He touts China's development model as a "new option for other countries."

Washington now faces its most dynamic and formidable competitor in modern history. Getting this challenge right will require doing away with the hopeful thinking that has long characterized the United States' approach to China. The Trump administration's first National Security Strategy took a step in the right direction by interrogating past assumptions in U.S. strategy. But many of Donald Trump's policies—a narrow focus on bilateral trade deficits, the abandonment of multilateral trade deals, the questioning of the value of alliances, and the downgrading of human rights and diplomacy—have put Washington at risk of adopting an approach that is confrontational without being competitive; Beijing, meanwhile, has managed to be increasingly competitive without being confrontational.

The starting point for a better approach is a new degree of humility about the United States' ability to change China. Neither seeking to isolate and weaken it nor trying to transform it for the better should be the lodestar of U.S. strategy in Asia. Washington should instead focus more on its own power and behavior, and the power and behavior of its allies and partners. Basing policy on a more realistic set of assumptions about China would better advance U.S. interests and put the bilateral relationship on a more sustainable footing. Getting there will take work, but the first step is relatively straightforward: acknowledging just how much our policy has fallen short of our aspirations.

Life in China's Asia

What Regional Hegemony Would Look Like

Jennifer Lind

For now, the United States remains the dominant power in East Asia, but China is quickly closing the gap. Although an economic crisis or domestic political turmoil could derail China's rise, if current trends continue, China will before long supplant the United States as the region's economic, military, and political hegemon.

As that day approaches, U.S. allies and partners in the region, such as Australia, Japan, the Philippines, and South Korea, will start to face some difficult questions. Namely, should they step up their individual defense efforts and increase their cooperation with other countries in the region, or can they safely decide to accept Chinese dominance, looking to Beijing as they have looked to Washington for the past half century?

It may be tempting to believe that China will be a relatively benign regional hegemon. Economic interdependence, one argument goes, should restrain Chinese aggression: because the legitimacy of the Chinese Communist Party (CCP) rests on economic growth, which depends on trade, Beijing would maintain peaceful relations with its neighbors. Moreover, China claims to be a different sort of great power. Chinese officials and scholars regularly decry interventionism and reject the notion of "spheres of influence" as a Cold War relic. Chinese President Xi Jinping has said that his country has "never engaged in colonialism or aggression" thanks to its "peace-loving cultural tradition." In this view, life in China's Asia would not be so different from what it is today.

But this is not how regional hegemons behave. Great powers typically dominate their regions in their quest for security. They develop and wield tremendous economic power. They build massive

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militaries, expel external rivals, and use regional institutions and cultural programs to entrench their influence. Because hegemons fear that neighboring countries will allow external rivals to establish a military foothold, they develop a profound interest in the domestic politics of their neighborhood, and even seek to spread their culture to draw other countries closer.

China is already following the strategies of previous regional hegemons. It is using economic coercion to bend other countries to its will. It is building up its military to ward off challengers. It is intervening in other countries' domestic politics to get friendlier policies. And it is investing massively in educational and cultural programs to enhance its soft power. As Chinese power and ambition grow, such efforts will only increase. China's neighbors must start debating how comfortable they are with this future, and what costs they are willing to pay to shape or forestall it.

ECONOMIC CENTRALITY

Over the past few decades, China has become the number one trading partner and principal export destination for most countries in East Asia. Beijing has struck a number of regional economic deals, including free-trade agreements with Australia, Singapore, South Korea, the Association of Southeast Asian Nations, and others. Through such arrangements, which exclude the United States, Beijing seeks to create a Chinese-dominated East Asian community. Beijing is also building an institutional infrastructure to increase its influence at the expense of U.S.-led institutions, such as the International Monetary Fund (IMF) and the World Bank, and Japanese-led ones, such as the Asian Development Bank. In 2014, China, along with Brazil, Russia, and India, set up the $100 billion New Development Bank, which is headquartered in Shanghai. In 2015, China founded the $100 billion Asian Infrastructure Investment Bank, which 80 countries have now joined. Furthermore, Xi's much-heralded Belt and Road initiative will promote Chinese trade and financial cooperation throughout the region and provide massive Chinese investment in regional infrastructure and natural resources. The China Development Bank has already committed $250 billion in loans to the project.

Such policies mimic the economic strategies of previous regional hegemons. China was the predominant economic and military power in East Asia until the nineteenth century. It granted or withheld trade

Changing of the guard: Chinese naval officers in Shanghai, December 2013

CARLOS BARRIA / REUTERS

privileges according to an elaborate system of tribute, in which other countries had to send diplomatic missions, bestow gifts, and kowtow to the Chinese emperor. The Chinese then determined the prices and quantities of all goods traded. Imperial China consolidated its economic power by investing in agriculture and railroads, extracting minerals, and encouraging close commercial integration throughout the region.

In Latin America, the United States followed the same playbook to establish itself as the region's central economic player. In the nineteenth century, American firms flocked to the region in search of fruit, minerals, sugar, and tobacco. The U.S. company United Fruit managed to gain control of the entire fruit export trade in Central America. Finance was another powerful tool; as the Uruguayan journalist Eduardo Galeano has argued, a U.S. "banking invasion" diverted local capital to U.S. firms. Washington encouraged American banks to assume the debts of European creditors to minimize the influence of European rivals. For almost 100 years, Washington used diplomacy to advance its economic interests through initiatives promoting U.S. regional trade and investment, such as the Big Brother policy in the 1880s, "dollar diplomacy" in the early 1900s, and the Alliance for Progress in the 1960s.

The United States also built a regional institutional architecture to advance its agenda. In 1948, it created the Organization of American

States (headquartered in Washington, D.C.) to promote regional security and cooperation. American influence ensured that the OAS remained silent on, or even legitimized, various U.S. military and political interventions in Latin America. Other development institutions, including the IMF, the World Bank, the Inter-American Development Bank, the U.S. Agency for International Development, and the Export-Import Bank of the United States, also advanced U.S. interests. Through "tied aid," such organizations required sponsored projects to hire U.S. vendors. The IMF, as Galeano has argued, was "born in the United States, headquartered in the United States, and at the service of the United States."

Another regional hegemon, Japan, pursued similar strategies in its empire that dominated the region in the early twentieth century. Vowing to eject the Western colonial powers, Tokyo declared itself the head of a "Greater East Asia Co-Prosperity Sphere." To feed its industrial economy and military, Tokyo extracted raw materials from countries it conquered. To promote Japan's centrality, and to prevent economic activities by rival countries, it reformed and managed local economies in a regional network, standardizing the region's currency in a "yen bloc" and dispatching Japanese banks throughout the area so that they controlled the majority of the region's bank deposits. Tokyo also created the Southern Development Bank, which provided financial services and printed currency in occupied territories.

Economic dominance lets regional hegemons use economic coercion to advance their agendas.

Similarly, in Eastern Europe after World War II, the Soviet Union relied on economic and financial statecraft to dominate the region. Moscow blocked all trade with Western Europe and forbade Eastern European states from accepting aid under the 1948 Marshall Plan. Instead, it created the Council for Mutual Economic Assistance to manage and integrate the regional economy. Soviet investment, trade agreements, and trade credits made Eastern European countries economically dependent on Moscow, both as their primary export market and as their supplier of raw materials and energy. And by selling raw materials at below-market prices, Moscow encouraged local political leaders to become dependent on its subsidies.

Economic dominance lets regional hegemons use economic coercion to advance their agendas. In Latin America, the United States has

long sought to coerce countries through sanctions. In addition to the long-standing (and failed) U.S. embargo of Cuba, Washington used financial pressure to weaken President Salvador Allende in Chile in the 1970s and embargoed Nicaragua to undermine the Sandinista government in 1985. Similarly, in Eastern Europe, Moscow sought to control independent-minded leaders, imposing sanctions against Yugoslavia in 1948, Albania in 1961, and Romania in 1964.

Beijing has already begun to employ such economic coercion. In 2017, China punished South Korea and the Japanese–South Korean business conglomerate Lotte for cooperating with the U.S.-built THAAD missile defense program. (Lotte had sold the land on which THAAD was deployed to the South Korean government.) Beijing banned Chinese tour groups from visiting South Korea, Chinese regulators closed 80 percent of Lotte supermarkets and other Korean-owned businesses (ostensibly for fire-code violations), and state-run media urged boycotts of Korean products. Beijing has also used economic coercion against Japan (banning the export of Chinese rare-earth metals to the country after a 2009 ship collision) and Norway (embargoing Norwegian fish exports after the Chinese dissident Liu Xiaobo won the Nobel Peace Prize in 2010). And in 2016, when Mongolia hosted the Dalai Lama, Beijing imposed extra fees on commodities moving through the country and froze all diplomatic activity—including negotiations about a $4 billion Chinese loan. "We hope that Mongolia has taken this lesson to heart," the Chinese foreign ministry said in a statement. Apparently it has: the Mongolian government has announced that the spiritual leader will not be invited back.

Such coercion will be less necessary in the future as leaders preemptively adjust their policies with Beijing in mind. Consider the Philippines: in the past, the country has stood up to China—for example, filing a complaint about Chinese territorial assertiveness with an international tribunal at The Hague in 2013. But more recently, Philippine President Rodrigo Duterte, who has received $24 billion in investment pledges from Beijing, has warmed relations with China and distanced his country from the United States.

THE PURSUIT OF MILITARY HEGEMONY

Following the example of previous hegemons, China is also expanding its regional military reach. Since the 1990s, Chinese military spending has soared, and the CCP is modernizing weaponry and reforming its

military organizations and doctrine. The People's Liberation Army (PLA) has adopted the doctrine of "anti-access, area denial" to push the U.S. military away from its shores and airspace. China has also built the region's largest coast guard and controls a vast militia of civilian fishing vessels. In 2017, the PLA opened its first overseas military base in Djibouti; it will likely build more bases along the African east coast and the Indian Ocean in coming years. Meanwhile, in the South China Sea, China has built six large islands that house air force bases, missile shelters, and radar and communications facilities. Already, the U.S. military finds itself constrained by the expanding bubble of Chinese air defenses, by China's growing ability to find and strike U.S. naval vessels, and by an increased missile threat to U.S. air bases and ports.

Beijing is using these capabilities to more forcefully assert its territorial claims. By transiting disputed waters and massing ships there, Beijing is pressuring Japan militarily over a cluster of small islands called the Diaoyu by China and the Senkaku by Japan. Elsewhere, to deny access to disputed areas, the PLA swarms fishing and coast guard vessels, and fires water cannons at other countries' ships. Last summer, after asserting ownership of an oil-rich area in Vietnam's exclusive economic zone, Beijing threatened to use military force if Vietnam did not stop drilling. Vietnam stopped drilling.

Contemporary China's quest for regional military dominance follows the behavior of previous regional hegemons, including China itself. As the historian Peter Perdue has argued, modern China is a product of invasions that subdued all of modern Xinjiang and Mongolia, and reached Tibet, as well. Chinese dynasties, he has written, "never shrank from the use of force," including the "righteous extermination" of rival states and rebels. Throughout Asia, Chinese military garrisons subdued invaders and pirates.

Subsequent hegemons dominated their regions through military force, too. Starting in the late nineteenth century, the United States began to build what would become the Western Hemisphere's preeminent military. In that period, the United States acquired territory through numerous wars against Mexico and Spain. Over the next few decades (often to advance the United States' commercial interests), U.S. forces invaded Latin American countries more than 20 times, most often the Dominican Republic, Haiti, Mexico, and Nicaragua. During the Cold War, the United States repeatedly used military

force to counter leftist movements in Latin America: it blockaded Cuba in 1962, sent troops to the Dominican Republic in 1965, mined Nicaraguan harbors in the 1980s, and invaded Grenada in 1983 and Panama in 1989.

Japan also built and maintained its empire through military force. Its nineteenth-century military modernization yielded stunning victories over China and Russia. Through these and other military campaigns, Japan seized territories such as Korea and Taiwan and wrested colonial possessions from France, Germany, the United Kingdom, and the United States. The Japanese military then administered the empire, fighting counterinsurgencies and suppressing independence movements.

In Europe after World War II, the Soviet Union dominated its sphere of influence with the region's most powerful army. It stationed troops in Czechoslovakia, East Germany, Hungary, and Poland. To shape the region to its liking, the Kremlin was willing to use force. It dispatched Soviet troops to quell uprisings in Hungary in 1956 and Czechoslovakia in 1968.

These hegemons did not tolerate the presence of rival great powers in their regions. Likewise, China today is chafing against the U.S. presence in Asia and actively working to undermine it. Chinese officials and defense white papers criticize U.S. alliances as outdated and destabilizing. Xi himself, calling for a new "Asian security architecture," has argued that these relationships fail to address the region's complex security needs. Meanwhile, by cultivating close ties with Seoul and encouraging the Philippines' tilt toward China, Beijing has sought to draw U.S allies away.

NOSY NEIGHBOR

Beijing is also interfering in the domestic politics of other countries. Citing China specifically, Canadian intelligence officials have warned of foreign agents who might be serving as provincial cabinet ministers and government employees. And in 2016, a scandal erupted in Australia after it was revealed that Sam Dastyari, a senator who had defended Chinese territorial claims in the South China Sea, had financial ties to a Chinese firm, prompting new laws banning foreign political donations.

Historically, regional hegemons have intervened extensively in domestic politics to support friendly governments and undermine parties and leaders perceived as hostile. Within China's tribute system, the emperor delegated the administration of subservient states to

local leaders, an approach known as "using barbarians to govern barbarians." But local independence went only so far. As the sixteenth-century statesman Chang Chu-cheng said of such vassals, "Just like dogs, if they wag their tails, bones will be thrown to them; if they bark wildly, they will be beaten with sticks; after the beating, if they submit again, bones will be thrown to them again; after the bones, if they bark again, then more beating."

Japan similarly intervened in domestic politics during its imperial heyday. In the Philippines, for example, it abolished all political parties except for the pro-Japanese one. Elsewhere, it delegated control to friendly local leaders and police, and trained such leaders at institutes in Japan. If officials in China, Korea, and Manchuria did not cooperate, Tokyo relied on a Japanese paramilitary organization that intimidated, blackmailed, and assassinated local leaders.

For its part, the United States meddled in Latin American politics countless times. Through the Roosevelt Corollary to the Monroe Doctrine, Washington claimed the right to intervene in its neighbors' affairs. It relied on covert and overt, violent and nonviolent methods to support anticommunist leaders and to undermine or depose leftist ones. The U.S. diplomat Robert Olds explained the approach in blunt terms in 1927: "Central America has always understood that governments which we recognize and support stay in power, while those which we do not recognize and support fall." During the Cold War, the U.S. military and the CIA funded, armed, and trained anticommunist forces throughout Latin America at institutions such as the U.S. Army School of the Americas in Panama. U.S.-trained forces sought to depose leftist governments in Cuba, Ecuador, El Salvador, and Nicaragua. Washington also supported coups in Guatemala in 1954 and Chile in 1973.

Moscow was similarly busy in Eastern Europe. After World War II, the Soviet Union installed communist parties in its neighbors' governments, in which advancement depended on loyalty to Moscow. Under Stalin, Soviet secret police harassed, tortured, and murdered opposition leaders. After Stalin, the Soviets relied on subtler tactics, such as bringing foreign elites to train in communist party schools and to build networks with Soviet and regional politicians. Through the Brezhnev Doctrine, Moscow claimed the authority to intervene in its neighbors' politics in order to defend socialism from hostile forces.

PLAYING HARDBALL FOR SOFT POWER

China today is seeking to increase its influence in East Asia and beyond through extensive educational and cultural activities. The media is central to this effort. The state-run media organizations Xinhua and the China Global Television Network have bureaus all over the world. Hollywood studios regularly seek Chinese funding for their projects, as well as distribution rights in China's vast market. Wary of offending the CCP, studios have started preemptively censoring their content. Censorship has also begun to infect the publishing industry. To gain access to China's vast market, publishers are increasingly required to censor books and articles containing specific words or phrases (for example, "Taiwan," "Tibet," and "Cultural Revolution"). Prominent publishing houses, including Springer Nature—the world's largest academic book publisher—have succumbed to Beijing's demands and are increasingly self-censoring.

Beijing also promotes Chinese influence in education. China has become the world's third most popular destination for foreign study, welcoming more than 440,000 students from over 200 countries in 2016. Many students receive support from the Chinese government. Overseas, in 142 countries, Beijing has created more than 500 Confucius Institutes to promote Chinese language and culture. A study by the U.S.-based National Association of Scholars argues that Confucius Institutes are decidedly nontransparent about their connections to the CCP. Their teachers must observe CCP restrictions on free speech and are pressured to "avoid sensitive topics," such as human rights, Tibet, and Taiwan.

The CCP also infiltrates college campuses abroad. Beijing enlists members of the 60-million-strong Chinese diaspora: at universities around the world, Chinese Students and Scholars Associations demonstrate in support of visiting Chinese leaders and protest the Dalai Lama and other speakers the CCP deems hostile. Beijing also monitors and silences Chinese critics abroad by mobilizing harassment on social media and by threatening their families back home. In Australia, concerns about Chinese interference and espionage at universities led intelligence officials to issue warnings about an "insidious threat" from foreign governments seeking to shape local public opinion.

Past regional hegemons similarly promoted their influence through culture and education, and by co-opting leaders of civil society. As the China expert Suisheng Zhao writes, "Chinese culture was seen as a

great lasting power to bridge periods of disunity and to infuse new governments . . . with values supportive of the traditional Chinese order." China spread its language, literature, Confucian philosophy, and bureaucratic traditions to Japan, Korea, Vietnam, and other countries. Chinese emperors also followed the advice of one minister in the Han dynasty who proposed subduing barbarians with "five baits": silk clothing and carriages, sumptuous food, entertainments and female attendants, mansions with slaves, and imperial favors such as banquets and awards.

U.S. hegemony in Latin America also relied heavily on soft power. In 1953, the U.S. government created the U.S. Information Agency, which, according to President Dwight Eisenhower, would show countries that U.S. objectives "are in harmony with and will advance their legitimate aspirations for freedom, progress, and peace." U.S. TV stations started Latin American channels that broadcast American films and programs. The U.S. government built news agencies and radio stations and infiltrated or intimidated opposition media outlets. In Chile and the Dominican Republic, for example, the CIA and the USIA engaged in an intense propaganda effort against undesirable political candidates, spreading misinformation and silencing opposition media.

Past regional hegemons promoted their influence through culture and education.

Likewise, imperial Japan created the East Asia Development League to shape regional perceptions and guide the activities of Japanese people living in the empire. Tokyo controlled civil society by creating and infiltrating organizations such as youth groups, martial arts clubs, student unions, secret societies, and religious organizations. Its Greater East Asia Cultural Policy sought to eradicate Western culture. For example, Tokyo banned Coca-Cola on the grounds that it had been invented "to bring the people under the soul- and mind-shattering influence of the insidious drug, and so to make them more apt for Anglo-American exploitation." Tokyo prohibited the use of European languages and established Japanese as the area's official language, dispatching hundreds of teachers throughout Asia. Japan transmitted its culture through radio programs, newspapers, and comic books, as did cultural institutes that sponsored exhibitions, lectures, and films.

The Soviet Union secured its influence in Eastern Europe through extensive cultural activities. As the writer Anne Applebaum details in her book *Iron Curtain*, Soviet-backed communist parties took over radio stations and newspapers and intimidated or shut down independent media. The Soviets created influential youth organizations and co-opted writers, artists, and other intellectual leaders by offering well-paid jobs, lavish houses with servants, and free education for their children.

Moscow also created a vast organization known as VOKS (a Russian acronym for All-Union Society for Cultural Relations With Foreign Countries) to disseminate Soviet ideas and culture and bring Western intellectuals under communist influence. VOKS brought thousands of visitors to the Soviet Union and sponsored scientific research, filmmaking, athletics, ballet, music, and publishing. It also spent lavishly at international fairs and expositions—such as the Brussels World's Fair of 1958—to showcase Soviet technology and culture.

CONTEMPLATING LIFE IN CHINA'S ASIA

When examining China's current behavior in the context of previous regional hegemonies, some common themes stand out. First, economic interdependence has a dark side. Although interdependence raises the cost of conflict, it also creates leverage. China's centrality in regional trade and finance increases its coercive power, which Beijing has already begun to exercise. Second, history shows that regional hegemons meddle extensively in their neighbors' domestic politics. Indeed, Beijing has already begun to reverse its much-touted policy of nonintervention. As China grows stronger, its neighbors can expect Beijing to increasingly interfere in their domestic politics.

East Asian countries need to decide whether this is something they are willing to accept. In particular, Japan, the only country with the potential power to balance China, faces an important choice. Since World War II, Japan has adhered to a highly restrained national security policy, spending just one percent of its GDP on defense. For obvious historical reasons, the Japanese people are suspicious of military statecraft, and they worry about a lagging economy and the expense of caring for an aging population. They may decide to continue devoting their wealth to butter rather than guns.

This would be a perfectly valid choice, but before making it, the Japanese people should contemplate their life in China's Asia. Beijing

and Tokyo are already embroiled in a bitter territorial dispute over the Diaoyu/Senkaku Islands. To gain control of the islands, weaken the U.S.-Japanese relationship, and advance other interests, Beijing can be expected to use greater military and economic coercion and to meddle in Japanese politics. Beyond a hegemon's normal reasons to intervene, China harbors deep historical resentment toward Japan. Imagine if the United States had actually hated Cuba.

If Japan decided that Chinese hegemony would be unacceptable, its national security policy would need to change. The United States' global interests and commitments allow Washington to devote only some of its resources to Asia. It would not have the capability, let alone the will, to balance Beijing alone. Japan would need to become more like West Germany: a U.S. ally that, although outgunned and directly threatened by a hostile great power, mobilized substantial military might and was a true partner with the United States in securing its national defense.

Tokyo and Washington could use diplomacy to offer countries an alternative to Chinese regional dominance. To do so, they should look to a core group of maritime countries with similar values and overlapping interests—namely, Australia, India, New Zealand, and the Philippines. Other potentially interested actors, such as Indonesia, Malaysia, Singapore, and Thailand, should be welcomed, too. But the first step on this path is a Japanese—and broader East Asian—debate about the prospect of living in China's Asia.

READY FOR THE FUTURE

By Yoshimasa Hayashi, Minister of Education, Culture, Sports, Science and Technology

As Japan deals with an ageing population and finds itself in the midst of a fourth industrial revolution, the country's universities, as core stakeholders in fostering human resources and driving innovation, are asked to play important roles in strengthening our society.

To face the challenges of the future, the Japanese government formulated the Japan Revitalization Strategy in 2013, launched the Top Global University Project, and set to double the numbers of both inbound and outbound student exchanges.

Yoshimasa Hayashi, Minister of Education, Culture, Sports, Science and Technology

Based on this long-term strategy, the Ministry of Education, Culture, Sports, Science and Technology (MEXT) has provided financial support to improve the study environment at universities in order to attract more international students, among others. The ministry has also supported the efforts of Japanese universities towards more internationalization, through the Top Global University Project.

Anybody can learn more about this program from: https://tgu.mext.go.jp/en/index.html.

The government is also encouraging Japanese students to study abroad through government scholarships and a public-private study abroad initiative called "Tobitate!" or "Young Ambassador Program."

To support some national universities in their efforts to raise the quality of their educational and research activities to world-class standards, MEXT established the Designated National University system. In 2017, Tohoku University, University of Tokyo and Kyoto University were the first schools to receive this DNU status.

A successful society must be both stable and be receptive to new ideas so that advanced technology, such as AI and robotics, can be applied in daily life. Advancements in technology will further change labor markets. In Japan, a shrinking population is resulting in a shortage of workers.

Japan, nevertheless, has developed effective technologies. We are a stable society with a well-organized government. I am convinced that Japan has the capability to become a leading problem-solving nation by skillfully combining all these attributes and deal with a reduction of jobs with these demographic changes.

On behalf of the government, I invite researchers and students from around the world to come to Japan and learn in a cutting-edge environment. ■

Kobe: Crossroads of Industry and Culture

"Ever since our port began operating 150 years ago, Kobe has been very much open to the world. The city, in terms of industry, has developed over the years to the times and the needs of its people," **Mayor Kizo Hisamoto** said.

Kobe Mayor Kizo Hisamoto

In the past few years, Kobe has been home to Japan's largest Biomedical Innovation Cluster, which hosts more than 340 companies on Port Island, joining heavy industries manufacturing as major pillars of the city's economy.

This growth would not have been possible if it weren't for the highly skilled and talented workers who live in Kobe.

The mayor is now focused on efforts to attract new and innovative companies to this bustling seaside metropolis.

Amid so much optimism about the future, Kobe has intensified its efforts to develop clean energy.

In December, the city conducted the world's first test to supply energy from hydrogen power. It has also collaborated with the government of Aberdeen in Scotland to develop a marine industry cluster.

"We've made the most of international knowledge to develop Kobe into a thriving, multi-faceted city. Looking to the future, we intend to continue this pioneering spirit," Hisamoto said. ■

www.city.kobe.lg.jp/foreign/english/index.html

Japanese SMEs look further afield

Until recently, small Japanese companies were viewed as businesses that prefer to transact only with other Japanese companies. Many of them expanded their international presence mainly to support long-running relationships with their loyal customers.

As continuing globalization makes the business landscape increasingly competitive, many of these Japanese SMEs have had to accept the need to expand overseas if they are to survive and grow sustainably.

Showa Denki, a manufacturer of wind machines such as electric blowers and fans, is an example of how these SMEs are seeing their global potential.

"I started our overseas business in 2010 by myself, after finding out through internal research that 38% of our products ended up being exported overseas through clients here in Japan," **President Kensaku Kashiwagi** said.

However, **Shimizu Densetsu Kogyo President Hiroyuki Shimizu** was steadfast in maintaining his company's international operations following a slump in the demand for coating technology in the automotive and medical equipment sectors.

"When our U.S. subsidiary faced some challenges in the past, most of the executives wanted to close it down. But I believed in the market and decided to run the operations myself until it became profitable," Shimizu recalled.

"Now, after our customers in the U.S. experience our service, they tell their Japanese counterparts to reach out to us in Japan for their coating needs," Shimizu added.

For Shimizu and Kashiwagi, leading an SME has not discouraged them from expanding overseas and promoting the "Made in Japan" brand.

"The strength of small companies lies in being able to quickly adapt and deliver customer requests. Customers keep demanding for better, so we keep innovating for the better," Shimizu explained.

"In Japan, there is a philosophy called *magokoro*, which means sincerity or devotion. It is the ultimate made-in-Japan asset. And we've made it a point to center our operations around this philosophy," Kashiwagi said.

With the compelling need for Japanese companies to find stronger and more sustainable growth prospects, packaging products maker **Ohishi Sangyo** has identified Southeast Asia as its most promising market.

"In the last 20 years, Japan lost a lot of big players and demand sharply declined. Many companies decided to open in other Asian markets. That is why we now have a branch office in Singapore and a plant in Malaysia," says **President Norio Okubo.**

"It is not very easy to do business overseas. To ensure international growth, companies need to modernize products and processes. But Japan will remain important because we still lead in technological innovation and high-quality manufacturing," Okubo added.

Meanwhile, **President Masayoshi Funahashi of Shachihata**, a leading maker of writing instruments and stampers, attributes the company's success to its ability to design pens, markers and stampers that address and adapt to the ever-changing consumer taste.

"Using skills we have cultivated, we have developed our latest ma-

chine, the QuiX, where you can easily customize your stamps," Funahashi said.

"The domestic market is diminishing and competition grows more stiff. That is why I expect more potential from our international operations. In fact, we mostly offer our latest markers to the international markets first," Funahashi said.

Helping out small companies that want a bigger global presence but don't have the resources, trading company **Yashima Sangyo** has acted as a major connector between Japanese and foreign businesses. "Our company aims to introduce Japanese quality products to the global market, and vice versa. We aim to be a partner in global expansion for companies worldwide," **President Masatoshi Takamuku** said.

"Many SMEs have the right products with the perfect quality, but find global expansion to be challenging. My dream is to have an exhibition for the 'Made in Japan' brand as a means for Japanese companies to introduce themselves to foreign markets, and help raise the profile of Japanese quality in manufacturing," he added.

Shachihata's Headquarters in Nagoya

Some local government units and nonprofit organizations, such as the American Chamber of Commerce in Japan and the City of Kobe, have joined the efforts to promote bilateral trade and cooperation.

"With this, we applaud the launch of the U.S.-Japan Economic Dialogue by Vice President Pence and Deputy Prime Minister Aso in April 2017," ACCJ Representative Christopher LaFleur said.

"Its focus on setting high trade and investment standards and reducing market barriers aligns with the need we see on both sides, and we hope the positive agenda will continue," he also said.

Already known as one of Japan's most dynamic cities and the base of many major global companies, **Kobe** has intensified efforts to spur further growth through programs aimed specifically at helping entrepreneurs turn their ideas into reality.

"We are making Kobe into a city where startups can thrive. Kobe has developed into a thriving, multi-faceted city and we, with the rest of Japan, will continue that pioneering spirit for years to come," **Mayor Kizo Hisamoto** said.

Recently, Kobe collaborated with US-based seed investment fund 500 Startups in an accelerator program. It was the first such collaborative program with a Silicon Valley venture capital fund in Japan. ■

Abenomics at work in manufacturing

As the world eagerly awaits the 2020 Tokyo Olympics, which got the unflagging support of Prime Minister Shinzo Abe, construction materials developer **Kanaflex**, like many other Japanese companies, works in the background to prepare for the influx of thousands of tourists from across Japan and the rest of the world.

"We were selected by the National Diet as one of the companies in charge of eliminating utility poles on the streets, and installing underground wires and cables. We are proud to contribute to the preparation of Japan's landscape for the influx of tourists for Tokyo 2020," **President Shigeki Kanao** said.

Given its impressive track record and unique products, Kanaflex has done well in the United States for over 30 years and is well positioned to expand further globally. It eyes China and the US as its next big markets.

Although nearly all its business is domestic, construction materials wholesaler **JK Holdings** values its role in the construction of the Olympic Stadium, always the centerpiece venue of the Summer Games.

"Ninety percent of our business is in Japan but we have been in the business for 80 years. We are a supplier of Japanese wood for the Tokyo Stadium and it is exciting to be part of the Tokyo 2020 infrastructure because it will surely have an impact on people from all over the world," **President Keiichiro Aoki** said.

However, Aoki is studying the feasibility of setting up operations outside Japan for its housing materials segment.

The government's economic stimulus plan dubbed Abenomics has remained effective in providing Japanese companies the much needed shot in the arm.

As the third "arrow" of the economic stimulus plan dubbed Abenomics, the economic empowerment of women has become more visible in recent years, with very impressive results.

"I just became CEO two years ago. Before that, for over five years, our financial condition was not good," recalled **Akiko Mitani**, the CEO of **Nikko Company**, which makes ceramic goods and wastewater treatment systems.

To turn things around for the 110-year-old company, Mitani encouraged her employees to understand the company's importance to the lives of all Japanese. That shift in mindset led to increased productivity and profitability.

For the next five years, Mitani plans to lead the company in growing its business around the world.

"We have been exporting our products for over 50 years. While we will continue to focus on our biggest markets, such as the US and Middle East, I see great potential in Southeast Asia as our comprehensive business field as well," Mitani explained.

For **Fuji Denshi**, a unique manufacturer of induction heating machines, tapping the talent of its female workforce has also yielded positive results. In fact, it was named by the government as one of Japan's Top 100 Global Niche companies, an achievement that has given much pride to **President Hiroki Watanabe**.

"I want to cultivate empowerment among women in the workforce. While there is still a long way to go for us here in Japan, there is no denying the importance of women's role in the economy," Watanabe said.

To complement that objective, she established the group Monozukuri-Nadeshiko for female CEOs within the manufacturing industry. ■

Local impact, global outlook

In recent years, Japanese universities have focused on two main objectives: contributing to the local community and globalizing its instruction.

In Nagano Prefecture, **Shinshu University** has topped the Nikkei Global ranking several times in terms of local contributors.

"Everyone is working together to revitalize the economy. There is true synergy between the government, the private sector and the universities," **President Kunihiro Hamada** said.

A view of Toyo Eiwa University's campus in Yokohama

The national university established five research institutes for the fields of biomedical, carbon, mountain, and energy & environmental sciences, as well as fiber technology.

"We have already reorganized our faculties as we aim to combine the expertise from different fields to develop new industries that will help the local community in the next years," Hamada also said.

In Yokohama, **Toyo Eiwa University** aims to further incorporate diversity and open-mindedness among its students. Globalization is the ongoing focus, as the university develops a full English-only curriculum to increase its pool of international students and partners.

"We also send students abroad to see different cultures," said **President Akufumi Ikeda**, who believes that this exposure is especially important to its students because it also allows them to understand their own heritage and share it with people around the world.

"With our students being all female and Japan encouraging women to play bigger roles in the economy, making our students venture out into the world is our way of making an impact on the country," Ikeda said. ■

Green Giant

Renewable Energy and Chinese Power

Amy Myers Jaffe

In 1997, in need of increasing oil and gas imports to fuel its accelerating economy, China launched a new energy policy. Intent on replicating Washington's close relationships with large oil-producing countries, its diplomats toured oil-state capitals, offering investment and arms in exchange for guaranteed supplies. Of particular interest were governments that had been ostracized by Western powers—an opening, Beijing believed, that would allow it to level the energy playing field with the United States and have the added benefit of fueling conflicts that would distract the U.S. military just as it was trying to refocus on Asia.

Yet many of China's forays turned out badly. New partners defaulted on loans and failed to deliver the promised oil. The practice of investing in dangerous places where others would not put the lives of Chinese workers at risk. At home, several leaders of large energy corporations have been purged in so-called anticorruption drives. Meanwhile, the United States has enjoyed a domestic energy boom that is rapidly turning it into a major exporter of oil and natural gas and cushioning its economy against oil-price shocks. Beijing has begun to worry that, given the United States' decreasing reliance on supplies from the Persian Gulf, Washington might intervene more slowly to quell disturbances in the Middle East that threaten to disrupt the flow of oil.

Accordingly, since assuming office in 2012, Chinese President Xi Jinping has turned to a new strategy: a pivot to renewable energy. China already dominates the global solar-panel market, but now it is

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expanding its support for oil-saving technologies, funding the development and production of everything from batteries to electric cars. The goal is not just to reduce China's dependence on foreign oil and gas but also to avoid putting the country at an economic disadvantage relative to the United States, which will see its own growth boosted by its exports of oil and gas to China. China's aims are also strategic. By taking the lead in green energy, Beijing hopes to make itself an energy exporter to rival the United States, offering other countries the opportunity to reduce their purchases of foreign oil and gas—and cut their carbon emissions in the process.

If Beijing's new energy strategy succeeds, it will help both the global fight against climate change and China's ambition to replace the United States as the most important player in many regional alliances and trading relationships. That ambition has been bolstered by the Trump administration's backward-looking approach to energy policy: its focus on coal, oil, and natural gas; its abandonment of the international organizations that shape global energy markets; and its rejection of the Paris climate accord. Such moves are helping pave the way for China to become the renewable energy superpower of the future. Washington needs to respond before it is too late.

OIL SHOCK

Beginning in the first decade of this century, breakneck economic growth in China created a need for foreign oil and gas, driving China's transformation from a regional power to a global one. Hampered by competition for resources from large Western oil companies, Beijing focused on so-called rogue states, where, because of Western sanctions, those rival companies could not invest. It first targeted Iran, Iraq, and Sudan, then Russia and Venezuela.

The results have been less than stellar. In Iran, Western and then UN sanctions hindered Chinese efforts for several years by limiting the amount of money Chinese firms could spend in Iran. And even since the Iran nuclear deal relaxed sanctions, other problems have cropped up. In early 2016, for example, two Chinese national oil companies, Sinopec and the China National Petroleum Corporation, finally managed to get production moving at two fields in Iran's Khuzestan Province, but they now have to worry about Saudi-backed Arab separatists, who have recently bombed oil facilities there.

China has encountered similar problems in Iraq, where a lack of security has plagued oil projects. And in the more secure Kurdish region, estimates of oil reserves have been reduced by half since initial surveys. Together with low oil prices, that means that Sinopec is unlikely to make a profit on its investments there. Chinese exploration for natural gas in Saudi Arabia has also come up dry.

In Africa, Chinese projects have fared little better. Prolonged civil wars in Sudan and South Sudan have severely restricted the amount of oil that Chinese firms operating there can extract. Beijing has faced international condemnation for its support of the Sudanese government, which has been sanctioned by the United States for war crimes. And attacks on Chinese oil workers in Ethiopia, Libya, Nigeria, Sudan, and South Sudan have forced the Chinese government to evacuate its personnel and have led to political criticism at home.

China's increasing dependence on foreign oil has made its leaders uneasy.

China has struggled even in relatively stable places. Last September, a Chinese conglomerate invested $9 billion in the Russian state-controlled oil giant Rosneft in return for a 14 percent ownership stake. But Rosneft is saddled with nearly $50 billion in debt and has undertaken a program of ambitious international spending driven less by a coherent profit strategy than by Russia's strategic interests. This decision, on top of the uncertainty caused by U.S. sanctions on Russia, led Rosneft's share price to decline by 23 percent during 2017, which translates into a multibillion-dollar loss for the Chinese conglomerate.

The story is similar in Venezuela. From 2007 to 2014, Chinese firms provided around $60 billion in oil-backed loans to Caracas. But Venezuelan crude oil exports to China reached just 450,000 barrels a day in 2017, only half the volume the Chinese had anticipated. One of the largest lenders, the China Development Bank, currently receives barely enough oil and refined oil products from Venezuela to cover the interest payments on its loans.

All told, China's $160 billion in spending on oil and gas assets has bought it less energy that it might have expected. Its foreign oil resources are projected to produce roughly two million barrels a day by 2028. By comparison, just over a decade ago, Saudi Arabia spent $14 billion to add two million barrels a day of new production. China's

oil imports pale in comparison with the United States' domestic oil production, which stood at 9.8 million barrels a day at the end of 2017 and could reach over 20 million barrels a day in the next decade. Moreover, China's own oil production, currently 3.9 million barrels a day, is falling fast due to mismanagement, depleted fields, and low prices. China currently imports around 70 percent of the oil it uses. By 2030, that figure is expected to reach 80 percent.

Meanwhile, the United States will likely become a net exporter of oil and natural gas by the 2030s, if not sooner. When it does, other energy producers will lose their long-standing leverage over U.S. policy. (In 1973, for example, OPEC placed an embargo on oil exports to countries, including the United States, that had supported Israel during the Yom Kippur War.) And the U.S. economy, which boasts hundreds of thousands of new oil and gas jobs, will be better shielded than China's economy from a sudden drop in the global oil supply.

China's increasing dependence on foreign oil has made its leaders uneasy. Its 12th five-year energy plan, which ended in 2015, noted "a profound adjustment in energy supply patterns" resulting from the development of new oil and gas sources in Canada and the United States. It characterized China's energy security situation as "grim," in contrast to that of the United States. Such trends have also changed Beijing's calculus in the Middle East. Although Washington is still saddled with the responsibility of protecting the region's oil flows, an oil cutoff caused by conflict there would now do more damage to China's economy than to that of the United States. Beijing has to take account of the growing risk that Washington will abdicate its protector role in the region or, at the least, force China and other countries to foot more of the bill.

THE BIG GREEN BANG

This new reality has prompted China to ramp up its investment in renewable energy and low-carbon technologies. It is not only looking for domestic energy security but also banking on green energy products as major industrial exports that will compete with Russian and U.S. oil and gas. China aims to make itself the center of the clean energy universe, selling its goods and services to help other countries avoid the environmental mistakes it now admits were part of its recent economic growth.

There is a precedent for this approach. Beginning around ten years ago, a booming solar power industry in Germany helped China's nascent

solar-panel manufacturing sector get off the ground. The Chinese government plans to repeat that success on a grander scale. It hopes that demand for clean energy technology from countries looking to reduce their carbon emissions will create jobs for Chinese workers and strong relationships between foreign capitals and Beijing, much as oil sales linked the Soviet Union and the Middle East after World War II. That means that, in the future, when the United States tries to sell its liquefied natural gas to countries in Asia and Europe, it may find itself competing not so much with Russian gas as with Chinese solar panels and batteries.

China's bet on renewable energy is designed to improve its national security.

According to the International Energy Agency, the Chinese public and private sectors will invest more than $6 trillion in low-carbon power generation and other clean energy technologies by 2040. The Chinese renewable energy sector already boasts 125 gigawatts of installed solar power, over twice the figures for the United States (47 gigawatts) and Germany (40 gigawatts). Chinese firms now have the capacity to manufacture 51 gigawatts' worth of photovoltaic solar panels every year, more than double total global production in 2010. The U.S. Department of Energy estimates that the Chinese government has provided as much as $47 billion in direct funding, loans, tax credits, and other incentives to solar-panel manufacturers since 2008. Over the last decade, Chinese exports have contributed to an 80 percent drop in global solar-panel prices. Future Chinese investment in battery technology is likely to have a similar effect on battery prices. Overall, China currently generates 24 percent of its power from renewable sources; the United States generates 15 percent.

China is also betting big on electric vehicles, heavily subsidizing their development and production. In 2015, Chinese public subsidies for electric vehicles totaled more than ten times the amount provided by the U.S. government. Over 100 Chinese companies currently make electric cars and buses. The Chinese car manufacturer BYD is now the largest producer of electric vehicles in the world, with another six Chinese firms also ranking in the top 20. In 2015, China surpassed the United States in annual and cumulative electric car sales. There are over one million electric cars on Chinese roads today, almost double the number in the United States. By 2020, China aims to have five

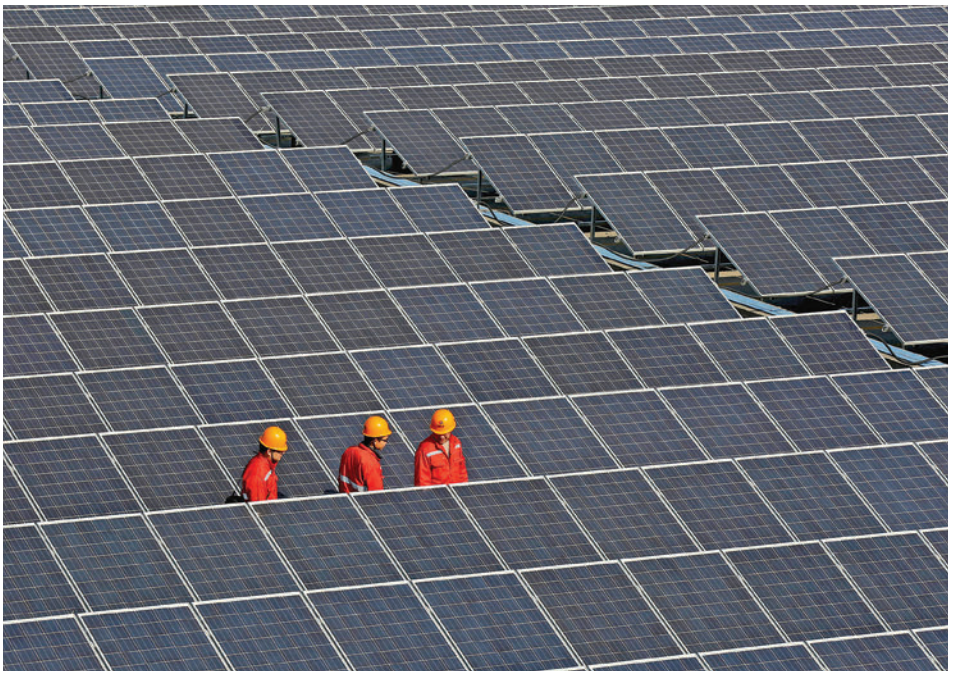
million in operation. China could eventually boast as many as 100 million electric vehicles. In September, Chinese officials confirmed that the government is developing a timetable to end the use of gas-powered cars in China, in line with other countries, such as France and the United Kingdom, that are aiming to eliminate them by 2040.

Beijing is also working to dominate the financing of green energy. In late December, it announced that it intends to create the world's largest carbon market, in which firms trade credits for the right to emit greenhouse gases. China already buys more "green bonds"—which fund projects designed to prevent climate change or mitigate its effects—than any other country and is actively promoting so-called green finance within its financial sector by encouraging its major banks, including the People's Bank of China, to accelerate the issuance of green bonds and other kinds of credits for clean energy. The Chinese government has started to promote cooperation on green finance between Chinese and foreign businesses through bilateral efforts, such as the UK-China Economic and Financial Dialogue. It is also playing up its environmental standards to attract multinational lenders to pay for its ambitious $1.4 trillion Belt and Road Initiative, an infrastructure program designed to expand Beijing's influence in Asia.

China's bet on renewable energy and electric transport is also designed to improve its national security. Chinese analysts have long decried the risks of shipping oil through sea-lanes that are dominated by the U.S. military and increasingly threatened by the growing navies of regional powers such as India and Japan. Replacing foreign oil with domestic sources of renewable energy would remove this problem. Meanwhile, flexible energy microgrids (which generate and distribute power in self-contained grids that can detach from centralized systems during a crisis) and multifuel transportation systems (which move away from sole reliance on oil-based gasoline and diesel) will help China withstand cyberattacks and limit the effects of natural disasters and wars. Advanced clean energy technologies will also likely fuel autonomous weapons, such as drones, artificial intelligence, and satellite-based equipment that can disable U.S. satellites and global positioning systems, all of which China is trying to master.

FALLOUT

China's energy pivot promises to reshape the international order. Its most direct impact will be on the global response to climate change.



Here comes the sun: solar panels in Zhejiang Province, China, December 2014

CHINA STRINGER NETWORK / REUTERS

Just as China's big move into solar-panel manufacturing brought down the costs of that technology, so the prices of batteries, electric cars, and carbon capture and storage will likely collapse as China invests.

The energy pivot is also already changing how China deals with the rest of the world. It is courting countries in Europe, Central Asia, and Southeast Asia with the promise of cheap loans, upgraded energy and transport infrastructure, and freedom from energy shortages and energy-related pollution. Russia's history of heavy-handed threats to cut off supplies of oil and gas to its neighbors has made Beijing's job all the easier. Helping countries generate clean, abundant energy will allow China to compete more aggressively with the United States by undercutting Washington's ability to use its new oil and gas exports to forge closer relations with other countries. Chinese officials have even argued that by assisting countries in developing green business models and providing access to reliable energy and modern infrastructure to poorer countries, China can help redress inequality among nations and create more consistent global economic growth, lowering the risks of terrorism and conflict.

Not all the effects of China's move into clean energy are likely to prove so benign. If China comes to depend largely on domestic energy, it will become less willing to offer preferential loans to failing oil states.

That could prove disastrous for some countries, especially if China's renewable energy technology exports also eliminate a significant proportion of the world's demand for oil and gas. This story has already played out in Venezuela. In 2016, China refused to extend new loans to Caracas, cutting off Venezuela's most important remaining financial lifeline and pushing the country deeper into debt, poverty, and political breakdown. As China sells more and more renewable energy technology and electric vehicles at home and abroad, other oil states, such as Angola, Nigeria, and Russia, could experience similar fates. Even countries in the Persian Gulf could suffer if they do not reform their economies. The result could well be more dangerous failed states with disenfranchised populations.

AMERICA'S ENERGY CHALLENGE

China's new energy strategy raises serious questions for U.S. energy and climate policy. The Trump administration argues that the United States can maintain U.S. energy dominance by selling its vast supplies of oil and natural gas to the rest of the world, as long as domestic producers are unfettered by excessive government regulation. But the success of that vision will rely on international energy and carbon rules. If the United States abdicates its global role, those might be set by other countries.

Although President Donald Trump has announced that the United States will withdraw from the Paris climate agreement, the country cannot formally do so until 2020. That means that the United States still holds leadership positions in the bodies that will play a large part in determining global energy-market regulations, energy- and carbon-pricing policies, and possibly even which fuels—coal, oil, gas, nuclear, or renewables—will be favored globally. But if the United States leaves those groups, they may well design a global energy architecture that favors China's interests. That could allow China to sell its energy technology products abroad free of tariffs, while fees on carbon emissions would hamper U.S. oil and gas exports. It could also make Chinese, rather than U.S., requirements for energy-product labeling and efficiency and for zero-emission vehicles the global standards. And if Chinese financial institutions help set the rules and standards for green financing, they could stack the deck in their own favor, hurting U.S. banks in what is set to become a multitrillion-dollar industry in the coming decades.

To keep the United States' options open, the Trump administration needs to find a creative way to meet the country's original pledge in the Paris agreement to reduce its emissions by roughly 27 percent from 2005 levels by 2025. There is still time to do so. A majority of U.S. states and major cities will continue to implement the initiatives they set out in alignment with the Clean Power Plan, an Obama-era policy designed to get states to cut their carbon emissions, which the Trump administration rescinded in October. U.S. car and truck manufacturers and ride-sharing companies are engaging China to sell their products and services to Chinese consumers. By recommitting to the Paris agreement, even with a less ambitious strategy, the Trump administration would avoid needlessly antagonizing countries that care about the accord and maintain U.S. influence in global rule-making on energy.

The United States should also work both inside and outside the framework of the Paris agreement to create trade rules and carbon-market systems that would favor U.S. oil and natural gas exports in the immediate term and lay the groundwork to promote U.S. clean technology companies in the long run. A good model exists in the agreement finalized in November among Alaska, Sinopec, the Bank of China, and China's sovereign wealth fund, which will result in a Chinese investment of up to $43 billion to develop natural gas reserves in northern Alaska. Natural gas could replace coal in countries such as China and India, reducing carbon dioxide emissions. And tying China to U.S. resource extraction would help cement U.S.-Chinese energy cooperation and ensure that the United States' energy exports will remain competitive with those of other countries trying to sell oil and gas to China.

So far, the Trump administration has shown little sign that it has a real vision for sustaining U.S. energy dominance. It seems inclined to expand rules set by the Committee on Foreign Investment in the United States in order to safeguard U.S. advantages in artificial intelligence and other digital technologies important to protecting U.S. energy infrastructure. That could be worthwhile, but the administration will need a much broader vision, one that goes beyond a proposed small tariff on imported solar panels and looks at the rest of the U.S. clean technology complex, which includes new batteries, energy-saving digital products, and alternative-fuel vehicles.

The administration has begun the process of rewriting the Clean Power Plan. It has suggested improving the efficiency of power plants by

reducing leaks and using new digital technologies to improve control systems. But that will not be enough. It also needs to devise policies to help innovation and promote the adoption of technologies that can rival Chinese products, such as smart meters and solar panels or wind turbines with connected batteries to store the energy generated. New regulations on the power generation industry should reward states, counties, and cities that want to shift to clean energy and issue green bonds.

Rick Perry, the secretary of energy, has argued that natural gas and renewable sources of energy are less reliable than fossil fuels or nuclear power and so the administration should subsidize coal and nuclear power in key markets to prevent interruptions in supply. But this argument fails to realize that new technologies can create a flexible, responsive grid capable of bouncing back quickly in the aftermath of sudden surges in demand, natural disasters, or cyberattacks.

The administration should also think creatively about how to best tap the United States' increasing surplus of cheap natural gas to lower the country's emissions and meet its pledge under the Paris agreement. Washington should consider supporting new uses for natural gas, such as to power long-distance trucks or to make hydrogen fuel for other vehicles. Doing so while minimizing emissions will require enforcing rules governing the leakage of methane from oil and gas production, transport, and disposal. Those rules have bipartisan support in Congress as well as support from many industry players. But the Department of the Interior has delayed their implementation and even suggested that it is considering scrapping them altogether.

There is some good news. The Republican tax reform bill signed by Trump in December left federal support for renewable energy and credits for electric cars intact (an earlier version of the bill had eliminated them). But these programs don't do enough to meet the challenge of China's massive public investments.

Washington should embrace additional policies to promote private-sector investment in clean technology, such as allowing renewable energy investors to form master limited partnerships (MLPs), a type of publicly traded entity that avoids double taxation for its shareholders. Currently, MLPs are restricted to companies that extract or process natural resources or lease real estate. The tax bill slashed the tax rate for MLPs, making them even more attractive, but failed to extend the structure to renewable energy production, even though a bipartisan congressional group proposed doing just that last October.

The United States' withdrawal from the Paris accord will likely be accompanied by lackluster U.S. participation in Mission Innovation, a global initiative involving the European Union and 22 major countries, including China and the United States, to accelerate the transition to clean energy by doubling the public R & D budgets of the participating countries. Failing to take part would be a mistake. China is building an energy system that will help its economy and allow its military to better withstand cyberattacks and natural disasters. The United States should do the same. That means developing and installing new technologies, such as smart grids, solar panels, and wind turbines, at U.S. military bases to reduce the damage from potential interruptions in power supplies or attacks on power sources.

During the Cold War, the United States realized the likely economic and military consequences of losing the space race, and it rose to the task. Meeting the challenge of China's pivot to renewable energy will be no different. The United States risks frittering away its dominance of the global energy market. But with strong leadership and a long-term commitment, it can secure its energy future for decades to come.

How to Crack Down on Tax Havens

Start With the Banks

Nicholas Shaxson

On October 17, 2008, during the throes of the global financial crisis, officials from the U.S. Department of Justice summoned Swiss banking regulators and executives from UBS, Switzerland's largest bank, to a closed-door meeting in New York to discuss the bank's role in helping American clients evade taxes. It was a sensitive moment: the Swiss government had bailed out UBS the previous day. The bank's game plan was simple, a company insider later told Reuters: "Admit guilt, settle the case quickly, and move on."

But the Swiss were in for a nasty surprise. Four months earlier, U.S. authorities had imprisoned Bradley Birkenfeld, a former UBS wealth manager who had begun to spill the institution's secrets. Cooperating with U.S. investigators, Birkenfeld described a culture of deception at the bank, which circumvented many countries' laws and the bank's own regulations, making use of encrypted computers and offshore shell companies and trusts. (Birkenfeld also claimed to have relied on less sophisticated methods, such as hiding diamonds in a toothpaste tube to smuggle them across borders.) Birkenfeld claimed that UBS, seeking to make inroads with "high net worth individuals"—Silicon Valley entrepreneurs, Russian oligarchs, Saudi princes, Chinese industrial magnates—sponsored events popular with global economic elites, such as the America's Cup yacht race and the Art Basel festival in Miami. In his confessional book, *Lucifer's Banker*, he describes organizing what he touts as the largest-ever exhibit of Rodin sculptures. "I can't even remember how many of those art lovers ended up in our vaults," Birkenfeld writes.

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According to Birkenfeld, other UBS bankers also used such events to introduce themselves to ultrarich attendees and pitch their bank as a safe harbor where vast quantities of wealth could reside, out of the reach of pesky tax collectors. The Department of Justice estimated that in 2004 alone, Swiss bankers visited the United States 3,800 times to find and retain clients. The investigation found that UBS had helped U.S. clients hide up to $20 billion.

But U.S. clients accounted for less than two percent of the assets of the bank's wealth-management division, which was handling around $1.3 trillion globally by the time the financial crisis hit in 2007. Secrecy was a global game for Swiss banks, and the playing field extended far beyond Switzerland and the United States. One former Swiss banker told me that she would regularly travel to Latin America for work and would always arrive with butterflies in her stomach, uncomfortable with the deceptions she had to carry out. On the immigration form, she would write that she was traveling for pleasure, "though my suitcase would be full of business suits and portfolio evaluations." She would remove client names and numbers from documents so that if the authorities found them, they wouldn't be able to connect the dots between assets and depositors. She attended polo matches, operas, and champagne dinners, earning the trust of potential customers. "That is where it happens," she said—meaning the establishment of a mutually beneficial relationship in which her bank would help wealthy elites hide their often ill-gotten gains in exchange for hefty wealth-management fees. "I felt like I was prostituting myself," she said.

UBS was a major player, but just one part of a vast system of offshore tax havens that still thrives. Havens facilitate tax evasion, undermine the rule of law, and abet organized crime. They contribute to the economic inequality that has sapped people's faith in democracy and fueled populist backlashes. They corrupt market economies by favoring large multinationals over smaller local companies for reasons that have nothing to do with productivity, entrepreneurship, or genuine wealth creation. They have supercharged the profits of systemically important global banks, helping make such institutions "too big to fail" and "too big to jail." They help wealthy elites in poor countries loot their treasuries and stash the spoils elsewhere, generating illicit cross-border financial flows of around $1 trillion each year, according to the Washington, D.C.–based research firm Global Financial Integrity.

Before the global financial crisis, few officials in the developed world made much noise about tax havens. But their existence was hardly a secret, and many major financial firms involved in the offshore system employed former officials as executives or lobbyists. At the time that UBS was under investigation, its vice chair of investment banking was Phil Gramm, a former Republican senator from Texas who had served as the chair of the Senate Banking Committee. (I sent Gramm an e-mail asking him what he knew about UBS' activities in this area at that time; a representative said he was not available to comment.)

Whatever political cover the bank may have believed it enjoyed, the Department of Justice officials told the Swiss that if they wanted to avoid criminal charges of defrauding the United States, they would need to supply the names of U.S. tax evaders who held assets at UBS. For the Swiss, this represented an excruciating choice between violating the official policy of banking secrecy that their country had upheld for more than seven decades and risking a criminal indictment that could conceivably destroy UBS. Ultimately, in February 2009, the Swiss government gave its blessing to a settlement in which UBS admitted defrauding the United States and paid a fine of $780 million. Crucially, Switzerland also agreed to implement emergency laws to bypass Swiss courts and allow UBS to deliver the names of 280 high-level U.S. tax evaders.

Havens undermine the rule of law, abet organized crime, corrupt market economies, and sap people's faith in democracy.

But the Department of Justice wasn't done: it immediately hit UBS with a new fraud charge. The bank eventually coughed up 4,450 names. The Department of Justice widened the net to include other Swiss banks, and to date, more than 55,000 U.S. taxpayers have voluntarily come forward with information about their Swiss deposits. By January 2016, U.S. authorities had recovered some $8 billion from these banks' clients in back taxes, interest, and penalties, plus $1.4 billion in penalties paid by the banks themselves. More is likely to have been recovered since then.

The episode marked a powerful victory in the fight against tax havens and provided crucial lessons in how to crack down on them, a task that has taken on renewed urgency in recent years. Last November, the International Consortium of Investigative Journalists, in partnership

with 95 news organizations all over the world, published the "Paradise Papers" reports, the result of a giant data leak from the Bermuda-based offices of an offshore law firm, Appleby, which shed light on how the ultrarich avoid taxes and escape other laws and rules. This was a sequel to the ICIJ's 2016 "Panama Papers" reports, which revealed the secrets of another company that specialized in hiding assets, the Panamanian law firm Mossack Fonseca, and exposed a sordid world of criminality and creative tax shenanigans—alongside plenty of perfectly legal behavior. And in 2014, the ICIJ published the "LuxLeaks" papers, another huge data leak, which revealed how the accounting firm PwC helped its clients lawfully avoid paying taxes by using Luxembourg as a platform for exploiting loopholes in other countries' tax codes.

These revelations have turned a harsh spotlight on the questionable financial practices of prominent multinationals such as Disney; the commodity trading giant Glencore and its rival, Koch Industries; celebrities such as Harvey Weinstein and Shakira; criminals connected to the notorious Mexican drug lord Joaquín "El Chapo" Guzmán; and political figures as varied as U.S. Commerce Secretary Wilbur Ross, Russian President Vladimir Putin, and Queen Elizabeth II. What these investigations have shown is that tax havens aren't an exotic sideshow to the world economy: they lie close to its heart.

Outrage over tax havens has never been more widespread and deep-seated than it is today. But addressing the harm they cause will not be easy; tax havens enjoy the protection of powerful forces, and the reforms that would be required to rein them in are fairly radical. Successfully tackling the problem will require mobilizing public anger against rigged systems that disadvantage ordinary people.

TAKE THE MONEY AND RUN

There is no generally agreed-on definition of "tax haven," but its meaning can be boiled down to two ideas: elsewhere and escape. Very wealthy people put their money or assets elsewhere—in places usually referred to as "offshore"—to escape the rules at home that they don't like. Those rules may be tax laws, disclosure requirements, criminal statutes, or financial regulations. In exchange, the private-sector enablers of the system earn hefty fees from their clients, and haven governments profit from taxes, which they typically levy not on the capital nominally flowing through these places but on the incomes or consumption of the local resident professionals who handle that capital.

A commonly cited estimate of the total amount of wealth held offshore, calculated by the economist Gabriel Zucman, is $8.7 trillion—a figure equal to around ten percent of global GDP. Zucman arrived at that figure using a novel method: tracking mismatches between cross-border assets and liabilities in countries' balance-of-payments records. He has said that the $8.7 trillion figure probably does not fully reflect the volume of hidden assets, because it excludes nonfinancial assets owned offshore, such as art, or racehorses, or real estate. But in e-mail exchanges with me, he agreed there were further assets his data miss. His method doesn't account for some fairly common tax-evasion tools, such as certain insurance products designed to hide assets, or for situations in which recorded assets and liabilities technically reside in the same jurisdiction but are nevertheless "offshore" because the owner is elsewhere. (One example: U.S. securities held by a custodian bank in the United States but owned by a Brazilian.) Also, although banks don't mind revealing aggregate figures of their assets and liabilities, which form the basis of Zucman's numbers, tax or criminal authorities seek client-level data, which banks are far more reluctant to hand over. It's safe to assume that if authorities could see that information, they would discover many more hidden assets.

Havens exist in almost every region of the world, with each providing a different mix of offshore services.

Using a model that is more inclusive than Zucman's, the economist James Henry has estimated that tax havens hold between $24 trillion and $36 trillion. Even that estimate represents only the stock of individual wealth held offshore and does not fully take into account the assets that corporations park outside their home countries. (Corporate and individual wealth overlap, of course, since individuals hold corporate assets, but the two forms of wealth are taxed differently.) U.S. Fortune 500 corporations alone hold around $2.6 trillion offshore. The UN Conference on Trade and Development has estimated that developing countries lose out on somewhere between $70 billion and $120 billion in annual tax revenue due to multinationals artificially shifting profits to tax havens. And rich countries are hardly immune: according to a 2014 U.S. Senate report, the United States loses around $150 billion in tax revenue each year owing to offshore tax schemes.

The global offshore system is constantly evolving. Havens exist in almost every region of the world, with each providing a different mix of offshore services. In Asia, Hong Kong serves as China's offshore gateway to the world—a low-tax platform for capital to flow in and out of China, often with minimal scrutiny. Singapore, meanwhile, acts as a haven of choice for wealthy elites from Australia, Indonesia, and Malaysia. In Europe, Switzerland is not the only player. A U.S. Senate investigation published in 2013, for example, showed how Apple had routed some $74 billion through Ireland in the preceding four years, escaping almost all taxes on its profits earned outside the United States. Meanwhile, Luxembourg provides exotic tax-avoidance products, such as shell companies, alongside more mainstream tax-escape facilities. And the Netherlands acts as an offshore stepping-stone for investment funds shifting capital between different countries stripping out taxes along the way.

Then there is the massive British network, which resembles a spider web, with the City of London in the middle, surrounded by an array of British territories and dependencies: the British Virgin Islands, Bermuda, Gibraltar, the Cayman Islands, Jersey, Guernsey, and the Isle of Man. The British Virgin Islands specialize in secretive shell companies and trusts. Bermuda is a big player in offshore "captive insurance," wherein a multinational owns a company ostensibly for insurance purposes but typically with the real goal of cutting its tax bill. Gibraltar is a favored destination for dodgy money from the former Soviet Union, and the Cayman Islands and Jersey cater to the tax-avoidance needs of investors in hedge funds and private equity firms, among others. Such places enjoy some level of autonomy from the United Kingdom, but London ultimately calls the shots and guarantees their legal systems.

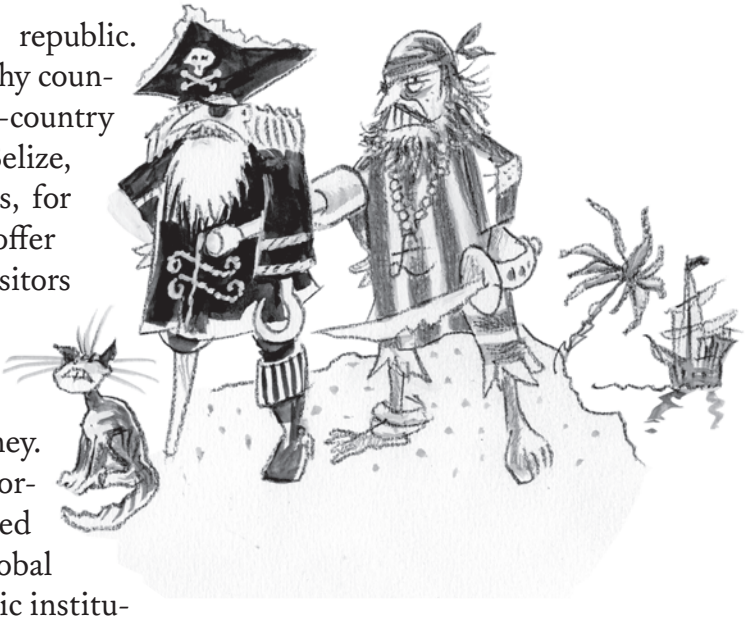
Another crucial tax haven is the United States. Delaware, Nevada, Wyoming, and other states encourage people to set up shell companies, which allow their owners to hide behind walls of secrecy so thick that foreign crime fighters cannot penetrate them—and neither, usually, can the Internal Revenue Service or the Department of Justice. Much of U.S. President Donald Trump's wealth is reportedly held by Delaware companies, which would make it easier for him to hide conflicts of interest. The amount of assets held in shell companies based in the United States can only be guessed at; it is likely in the trillions.

The U.S. federal government, for its part, turns a blind eye to this state-level phenomenon and even provides another layer of financial

secrecy for foreigners. Federal enforcement efforts focus on finding U.S. tax cheats in overseas havens. Under the Foreign Account Tax Compliance Act (FATCA), Washington requires foreign financial institutions to disclose their American clients' financial information to the U.S. Treasury and imposes a 30 percent withholding tax on certain payments to foreign financial institutions that don't comply. But Washington is stingy when it comes to sharing information in the other direction, often refusing to reveal data on the assets that foreigners hold in the United States to law enforcement authorities elsewhere. As a result, the United States hosts large amounts of criminal and foreign "dark money," some of which finds its way into the political system via campaign spending. In 2011, the Florida Bankers Association estimated that hundreds of billions of dollars had come to the United States in pursuit of this secrecy. The sums are larger now.

Notice that nearly all the places mentioned above are either rich countries or satellites of rich countries. Tax havens need to persuade asset holders that they are safe, reliable, and trustworthy. Nobody wants

to hide assets in a banana republic. There are havens in less wealthy countries and places without rich-country protectors—the Bahamas, Belize, Mauritius, and the Seychelles, for example—but they cannot offer mainstream ultrarich depositors the same level of protection as the big players, and so those places tend to go down market, attracting more illicit money.



All tax havens share an important feature: they are "captured states," in which powerful global forces prevent local democratic institutions from interfering in the elaborate game of offshore finance. This is especially true of smaller tax havens, such as Jersey or Vanuatu, where local legislators are often ordinary folks—former fishermen or hoteliers, for example—who lack the skills, knowledge, or confidence they would need to push back against the flood of money, influence, and financial expertise that suffuses the offshore system and that has drowned entire societies. Locals often fear that challenging offshore players will lead the rich to take their money elsewhere. Haven residents who dare criticize the offshore sector are routinely ostracized as traitors and even frozen out of employment. And if offshore players don't get the laws they want, they have been known to turn to bribery, which can be especially effective in small jurisdictions. As a result of all of this, local authorities often serve as rubber stamps for laws and regulations proposed by offshore private-sector actors.

Most tax havens attract little genuine foreign investment as a result of their offshore strategies. What they generally get instead is "hot money"—rootless capital that flits from place to place in search of the most welcoming home. The constant fear in havens that such assets will flee creates a race to the bottom, as authorities strain to make themselves ever more accommodating. In March

2009, in the depths of a global financial crisis that was brought on in large part by lax regulation, Robert Kirkby, then the technical director of Jersey Finance, the official lobbying body for Jersey's financial sector, proudly described this dynamic. Explaining how Jersey dealt with private-sector demands to loosen regulations related to the risky securitization of various kinds of assets, he told me, "You can lobby onshore, but there are lots of stakeholders, you have to get past them all, and it takes a long time." In Jersey, he boasted, "we can change our company laws and our regulations so much faster." That may sound like a form of free-market efficiency—but those stakeholders and onshore rules that such places bypass represent the lifeblood of the rule of law and accountability.

"A LOT OF THIS STUFF IS LEGAL"

It's fair to ask why tax havens persist and why they have so many defenders if they are so clearly deleterious. Offshore advocates make a number of arguments. But none survives scrutiny.

Officials in tax havens point out that those places are sovereign nations (or autonomous territories) with every right to set their own tax laws. That's true. But by the same logic, countries harmed by havens have every right to take strong countermeasures against them. Officials in havens also note that people have a right to privacy and need relief from unjust laws. But the people who use tax havens are overwhelmingly rich and powerful. Providing them with special forms of protection and immunity from fiscal and legal obligations while leaving everyone else to shoulder the responsibilities and burdens of society creates one rule for the 0.1 percent and another rule for everyone else.

Defenders of offshoring also correctly argue that the practice is not always illegal and arguably benefits ordinary investors alongside the ultrarich. Most large private pension and equity funds touch the offshore system in some way. So do "tax efficient" corporate cash management operations, which circulate capital around a multinational's many global subsidiaries, and "tax neutral" investing platforms, which host pools of capital from various different places and then spread it out around the world, seeking out the highest after-tax returns. If such assets were taxed in havens, too, it would be unfair "double taxation." In this sense, defenders argue, havens serve as frictionless, efficient financial conduits, removing obstacles from the path of capital as it flows in pursuit of investment opportunities around the globe.

Yet this isn't the full story. For one thing, the facilities that prevent "double taxation" are the same ones that allow accounting tricks to produce "double nontaxation," in which no taxes are paid anywhere. What is more, a lot of common tax avoidance that gets labeled "legal" actually is not: often, it's not clear whether a particular offshore strategy or structure is lawful until it has been tested in court. Law firms that set up shell companies for their clients may not be breaking any laws themselves, but many of their clients are. More broadly, what is legal isn't necessarily legitimate. As U.S. President Barack Obama said in 2016, in reaction to the Panama Papers revelations: "The problem is that a lot of this stuff is legal, not illegal."

Tax havens are a pure distillation of all that is wrong with financial globalization: they encourage capital to move across borders, but in the wrong directions. Many developing countries have found that when they open up to global finance, investment doesn't flow in to their capital-starved economies—instead, after being looted by elites, money flows out, into tax havens. Indeed, this represents one of the main reasons why financial globalization has failed to improve the lot of many poor countries.

TO CATCH A TAX CHEAT

No magic bullet can solve this vast political and economic conundrum. Any serious effort to do so would run headlong into some of the world's most powerful interests. So fairly radical solutions are required—as is constant vigilance, since the officials, bankers, accountants, and lawyers who prop up the offshore system will always seek new ways to subvert the rules.

One tactic that some economists (and many lobbyists) advocate would be sure to fail: trying to reduce the incentive for major companies and rich people to park their money offshore by lowering corporate and income tax rates. For one thing, as rich countries have steadily lowered their corporate tax rates since the 1970s, corporate investment has stagnated and tax avoidance has skyrocketed. Major firms now sit on huge piles of uninvested cash—Apple alone had nearly $300 billion at last count. Cutting corporate taxes would simply add to such piles. The same applies to lowering taxes for superwealthy individuals. There is little point in trying to "compete" with tax havens. After all, why would corporations or rich people pay a bit less when they can pay a whole lot less, or even nothing, by going offshore?

What lower taxes might attract, however, is more hot money, which brings few benefits to economies but is associated with a raft of costs: financial instability; asset bubbles; increased economic, political, and geographic inequality (which saps long-term growth); and the potential, especially in smaller open economies, for "Dutch disease," in which financial inflows push up real exchange rates and damage productive parts of an economy.

If governments want to cut havens out of the game, they will have to take far more drastic steps. By late 2017, U.S. taxes on the estimated $2.6 trillion in profits held overseas by Fortune 500 companies were supposedly being "deferred" until such time as the companies decided to "repatriate" them. As Kimberly Clausing, Reuven Avi-Yonah, and other tax experts have recommended, the United States should simply eliminate such deferrals and tax accumulated offshore earnings directly, with exemptions for taxes already paid in other countries. According to the Institute on Taxation and Economic Policy, such an approach to taxing multinationals could raise up to $750 billion for the U.S. Treasury. But the tax bill Trump signed into law last year went in precisely the opposite direction, levying a one-time tax on accumulated offshore earnings at a hugely reduced rate of between eight and 15.5 percent and exempting future foreign profits from tax—thus increasing the incentive for multinationals to keep relying on tax havens.

Advocates for the tax bill cheered in January when Apple announced that it would make a $38 billion tax payment on the cash that it held overseas and would spend $30 billion in capital expenditures over the next five years. Other technology companies will likely follow suit. But Apple's announcement did not say that the investments had anything to do with the tax reforms. Moreover, the reforms will yield less than half of the revenue the United States could have raised by simply taxing Apple's roughly $246 billion in offshore profits at the full corporate rate and then continuing to tax them every year. Instead, Washington will get a relatively modest short-term payment and next to nothing in the future.

An even more far-reaching solution is called "formulary apportionment" and would divide a multinational's total global income between individual countries according to a formula based on the company's sales, assets, and payroll in each country where it operates. After the income was so divided, each country could tax its share at whatever rate it liked. Countries could adopt this measure unilaterally, calculating

and then taxing their share of a multinational's income, but international coordination would help iron out complexities. Many U.S. states and Canadian provinces already use a version of this model. It's not without its drawbacks, but it could make a huge difference if properly implemented.

Other solutions are already being tested. In 2014, the Organization for Economic Cooperation and Development set up a useful (although imperfect) global information-sharing scheme called the Common Reporting Standard, in which participating countries automatically share financial information about one another's taxpayers. The CRS is technically similar to the FATCA in the United States but with a big difference: unlike FATCA, the CRS doesn't impose a hefty 30 percent tax on payments to financial institutions that don't comply with it. Most large countries and even most large tax havens have agreed to participate in the CRS, with one glaring exception: the United States. Washington claims that it does participate, in effect, since the CRS is similar to FATCA—but this ignores the fact that although FATCA involves vague promises to share information with other countries, it actually offers other countries very little. To give the CRS teeth, the EU—the largest non-U.S. entity represented by the OECD—should impose its own 30 percent tax on payments to financial institutions that don't comply with the CRS. This would target U.S. banks, which would likely pressure Washington to provide the necessary information.

On the level of U.S. states, the activist Ralph Nader and others have long argued that letting individual states incorporate companies has resulted in a race to lower standards, as states turn themselves into permissive corporate havens in order to attract businesses and maximize incorporation fees. Nader has argued for a federal law that would create "a modern federal chartering agency with comprehensive authority." Limiting corporate chartering to the federal level, Nader contends, would "put an end to the wheeling and dealing that corporations use against state governments."

Another tactic would be to require all countries and territories to establish standardized central registers that would record who owns the various assets they hold—and, ideally, publish that information. The United Kingdom has the power to impose such a rule on every node in its spider web of tax havens, and the EU could force all its member states to do the same thing. Large, powerful countries could also blacklist tax havens that refused to take this step by imposing sanctions

ranging from blocking foreign aid to cutting off recalcitrant governments or financial institutions from international payment systems. (The trouble with blacklists, however, is that the big players usually have the political muscle to lobby their way off the lists, leaving behind only the minnows.)

Alongside these measures, the UBS case illustrates an immensely powerful principle for those seeking to tackle tax havens. For decades, countries had tried and failed to crack open Switzerland's famed banking secrecy. The fight launched by U.S. law enforcement against the bank didn't exactly pit the United States against Switzerland: rather, it was chiefly a contest between the rule of law, on the one hand, and wealthy tax evaders and other criminals, on the other. Switzerland was merely the main battlefield. U.S. authorities did not threaten the country's government, at least not directly.

If authorities in one country go after another country, then elected officials and the public in the target country might rally against foreign "bullies." That is what happened in 2008, when Peer Steinbrück, then the German finance minister, publicly threatened to "take a whip" to Switzerland, albeit without providing detailed proposals. In the wake of a furious response from the Swiss public, the Germans backed off.

In tackling tax havens, private companies often make much better targets than governments. Banks can be regulated and penalized. So can the so-called Big Four accounting firms: Deloitte, EY, KPMG, and PwC, which are as responsible as any other group for putting together the nuts and bolts of the offshore system. Little focuses the minds of bankers and accountants like the threat of jail or the loss of a license to operate in a big economy.

TRUMP TIME?

Fatalists argue that crackdowns on tax havens are pointless, like squeezing a balloon: its shape changes, they argue, but its volume stays the same. That is false. Crackdowns are more like squeezing a sponge: yes, there is some displacement, but also a reduction in volume.

The real problem with crackdowns is usually that governments lack the political will to carry them out. In the United States, it seems unlikely that this will change much in the Trump era. But Trump could, in theory, revive his now tattered populist image and drive up his flagging approval ratings by announcing a crackdown on tax havens. He has, in fact, already expressed interest in doing so. When

I interviewed him by telephone in 2016 for an article I was writing for *Vanity Fair*, he told me that, if elected, he would "fix" tax havens and address the issue of banking secrecy. "I fully understand the tax-haven situation, and much of it will be ended," he said. "It is very easy to end it." But when I asked him how, he cut short the interview.

Whether or not Trump acts, it seems likely that the offshore system will come under ever-stronger attack, as public fury rises about inequality and as large multinationals and private elites remain untaxed, unaccountable, and out of touch. Until recently, few people paid attention to tax havens, and those who did considered them to be colorful sideshows to the global economy: the province of a few Mafiosi, drug runners, tax-cheating celebrities, and European aristocrats. But the Panama and Paradise Papers helped expose the truth: the offshore system is a cancer on the global economy. Tax havens are formidable bastions of wealth and power, but because they hurt nearly everyone, the campaign against them could conceivably draw together a vast array of allies. Mafia bosses and drug runners use tax havens, so law enforcement and tough-on-crime politicians should want to shut them down. Every major private-sector financial institution uses tax havens and is significantly implicated in the offshore system, so campaigners against the outsize influence of Wall Street should be laser-focused on the problem. U.S. banks go offshore to escape rules they don't like, accelerating their path toward too-big-to-fail, too-big-to-jail status. So policymakers worried about financial stability should pay more attention to the role of tax havens. Politicians use tax havens to hide bribes and bypass disclosure laws, which means that anticorruption campaigners ought to join the fray. Dictators and their cronies in poor countries use havens to stash their looted treasure, so international development organizations should contribute more to fighting the offshore system.

The list of potential partners in the fight against the offshore system is long, and could grow longer. It is a cause that could attract voters on the right worried about crime and the corruption of markets and voters on the left worried about inequality and growing corporate power. Politicians of all stripes would be wise to get ahead of the story.

Iran Among the Ruins

Tehran's Advantage in a Turbulent Middle East

Vali Nasr

Over the last seven years, social upheavals and civil wars have torn apart the political order that had defined the Middle East ever since World War I. Once solid autocracies have fallen by the wayside, their state institutions battered and broken, and their national borders compromised. Syria and Yemen have descended into bloody civil wars worsened by foreign military interventions. A terrorist group, the Islamic State (also known as ISIS), seized vast areas of Iraq and Syria before being pushed back by an international coalition led by the United States.

In the eyes of the Trump administration, and those of a range of other observers and officials in Washington and the region, there is one overriding culprit behind the chaos: Iran. They point out that the country has funded terrorist groups, propped up Syrian dictator Bashar al-Assad, and aided the anti-Saudi Houthi rebels in Yemen. U.S. President Donald Trump has branded Iran "the world's leading state sponsor of terrorism," with a "sinister vision of the future," and dismissed the nuclear agreement reached by it, the United States, and five other world powers in 2015 as "the worst deal ever" (and refused to certify that Iran is complying with its terms). U.S. Secretary of Defense James Mattis has described Iran as "the single most enduring threat to stability and peace in the Middle East." And Saudi Foreign Minister Adel al-Jubeir has charged that "Iran is on a rampage."

Washington seems to believe that rolling back Iranian influence would restore order to the Middle East. But that expectation rests on a faulty understanding of what caused it to break down in the first place. Iran did not cause the collapse, and containing Iran will not

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bring back stability. There is no question that many aspects of Iran's behavior pose serious challenges to the United States. Nor is there any doubt that Iran has benefited from the collapse of the old order in the Arab world, which used to contain it. Yet its foreign policy is far more pragmatic than many in the West comprehend. As Iran's willingness to engage with the United States over its nuclear program showed, it is driven by hardheaded calculations of national interest, not a desire to spread its Islamic Revolution abroad. The Middle East will regain stability only if the United States does more to manage conflict and restore balance there. That will require a nuanced approach, including working with Iran, not reflexively confronting it.

MORE NORMAL THAN YOU THINK

Too often, politicians and analysts in the West reduce Tehran's interests and ambitions to revolutionary fervor. Iran, the charge goes, is more interested in being a cause than a country. In fact, although Tehran certainly has its dyed-in-the-wool hard-liners, it also has many pragmatic, even moderate, politicians who are keen to engage with the West. In domestic politics, the two camps are locked in a long-running tug of war. But when it comes to foreign policy, there is a growing consensus around the imperatives of nationalism and national security. It was this consensus that led Iran to sign and then implement the nuclear deal.

Some observers see Iran today, with its use of militias and insurgents abroad, as the United States saw the Soviet Union or China at the height of its revolutionary fervor—as a power intent on using asymmetric means to upset the existing order and sow chaos. Iran's goal is to "expand its malign influence," Mattis said at his confirmation hearing, "to remake the region in its image." But Iran is closer to modern Russia and China than to their revolutionary predecessors. Like them, it is a revisionist power, not a revolutionary one. It opposes a regional order designed to exclude it. Iran's methods often defy international norms, but the national interests they serve, even when at odds with those of the United States, are not uncommon. Iran's view of the world is shaped less by the likes of Lenin and Mao than by those of Vladimir Putin and Xi Jinping. And it is driven less by revolutionary zeal than by nationalism.

What characterizes Iran's current outlook harks back not just to the Iranian Revolution in 1979 but also to the Pahlavi dynasty, which ruled

the country for the five decades leading up to the revolution. Mohammad Reza Pahlavi, the last shah, envisioned Iran dominating the Middle East, with the help of a nuclear capability, a superior military, and exclusive control over the Persian Gulf. For a time, the Islamic Republic eschewed such nationalism in favor of more ideologically driven aspirations. But nationalism has, over the last decade and a half, been on the rise. Today, Iran's leaders interlace their expressions of fidelity to Islamic ideals with long-standing nationalist myths. Like Russia and China, Iran has vivid memories of its imperial past and the aspirations of great-power status that come with them. And like those two countries, Iran sees a U.S.-led regional order as a roadblock in the way of its ambitions.

Iran worries that it is outgunned by its traditional rivals.

Such nationalist ambitions come alongside more acute national security concerns. The Israeli and U.S. militaries pose clear and present dangers to Iran. The U.S. invasions of Afghanistan and Iraq put hundreds of thousands of U.S. troops on Iran's borders and convinced Tehran that it would be foolish for it to think that Iranian forces could thwart the U.S. military on the battlefield. But the U.S. occupation of Iraq showed that, once the initial invasion was over, Shiite militias and Sunni insurgents would do just that, persuading the United States to withdraw. The use of those militants, who relied on training and weapons provided by Iran to kill and injure thousands of U.S. soldiers during the Iraq war, also helps explain the Trump administration's antipathy toward Iran.

Iran sees threats from the Arab world, as well. From 1958, when a revolution overthrew the Iraqi monarchy, to 2003, Iraq posed an ongoing threat to Iran. The memory of the eight-year Iran-Iraq War in the 1980s shapes Iran's outlook on the Arab world. Many senior Iranian leaders are veterans of that war, during which Iraq annexed Iranian territory, used chemical weapons against Iranian troops, and terrorized Iranian cities with missile attacks. And since 2003, brewing Kurdish separatism in Iraq and Syria and growing Shiite-Sunni tensions across the region have reinforced the perception that the Arab world endangers Iran's security.

Iran also worries that it is outgunned by its traditional rivals. In 2016, according to the Stockholm International Peace Research Institute, Iran

Hired guns: a Hezbollah fighter on the Lebanese-Syrian border, July 2017

ALI HASHISHO / REUTERS

spent three percent of its GDP on its military, less than the proportions spent by Saudi Arabia (ten percent), Israel (six percent), Iraq (five percent), and Jordan (four percent), putting Iran in eighth place in the Middle East in terms of defense spending as a percentage of GDP. Iran's spending lags in absolute terms, as well. In 2016, for example, Saudi Arabia spent $63.7 billion on defense, five times Iran's $12.7 billion.

To compensate for this handicap, Iran has adopted a strategy of "forward defense." This involves supporting friendly militias and insurgent groups across the Middle East, including Hamas and Hezbollah, both of which threaten Israel's borders. Iran's most vaunted military unit is the Quds Force, the part of the Islamic Revolutionary Guard Corps (IRGC) charged with training and equipping such proxies. Hezbollah has proved a particularly effective ally, as it has achieved the only instances of Arab military success against Israel. In 2000, it forced Israeli troops to withdraw from southern Lebanon, and in 2006, it blunted Israel's offensive there.

A similar logic underlies Iran's long-range missile program (and, before the 2015 agreement, its nuclear efforts). Tehran has intended for these programs to serve as a protective umbrella over its other forces, a strategy successfully employed by Pakistan against India. Iran has

agreed to freeze its nuclear program; the idea now is that, with a fully developed missile program, even a significantly more powerful country could not attack Iran or its proxies without facing devastating retaliation.

SURROUNDED BY CHAOS

If Iran's behavior appears more threatening today than it once did, that is not because Iran is more intent on confronting its rivals and sowing disorder than before but because of the drastic changes the Middle East has experienced over the last decade and a half. Gone is the Arab order on which Washington relied for decades to manage regional affairs and limit Iran's room for maneuver. A chain of events, starting with the U.S. invasion of Iraq in 2003, culminated in the implosion of the Arab world, as social unrest toppled rulers, broke down state institutions, and triggered ethnic and sectarian strife that in some cases escalated into full-fledged civil war.

In many ways, the instability has enhanced Iran's relative power and influence throughout the region; with so many other power centers weakened, Tehran looms larger than before. In Iraq, working through an array of Kurdish and Shiite political forces, Iran shapes alliances, forges governments, settles disputes, and decides policies. As a result, Iraq is influenced more deeply by Iran than by any other country, including the United States. In Syria, Iran has combined Hezbollah fighters with Shiite volunteers from across the Middle East to make an effective military force, which it has used to wage war on the opposition. As Assad has gained the upper hand in the civil war, Iran's influence in Damascus has surged. And in Yemen, with very little investment, Iran has managed to bog Saudi Arabia and its allies down in a costly war, diverting Saudi resources away from Iraq and Syria.

But the instability has also produced new threats. Arab public opinion is highly critical of Iran's support for the Assad regime in Syria. According to a Zogby poll published in 2012, soon after Iran entered the Syrian conflict, the country's favorable rating in the Arab world plummeted to 25 percent, down from a high of 75 percent in 2006. And the meteoric rise of ISIS, which is virulently anti-Shiite and anti-Iranian, brought into sharp relief Sunni resistance to Iranian influence. Yet ISIS' fate has also confirmed the effectiveness of forward defense in Tehran's eyes. Without Iran's military reach and the strength of its network of allies and clients in Iraq and Syria, ISIS would have quickly swept through Damascus, Baghdad, and Erbil (the capital of Iraqi

Kurdistan), before reaching Iran's own borders. Although Iran's rivals see the strategy of supporting nonstate military groups as an effort to export the revolution, the calculation behind it is utterly conventional: the more menacing the Arab world looks, the more determined Iran is to stay involved there.

The new regional context has also heightened the risk of direct conflict between Iran and the United States or its Arab allies. But here, too, Iran's leaders sense that they have the advantage. Iran has come out of the fight against ISIS stronger than before. The IRGC has trained and organized Iraqi Shiites who confronted ISIS in Iraq, Shiite volunteers who traveled from as far away as Afghanistan to fight in Syria, and Houthi forces battling the pro-Saudi government in Yemen. Together with Hezbollah, these Shiite groups form a force to be reckoned with. After the fighting ends, they will continue to shape their home countries as they enter local politics, entrenching Iran's influence in the Arab world. As a result, Sunni Arab states will no longer be able to manage the region on their own.

With so many other power centers weakened, Tehran looms larger than before.

Over the past year, escalating tensions with Saudi Arabia, the Trump administration's saber rattling against Iran, and the administration's ban on travel from several Muslim-majority countries, including Iran, have touched off a nationalist reaction. The defiance toward the United States is matched by worry about the growing threat from the reinvigorated U.S.-Saudi relationship. Tensions between Iran and Saudi Arabia have been on the rise since the signing of the nuclear deal, but since the Trump administration took office, they have taken an ominous turn. In May 2017, Crown Prince Mohammed bin Salman, Saudi Arabia's first deputy prime minister and minister of defense, warned that the battle for influence over the Middle East ought to take place "inside Iran."

Iran is also no longer immune to the kinds of terrorist attacks that have hit Arab and Western capitals. Last June, ISIS gunmen and suicide bombers attacked the Iranian parliament building and the mausoleum of Iran's first supreme leader, Ruhollah Khomeini, killing 18 people. The sense of danger from the threats swirling around the country has led many Iranians to accept the logic of forward defense. During the early years of the Syrian civil war, Iran's rulers went to great lengths

to downplay Iranian involvement and hid Iranian casualties. Now, they publicly celebrate them as martyrs.

During antigovernment protests in late December and early January, some marchers shouted slogans questioning Iran's involvement in Lebanon, Syria, and the Palestinian territories. Forward defense, the demonstrators claimed, channeled scarce resources to distant conflicts, away from pressing needs at home. The protests suggested that nationalism is tempered by its economic cost. But despite the public criticism, Iran is not about to collapse under the pressure of imperial overreach. Iranians are skeptical of their government's regional ambitions, but they do not doubt the imperative of defense. They worry about the threat posed by Sunni extremists to sacred Shiite cities in Iraq and Syria, and even more so to Iran itself. In any case, Iran's rulers are not moved by the criticism. Many of them saw foreign hands behind the protests. They are convinced that rather than retreat, Iran must show strength by protecting its turf in the Middle East.

FROM NEGOTIATION TO CONFRONTATION

The Obama administration responded to the disintegrating order in the Middle East by distancing the United States from the region's unending instability. In a clear break with past U.S. policy, it refused to intervene in Syria's civil war and moved beyond the old strategy of containment to forge a nuclear deal with Iran. That deal angered the Arab world and aggravated regional tensions, but it also reduced the threat that would have continued to tether the United States to the Middle East just when it was trying to break free.

The success of the nuclear deal suggested that the United States might reimagine its relationship with Iran. Arab allies concluded that Washington would no longer be committed to containing the country and worried that it would turn away from them. Tehran agreed. With the Arab world in free fall, it reasoned, a containment strategy against Iran was unsustainable, and the nuclear deal would make it unnecessary.

But despite these expectations, the United States did not fundamentally change its approach to the region. The Obama administration sought to assuage Arab angst by signing large arms deals with Bahrain, Kuwait, Oman, Qatar, Saudi Arabia, and the United Arab Emirates. Those in Tehran who had supported the nuclear deal were disappointed: Iran had given up an important asset only to see the conventional

military gap with its regional rivals widen. In 2015, Saudi Arabia and its allies for the first time proved willing to use that military superiority, with devastating effect, in Yemen—a signal that was not lost on Iran. Tehran responded by doubling down on its missile program.

The Trump administration has reversed course on the nuclear deal and is pivoting back to the old U.S.-Arab alliance system, with Saudi Arabia as its anchor. The deal may limp along, but the opening that it presented Iran and the United States has closed. A return to containment will be difficult, however. Two important building blocks are missing: Iraq and Syria are weak and broken, unable to control their own territories and ruled by governments that are closer to Iran than to the United States' Arab allies. The two countries cover most of the Levant and for several decades had imposed order on its competing sects, ethnicities, and tribes. Since World War I, along with Egypt and Saudi Arabia, they had served as pillars of the Arab order. After 1958, Iraq, in particular, acted as both a shield against Iranian influence and a spear in Iran's side.

Ultimately, the United States' position in the Middle East reflects its broader retreat from global leadership. The United States lacks the capacity to roll back Iranian gains and fill the vacuum that doing so would leave behind. The shortcomings of U.S. policy were on full display during last year's referendum on independence held by Iraqi Kurdistan. Although Washington called on the Kurds not to hold the vote, it could not stop them, and after they voted for independence, it played little role in managing the ensuing crisis. Instead, Iran defused the standoff, which threatened to escalate into open conflict between Baghdad and Erbil. Tehran compelled Kurdish leaders to back away from independence, surrender control over the contested city of Kirkuk, and even submit to a change in leadership in the Kurdistan Regional Government.

Nor can the United States' principal Arab ally, Saudi Arabia, pick up the slack. It has successfully rallied Sunni Arab public opinion in opposition to Iran's meddling in Syria and the rest of the Arab world. And between 2013 and 2016, it, along with Qatar and Turkey, put Iran and its clients on their heels in Syria by supporting various anti-Assad opposition groups. But then the Saudi effort fell short. Saudi Arabia quarreled with Qatar and Turkey, and the Assad regime survived the Sunni-led opposition. And in Yemen, the Houthis have stood their ground in the face of the vast military muscle of the Saudi-led coalition.

Iran still worries about Saudi Arabia's newfound assertiveness. Prince Mohammed is waging war in Yemen and isolating Qatar, and he even attempted to strong-arm Lebanon's prime minister, Saad Hariri, into resigning in November. Breaking with his predecessors, he has also shown a willingness to play a role in Iraq, where he is wooing Iraqi Shiite politicians, including the maverick militia leader Muqtada al-Sadr. Yet Saudi Arabia will have a hard time continuing this aggressive strategy. The crown prince has to manage a tricky succession from his father, King Salman, and pull off an ambitious program of social and economic reforms, all while confronting Iran.

A consensus has emerged in Tehran around closer ties with Russia.

Nor does Iran feel as isolated as Washington and its allies would like. Last June, Saudi Arabia led a coalition of Arab states to impose a diplomatic and economic boycott on Qatar, punishing it for cozying up to Iran and for supporting terrorist groups and the Sunni Islamist organization the Muslim Brotherhood. But the effort to isolate Qatar has only pushed it closer to Iran, providing Tehran with a beachhead on the southern shores of the Persian Gulf.

Saudi Arabia's move also damaged relations with Turkey. Ankara's ruling Justice and Development Party has ties to the Muslim Brotherhood, and the country has its own aspiration to lead the Sunni world. The U.S.-Saudi vision of regional order does not reflect Turkey's interests and ambitions. All of this has accelerated Turkey's pivot toward Iran and Russia. Turkish President Recep Tayyip Erdogan has found ways around his disagreements with Tehran and Moscow to forge a partnership with the two in order to shape events in Syria. This new axis was on full display last November, when Erdogan joined Russian President Vladimir Putin and Iranian President Hassan Rouhani in Sochi to decide Syria's fate. The rise in tensions between Iran and the United States is happening in the context of Russia's entry into the Middle East, which began in earnest in 2015, when Russia intervened in the Syrian civil war on behalf of the Assad regime. U.S. officials have steadfastly downplayed Moscow's interest in Syria and dismissed the idea that Russia will gain influence by extending its reach into the region. But Russia has emerged as the main arbiter of Syria's fate, and as its role has grown beyond Syria, it has become the only power broker in the Middle East that everyone talks to.

Russia could not have made these gains without Iran. Iranian ground presence gave Russia its victory in Syria. And in Afghanistan, Central Asia, and the Caucasus, Iran and Russia have worked together closely to counter U.S. influence. The two countries see themselves as great powers at odds with U.S. alliances built to contain them. Russia understands Iran's value to its broader ambitions. Iran sits at an important geographic location and is an energy-rich country of 80 million people, with a network of allies and clients that spans the Middle East—all outside the United States' sphere of influence. That makes Iran a prize for Putin, who is eager to push back against the United States wherever he can.

By working together in the Syrian civil war, the Iranian and Russian militaries and intelligence communities have built deep ties with one another, which will help Iran withstand future U.S. coercion. Over the past year, as the United States has backed away from the nuclear deal and put increased pressure on Iran, a consensus has emerged in Tehran around closer ties with Russia. Iran is looking to increase trade with Russia and buy sophisticated weaponry from it to counter rising military spending within the Saudi-led bloc. It may even sign a defense pact with Russia, which would include close military and intelligence cooperation and Russian access to Iranian military bases, something Iran has resisted in the past. In the end, U.S. policy may end up empowering Russia without diminishing Iran's influence.

TIME TO TALK

Based as it is on a warped understanding of the causes of the disorder in the Middle East, the Trump administration's Iran policy is caught in a self-defeating spiral. The assumption that the United States and its Arab partners will be able to contain Iran quickly and painlessly, and that doing so will bring stability to the region, is dangerously wrong. Right now, the United States does not have enough troops in the Middle East to affect developments in Iraq or Syria, let alone suppress Iran. Committing the necessary military resources would force Trump to go back on his disavowal of costly military adventures. And those resources would have to come at the expense of other pressing issues, such as managing North Korea and deterring China and Russia. Nor should Washington put its hopes in its regional allies. They are not able to expel Iran from the Arab world, nor would they be able to replace its influence if they did. Any regional conflagration would inevitably compel the United States to intervene.

Even if the United States did muster the necessary resources to contain Iran, doing so would not bring stability. Iran is an indispensable component of any sustainable order in the Middle East. Military confrontation would only encourage Tehran to invest even more in forward defense, leading to more Iranian meddling and more instability. Stable states, such as Bahrain, Jordan, Qatar, and the United Arab Emirates, could stumble, and weak ones, such Iraq and Lebanon, could descend into the kind of lawlessness and violence that have characterized Libya and Yemen in recent years. On top of that, the United States would have to contend with humanitarian crises and terrorist groups that would pick up where ISIS left off.

Rather than conceive of a regional order designed to contain Iran, the United States should promote a vision for the Middle East that includes Iran. It should convince Tehran that it would be better off working with Washington and its allies than investing its hopes in a Russian-backed regional order.

To achieve that, the United States would have to rely more on diplomacy and less on force. Washington should find ways to reduce tensions by engaging Iran directly, picking up where the nuclear deal left off. It should also encourage Iran and Saudi Arabia to cooperate to resolve regional crises, starting with those in Syria and Yemen.

Given the trust Saudi Arabia now places in the Trump administration, the United States should do what the Obama administration failed to: lead an international diplomatic effort to broker a regional deal that would end conflicts and create a framework for peace and stability. This task should not be left to Russia. Such an effort would be difficult, especially since Washington has thrown away any diplomatic capital generated by the nuclear deal. But the alternative—escalating confrontation—would only drive the Middle East deeper into disarray.



A BRIGHT ECONOMIC OUTLOOK

By H.E. Mohammed Bin Abdulrahman Al-Thani, Deputy Prime Minister and Minister of Foreign Affairs

Since June 2017, the Government of Qatar has accelerated its plans to move from a hydrocarbon to a diversified, knowledge-based economy. In line with Qatar National Vision 2030, our roadmap launched in 2009 to achieve sustainable economic growth, we have strengthened international relationships with trade partners, opened new trade routes, increased our international investments and created new incentives for local and foreign businesses.

The catalyst for this transformation has been the illegal blockade imposed on us by our neighbors. The blockade has inspired national pride and patriotism in Qatar and given us the chance to tell the world who we are, what we stand for and what we believe in.

While the blockading countries attempted to use economic means to curtail our sovereignty through closing borders, splitting up families, and attempting to harm our currency, we have remained committed to keeping business and politics separate. Put simply, we will never stoop to their level and put our region's citizens at risk.

The fundamentals of our economy remain strong and we have not scaled back our domestic or international trade or made changes to our long-term investment strategy. Our assets and foreign investments comprise more than 250 percent of our GDP and we remain the world's largest exporter of LNG, GTL and the second largest producer of helium.

H.E. Mohammed Bin Abdulrahman Al-Thani, Deputy Prime Minister and Minister of Foreign Affairs

In recent months, we have made it easier for foreign investors to gain a foothold in the Qatari market by removing barriers to investment and providing greater incentives through our Investment Free Zones, including those located at Hamad International Airport.

We have also fast-tracked major labor reforms in partnership with the International Labor Organization and opened the door for expatriates to gain permanent residency in Qatar, a first for the region. This is in addition to the introduction of new rules that allow visa-free entry to citizens of over 80 countries.

As a testament to our commitment to economic development, we are building strategic partnerships with international investors as we look forward to foreign investment in Qatar, as well as opportunities to bolster foreign economies.

The United States and the United Kingdom remain key partners for international investment and collaboration. Qatar has invested $27 billion in the US with nearly $10 billion more slated for projects in the years ahead. Qatari investment in the UK has amounted to £40 billion, and we announced in March that we will invest an additional £5 billion in the next three to five years.

Since the start of the blockade, we have continued to honor all of our business agreements and we have not missed or delayed a single shipment of energy to our regional and international partners that rely on Qatar for their sources of energy. Qatar does not and will not use economic tools to harm trading partners, nor do we leverage business deals for political gain.

Ultimately, we are committed to creating a dynamic and more diversified economy in which the private sector plays a prominent role. This has been boosted by the opening of our new Hamad Port, south of the capital Doha, which now handles 27 percent of trade in the region.

Since its opening last September, we have established new shipping routes to Oman, Kuwait, Turkey, Pakistan, and India.

The illegal actions of our neighbors have served as an impetus for us to accelerate our economic plans and renew our commitment to diversification and sustained growth.

We fully expect to see a strong return of the Qatari economy this year and growth over the years to come and we will continue to build strategic partnerships with our friends around the world. ■

Educating Media Professionals and Engaging Thought Leadership in the Middle East

By Everette E. Dennis, Dean and CEO of Northwestern University in Qatar

Dennis delivers keynote address at OSCE conference in Vienna.

Northwestern University in Qatar (NU-Q) began its tenth year of operations in the fall of 2017, fully ensconced in a new 515,000 square foot building, hailed as one of the world's largest and most advanced communication and media centers where engaged innovation in teaching, research and thought leadership continues apace.

Designed by architect Antoine Predock, the building features the infrastructure of a television network and a Hollywood studio with a robotic newsroom, massive video installations, a state of the art cinema, black box theater and the largest sound stage in the region along with classrooms, auditorium, executive education center and even a digital museum, called the Media Majlis at NU-Q, which will open in September 2018.

A diverse, cosmopolitan student body from Qatar and 40 other countries comes to NU-Q to study media industries and technology as well as journalism and strategic communication imbedded in a liberal arts context. Graduates work in media industries, business, government, and other fields. Thirty-four percent of the first four graduating classes have matriculated for advanced study to the world's top graduate schools, such as Cambridge, Oxford, Harvard and London School of Economics.

The resident faculty is made up of media professionals, renowned scholars, and others including award-winning documentary and narrative filmmakers. The curriculum, modeled on and validated by Northwestern's home campus, has also developed specialties in Middle East Studies, Media and Politics, Strategic Communication, and other specialties.

NU-Q is dedicated to the advancement of freedom of expression and independent media through its current undergraduate instruction with degrees granted by Northwestern's home campus in the United States.

NU-Q also has a signature institutional research project, *Media Use in the Middle East*, now in its fifth year, the only longitudinal study of its kind in the world, and a partner in the World Internet Project. Along with the course *Media Industries in the Middle East*, NU-Q maintains an interactive website where these massive data sets are available to scholars, media professionals, and the public. (**www.mideastmedia.org**)

Northwestern University in Qatar carries out its work sensitive to local culture and traditions and fully conscious of the tensions separating tradition and modernity, while building connections to the realities of a digital and global society. Being at the epicenter of geopolitics and higher education has yielded great benefits for individuals, institutions, and society itself. ■

Old School, New School

Widely known as an oil-rich state, Qatar has built a reputation over the years as a more diversified economy with a globalized outlook on development. Apart from the usual petrochemical players, the country boasts large local flagships as well as new contributors to its nation-building project.

Established in 1964, **Qatar Insurance Company (QIC)** is the largest insurance company in the MENA region by Gross Written Premium and market capitalization. Group President and CEO Khalifa Abdulla Turki Al-Subaey wants the company to become among the world's top 50 insurance companies by 2030.

"We are a Qatar-based composite insurer with an underwriting footprint across the Middle East and the rest of the world. The group is the leading insurance group in the region in terms of total assets, gross written premiums and net income," said Al-Subaey.

Qatar Insurance Company (QIC) President and CEO Khalifa Abdulla Al-Subaey

With 73 percent of its gross written premium generated from outside of the Middle East, QIC's strategy is underpinned by continued global expansion and diversification.

"QIC's international business is a critical element of the group's overall insurance and reinsurance operations. We have grown in recent years both organically and through acquisition, and we will continue to do so," said Al-Subaey.

While QIC is primarily non-life insurance and reinsurance group, the group is looking to expand into life and medical insurance and is open to partnerships with global players to gain access to new distribution platforms and geographic markets.

"We are focusing on the Asia-Pacific markets. We already have operations in Shanghai and Singapore through leading specialist insurance and reinsurance group Antares, which we acquired in 2014 and we want to expand our presence beyond," explained Al-Subaey.

In the next two years, Al-Subaey plans to implement structural changes and adopt new technology to improve customer service.

"During the past half century, QIC has served as a trusted insurance partner to businesses and individuals both locally and regionally. Now, it is spreading its wings globally beyond the regions," shared Al Subaey.

Focused on communication and journalism and embedded in the liberal arts, Northwestern University in Qatar (NU-Q) has attracted around 300 students coming from 40 different countries, half of them Qatari nationals.

"We have a uniquely diverse student body, which creates a global environment for our students. In a country with little tradition for journalism and media education, we have seen interest in our programs grow over several years. Due to a recent diplomatic crisis, our students have a front row seat to a situation that is multifaceted and has many causes, all with a central communication and media component," said NU-Q Dean and CEO Everette Dennis.

Following the diplomatic embargo declared by some of its neighbors in June 2017, Qatar, with its population of 2.6 million, has displayed extraordinary agility and resilience in negotiating the challenges posed by the crisis.

"We have various print and digital media outlets, television and radio outlets and a booming film industry. So we have a 'media city' in Qatar and NU-Q is well positioned to provide talent for that industry. Our graduates are being employed to help tell the story of Qatar's evolution and change," explained Dennis. ■

QIC

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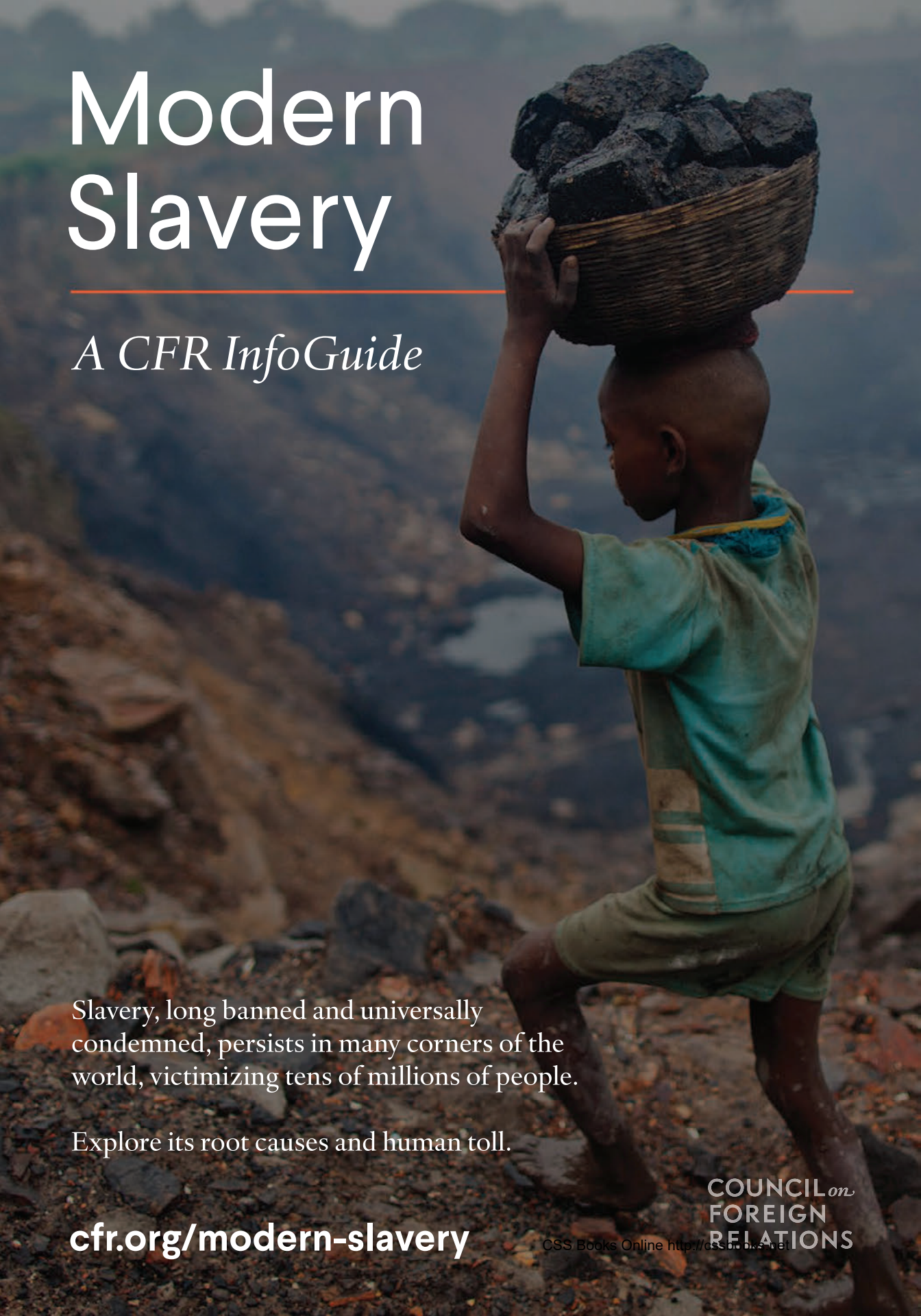

The President and the Bomb

Reforming the Nuclear Launch Process

Richard K. Betts and Matthew C. Waxman

In November 2017, for the first time in 41 years, the U.S. Congress held a hearing to consider changes to the president's authority to launch nuclear weapons. Although Senator Bob Corker of Tennessee, the Republican chair of the Senate Foreign Relations Committee, insisted that the hearing was "not specific to anybody," Democrats used the opportunity to air concerns that President Donald Trump might stumble into nuclear war. After all, he had threatened to unleash "fire and fury" on North Korea, and he subsequently boasted in a tweet about the size of the figurative "nuclear button" on his desk in the Oval Office. General C. Robert Kehler—a former head of U.S. Strategic Command, the main organization responsible for fighting a nuclear war—tried to calm senators' fears about an irresponsible president starting such a war on a whim. He described how the existing process for authorizing the launch of nuclear weapons would "enable the president to consult with his senior advisers" and reminded the senators that officers in the chain of command are duty-bound to refuse an illegal order.

What Kehler could not assure the senators, however, was that the process that enabled the president to seek the concurrence of the secretary of defense or senior officers actually required him to do so, or even required that he consult with advisers. Nor could he assure them that officers receiving a launch order would dare to assert their own judgment over his about its legality, or that the president

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would listen to them if they did. When asked by Senator Ben Cardin, a Democrat from Maryland, whether the president could ignore a military lawyer's advice that an order to launch a nuclear attack was illegal, Kehler said that would present "a very interesting constitutional situation." He continued: "I would say, 'I have a question about this, and I'm not ready to proceed.'" Pressed by Cardin about what would happen next, Kehler responded, "Well, I don't know." The implication was worrisome: although common sense and careful official planning dictate a process to prevent an imprudent and impulsive president from starting a nuclear war, there is nothing stopping a determined president from overriding it.

Details of the current nuclear launch process are classified, but in general, they are designed to ensure that the president can quickly order a launch. That's why wherever the president goes, he is accompanied by a military officer carrying the "football," a briefcase containing strike options and codes used for communicating with the chain of command and confirming that an order is authentic. Once an order is issued, it reaches officers manning the missile silos, bombers, and submarines responsible for carrying out an attack. Before issuing the order, however, the president is expected to confer in person or over a secure line with senior military and civilian advisers. But that is merely assumed. The secretary of defense has no formal role in the authorization, and the president can bypass him if he wishes.

That needs to change: any presidential order to launch nuclear weapons that is not in response to an enemy nuclear attack should require the concurrence of the secretary of defense and the attorney general. This reform is not aimed at a particular president; it addresses a problem that could arise in any administration. Moreover, adding these checks would not only limit the commander in chief's power but also buttress it, protecting the launch process from interference by unauthorized parties.

CONSTRAINING AND CONFIRMING

There are two sets of scenarios in which a U.S. president might order a nuclear strike. The first is relatively straightforward and uncontroversial: launching a retaliatory attack after or during an enemy nuclear attack. In that case, given the need to respond quickly, the commander in chief's power should remain unhampered. The concern arises when considering the other set of scenarios: the first use of nuclear weapons,

Hail Mary: carrying the "nuclear football" in Washington, D.C., February 2017

KEVIN LAMARQUE / REUTERS

either as an initial knockout blow or during the course of a conventional war. What if the commander in chief ordered such an attack without sufficient cause, consultation, or legal justification?

Starting a nuclear war is the most momentous national security decision imaginable. Some observers have called for a ban on nuclear first use altogether, and the Obama administration considered declaring a no-first-use policy near the end of its second term. But for better or worse, U.S. and NATO strategic doctrine has always rested on this option (originally, to counter the Soviets' perceived superiority in conventional forces), and there is no consensus for taking it off the table.

In the event that the president wanted to be the first in a conflict to use nuclear weapons, two procedural problems could arise: insufficient deliberation and insubordination. On the one hand, the president might order a launch without adequate consideration or without consulting responsible advisers, and the military chain of command might simply comply. On the other hand, he might order a launch and officers might refuse to comply, either doubting the order's authenticity or resisting it on moral or other grounds. Either possibility is dangerous. The first risks unnecessary and catastrophic escalation. The second may seem less dangerous—to some it may even seem desirable—but a refusal by uniformed officers to comply would deeply damage the

hallowed norms of civilian control of the military. Currently, if the president orders a launch, there are technical means to ensure the authenticity of the order, but the system is not designed to deal with an order that appears to be irrational. Relying on ad hoc disobedience of orders of questionable legality is not the right solution to this problem, since it is both unreliable and fraught with bad constitutional and policy implications.

A third and very different problem—the possibility of unauthorized parties tampering with the system to inject a false launch order or block a legitimate one—has received less attention. Such a problem is unlikely. The U.S. nuclear command-and-control system has been carefully designed with redundant bulwarks against imaginable accidents—but so have nuclear power plants, and still there were unanticipated disasters at Three Mile Island, Chernobyl, and Fukushima, all of which would pale in comparison to a single mistaken use of nuclear weapons. When it comes to nuclear weapons, even extremely low odds of a mistake should be reduced in any reasonable way possible. Whether an unauthorized launch stemmed from an unhinged military aide in charge of the football, unforeseen technical glitches that accidentally mimicked a presidential order, malicious hackers who managed to penetrate the command-and-control system, or malfunctioning sensors that generated false warnings of an attack, a requirement that officials in addition to the president sign off on a nuclear launch would serve as a valuable safeguard. It would make it harder for a wayward president, a provocateur, or a malfunction to start a nuclear conflagration, while preserving the president's option to fire nuclear weapons first when sensible officials consider it necessary.

It is time to add new checks to the process for nuclear first use.

Given the deficiencies in the existing process, it is time to add new checks for nuclear first use: certification from the secretary of defense that a given order is valid (meaning definitely from the commander in chief) and from the attorney general that it is legal (that is, within the president's authority and proper legal bounds). Requiring written confirmation from the secretary of defense that the president has, in fact, commanded a launch would supplement the existing technical means for ensuring an order's authenticity. More important, it would guarantee the secretary's involvement in the decision-making. Requiring written

confirmation from the attorney general that an order is legal—or, alternatively, that there has been a meaningful review of the order's legality—would further widen the circle of cabinet-level discussion. For both officials, provisions would need to be made for alternates to perform their roles when needed.

These proposed requirements could be implemented either by the executive branch, through an executive order, or by the legislative branch, through a new law. The executive-branch route would be more politically and legally palatable to those who oppose legislative restrictions on presidential decision-making or fear that it would lead to further congressional meddling. True, executive orders can be waived by the president, but once it was institutionalized in two cabinet departments, it would be difficult to undo this requirement quickly and without raising major alarms internally.

Codifying these requirements instead through legislation would have virtues and risks. For one thing, statutory requirements would give commanders below an irrational president greater confidence to resist an unjustified launch order. There is, however, a danger that even if such a statute were not watered down during the legislative process, the executive branch might label it unconstitutional and announce that it would refuse to be bound by it, at least in certain circumstances. The legal issues raised by such a law are unlikely to ever be resolved by the courts, which have tended to punt on tough questions about war powers and leave them to the other branches. That said, the executive branch often adopts practices mandated by Congress even without conceding its legal position. (For example, presidents regularly submit notifications to Congress about the use of U.S. forces, as required by the 1973 War Powers Resolution, even when questioning the constitutionality or applicability of the law.) If Congress did pass reforms to the nuclear launch process, it should be prepared to exercise firm oversight and, if necessary, use its other powers, such as threatening to withhold certain funding, to ensure that the executive branch followed through.

Adding new certifications to the launch process should appeal to a broad range of opinions—both of those who want to move toward a ban on first use and of those who are worried about the credibility of U.S. nuclear deterrence, including whether the command-and-control system will function as intended in crises. The fact that the safeguards would both constrain and empower the president as commander in

chief should increase the odds of a viable political coalition for reform. Still, the proposal would no doubt be controversial. But the most likely criticisms do not hold up.

IS THIS REALLY A PROBLEM?

The first criticism of additional checks is that they represent a solution to a problem that does not exist. Granted, the image of a president simply pushing a button to launch hundreds of missiles at a moment's notice, unchallenged, is naive. And although the details of command and control are classified, some of the most informed critics of reform insist that consultation and concurrence are solidly built into the standard operating procedure. As a practical matter, however, senior officials might not be immediately available when called on to confer with the president, a problem that has come up in past exercises and false-warning incidents. More to the point, the president can change or revoke the procedural plans that his subordinates have designed, reject the counsel of top advisers, or issue orders directly to officers in the chain of command—who in some circumstances could be no more senior than a colonel.

Officers are bound to disobey orders that are obviously illegal, but when the legality of a command seems uncertain, they are not expected to resist. Officers might be especially inclined to defer to the commander in chief in a crisis or even merely in a situation of increased tension, when an order for action, however unwise it may sound, would not seem to be a completely nonsensical bolt from the blue. (The current strain with North Korea represents just such a situation.) If the president said that the United States needed to launch an anticipatory first strike to prevent an enemy attack that could kill many Americans, there is no guarantee that officers of any rank would assert that their interpretation of the law should take precedence over his. Besides, those who count on officers in the chain of command to resist illegal nuclear orders rarely consider what that would mean the day after, for presidential authority over the military or for the credibility of the nuclear deterrent.

If a four-star general who headed U.S. Strategic Command does not know what would happen if the president insisted on a suspect order, as Kehler admitted, then there certainly is a problem. And some of the most knowledgeable civilian experts on command-and-control procedures—such as Bruce Blair, a scholar at Princeton (and former

missile launch control officer in the U.S. Air Force), and Scott Sagan, a political scientist at Stanford—are firmly convinced that the current system is inadequate. The current reliance on the president's optional consultation with top advisers is only a speed bump in slowing a precipitous launch authorization. What's needed is a circuit breaker. Lengthening the time in which an irrational launch order could be held up, as required certification by the secretary of defense and the attorney general would do, would buy time for the most extreme solution, if it appeared necessary: the as-yet-untested process, authorized by the 25th Amendment, by which cabinet officers can legally remove a president who has gone off the deep end.

What about the opposite problem—that unauthorized parties could manage to block the legitimate use of nuclear forces? It's hard to know how significant that risk is. But even if the current system is immune to such interference—and to the similar danger of an unforeseen malfunction—there is no guarantee that it will remain so, especially in the age of rapidly evolving technology and burgeoning failures in cybersecurity. The record in military history of disastrous surprises that had been considered impossible before the fact does not inspire confidence.

TYING THE PRESIDENT'S HANDS?

A second line of criticism contends that these reforms would dangerously tie the president's hands. Skeptics fear that even a short lag in the process could give an enemy an advantage, whether during a tense standoff or in the course of a conventional conflict. It's important to remember, however, that the measures would apply only to first use, meaning that there is no risk that a president would be unable to retaliate quickly against an enemy nuclear attack in progress.

That said, the one situation in which additional steps in the process could present a problem would be if a president felt it necessary to launch a preemptive nuclear strike—that is, one intended to interdict an imminent attack by an enemy making immediate preparations for nuclear war. It's important to distinguish this from a preventive war, one waged in anticipation of a possible enemy attack sometime in the future. Preventive wars are almost never a good idea, given the uncertainty about whether the threat will ever come to pass, and because they are usually seen by the rest of the world as aggression, not defense. A nuclear one started by the United States, inflicting

epochal devastation without immediate provocation, would brand the country as an international outlaw.

A preemptive attack, in contrast, could be more legitimate, since if an enemy attack really was about to begin, a U.S. first strike might block the damage it could inflict. Preemption is still very risky, however, since it may be impossible in the heat of a crisis to determine whether the enemy's war preparations are intended for offense or defense. Figuring out which mistake is the greater risk—launching an unnecessary attack or falling victim to aggression—has long been a central strategic dilemma for decision-makers.

During the Cold War, the United States handled the dilemma by constructing a nuclear force capable of surviving a first strike and firing back effectively, creating a sense of certain retaliation, which would make Moscow refrain from initiating a nuclear attack under any circumstances, since it knew that doing so would be suicidal. Thus, there would be no need for preemption, even in a crisis. No strategy is foolproof, but such deterrence should still work today, even against a reckless adversary such as the North Korean leader Kim Jong Un, who, for all his bluster, still wants to stay in power (and alive).

If U.S. intelligence did report a major increase in the readiness of North Korean forces, the argument for a preemptive strike would grow stronger, but should not override the reasons for nuclear restraint. Rather, policymakers should make an effort to maximize the capabilities for preemption with conventional forces. Doing so may require technical and operational innovations, along with the deployment of additional forces near the scene in peacetime, and it would raise the risk of failing to destroy 100 percent of the enemy's arsenal. But the alternative risk—starting an unnecessary nuclear war—is worse.

UNCONSTITUTIONAL?

The third likely criticism would come from those who believe that limiting the president's nuclear authority—if done through legislation—would violate the Constitution. Imposing conditions on his authority to direct military officials and exercise tactical and operational control over U.S. forces, the argument runs, would encroach on his executive powers, including as commander in chief.

But the proposed requirements are justifiably within Congress' authority. The Constitution gives Congress the power to declare war and regulate the military, provisions that arguably include the power

to place limits on when the president may resort to nuclear first use. New requirements would also raise separate concerns about encumbering the president's direct command of military forces or intruding on his power to determine how to conduct military operations, but Congress may arguably legislate measures such as these to ensure that the president's commands are lawfully and properly carried out, without taking military options completely off the table. In the past, the enormous stakes of nuclear decision-making were used to justify expanded presidential powers, but today, the better argument is that the special challenges of nuclear decisions justify giving Congress some authority to regulate them.

To be clear, this proposal leaves open many constitutional and legal questions. Under what circumstances may a president resort to a nuclear first strike without explicit authorization from Congress? What international law applies to a proposed strike, and how should it be interpreted in the context at hand? But the aim right now should not be to answer such questions definitively; rather, it should be to ensure that before a nuclear attack is launched, the answers are carefully considered, formalized, and communicated reliably down the chain of command. Instead of settling the thorny questions in advance, they would be left for the attorney general to answer when certifying the legality or legal review of a given proposed attack. Moreover, merely institutionalizing this process of requiring the attorney general's official opinion would allow time for reconsideration. And in the event that the attorney general refused to certify that a strike was legal, the process would give the chain of command the confidence needed to resist an irrational president who wished to start a nuclear war without reasonable grounds. In other words, it would put insubordination on firmer legal footing, should it come to that.

THE BALANCE OF RISKS

Requiring additional checks for the first use of nuclear weapons would serve as a hedge against a low-probability, high-consequence event: an impetuous commander in chief lurching into catastrophe. At the same time, it would help guard against interference by hostile parties seeking to sabotage the chain of command, and it would improve decision-making and implementation in the very unlikely event that a nuclear first strike were truly necessary. Political and legal opposition to this proposal will inevitably be strong. Much of that will concern the

question of the extent of the president's war powers, but merely adding a delay to the process for first use does not require resolving this long-standing constitutional debate. If only by ensuring and formalizing deliberation, these reforms would buy time for responsible officials to take action. And although critics will inevitably point to the political, strategic, and legal risks of this proposal, the problem of an inadvertent nuclear war has no risk-free solution. Adding new steps to the authorization process would balance these risks better than the current system does.

Questions about how and when to use nuclear weapons may seem like an academic relic of the Cold War era, a time when they consumed defense planners. Indeed, after the Soviet Union collapsed, such questions faded away as smaller security problems took center stage. But now, as tensions grow with the established nuclear powers of China and Russia and with the new nuclear power of North Korea and the potential one of Iran, such debates have returned to the fore. As the United States adapts its nuclear strategy to the twenty-first century, it should adapt its nuclear decision-making procedures, too. The founders put a high premium on checks and balances out of a healthy appreciation for the limits of any individual's virtue or wisdom. There is every reason to apply this logic to the process of starting a nuclear war—the ultimate presidential power.

Mugabe's Misrule

And How It Will Hold Zimbabwe Back

Martin Meredith

In a radio broadcast that Robert Mugabe made from exile in 1976, during the guerrilla war he was leading to overthrow white-minority rule in Rhodesia, he set out his views about the kind of electoral democracy he intended to establish once he had gained control of Zimbabwe, as the new state was to be named. "Our votes must go together with our guns," he said. "After all, any vote we shall have shall have been the product of the gun. The gun which produces the vote should remain its security officer—its guarantor. The people's votes and the people's guns are always inseparable twins."

As Zimbabwe's leader for 37 years, Mugabe never deviated from this attachment to brute force. Whatever challenge his regime faced, he was always prepared to overcome it by resorting to the gun. So proud was he of his record that he once boasted that in addition to his seven university degrees, he had acquired "many degrees in violence."

What propelled Mugabe to use violence so readily was his obsession with power. Power for Mugabe was not a means to an end but the end itself. His overriding ambition was to gain total control, and he pursued that objective with relentless single-mindedness, crushing opponents and critics who stood in his way, sanctioning murder, torture, and lawlessness of every kind. "I will never, never, never, never surrender," he said after unleashing a campaign of terror to win an election held in 2008. "Zimbabwe is mine."

To sustain himself in power, Mugabe came to rely on a cabal of army generals, police chiefs, senior civil servants, and political cronies willing to do his bidding. In return, he gave them license to amass huge personal wealth, derived mainly from bribes and the looting of state assets. As the bedrock of the Mugabe state, they became accustomed

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to using methods of violence and intimidation as a matter of routine, able to act with impunity.

Ensconced in the presidential residence in Harare, the capital, Mugabe intended to rule for life. At the age of 93, although prone to falling asleep in meetings and afflicted by memory lapses, he still clung to power with the same determination and ruthlessness that had marked his political career from the start.

In his dotage, however, he succumbed to the blandishments of his 52-year-old wife, Grace, an avaricious and menacing figure with ambitions to establish herself at the head of a Mugabe dynasty. During a vicious struggle over the succession, Mugabe was persuaded in November 2017 to dismiss Grace's main rival, Vice President Emmerson Mnangagwa, his chief enforcer and a key player in the security establishment. Fearing that their own positions were under threat, the generals who had underwritten Mugabe's rule for so long decided to stage a palace coup, placing him under house arrest. For six days, Mugabe tried to hold on to the trappings of office, but after losing the support of his party, he accepted a lavish retirement package and agreed to resign, paving the way for Mnangagwa to take control.

Mugabe may have gone, but the Mugabe state lives on. The apparatus of vote rigging and repression is still in place. The plight of Zimbabwe, moreover, remains pitiful, a once prosperous country not only reduced to economic ruin but also trapped in a culture of corruption and violence that Mugabe fostered since gaining power in 1980 and that is now deeply embedded among the ruling elite. There is little hope of much change for the better.

FROM TEACHER TO REVOLUTIONARY

Before he entered politics, Mugabe seemed set on an illustrious career as a teacher. Like many other independence leaders in Africa, he was a product of the mission-school system. As a pupil at Kutama Mission School in rural Rhodesia, then a British colony, he devoted much of his time to studying, encouraged by Jesuit teachers who recognized his intellectual ability and his aptitude for self-discipline. His Jesuit upbringing instilled in him a self-confidence that he never lost. Yet he was also secretive and solitary, preferring books to sports or other school activities. "His books were his only friends," his brother Donato once recalled.

Mugabe left Kutama in 1945 with a teaching diploma and took up a series of teaching posts. After winning a scholarship to study in

No country for old man: Mugabe and his wife, November 2017

PHILIMON BULAWAYO / REUTERS

South Africa, he returned to Rhodesia in 1952 more politically aware of the injustices of white rule, but he still preferred to continue his studies rather than engage in political activity. To his political friends in the 1950s, he remained an aloof and austere figure, a supporter of the African nationalist cause but one who kept his distance. In 1958, with three academic degrees to his credit, he took up a post at a teacher-training institute in newly independent Ghana. As the first black African colony to gain independence, Ghana was brimming with optimism and ambition at the time. Its leader, Kwame Nkrumah, harbored grand plans for a new socialist order and was keen to support the liberation of the rest of Africa from European rule. Mugabe reveled in this environment but nevertheless remained committed to his work as a teacher.

The pivotal moment came in 1960, when he returned to Rhodesia for a brief visit, fully expecting to go back to Ghana, but found himself caught up in nationalist agitation against white rule. Galvanized into action by street protests, he abruptly resigned from his teaching post and threw himself into the nationalist fray with the same dedication he had hitherto devoted to education.

Mugabe was among the first nationalists to advocate armed struggle, convinced that nothing else would overcome white intransigence. But he was simultaneously helping organize attacks against black political opponents. When the nationalist movement split in 1963, setting off internecine warfare between two rival factions, ZANU (the Zimbabwe African National Union) and ZAPU (the Zimbabwe African People's Union), Mugabe played a prominent role in orchestrating violence carried out by ZANU's youth group against ZAPU. ZAPU was politically aligned with the Soviet Union and tended to focus on the urban proletariat, whereas ZANU supported Mao Zedong's China and was agrarian in outlook.

Gang violence between the two factions eventually gave Rhodesia's white rulers sufficient pretext to arrest nationalist leaders and crush the nationalist movement in 1964 in the name of law and order. When a guerrilla war against white rule broke out in 1972, ZANU and ZAPU fought separately in different parts of Rhodesia. Meanwhile, many of the personal hatreds and antagonisms engendered in the nationalist movement in the 1960s continued to fester and came to the fore after independence in 1980, with disastrous consequences.

Like Nelson Mandela in South Africa, Mugabe endured long years of imprisonment. And like him, he suffered the anguish of losing a son and was refused permission to attend the funeral. But whereas Mandela used his prison term to open a dialogue with South Africa's white rulers in order to defeat apartheid, Mugabe emerged from 11 years in prison bent on revolution. In 1975, he escaped into exile in neighboring Mozambique, intent on taking control of ZANU's war effort, determined to overthrow white society by force and replace it with a one-party Marxist regime. In 1979, after seven years of civil war in which at least 30,000 people had died, a negotiated settlement under British auspices was within reach, but Mugabe still hankered for military victory—"the ultimate joy," as he described it at the time. Only an ultimatum from African presidents who had until now backed him forced him to compromise, accepting a cease-fire and a British-run transition to independence. "As I signed the document, I was not a happy man at all," he recalled.

THE DICTATOR

After winning a majority in Zimbabwe's inaugural elections in February 1980, Mugabe became prime minister of a coalition government amid a rising sense of optimism. He made strenuous efforts to achieve a good

working relationship with his former white adversaries, pledging to strive for reconciliation and racial harmony. Instead of the angry Marxist ogre that the white minority had been led to expect, he impressed them as a model of moderation. Even the recalcitrant white leader Ian Smith, who had previously denounced Mugabe as "the apostle of Satan," found him "sober and responsible."

On the international stage, Zimbabwe was accorded star status. In the first year of independence, Zimbabwe was awarded more than $1 billion in aid, enabling Mugabe to embark on ambitious health and education programs. The white population, too, benefited from the growing prosperity. Mugabe paid particular attention to the concerns of white farmers—the backbone of the agricultural economy—reassuring them with large increases in commodity prices. "Good old Bob!" they cheered. "We are the darling of the world," Mugabe told a meeting of white farmers, "and since we are on honeymoon and honeymoons don't always last long, we ought to take advantage of it!"

Within weeks of taking office, Mugabe decided to settle some old scores, not against former white adversaries but against black opponents.

Zimbabwe's honeymoon was indeed brief. Within weeks of taking office, Mugabe decided to settle some old scores, not against former white adversaries but against black opponents. Although Mugabe's party, ZANU-PF (the additional two letters stand for "Patriotic Front"), had won the February 1980 elections with a substantial majority, the outcome left his ZAPU rivals with a stronghold in Matabeleland, a region that makes up the western half of the country. Mugabe made clear his intention of provoking a showdown, licensing his closest colleagues to speak out about the need to "crush" ZAPU. In October 1980, he secretly arranged for North Koreans to train a special military brigade as a strike force. It was given the name Gukurahundi, after a Shona word meaning "the rain that blows away the chaff before the spring rains."

In 1983, using "dissident" activity in Matabeleland as a pretext, Mugabe unleashed the Gukurahundi on a campaign of mass murder, torture, arson, rape, and beatings directed mainly against the civilian population there. One of the key figures in the campaign was Mnangagwa, then the minister of state security, who described the "dissidents" as "cockroaches"

that needed to be eliminated. Over a four-year period, an estimated 20,000 civilians were killed. ZAPU eventually capitulated and agreed to disband.

Having demolished his ZAPU rivals and established a de facto one-party state, Mugabe went on to accumulate huge personal power, giving himself the right to hold office as president for an unlimited number of terms. He based his regime on a vast system of patronage, controlling appointments to all senior posts in the civil service, the defense forces, the police, and parastatal organizations. One by one, all these institutions—and, eventually, the judiciary—were subordinated to his will. His secret police harassed, intimidated, and murdered his opponents.

As a reward for their loyalty, Mugabe allowed the new elite to engage in a scramble for property, farms, businesses, and contracts. "I am rich because I belong to ZANU-PF," boasted one of his cronies, the multimillionaire businessman Philip Chiyangwa, in the press. "If you want to be rich, you must join ZANU-PF." The scramble became ever more frenetic, spawning corruption on a massive scale. One after another, state corporations—the national oil company, the national electric company, the national telecommunications company—were plundered. Fraud, theft, and embezzlement in government departments became endemic. In the most notorious case, a state fund set up to provide compensation for those who had suffered during the liberation war was looted so thoroughly by Mugabe's colleagues that nothing was left for genuine victims. A land redistribution program financed by the British government was halted when it was discovered that Mugabe had been handing out farms intended for peasant resettlement to ministers and officials.

By the mid-1990s, Mugabe had become an irascible dictator, brooking no opposition, contemptuous of the law and human rights, and indifferent to the incompetence and corruption around him. Whatever good intentions he had started out with had long since evaporated. Surrounded by sycophants, he had become increasingly detached from reality, living in heavily fortified residences and venturing out only with retinues of armed bodyguards and in large motorcades. He spent much of his time abroad, enjoying the role of revolutionary hero.

CHALLENGE AND RESPONSE

Ordinary people suffered the brunt of government mismanagement. By 2000, Zimbabweans were generally poorer than they had been at independence; average wages were lower; unemployment had tripled;

and life expectancy was falling. More than two-thirds of the population lived in abject poverty. Veterans of the liberation war held particular grievances over government neglect and Mugabe's failure to deliver on promises of land reform.

Popular opposition to Mugabe's regime spread to many parts of the country. Aiming to challenge ZANU-PF in parliamentary elections in 2000, a coalition of labor unions, lawyers, journalists, and church groups launched a new party, the Movement for Democratic Change (MDC), and mobilized support to oppose Mugabe's plans to extend his powers even further in a referendum over a proposed new constitution. White activists played a significant role in the "no" campaign. White farmers, in particular, were alarmed by Mugabe's proposal to allow the government to seize land without compensation.

The result was a stunning defeat for Mugabe: 55 percent voted against the proposed constitution. Shaken to the core, the ruling elite suddenly saw their grip on power slipping and, with it, all the wealth, salaries, perks, contracts, commissions, and scams they had enjoyed for 20 years. Mugabe attributed his defeat principally to the whites.

In a carefully coordinated operation, starting ten days after the referendum result was announced, Mugabe launched a campaign of terror against white farmers and hundreds of thousands of black farm workers whom he accused of supporting the opposition. Gangs armed with axes and machetes invaded white-owned farms across the country. Government and army trucks were used to transport them to the farms and keep them supplied with rations. They were called "war veterans," but the majority were too young to have participated in the war 20 years earlier. Large numbers were unemployed youths paid a daily allowance. They assaulted farmers and their families, threatened to kill them, and forced many to flee their homes. They stole tractors, slaughtered cattle, destroyed crops, and polluted water supplies. The police refused to take action. Black farm workers and their families were subjected to mass beatings and taken away en masse to "reeducation centers."

Mugabe fanned the flames, describing white farmers as "enemies," and as the election approached, his target became the MDC and opposition of any kind. "The MDC will never form the government of this country, never ever, not in my lifetime or even after I die," he declared. Violence and intimidation erupted across the country. One MDC candidate, Blessing Chebundo, who was running for Mnangagwa's seat in Parliament, endured several murder attempts. On his way to work, Chebundo was

surrounded by a gang of ZANU-PF thugs who poured gasoline on him and tried to set him on fire, but failed because in the scuffle, their matches had been doused in gasoline. Even though he was forced to remain in hiding throughout the campaign, he nevertheless managed to inflict on Mnangagwa a humiliating defeat.

After months of systematic intimidation, ZANU-PF scraped through with a narrow victory. But there was to be no respite from Mugabe's tyranny. He pursued his vendetta against white farmers relentlessly, seizing cattle ranches, dairy farms, tobacco estates, and safari properties. When the Supreme Court declared his actions illegal, Mugabe swiftly removed independent judges and replaced them with loyalists. A chaotic land grab ensued as Mugabe's cronies, party officials, and army and police commanders scrambled to snap up choice properties. Among the beneficiaries were his wife, Grace, and his brother-in-law.

At one point, Zimbabwe's inflation rate reached 500 billion percent.

The farm seizures spelled the end of commercial agriculture as a major industry. The impact on food supplies was calamitous. To survive, Zimbabwe became increasingly dependent on food imports and foreign food aid. Over a five-year period from 1999 to 2004, the economy shrank by one-third, precipitating a mass exodus. It was not only whites who fled abroad but also a large part of the black middle class—doctors, nurses, teachers, and other professionals who saw no future for themselves in Mugabe's Zimbabwe.

The same pattern of violence, intimidation, and vote rigging prevailed from one election to the next. In 2005, Mugabe targeted the mass of disaffected Zimbabweans living in slums and shantytowns on the fringes of urban centers, strongholds of the MDC. In a campaign called Operation Murambatsvina, using a Shona word meaning "drive out the rubbish," police squads bulldozed and sledgehammered one community after another. According to a UN investigation, some 700,000 people lost their homes, their source of livelihood, or both. Mugabe claimed that the aim of the campaign was merely slum clearance. But his real purpose was to make clear the fate of anyone who voted against him.

In the run-up to presidential and parliamentary elections in 2008, the MDC's leader, Morgan Tsvangirai, became a direct victim of Mugabe's tactics. When Tsvangirai arrived at a police station to investigate reports that supporters held there had been beaten, he, too, was seized, held

down, and beaten so badly that doctors thought his skull had been fractured. "I told the police, 'Beat him a lot,'" Mugabe subsequently said at a gathering of African presidents. "He asked for it."

Despite the fearful consequences, MDC supporters continued to defy Mugabe's regime. The 2008 parliamentary elections gave opposition parties, led by the MDC, a clear majority. The simultaneous presidential election also gave Tsvangirai a narrow lead over Mugabe, but election officials, after weeks of prevarication, manipulated the figures to ensure that a second round of voting was needed.

The campaign of terror that Mugabe unleashed to win the second round was more intense than any previous election episode. In a military-style operation, youth militias, police agents, army personnel, and party thugs moved into opposition areas, setting up torture camps and indoctrination centers. The campaign was officially called Operation Mavhoterapapi?—"Operation Whom Did You Vote For?" Among the people, it was known simply as *chidudu*—"the fear." Villagers were beaten en masse and told to vote for Mugabe next time or they would be killed. Scores of MDC organizers were abducted and murdered; hundreds were tortured. Some 200,000 people were forced to flee their homes. Mugabe vowed that he would "go to war" to prevent an MDC victory. "We are not going to give up our country because of a mere *x*," he said. "How can a ballpoint pen fight with a gun?" Five days before the voting was due to start, Tsvangirai withdrew.

A fractious coalition government was eventually formed, but Mugabe refused to implement any major reform that would restore a semblance of democracy, leaving Tsvangirai and the MDC humiliated and discredited by the time of the next election, in 2013. The economy, meanwhile, continued its downward slide. At one point, inflation reached 500 billion percent, according to calculations by the International Monetary Fund, rendering the currency worthless.

MUGABEISM AFTER MUGABE

The damage inflicted on Zimbabwe by Mugabe's 37-year rule is immense. Mugabe vitiated the courts, trampled on property rights, rigged elections, hamstrung the independent press, and left Zimbabwe bankrupt and impoverished. One-quarter of Zimbabweans live abroad in order to survive; four million depend on food aid; vast numbers of children are stunted by malnutrition; life expectancy, at 60 years, ranks among the lowest in the world.

No wonder the downfall of Mugabe brought crowds onto the streets in celebration. But the sense of euphoria has been replaced by apprehension. As a member of Mugabe's inner circle since independence, Mnangagwa, now 75 years old, is well known for his ruthlessness. His involvement in the Gukurahundi atrocities and in ZANU-PF's habitual election violence has made him the most feared politician in Zimbabwe. At his inauguration as president in December 2017, he praised Mugabe as "a father, a mentor, a comrade-in-arms, and my leader." He also approved a lavish retirement package for Mugabe and his wife that includes bodyguards, housekeepers, gardeners, waiters, cooks, chauffeurs, diplomatic passports, first-class air flights, and private health insurance.

In recent years, as Mugabe's deputy, Mnangagwa sought ways out of Zimbabwe's economic morass, courting multilateral financial institutions such as the International Monetary Fund and the World Bank and proposing reforms to encourage foreign investors to return. As president, he has promised to compensate white farmers, even though the treasury is empty. But although he offers a more pragmatic approach than Mugabe, Mnangagwa has also made clear his determination that ZANU-PF, and its wealthy elite, will remain in control. "The dogs may keep on barking, but ZANU-PF will keep on ruling," he said after Mugabe's resignation. To this end, he has appointed to his cabinet several former generals notorious for their brutality, including Perence Shiri, former commander of the Gukurahundi, and Constantino Chiwenga, a former defense forces chief; both have been heavily involved in orchestrating election violence and farm seizures.

The key test of Mnangagwa's intentions will come in the run-up to the next elections, which are due later this year. He has promised that the elections will be "free and fair." Yet ZANU-PF's government has a long record of rigging elections. It is practiced not only in controlling the work of election officials and law enforcement agencies but also in manipulating a defective electoral roll system that contains millions of ghost voters. Much will depend on the willingness of Western governments to insist on credible elections that are strictly monitored as a condition for helping Zimbabwe emerge from decades of misrule. Meanwhile, the state Mugabe created lives on. With Mnangagwa and the generals at the helm, ZANU-PF continues to control every lever of government. Just as Mugabe envisioned more than four decades ago, the vote still goes with the gun.

The Clash of Exceptionalisms

A New Fight Over an Old Idea

Charles A. Kupchan

Many Americans have recoiled at President Donald Trump's "America first" foreign policy. Critics charge that his populist brand of statecraft undermines the United States' role as an exceptional nation destined to bring political and economic liberty to a waiting world. Trump exhibits isolationist, unilateralist, and protectionist instincts; indifference to the promotion of democracy; and animosity toward immigrants. How could Americans elect a president so at odds with what their country stands for?

Yet "America first" is less out of step with U.S. history than meets the eye. Trump is not so much abandoning American exceptionalism as he is tapping into an earlier incarnation of it. Since World War II, the country's exceptional mission has centered on the idea of a Pax Americana upheld through the vigorous export of U.S. power and values. But before that, American exceptionalism meant insulating the American experiment from foreign threats, shunning international entanglements, spreading democracy through example rather than intrusion, embracing protectionism and fair (not free) trade, and preserving a relatively homogeneous citizenry through racist and anti-immigrant policies. In short, it was about America first.

That original version of American exceptionalism—call it American Exceptionalism 1.0—vanished from mainstream politics after the Japanese attack on Pearl Harbor. But it retained allure in the heartland and is today making a comeback across the political spectrum as Americans have tired of their nation's role as the global policeman and grown skeptical of the benefits of globalization and immigration. To

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be sure, as a grand strategy, "America first" is headed for failure. The United States and the rest of the world have become too interdependent; solving most international challenges requires collective, not unilateral, action; and immigration has already ensured that a homogeneous United States is gone for good.

A brand of exceptionalism dating to the eighteenth century is ill suited to the twenty-first. Still, the contemporary appeal of "America first" and the inward turn it marks reveal that the version of exceptionalism that has guided U.S. grand strategy since the 1940s is also past its prime. Trump's presidency has exposed the need for a new narrative to steer U.S. foreign policy. The nation's exceptional mission is far from complete; a world tilting toward illiberalism sorely needs a counterweight of republican ideals. How the United States redefines its exceptional calling will determine whether it is up to the task.

AMERICAN EXCEPTIONALISM 1.0

From its earliest days, the exceptionalist narrative has set the boundaries of public discourse and provided a political and ideological foundation for U.S. grand strategy. The original conception of American exceptionalism was based on five national attributes.

The first was geography: protective oceans kept predatory powers at bay, and ample and fertile land sustained a growing population and generated wealth, helping the United States become the dominant power in the Western Hemisphere. But the nation's geopolitical ambition would stretch no farther. Exceptional geographic bounty enabled, even mandated, a grand strategy of isolation from other quarters. As President George Washington affirmed in his Farewell Address, the country enjoyed a "detached and distant situation. . . . Why forgo the advantages of so peculiar a situation? Why quit our own to stand upon foreign ground?" The United States did experiment with a broader imperialism in 1898, colonizing the Philippines and taking hold of Hawaii and a number of other Pacific islands, and it intervened in Europe during World War I. But these episodes provoked a sharp backlash and consolidated the stubborn isolationism of the interwar decades.

Second, in part because of its geographic isolation, the United States enjoyed unparalleled autonomy, both at home and abroad. Although the founders were keen to expand overseas commerce through trade deals, they were deeply averse to binding strategic commitments. As

Washington said in his Farewell Address, "The great rule of conduct for us in regard to foreign nations is in extending our commercial relations, to have with them as little political connection as possible." After reneging in 1793 on the revolution-era alliance with France that had helped the United States gain independence, the country would not enter into another alliance until World War II.

Third, Americans embraced a messianic mission: they believed that their unique experiment in political and economic liberty would redeem the world. As the pamphleteer Thomas Paine wrote in *Common Sense*, "A situation, similar to the present, hath not happened since the days of Noah until now. The birthday of a new world is at hand." But the United States was not to fulfill this mission through intervention. When liberal revolutions unfolded in Europe and Latin America in the early 1800s, Secretary of State John Quincy Adams asserted that the United States "goes not abroad, in search of monsters to destroy." The country should be "the well-wisher to the freedom and independence of all," he insisted, but only through "the countenance of her voice, and the benignant sympathy of her example."

A brand of exceptionalism dating to the eighteenth century is ill suited to the twenty-first.

Fourth, the United States enjoyed unprecedented social equality and economic mobility. Americans had replaced monarchy and aristocracy with equality of opportunity. Yeoman farmers and small-town shopkeepers were the foot soldiers of manifest destiny—the notion that democracy and prosperity would stretch from coast to coast. As the United States became a leading commercial power, it defended its emerging industrial base through tariffs and insisted on fair and reciprocal trade, not free trade. And when necessary, it was prepared to use deadly force to defend the commercial rights of its citizens, as made clear in the Barbary Wars of the early 1800s and in the War of 1812.

Finally, Americans believed their nation had been endowed with not just exceptional land but also exceptional people: Anglo-Saxons. Reflecting a view commonplace in the early United States, the Congregational minister Horace Bushnell declared, "Out of all the inhabitants of the world, . . . a select stock, . . . the noblest of the stock, was chosen to people our country." The racial dimension of American exceptionalism manifested itself in the campaigns against

Native Americans, the enslavement and segregation of African Americans, and frequent bouts of anti-immigrant sentiment. Through the Alien and Sedition Acts of 1798, Congress extended the timeline for immigrants to become U.S. citizens and granted the federal government the power to imprison or deport those it deemed disloyal. Restrictions on immigration kicked in during the second half of the 1800s and intensified during the interwar period. And the fear of diluting the population with "inferior peoples" curbed the country's desire to acquire significant territory in the Caribbean and Central America after the Civil War.

AMERICAN EXCEPTIONALISM 2.0

Then came the attack on Pearl Harbor, which, as Arthur Vandenberg, a Repubican senator and one-time isolationist, wrote in his diary, "ended isolationism for any realist." So began the era of American Exceptionalism 2.0. If the United States could no longer shield itself from the world and share the American experiment by example, it would have to run the world by more actively projecting its power and values. Ever since the 1940s, internationalists have enjoyed political dominance, while isolationists have become political pariahs—"wacko birds," as Senator John McCain of Arizona once labeled his fellow Republican Senator Rand Paul of Kentucky and others who take that stance.

Under American Exceptionalism 2.0, an aversion to foreign entanglement gave way to a strategy of global engagement. The Cold War set the stage for the country's core alliances in Europe and Asia, as well as a global network of diplomatic and military outposts. Unilateralism yielded to multilateralism. In 1919 and 1920, the Senate rejected U.S. participation in the League of Nations three times; in 1945, it ratified the UN Charter by a vote of 89 to 2. The United States also assumed a leading role in the panoply of institutions that have undergirded the postwar rules-based international order. And it continued to pursue its messianic mission, but through more intrusive means, from the successful occupations and transformations of Germany and Japan after World War II to the ongoing and less successful forays into Afghanistan and Iraq.

The American dream remained central to this updated version of exceptionalism, but it was to be fulfilled by the factory worker instead of the yeoman farmer. The postwar industrial boom generated bipartisan support for open trade. And especially after the civil rights movement of

True believers: watching a Veterans Day parade in New Hampshire, November 2015

BRIAN SNYDER / REUTERS

the 1950s and 1960s, postwar American exceptionalism lost its racial tinge, replaced by a conviction that the melting pot would successfully integrate a diverse population into one civic nation. Preaching pluralism and tolerance became part of spreading the American way.

THE RETURN OF AMERICA FIRST

Postwar presidents through Barack Obama have been staunch defenders of American Exceptionalism 2.0. "The United States has been, and will always be, the one indispensable nation in world affairs," Obama affirmed in a 2012 commencement speech at the U.S. Air Force Academy. But just minutes after taking office, Trump promised something different. "From this moment on," he proclaimed in his inaugural address, "it's going to be America first."

Because of the America First Committee, which was founded in 1940 to oppose U.S. intervention in World War II, this phrase evokes anti-Semitism and isolationism. But there is more to Trump's "America first" than its ugly pedigree. Trump's political success stems in no small part from his ability to exploit a version of American exceptionalism that resonates with the nation's history. As the writer Walter Russell Mead has argued, populist foreign policy—what Mead calls a "Jacksonian" approach—has always maintained its appeal in the heartland, Trump's electoral base. Whether Trump

himself actually believes in the exceptional nature of the American experiment is unclear (his illiberal instincts and behavior suggest he may not). Nonetheless, he has proved quite successful at reanimating core elements of American Exceptionalism 1.0.

Trump has cloaked himself in isolationist garb, repeatedly questioning the value of core U.S. alliances in Europe and Asia and promising in a campaign speech outlining his "America first" foreign policy that the United States will be "getting out of the nation-building business." So far, his bark has been worse than his bite, as these pledges have proved easier said than done. The United States remains the strategic stabilizer of Europe and Northeast Asia and continues to be mired in the broader Middle East. And when it comes to Iran and North Korea, Trump, if anything, errs on the hawkish side.

Still, Trump's vision is nonetheless isolationist. In his "America first" campaign speech, he promised to let allies that did not increase their own military spending "defend themselves." And he pledged to bring to an end the era in which "our politicians seem more interested in defending the borders of foreign countries than their own."

Trump wants to roll back multilateralism. As a candidate, he vowed that "we will never enter America into any agreement that reduces our ability to control our own affairs." Once in office, he pulled the United States out of the Trans-Pacific Partnership, the Paris climate agreement, and UNESCO. He refused to certify the nuclear deal with Iran and continues to take aim at the North American Free Trade Agreement and the World Trade Organization.

As for the United States' messianic mission, Trump is disdainful of the activist brand of democracy promotion embraced under American Exceptionalism 2.0. As he explained in that same campaign speech, he sees today's instability in the Middle East as a direct result of the "dangerous idea that we could make Western democracies out of countries that had no experience or interests in becoming a Western democracy." But Trump does not stop there; indeed, he forsakes even American Exceptionalism 1.0, by showing little patience for republican ideals. He traffics in untruths, denigrates the media, and expresses admiration for Russian President Vladimir Putin and other autocrats.

According to Trump, the American dream has given way to what he called "American carnage" in his inaugural address. He claimed that the wealth of the country's middle class "has been ripped from their homes and then redistributed across the entire world." Taking a page

from American Exceptionalism 1.0, he has promised protectionist policies to "bring back our jobs . . . bring back our borders . . . bring back our dreams."

Trump also wants to return to the more homogeneous America of the past. Restricting immigration; ending Deferred Action for Childhood Arrivals, or DACA (the Obama administration's program that shielded undocumented immigrants who were brought to the country as children); insulting Hispanic Americans; sending back Haitians, Salvadorans, and others displaced by natural disasters; and equivocating on neo-Nazis in Charlottesville—all these moves are not-so-subtle paeans to the days when Christians of European extraction dominated the United States. For Trump, making America great again means making it white again.

AMERICAN EXCEPTIONALISM IN CRISIS

"America first" helped Trump win the presidency, but as a guiding principle for U.S. foreign policy, it is leading the nation astray. As Trump has already found out, a daunting array of threats makes it impossible for the United States to return to the era of "entangling alliances with none," as Thomas Jefferson put it. The rules-based international order that the United States erected may limit the country's room for maneuver, but dismantling it is a recipe for anarchy. In today's globalized economy, protectionism would worsen, not improve, the plight of the U.S. middle class. And with non-Hispanic whites projected to fall below 50 percent of the population by the middle of this century, there is no going back to Anglo-Saxon America.

But the political appeal of "America first" also reveals serious cracks in American Exceptionalism 2.0, which still dominates the U.S. foreign policy establishment. Trump's success stems not just from his skill at activating traditional elements of American identity but also from his promises to redress legitimate and widespread discontent. The United States has overreached abroad; after all, it was Obama, not Trump, who insisted that "it is time to focus on nation building here at home." The middle class is hurting badly: stagnant wages, inequality, and socioeconomic segregation have put the American dream out of reach for many. And the nation has yet to arrive at an effective and humane policy for controlling immigration, raising important questions about whether the melting-pot approach remains viable.

American Exceptionalism 2.0 is also failing to deliver overseas. With help from the United States, large swaths of Europe, Asia, and

the Americas have become democratic, but illiberal alternatives to the American way are more than holding their own. The collective wealth of the West has fallen below 50 percent of global GDP, and an ascendant China is challenging the postwar architecture, meaning that Washington can no longer call the shots in multilateral institutions. It was easy for the United States to advocate a rules-based international order when it was the one writing the rules, but that era has come to an end. Today, U.S. ideals are no longer backed up by U.S. preponderance, making it harder to spread American values.

AMERICAN EXCEPTIONALISM 3.0

With American Exceptionalism 2.0 stumbling and Trump's effort to revert to the original version not viable, the United States can either abandon its exceptionalist narrative or craft a new one. The former option may seem tempting amid the nation's political and economic trials, but the costs would be too high. American exceptionalism has helped the country sustain a domestic consensus behind a grand strategy aimed at spreading democracy and the rule of law. With illiberalism on the rise, the globe desperately needs an anchor of republican ideals—a role that only the United States has the power and credentials to fill. Failing to uphold rules-based governance would risk the return of a Hobbesian world, violating not just the United States' principles but also its interests. Indeed, it is precisely because the world is potentially at a historical inflection point that the United States must reclaim its exceptionalist mantle.

Doing so will require adjustments to all five dimensions of the exceptionalist narrative. For starters, the United States should find the prudent middle ground between the isolationism of American Exceptionalism 1.0 and the overreach that has accompanied Pax Americana. Some scholars have suggested that the United States embrace "offshore balancing," letting other countries take the lead in keeping the peace in Europe, Northeast Asia, and the Persian Gulf, with Washington intervening only in a strategic emergency. But this approach goes too far. The United States' main problem of late has been shot selection, embroiling itself in unnecessary wars of choice in the strategic periphery—namely, the Middle East—where offshore balancing is indeed the right approach. But in the core strategic theaters of Europe and Asia, a U.S. retreat would only unsettle allies and embolden adversaries, inviting arms races and intensifying rivalries.

The United States needs to end its days as the global policeman, but it should remain the arbiter of great-power peace, while emphasizing diplomatic, rather than military, engagement outside core areas.

The United States must also rebalance its alliances and partnerships. Trump is not alone in his antipathy to pacts that, as he said, "tie us up." Congress has lost its appetite for the treaty-based obligations that laid the foundation for the postwar order. But the United States cannot afford to drift back to unilateralism; only collective action can address many of today's international challenges, including terrorism, nuclear proliferation, and climate change. The United States should therefore view itself as the leader of an international posse, defending rules-based institutions when possible and putting together "coalitions of the willing" when only informal cooperation is available.

The United States can either abandon its exceptionalist narrative or craft a new one.

Although Trump's diplomacy lacks tact, he is right to insist that U.S. allies shoulder their fair share. The United States should continue catalyzing international teamwork, but Washington must make clear that it will ante up only when its partners do. And in areas where the United States transitions to an offshore-balancing role, it should help organizations such as the Gulf Cooperation Council, the Association of Southeast Asian Nations, and the African Union become more capable stewards of their respective regions. Washington should also encourage emerging powers such as Brazil, China, India, and South Africa to provide the much-needed public goods of humanitarian assistance, peacekeepers, and development aid.

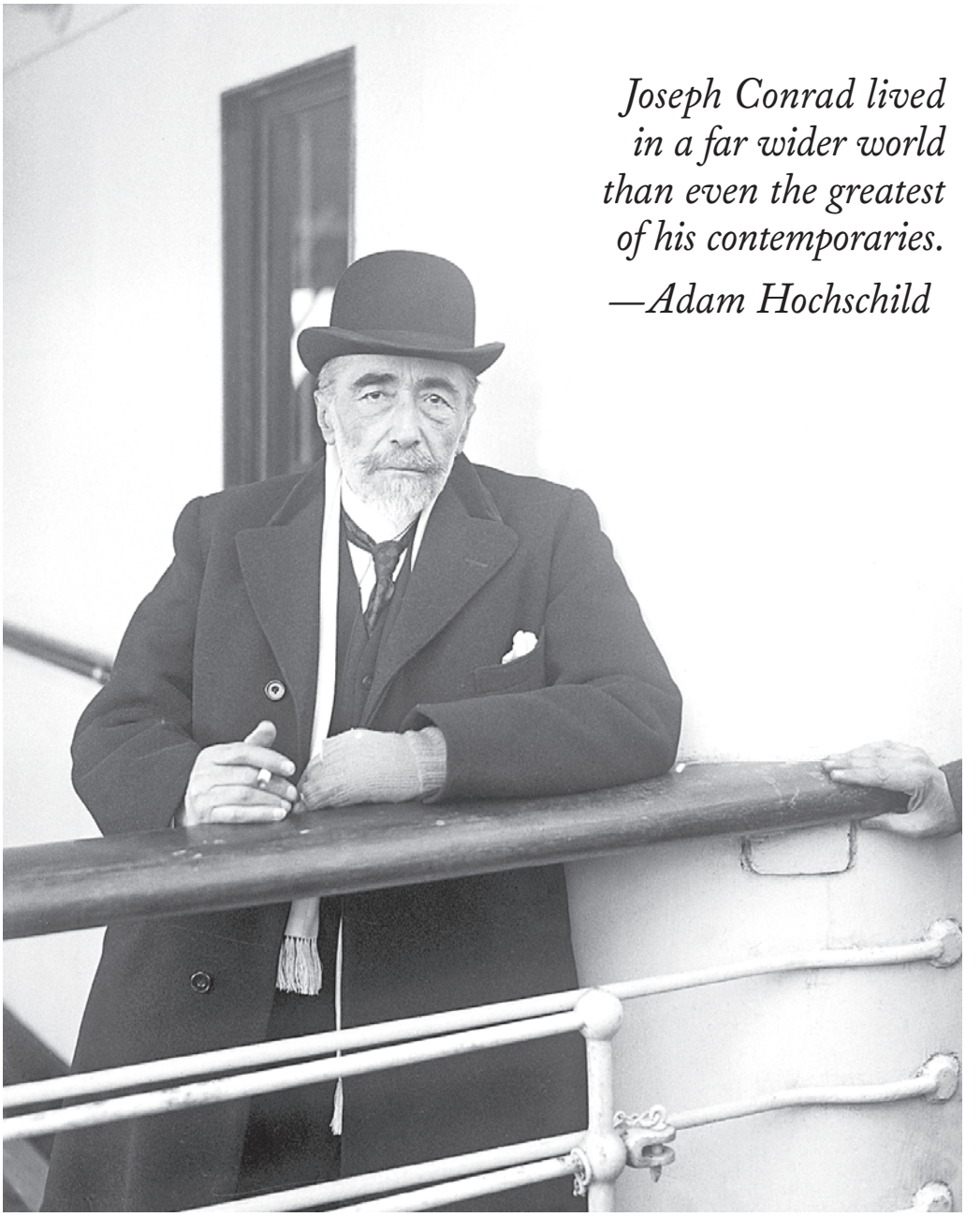
Although the United States' messianic mission should remain at the core of its exceptionalist narrative, the country must transition from crusader back to exemplar. Recent efforts at regime change in the Middle East, far from clearing the way for democracy, have unleashed violence and regional instability. Leading by example hardly means giving up on democracy promotion, but it does entail engaging in a world of political diversity and respectfully working with regimes of all types. Still, Americans must always defend universal political and human rights; to do otherwise would be to abandon the ideals that inform the nation's identity. Trump's failure on this count is not serving to reclaim an earlier version of American exceptionalism but denigrating it.

Domestic renewal is also essential to restoring faith in the American way both at home and abroad. The United States cannot serve as a global beacon if its electorate is deeply divided and it cannot provide opportunity for many of its citizens. Still, if the United States could recover from the internal discord of the Civil War and the hardship of the Great Depression, it can surely bounce back from today's malaise. Renewing the American dream—a key step toward overcoming political polarization—requires a realistic plan for restoring upward mobility, not a false promise to bring back an industrial heyday that is gone for good. Manufacturing employment has suffered mainly because of automation, not open trade or immigration. Adjusting the terms of trade can help. But rebuilding the middle class and restoring economic optimism in areas hurt by deindustrialization will also require ambitious plans to better educate and retrain workers, expand broadband Internet access, and promote growth sectors, including renewable energy, health care, and data processing.

Finally, a new version of American exceptionalism must embrace the idea that the United States' increasingly diverse population will integrate into an evolving national community imbued with the country's long-standing civic values. As sectarian passions cleave the Middle East, Hindu nationalism unsettles India, and discord over the future of immigration and multiculturalism test European solidarity, the United States must demonstrate unity amid diversity. The melting-pot approach of American Exceptionalism 2.0 is the right one, but sustaining it will require deliberate measures. Reversing socioeconomic segregation and immobility will take heavy investment in public schools and community colleges. Effective border control, a rational approach to legal immigration, and a fair but firm way to deal with undocumented immigrants would assure Americans that diversity is the product of design, not disorder. Fluency in English is critical to helping newcomers enter the mainstream. And national service and other programs that mix young Americans could encourage social and cultural integration and produce a stronger sense of community.

If nothing else, the rise of Trump has demonstrated that American Exceptionalism 2.0 has run its course. But try as he might, Trump will fail in his bid to respond to today's challenges by going back to the past. Looking beyond Trump, the United States will need a new exceptionalism to guide its grand strategy and renew its unique role as the world's anchor of liberal ideals.

REVIEWS & RESPONSES



Joseph Conrad lived in a far wider world than even the greatest of his contemporaries.

—Adam Hochschild

BETTMANN / GETTY IMAGES

Stranger in Strange Lands

Joseph Conrad and the Dawn of Globalization

Adam Hochschild

The Dawn Watch: Joseph Conrad in a Global World
BY MAYA JASANOFF. Penguin Press, 2017, 400 pp.

In the late nineteenth century and the first decade of the twentieth, nothing reshaped the world more than European imperialism. It redrew the map, enriched Europe, and left millions of Africans and Asians dead. For example, in 1870, some 80 percent of Africa south of the Sahara was under the control of indigenous kings, chiefs, or other such rulers. Within 35 years, virtually the entire continent, only a few patches excepted, was made up of European colonies or protectorates. France, Germany, Italy, Portugal, Spain, and the United Kingdom had all seized pieces of "this magnificent African cake," in the words of King Leopold II of Belgium—who took an enormous slice for himself.

In Asia in these same years, the British tightened their grip on the Indian subcontinent, the French on Indochina, and the Dutch on what today is Indonesia. Japan, Russia, and half a dozen European countries, even the tottering Austro-Hungarian Empire, won enclaves or concessions in China. Meanwhile, the United States fought a ruthless war in the Philippines, killing several hundred thousand Filipinos to establish an American colony.

It is startling, however, how seldom such events appear in the work of the era's European writers. It would be as if almost no major nineteenth-century American novelist dealt with slavery or no major twentieth-century German one wrote about the Holocaust. It's not that Europeans were unaware. Hundreds of thousands of them had lived or worked in the colonies, and the fruits of empire were everywhere on display: in palatial mansions and grand monuments built with colonial fortunes, in street names such as Rue de Madagascar in Bordeaux and Khartoum Road in London, in shops full of foreign trinkets and spices. In 1897, more than one million visitors came to see a world's fair on the outskirts of Brussels that featured 267 Congolese men, women, and children, living in huts and paddling canoes around a pond. There were similar human exhibits at fairs in the United States.

Writers, however, were largely silent. Mark Twain was a forthright critic of imperial cruelty in the Philippines and Africa, but only in some shorter pieces in the last decade and a half of his life. George Orwell would be profoundly disillusioned by his years as a police officer in British-ruled Burma, but he did not return from there and begin writing until 1927; *Burmese Days*, his debut novel, appeared in 1934. If turn-of-the-century writers approached imperialism at all, it was usually to celebrate it, as did John Buchan and

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Rudyard Kipling in the United Kingdom and similar literary cheerleaders in France and Germany.

The standout exception was Joseph Conrad. In his novel *Nostromo*, the American mining tycoon Holroyd declares, "We shall run the world's business whether the world likes it or not." Conrad's most searing portrait of such business is *Heart of Darkness*, published in 1899. No one who reads that book can ever again imagine the colonizers of Africa as they liked to portray themselves: unselfishly spreading Christianity and the benefits of commerce. "To tear treasure out of the bowels of the land was their desire," says Marlow, Conrad's narrator and alter ego, "with no more moral purpose at the back of it than there is in burglars breaking into a safe." The Congo at this time was the privately owned colony of Leopold II, whose ruthless regime conscripted huge numbers of Congolese as forced laborers—to gather ivory, wild rubber, food for the king's soldiers, firewood for the steamboats that plied the rivers, and much more. But the novelist does not imply that there was anything uniquely Belgian about this burglary, represented by Mr. Kurtz, the rapacious ivory hunter who is the book's villain. "All Europe contributed to the making of Kurtz."

Conrad lived in a far wider world than even the greatest of his contemporaries, such as Marcel Proust or James Joyce, and this is what animates *The Dawn Watch*, the gracefully written new book about him by the Harvard historian Maya Jasanoff. Born Jozef Teodor Konrad Korzeniowski to Polish parents, he left home at age 16 to sail the world on merchant ships for two decades, then settled in the United Kingdom and became a writer. Although Conrad "wouldn't have known the word 'globalization,'" Jasanoff writes, "with his journey from the provinces of imperial Russia across the high seas to the British home counties, he embodied it." And despite some racial stereotypes in his portrayals of Africans and, to a lesser extent, Asians, he recognized a multiethnic world: half of what he wrote, she points out, is set in Southeast Asia. No other writer of his time was dealing so trenchantly with encounters between Europeans and the non-European world.

Conrad's involvement with imperialism, political rebels, and the life of the sea just when steam was replacing sail made him attuned to dimensions of the world that remain relevant today. "The heirs of Conrad's technologically displaced sailors are to be found in industries disrupted by digitization," Jasanoff writes. "The analogues to his anarchists are to be found in Internet chat rooms or terrorist cells. The material interests he centered in the United States emanate today as much from China." Conrad was not a theorist of globalization, even under another name, but Jasanoff's take on him is a bracing reminder that in an age when writers often worked on a geographically limited stage—think of Wessex, for instance, the name Thomas Hardy gave to the part of England where he set nearly all his novels—Conrad's stage spanned the globe. And there are still very few major novelists about whom one could say that today.

A LONG WAY FROM HOME

Conrad's life, so much of it lived in far corners of the world, has kept critics and biographers busy for decades, their task made all the more challenging by

the web of evasions he spun in several unreliable memoirs of his own. *The Dawn Watch* is by no means as comprehensive a biography as others, particularly the masterful *Joseph Conrad: A Life* by Zdzislaw Najder (2007); in fact, it's not really a full biography so much as a meditation on the novelist's life and several of his major works. Still, the book is a great pleasure to read, for Jasanoff is driven to understand the world that shaped a writer she loves. To draw closer to his maritime experience, she traveled by container ship from Hong Kong to England; by a 134-foot, two-masted sailing vessel from Ireland to Brittany; and by riverboat down a thousand miles of the Congo River. Yet she mentions these voyages only modestly, using them not to boast of her enterprise but to evoke Conrad's life on the water: the remarkable width of the Congo River, for instance, or the rhythm of mariners' talk when you are out of sight of land for days at a time and your senses focus on the sea, the sunrise, the weather.

Jasanoff has also visited many of the places where Conrad lived, and she sketches them with a novelist's eye: "Marseille, city of olive oil, orange trees, sweet wine, and sacks of spice, mouth open to the Mediterranean and eye cocked toward the Atlantic, city of Crusaders, revolutionaries, the Count of Monte Cristo." She brings the same skillful pen to people who shaped the world Conrad lived in, such as King Leopold II, who, she writes, had "a nose like a mountain slope and a beard like a waterfall foaming over his chest." Her descriptive powers make for a fitting homage to a writer who said that the work of the written word was "to make you hear, to make you feel . . . before all, to make you see."

Exploring Conrad's world, particularly the changes in ocean commerce that occurred over his lifetime, leads Jasanoff down some fascinating byways. The switch from sail to steam meant fewer jobs: there weren't all those sails to set and furl, and steamships were larger and could carry much bigger cargoes. Hence it was a tough employment market, and Conrad seems to have spent as much time looking for a berth as actually serving in one. Once he was able to sign on to a British long-haul sailing ship as first or second mate, he was likely to find that more than 40 percent of the crew were foreigners like him: the wages were lower than many British workers earned onshore, but princely to someone from Asia or eastern Europe. (Jasanoff found the same thing to be true today for the Filipino crew of the container ship she traveled on.) And she points out that even during the long twilight of the sailing vessel, the cost of coal meant that transport by sail was still financially competitive on routes of more than 3,500 miles, which was one reason Conrad still often worked on such ships, much to the later benefit of his readers.

THE VICTIMS OF EMPIRE

Nowhere is Conrad's encounter with the world outside Europe more powerfully rendered than in *Heart of Darkness*, probably the most widely read, acclaimed, and written about short novel in English. The book gains its power from being closely based on six months Conrad spent in the Congo in 1890. He had signed up for what he expected to be an adventurous post as a steamboat

captain, but as he trained for the job, he was horrified by the greed and brutality he saw, fell ill with dysentery and malaria, and cut short his stay to return to Europe. Many of the details in *Heart of Darkness*—the slave laborers in chains, the rotting bodies of those who had been worked to death—can be found in the diary Conrad kept during the first weeks of his stay.

What gave him such a rare ability to see the arrogance and theft at the heart of imperialism? And to see that King Leopold's much-promoted civilizing mission was founded on slave labor? Much of it surely had to do with the fact that he himself, as a Pole, knew what it was like to live in conquered territory. Throughout the nineteenth century, the land that is Poland today was divided among three neighboring empires, Austria-Hungary, Prussia, and Russia. The last, where most of Conrad's family lived, was the most repressive; when he was three, Cossacks charged into churches to break up memorial services for a Polish nationalist hero. Furthermore, for the first few years of his life, tens of millions of peasants in the Russian empire were the equivalent of slave laborers: serfs.

Conrad's poet father, Apollo Korzeniowski, was a Polish nationalist and an opponent of serfdom, although both he and his wife came from the class of country gentry that had sometimes owned serfs. For his nationalist activities, Korzeniowski was thrown into a harsh Warsaw prison and then herded into exile in northern Russia by the tsar's police. His wife and four-year-old son went with him, and their time in the frigid climate exacerbated the tuberculosis that would kill Conrad's mother when he was only seven. His father died only a few years later, and his funeral procession,

in Austrian-occupied Krakow, turned into a huge demonstration of Polish nationalism. Small wonder that this boy who grew up among exiled prison veterans, talk of serfdom, and the news of relatives killed in uprisings was ready to distrust imperial conquerors who claimed they had the right to rule other peoples.

Few Europeans of Conrad's time were outspokenly hostile to imperialism, and virtually all of them were on the left. Paradoxically, however, in everything else about his politics, Conrad was deeply conservative. He hated labor unions. For all his disgust with Russian and Belgian imperialism, he believed that British imperialism was splendid. *Heart of Darkness* was enthusiastically welcomed by the largely British "Congo reformers," who were agitating against King Leopold's forced-labor regime, but Conrad was wary of identifying himself with their movement, even though one of its key figures was the Irishman Roger Casement, with whom he had bonded when they briefly shared a house in the Congo. Conrad had no use for the socialist idealism in which so many British intellectuals—including several close friends—had great faith. In his two most self-consciously political novels, *The Secret Agent*, about anarchists in London, and *Under Western Eyes*, about Russian revolutionaries in St. Petersburg and Geneva, almost all the characters are venal or hopelessly naive. Both groups are infiltrated by police informers.

In one sense, Conrad's dour vision served him well. Although *Under Western Eyes* was published six years before the Russian Revolution, he virtually predicted its fate. The novel's narrator at one point says: "In a real revolution the best characters do not come to the front. A violent revolution falls into the hands of narrow-minded fanatics. . . . The noble, humane, and devoted . . . the unselfish and the intelligent may begin a movement—but it passes away from them. They are not the leaders of a revolution. They are its victims."

In Russia, this turned out to be all too true. But this clumsy novel, with its wooden dialogue and stick-figure cast, would have been a far better one had Conrad demonstrated more empathy for such "noble, humane, and devoted" characters, no matter how misled they turn out to be. It is just that more capacious vision that gives greater depth to later novels dealing with the Soviet tragedy, such as Boris Pasternak's *Doctor Zhivago* and Vasily Grossman's *Life and Fate*.

Conrad brilliantly saw many of the injustices of the world as it existed. But what gave him such a skeptical view of anyone who aspired to change it? Jasanoff suggests that this came from "the failure of his father's political objectives," but there is evidence to suggest otherwise. In Conrad's *A Personal Record*, he speaks of his father as "simply a patriot" and not a revolutionary. And Korzeniowski's political objectives were achieved during his son's own lifetime, when Poles finally won their own homeland. Such a goal is certainly more benign than the dreams Conrad eviscerates in *The Secret Agent* and *Under Western Eyes*: the anarchist vision of the destruction of all governments and the Bolshevik one of the dictatorship of the proletariat. Conrad himself advocated Polish nationhood and honored the memory of his father; on a visit to Korzeniowski's grave decades after his death, the

novelist surprised his family by kneeling in prayer.

Conrad's sweeping dismissal of all radicals and reformers surely came from elsewhere. In his late teens, when he was living in Marseille, he lost all his money by investing in the running of contraband goods—possibly guns—to Spain. He received a loan from a friend and attempted to recover his losses at the casinos but gambled it all away. Deeply depressed, he fired a pistol into his chest in an attempt at suicide, but, even more humiliating, the bullet missed his heart, and he survived.

Rushing to Marseille to bail him out of trouble was his uncle, Tadeusz Bobrowski, his mother's brother, who had acted as a guardian since the death of Conrad's father. In person and in a long string of letters over the years, Bobrowski sternly disapproved of the young Conrad's ambitions as impractical and romantic and kept urging his ward to do something sensible, such as returning to Krakow and going into business. Happily, he did not prevail.

Conrad also suffered a later acute embarrassment, which Jasanoff mentions only in passing. In the 1890s, he invested and lost almost all his savings, plus a modest inheritance, in a South African gold mine. Ironically, the South African gold rush was a get-rich-quick bonanza of the type that Conrad had written about so harshly in *Nostromo*, where the rush was for silver, and *Heart of Darkness*, where it was for ivory. More awkward still, these losses came just as he was getting married and starting a family. Small wonder that the plot of one of his best novels, *Lord Jim*, revolves around a man trying to live down an early disgrace. The archconservatism of his political views may well have stemmed from his mortification over these youthful indiscretions and his desire to prove himself sober and responsible in the eyes of his much-loved father figure, Bobrowski.

In the best of his work, however, Conrad rose above the quirks and torments of his own life. He etched a deeper picture of the connections between the world's North and South and portrayed the corrosive effect of the lust for riches more powerfully than any other writer of his day—and perhaps of our day as well.

Still Crazy After All These Years

America's Long History of Political Delusion

James A. Morone

Fantasyland: How America Went Haywire; A 500-Year History
BY KURT ANDERSEN. Random House, 2017, 480 pp.

In the spring of 2011, Donald Trump began suggesting that U.S. President Barack Obama had not been born in the United States. "Why doesn't he show his birth certificate?" Trump asked on ABC's *The View*. "I would love to see it produced," he told Fox News' *On the Record*. "I'm starting to think that he was not born here," he announced on NBC's *Today Show*. Despite plenty of evidence to the contrary, Trump kept repeating his nonsense. To this day, polls show that some 70 percent of registered Republicans doubt Obama's citizenship. Welcome to what Kurt Andersen calls "Fantasyland."

In his new book, Andersen takes a dizzy, mordant trip through five centuries of magical thinking, bringing a novelist's gaze to make-believe Americana. The "hucksters" and the "suckers" tumble through the pages. John Winthrop announces a "City upon a Hill," with nothing less than the future of all Christianity at stake. The Puritan ministers Increase Mather and his son, Cotton, hunt witches in Salem Village. Andersen's story runs through P. T. Barnum, Henry David Thoreau, Walt Disney, Ronald Reagan, and, finally, Trump himself, who beats them all by managing an average of over five untruths a day.

As Andersen shows, fantastical thinking has always played an outsize role in American culture. But something seems different today. Running beneath the parade of con artists and manias that Andersen deftly catalogs glints something more dangerous than illusions: a bitter contest over national identity that political institutions may no longer be able to contain.

Americans have wrestled over their national character many times before. What has changed? The answer lies in how the political parties have reorganized debates over race, immigration, and the American self. For a long time, the party system stifled tribal questions; now, it inflames them.

AMERICAN GODS

Fantasyland begins with an inventory of magical thinking. Two-thirds of Americans believe in angels and demons; a third think climate change is a hoax, that humans roamed among the dinosaurs, or that pharmaceutical cartels are hiding the cure for cancer. The fantasies don't sit in any one cultural corner, Andersen observes. Many of those who believe, against all scientific evidence, that genetically modified foods are unsafe to eat snicker at those who deny Darwin's theory of evolution. And most creationists, in turn, dismiss the Mormon belief that an

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The show that never ends: a poster advertising the Barnum & Bailey Circus, 1895

angel revealed the contents of the Book of Mormon on golden plates to Joseph Smith.

The leitmotif for Andersen's tour of American chimeras comes from an unnamed senior adviser in the George W. Bush White House who, speaking with the journalist Ron Suskind in 2002, mocked the chumps in the "reality-based community" clinging to the notion that "solutions emerge from your judicious study of discernible reality." Not anymore, boasted the adviser. Now, "we create our own reality."

This attitude, as Andersen shows, was nothing new. But two recent shifts in the social cosmos, he argues, have tipped American society into a more intense and destabilizing Fantasyland. First, the 1960s culture of "do your own thing, find your own reality, it's all relative" liberated everyone to nourish his or her own favorite fantasies. Second, a new era of information and communication threw opinions onto the airwaves alongside actual news and fractured Americans' shared understanding of reality.

Today, the mass media overflow with malicious fantasies and conspiracy theories. During the 2016 election, claims that Democratic Party officials were implicated in a child sex ring run out of a pizza parlor in Washington, D.C., emerged from a white supremacist website and quickly went viral. This kind of fevered public discourse didn't just spring up; it was unleashed, in part, by policy decisions. For nearly four decades, starting in 1949, the Federal Communications Commission enforced a policy known as the Fairness Doctrine, which required media outlets to present both sides of controversial issues—producing the bland news regime that many Americans now remember with nostalgia. Then, in 1987, the Reagan administration repealed the rule and fended off congressional efforts to reinstate it.

TIME LIFE PICTURES / GETTY IMAGES

The change coincided with the emergence of transformative media technologies. In the late 1980s and early 1990s, cable channels sprang up on television, serious content moved into the newly opened FM radio bands, and a series of provocative talk-show hosts seized the freed-up space on the AM dial. The policy shift and the technological change combined to produce a fresh kind of content: heated, partisan, and often fantastical. Rumors sprang from the dark corners of the new World Wide Web and crept into established broadcast media. Anderson surveys all sorts of collateral damage: one quickly discredited study of 12 people published by Andrew Wakefield in 1998 led to dangerous anti-vaccine hysteria and the return of dormant diseases such as whooping cough. A surge of racial fantasies convinced millions that anti-white bias was a greater problem than anti-black bias and that American Muslims were scheming to replace U.S. jurisprudence with Islamic law.

The new media ecosystem flourished mainly on the right. Although liberals have tried to emulate conservative news shows, they have never had much success. As Andersen observes, the 45 million Americans who listen to right-wing talk radio are older, whiter, and more conservative than the country as a whole. Above all, they are angry. According to a 2015 *Wall Street Journal*/NBC News poll, 98 percent of those who regularly tune in are convinced that the country is going in the wrong direction.

NATION OF IMMIGRANTS

The history behind that anger helps explain just how and why the United States has gone haywire. Anderson is right to point to the 1960s. But underneath the story of a "do your own thing" culture lies a deeper tale of how the white majority has responded to the twin dangers of racial equality and immigrant power. Amid the upheaval of the 1960s, leaders of both parties finally acquiesced to black demands for racial justice—and promptly faced a white backlash. The Republican Party lurched into a rebellion against its own elites. Barry Goldwater, the party's nominee in the 1964 presidential election, was the first leader of that revolution. He preached free-market liberty but remained silent as segregationists lined up behind him. At the same time, Democrats faced their own racial reckoning as white voters, especially those in the South, turned away from the party. The Democratic nominee has lost the white vote in every presidential election after 1964.

Goldwater's coalition of small-government conservatives and segregationists had a long, bipartisan provenance. Back in the antebellum United States, supporters of slavery fiercely resisted federal projects. If the national government was powerful enough to build roads or mental hospitals, they reasoned, it might be powerful enough to meddle with their racial order. In 1842, former President John Quincy Adams, then an antislavery representative from Massachusetts, told his constituents that slavery "palsied" the hand of national government and stood in the way of "the prospective promotion of the general welfare."

These clashing attitudes about federal power were vividly illuminated when the North and the South split in 1861. With the slave states gone, the Union Congress passed a cascade of previously blocked national programs: land-grant

colleges, railroads, a homestead act, banking bills, a progressive income tax, and the first national currency. The Confederate constitution, in contrast, forbade its central government from engaging in any "internal improvements." Alexander Stephens, the Confederate vice president, explained the twin cornerstones of the fledgling state: slavery for blacks and no national projects under the guise of interstate commerce. Guarding the racial hierarchy meant binding the central government.

That pattern persisted long after slavery ended. Men and women fighting to preserve segregation in the middle of the twentieth century learned that raw racism provoked a national backlash. Calling for liberty and bashing the government, in contrast, brought them allies. The leaders of the powerful libertarian streak that runs through mainstream American conservatism, from Goldwater, through Reagan, down to the present, always seem to wink at the bigots. Of course, many conservatives dispute that idea; after all, they point out, every coalition has its lunatic fringe, and the big-government liberals of the New Deal were long enmeshed with the segregationists of the "Solid South."

But with Trump, what seemed fringe burst onto center stage, trumpeting racial animosity to cheering partisans. Anderson bluntly sums up the Trump campaign's strategy: "Fuck the dog whistles." You're "living in hell," Trump told African Americans during the first presidential debate. "You walk down the street, and you get shot." For a time, Trump refused to denounce the Ku Klux Klan or disavow the white supremacist leader David Duke, who had urged his supporters to vote for Trump. What allowed racism to burst from the shadows after all this time was an unprecedented intersection of racial politics and immigration.

Until the 1960s, the political parties sorted views on immigration very differently from those on race. Before the Civil War, the pro-slavery Democrats embraced new Americans, hustled them into the franchise, and turned an indulgent eye on their cheating at the polls, beating up abolitionists, or sparking race riots. Year after year, the Democratic Party platform denounced abolitionists, welcomed "the oppressed of every nation," and attacked the rival party's long history of anti-immigrant prejudice.

On the other side, the same people who fought against slavery often despised immigrants and worked to limit their political participation. Even Abraham Lincoln quietly incorporated nativists into the new Republican Party, although he refused to make concessions to them. As the historian David Potter wrote, "No event in the history of the Republican party was more crucial or more fortunate than this sub rosa union. By it, the Republican party received a permanent endowment of nativist support which probably elected Lincoln in 1860 and which strengthened the party in every election for more than a century to come." These twin alliances—Whigs (and, later, Republicans) joining with slavery's critics and nativists and Democrats siding with segregationists and immigrants—kept the two issues of slavery and immigration largely separate.

Once again, the 1960s changed everything. In 1965, Congress passed the Hart-Celler Act, which opened the door to a new wave of immigrants (immigration to the United States had been radically curtailed in the 1920s). The main

opposition to the act came from segregationists who feared that, unlike the predominantly European immigrants of the past, new arrivals to the United States were more likely to be nonwhite. New tensions arose as the immigrant generation that arrived after the act swelled into one of the largest in U.S. history. Those tensions were increasingly channeled into party politics as the parties aligned themselves along racial, ethnic, and national-origin lines. The Democratic Party championed civil rights and sponsored open immigration; over time, African Americans, Asian Americans, and Spanish speakers drifted (or were pushed) into its ranks. At the same time, white natives moved decisively to the Republicans.

Exacerbating matters still further, the U.S. Census Bureau began to publicize an explosive demographic prediction after the 2000 census: the United States was inexorably becoming a majority-minority nation. That oversimplified matters because the bureau uses a standard reminiscent of the "one-drop rule," classifying people of mixed ethnic heritage as minorities. But there is no denying that the face of the nation is changing. Nothing symbolized that change more than Obama. Nothing gave voice to the fretful backlash more than Trump.

The political realignment over race and immigration meant that by the early years of this century, for the first time, race and ethnicity mapped neatly onto party identification. Take just one marker of the divide: almost 90 percent of Republican members of the House of Representatives are white men; among Democrats, the figure is 43 percent. The political system that once diffused the issue of national identity now exacerbates it. Although most Americans expect politics to turn on differences over public policy, the two political parties are now configured to bring tribal issues to the surface. They repeatedly thrust the same perilous question into politics: Who counts as a true American?

By underscoring the question of national identity, party conflict now strains the United States' political institutions: regular order in Congress, the norms that once held the presidency in check, the impartiality of the courts and of the news media. Everything from the churches to the Boy Scouts has been caught up in the struggle. Mix this broad conflict over identity with the United States' long history of fantasy, and the result is a nation that has, indeed, gone haywire.

BAD TRIP

Andersen ends his book with the wan hope that American fantastical thinking has peaked and that the American people will somehow stumble their way to "balance and composure." What are the chances of that happening? The racialized history that runs parallel to the story of Fantasyland offers two very different prospects for the future.

On the one hand, national institutions are generally resilient, and even in today's media landscape, it remains difficult for most people—Trump excluded, it seems—to simply lie without consequences. Politics may continue to swing wildly back and forth for some time, but the basic demographic trends that worried Republican leaders after their defeat in the 2012 presidential election have not changed. Every year, the United States grows a little less white; white nationalism offers no long-term prospect of political success. Rather, each party will have to

face up to some stubborn realities. Republicans will need to finally and forcefully divorce their small-government message from implicit (and sometimes explicit) appeals to white supremacy. Democrats will need to earn the allegiance of their voters by squarely addressing the issue of economic opportunity rather than running on antipathy toward the Republican Party.

Of course, on either side, an impassioned base might not permit its party to make the necessary adjustments. There is plenty of precedent for that. American politics has often operated with a dominant majority party and an (often regional) minority one. The party that fails to keep up with the times may find itself looking like the Democrats after the start of the Civil War (the party put just two men in the White House in 72 years) or the Republicans after the start of the Great Depression (just one president in 36 years).

On the other hand, democracies can break. As the political scientists Robert Mickey, Steven Levitsky, and Lucan Ahmad Way warned in this magazine last year, it is exceedingly difficult for a large democracy to negotiate a change in its dominant ethnic group. The United States tried to achieve something like that after the Civil War, during Reconstruction, when Republicans sought to impose racial equality on Southern society. Resurgent white power fended off the reforms and constructed bluntly authoritarian regimes that stripped the vote from almost all black people and many whites across the Southern states. By the mid-1930s, for example, Mississippi had over two million citizens, but only about 6,000 of them cast ballots in midterm congressional elections.

In this scenario, the pressure of racial and ethnic change could result in the old South's racial politics going national. Andersen's history makes it easy to imagine the tall tales that might justify voter suppression, already a finely honed feature of U.S. politics. Politicians gerrymander districts, deny suffrage to felons, purge voting lists shortly before elections, impose restrictive registration requirements, enact voter ID laws, close polling places, and reduce voting times, all of which make it harder for many black, Hispanic, poor, and young people to cast their ballots. Fantasies about massive voter fraud could ratchet up the restrictions. Trump's victory, achieved with almost three million fewer votes than his opponent got, might mark the beginning of minority rule.

Whichever of these visions proves more accurate, American politics is not likely to calm down anytime soon, as the nation continues to confront its changing identity. Yet there is ultimately something soothing about Andersen's lively history. It is a litany of falsehood, fantasy, and folly. But it is also the tale of a country that has managed to survive and thrive for five centuries despite all the lies it tells itself.

Future Fights

Planning for the Next War

Stephen Peter Rosen

The Future of War: A History
BY LAWRENCE FREEDMAN. Allen Lane, 2017, 400 pp.

Former U.S. Secretary of Defense Robert Gates has been known to quip that Washington's predictions about its future wars have been one hundred percent right, zero percent of the time. In early 1950, officials said that the United States would not fight in Korea. In 1964, U.S. President Lyndon Johnson promised that he would not send American troops to fight wars in Asia. Iraq was not on any American's list of enemies in 1990; after all, the United States had assisted that country in its war against Iran just a decade before. And few people—not even Khalid Sheik Mohammed, one of the architects of the 9/11 attacks—anticipated the U.S. invasion of Afghanistan in 2001.

So why bother thinking about the future of war at all? The answer, for better or worse, is that there is no other choice. If bureaucracies do not carefully consider possible future scenarios, they will make choices that merely reflect their implicit or explicit assumptions about what kinds of wars they will fight. Worse yet, they may simply carry on doing what they know how to do with no regard for the future. It is not enough to follow U.S. President Barack Obama's injunction "Don't do stupid shit." Policymakers must be able to choose among alternative ideas.

In *The Future of War*, Lawrence Freedman, professor emeritus at King's College London (and a member of this magazine's panel of regular book reviewers), comprehensively examines how people have done this in the past. But his analysis will disappoint those seeking practical advice. Although Freedman offers a useful corrective to current tendencies, he may have overlooked some of history's more useful lessons.

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FUTURE WARS: A RETROSPECTIVE

To survey how Americans and Europeans have thought about the future of war over the past 150 years, Freedman consults many different sources, discussing fiction writers such as Tom Clancy, H. G. Wells, and Jules Verne and Vietnam War movies such as the John Wayne classic *The Green Berets*, in addition to the works of political scientists and military professionals, such as Charles Edward Callwell and B. H. Liddell Hart. He also covers related topics, such as civilian and military casualties, failed and fragile states, and the morality of humanitarian intervention, and provides potted histories of campaigns in the former Yugoslavia and Somalia, which are occasionally interesting even when not closely related to the subject at hand. This wide scope is commendable, as no discipline or mode of thought has a monopoly on insight. But the book's breadth may also explain some small factual errors that detract from its authority. (*Small Wars*, the classic book by the military strategist Callwell, displays considerable respect for insurgents, not

Eye robot: a military robot in London, February 2009

LUKE MacGREGOR / REUTERS

the imperial arrogance asserted by Freedman. Robot swarms do not require central control, as Freedman writes; they respond to cues from their environment and one another. The actor Peter Sellers said that his character Dr. Strangelove was modeled on the German American engineer Wernher von Braun, not the American strategist Herman Kahn, as Freedman has it.)

In setting up his main argument, Freedman approvingly quotes the political theorist Hannah Arendt: "Predictions of the future are never anything but projections of present automatic processes and procedures, that is, of occurrences that are likely to come to pass if men do not act and if nothing unexpected happens." He goes on to survey the long history of this flawed thinking. After the seemingly decisive battles of the Franco-Prussian War and the Russo-Japanese War, theorists assumed that the outcomes of future wars would be determined the same way. Even figures such as the Polish banker Ivan (Jan) Bloch and the British politician Norman Angell, who saw in the early 1900s that sudden victories were no longer possible, predicted short conflicts, assuming that no one would tolerate bloody stalemates. After World War I, scholars anticipated the use of poison gas and economic warfare, but not the adoption of blitzkrieg. The Cold War nuclear standoff led some to argue that nuclear proliferation and deterrence would stabilize the global system, a prediction whose accuracy scholars are still debating. The collapse of the Soviet Union produced the famous "end of history" thesis, which heralded democratic peace and the permanent triumph of Western liberalism. The September 11 attacks led observers to hypothesize about religious wars of terror, neglecting the reemergence of great-power military competitions.

Freedman concludes that although there will be many efforts to portray the future of war, "if there is a lesson from this book it is that while many will deserve to be taken seriously, they should all be treated skeptically." But perhaps historical study can offer more constructive wisdom. There are some alternative ways to think about the subject that have proved useful in the past. And examining the successes—not just the failures—might help strategists constructively plan for future wars.

THE EVOLUTION OF WAR

If a country cannot say with confidence where or with whom it will fight, it still may be possible to narrow down how it will fight. There are some constants, but the character of war does change—sometimes quickly, but more usually slowly. For example, the political scientist Stephen Biddle has described how the increasing lethality of firepower has forced the steady dispersal of troops on the battlefield. This in turn has expanded the battlefield, gradually eliminating what had been rear guards and diminishing the time interval between the onset of war and attacks on the enemy's heartland.

Identifying these kind of trends has historically helped countries prepare for future wars. During the tsarist era, the Russian military was not in the forefront of military modernization. But perhaps because they led a backward institution, Russian military thinkers were uniquely conscious of how others were changing. These Russians (and later Soviets) understood that revolutions in military affairs would regularly alter the pace and geographic extent of war. First came railroads and rifles; then internal combustion engines, radios, and airplanes; then missiles and nuclear weapons. Each advancement created a revolution that expanded the battlefield and compressed the time within which campaigns would occur. With the advent of railroads in the American Civil War, combat could cover continent-sized areas in a matter of days or weeks, not months or years. And later, aviation brought war to European cities before the defending armies were defeated.

According to the influential American strategist Andrew Marshall, an understanding of this pattern helped the Soviet Union identify the disruptive potential of digital information technology before its impact on war was widely recognized, in the wake of the 1990–91 Gulf War. The Soviet general staff had famously assessed that the antitank potential of American precision weapons was equal to that of tactical nuclear weapons, without the drawbacks. The recognition that the Soviet military industrial complex was unable to compete in the area of digital information processing led the general staff to urge Soviet leader Mikhail Gorbachev to seek some sort of rapprochement with the West, which would enable the Soviets to catch up in an area that was critical to military competition.

Today, the diffusion of digital military technology has given not only the Chinese and the Russians but also the Iranians and their proxy Hezbollah the ability to reach out over long distances and strike at targets with precision. This poses a problem for the U.S. military, which will need to figure out how to fight its way into areas defended with precision weapons. Freedman neglects the implications of this diffusion of precision strike weapons, instead focusing on robots, drones, cyberwarfare, and hybrid warfare.

PLANNING FOR THE UNKNOWN

Still, an awareness of general trends in the character of war does not necessarily mean that a country will know how to prepare. For advice on this front, strategists might consult the work of Burton Klein, who tackled the question of military procurement during periods of uncertainty as an analyst at the RAND Corporation in the 1950s.

When World War II ended, the United States did not know who its friends or its enemies would be. The Cold War alliance structures had not yet emerged, and there was still hope for cooperative relations with the Soviet Union. Washington also did not know what to buy. Ballistic missiles had been used in World War II, but so had manned bombers and primitive cruise missiles. The United States had already developed atomic bombs, but now scientists suggested that superbombs might be possible.

After reflecting on the practices of the U.S. defense establishment during that period, Klein concluded that flexibility should be the principal goal of defense spending during uncertain times. In his eyes, there were two kinds of flexibility. The first could be obtained by investing in expensive, multipurpose forces that were not optimized for any one mission—for example, an aircraft carrier task force. The second kind of flexibility derived from information rather than capabilities. According to Klein, countries could get ahead of the curve by investigating different technologies and investing in prototypes of weapons: some might be failures, but others might be war winners. Such an approach would show strategists many different ways to face many different threats and allow them to iron out problems in advance.

During this period, the United States made prototypes of dozens of missiles and airplanes, many of which it did not buy. The Department of Defense also bought information about large-scale production for military purposes, so that if and when an enemy emerged, it could quickly build the necessary forces. Unfortunately, this approach—known as "industrial mobilization planning"—became a lost art in the United States after the emergence of large arsenals of thermonuclear weapons led policymakers to believe that it was no longer necessary.

KNOW THY ENEMY

Freedman is right that it is always difficult to predict the future. But sometimes the problems facing a particular nation can be foreseen. Throughout history, successful preparations for war with a known enemy have fallen into roughly two camps: the Clausewitzian type and the Sun-tzu type. The Clausewitzian approach relies on general information about the enemy's and one's own capabilities. The Sun-tzu approach depends on a close and detailed study of the enemy.

In his classic book *On War*, Clausewitz gives examples of how the general characteristics of belligerents can be used to identity what he calls the enemy's "centre of gravity." The magnificent 2009 book by the historian Dominic Lieven, *Russia Against Napoleon*, illustrates the Clausewitzian approach in action. Lieven documents how a simple assessment of geography and national strengths and weaknesses allowed Russian officials to successfully prepare for war against an invading France in 1812. Napoleon was clearly a superior general, and his army was superior, as well—particularly in the use of cavalry and the integration of artillery fire and infantry movements. But Russia was big, and the tsar's army had many more horses than Napoleon's. If the war could be extended and protracted, France would run out of horses. And without cavalry, Napoleon would be blind on the battlefield, reducing his operational superiority.

Russia in 1812 is not the only case of a foreseeable war, as the historian Williamson Murray demonstrates in a 2014 book that he co-edited titled *Successful Strategies*. Murray suggests that strategists can reduce the problem of forecasting the character of a future war by focusing on what can be known with certainty about the enemy. For example, the Union had a demographic advantage over the Confederacy. In a war of attrition, it would win if the forces of the South were constantly engaged—hence General Ulysses S. Grant's famous order to General George Meade: "Wherever Lee goes, there you will go also."

In some cases, it may be possible to go beyond an enemy's obvious characteristics to understand its plans and thwart them even before the war begins. As Sun-tzu observed, the acme of strategy is to defeat the enemy's strategy. Of course, such an approach requires a detailed understanding of or intelligence about the enemy's plans, which is not always possible. Still, it has been successfully executed in the recent past. The military analyst Peter Swartz has written about how a careful reading of Soviet naval doctrine and the exploitation of still classified intelligence sources showed the U.S. Navy that it had completely misunderstood how the Soviet navy planned to fight a submarine war. A corrected understanding helped the U.S. Navy develop a new strategy. Instead of using U.S. attack submarines

to protect American transatlantic convoys from Soviet submarines, the Americans began to use their attack submarines to threaten Soviet ballistic missile submarines, in order to keep the Soviet navy on the defensive. In the event of war, Washington planned to force the Soviet attack submarines to stay close to home instead of going out to sink American convoys. This strategy worked—the threat posed by American attack submarines led the Soviet navy to hold their ballistic missile submarines close to port, in "bastions," where they would be protected by Soviet attack submarines.

LOOKING AHEAD

The United States is currently experiencing another period of uncertainty. What is the greatest threat to American security today? China? Russia? Islamist extremism? Officials and experts disagree. Are nuclear weapons obsolete or the wave of the future? Again, reasonable experts disagree. But acknowledging the unknowns does not mean that strategic policymaking is impossible.

As a practical matter, the United States should practice the arts of planning just discussed. If general trends in the character of war persist, they will greatly constrain the ability of the United States to intervene militarily at intercontinental distances, at least in the way Washington has become accustomed to doing. As other states gain the ability to conduct precision strikes, building up the fixed logistical bases and resources necessary for industrial-era war in the theater of operations will no longer be possible.

The United States should also prioritize funding research and development and focus on building a smaller military with higher-quality personnel, soldiers who are able to adapt rapidly to changing conditions. Finally, it should revive the art of industrial mobilization planning, so that when threats become better defined, the United States can make the best use of its still formidable production capabilities. And since the industrial age is over, military mobilization will need to involve newly dominant production technologies, such as chip fabrication and 3-D printing.

Freedman may be right that a fixation on the recent past makes mispredicting hard to avoid. But even so, considering history can still help officials usefully plan for a wide range of future contingencies.

Recent Books

Political and Legal

G. John Ikenberry

How Democracies Die
BY STEVEN LEVITSKY AND DANIEL ZIBLATT. Crown, 2018, 320 pp.

Since the mid-twentieth century, most people in Europe and North America have taken for granted the stability of their liberal democratic institutions. In the postwar decades, some democracies did collapse, but they tended to be weak states in poor countries outside the advanced Western world, such as Argentina, Brazil, Ghana, Peru, and Thailand. Today, as Levitsky and Ziblatt argue in this important study, democracies are dying in slower and more subtle ways—and Western democracies, including the United States, are not immune. The risk comes not from power-hungry generals or revolutionary parties but from elected officials who come to office—often riding a nationalist, populist, anti-elite, anticorruption wave—and proceed to take small steps toward authoritarianism. The threat is so dangerous precisely because each step is often legal. Delivering a powerful wake-up call, Levitsky and Ziblatt see signs of erosion in "the soft guardrails" of democracy in the United States. Decades of extreme polarization have taken their toll on the respect for constitutional checks and balances and on traditional American political norms, such as mutual toleration, acceptance of the legitimacy of rivals, and self-restraint in the use of institutional prerogatives.

Safe Passage: The Transition From British to American Hegemony
BY KORI SCHAKE. Harvard University Press, 2017, 400 pp.

World power transitions are rare but perilous moments when hegemonic leadership passes hands. From the ancient struggles between Athens and Sparta to the world wars of the twentieth century, these grand shifts have often been bloody. The passage of leadership from the United Kingdom to the United States, however, stands out as unusually peaceful. Although this story has been told many times, Schake provides a fresh and insightful account that focuses on key moments when American and British elites revised their judgments about each other and their changing geopolitical fortunes. She argues that the transition was peaceful mostly because it unfolded slowly over a century, during which the United States became an empire and the United Kingdom became a democracy. A shared political heritage and common liberal democratic values helped an increasingly beleaguered United Kingdom decide that it could cede leadership to the United States and harness U.S. power to the pursuit of its own interests. The book is most fascinating in its details, illuminating the myriad struggles between London and Washington over the rules and institutions that would form the basis for Pax Americana.

The Sovereignty Wars: Reconciling America With the World
BY STEWART PATRICK. Brookings Institution Press, 2017, 352 pp.

For more than a century, the grand debate over the United States' global role has tended to pivot on one question: Can Washington best advance its interests and values through international institutions or through its own national efforts and ad hoc partnerships? At times, as Patrick illuminates in this cogent and timely book, this debate has turned into "sovereignty wars," heated controversies over whether the United States should accept constraints on its autonomy and freedom of action. The U.S. Senate's debate over President Woodrow Wilson's League of Nations was the first and most dramatic fight of this kind. But more recent arguments over the North American Free Trade Agreement, the International Criminal Court, the Trans-Pacific Partnership, and the Paris agreement on climate change have proved almost as profound and consequential. Cutting through the hyperbole and inflamed rhetoric that tends to surround this subject, Patrick argues that when the United States signs a treaty or ties itself to other countries, it is exercising its sovereign authority, not abdicating it. Washington's long-term efforts to build and operate within a world of rules and institutions have made it easier, not harder, for the United States to be the captain of its own future.

How to Do Things With International Law
BY IAN HURD. Princeton University Press, 2017, 200 pp.

Scholars and policymakers have traditionally seen international law as a framework designed to tame state power. In this insightful book, Hurd argues that international law is actually best understood as a tool of state power—less an externally imposed constraint than a resource that governments employ to authorize and legitimize what they want to do. He arrives at this contrarian view by closely examining the role of international law in contemporary disputes over war, torture, and drones. In Hurd's portrait, governments pragmatically—and sometimes cynically—interpret international law to suit their purposes. They look for legal arguments that will justify their actions and create a "vocabulary of virtue" to describe their policies. Governments have steadily expanded what qualifies as self-defense, for example, in order to give themselves permission to use force. Nevertheless, Hurd notes, in often small and subtle ways, international law also constructively shapes how states think about and pursue their interests.

Beyond Gridlock
BY THOMAS HALE AND DAVID HELD. Polity, 2017, 280 pp.

Conventional wisdom holds that the Western-centered postwar system of multilateral cooperation is in crisis. In areas as diverse as security, trade, development, the environment, and public health, the challenges of managing interdependence have multiplied and cooperation has receded. In an earlier book, Hale and Held described the problem as "gridlock": a world order marked by dysfunctional international institutions and countries less willing or able to coordinate polices and provide

global public goods. In this new book, the authors reassess that bleak outlook. Reporting on research conducted by a consortium of experts, the book identifies some areas of effective cooperation, such as the World Trade Organization's dispute-settlement mechanism and the Chemical Weapons Convention. It also notes that, as older frameworks weaken, new types of multilateral cooperation have emerged. For example, although the WTO's Doha Round of trade talks has stalled, China is building trade and investment ties across Central Asia and Southeast Asia. The Paris agreement on climate change signaled another form of progress. As Hale and Held see it, the institutions of global governance are inadequate, but small innovations and experiments in cooperation—often pursued regionally, in coalition with civil society groups, or by transnational technical elites—show promise.

Economic, Social, and Environmental

Richard N. Cooper

Is Capitalism Obsolete? A Journey Through Alternative Economic Systems
BY GIACOMO CORNEO. TRANSLATED BY DANIEL STEUER. Harvard University Press, 2017, 312 pp.

Capitalism is increasingly unpopular, especially in Europe. This intriguing book opens and closes with a spirited dialogue between a young woman skeptical of capitalism and her father, Corneo, an economist who is keeping the faith, albeit not without reservations. Corneo takes seriously the many criticisms of capitalism as it is practiced today but insists that detractors must confront the question of which alternative systems could realistically meet contemporary society's economic needs. In this sweeping and informative discussion of the role of economy in society, he explores alternative systems, both hypothetical and real, and finds them all inferior to capitalism. The book then addresses how the modern welfare state has tempered capitalism's worst features but has eroded since the late twentieth century—a development that is responsible for much of today's public disillusionment with the free-market system. Corneo considers how the welfare state might be revived under current conditions, which would require new incentives for politicians and civil servants to construct a sturdier safety net.

Capitalism Without Capital: The Rise of the Intangible Economy
BY JONATHAN HASKEL AND STIAN WESTLAKE. Princeton University Press, 2017, 288 pp.

In the context of business spending, "investment" is a word with diverse meanings, which often leads to confusion. Economists usually use it to refer to expenditures on tangible things, such as buildings and equipment—a kind of spending that raises future earnings. The authors of this informative book, by contrast, define it more broadly as expenditure today in the expectation of material rewards in the future. Haskel and Westlake note that

in all rich countries, "intangible investment"—spending on things such as research and development and branding—has been growing relative to tangible investment. The data are often sketchy, but the authors report that intangible investment now exceeds the tangible kind in Finland and Sweden, and does so by even larger margins in the United Kingdom and the United States. The authors explore how the changing nature of investment will affect companies, investment analysts, economists, and governments, and they offer suggestions for all. This is a useful exposition of a number of widely used but poorly understood terms and concepts.

The Paradox of Risk: Leaving the Monetary Policy Comfort Zone
BY ÁNGEL UBIDE. Peterson Institute for International Economics, 2017, 170 pp.

Many books have been written on the origins, dynamics, and lessons of the financial crisis and recession of 2007–9. The year 2008 was arguably the worst financial year since 1931—which was a very bad year indeed. This important book distinguishes itself by focusing on how central banks—specifically, the U.S. Federal Reserve, the European Central Bank, the Bank of England, and the Bank of Japan—took unconventional actions to avert another Great Depression. Ubide, an economist with extensive practical experience in wealth management, discusses misconceptions about the role of monetary and fiscal policies in contributing to and helping end the crisis; he argues that extremely low (even negative) interest rates, vast central bank purchases of bonds, and "forward guidance"—statements that central banks make to inform the public of likely future decisions—made sense to stimulate economic recovery in the wake of the crisis. Such steps, which were once unconventional, and are now more common, may become quite normal in future. This is something of a niche subject, but Ubide's presentation of these ideas does not rely on overly technical language.

Vaccines: What Everyone Needs to Know
BY KRISTEN A. FEEMSTER. Oxford University Press, 2017, 208 pp.

Life has been made immeasurably better by the sharp decline in the incidence of infectious diseases, an improvement made possible through inoculations, especially of children, which protect people from contracting diseases and have led to the elimination or near elimination of maladies such as smallpox and polio. Yet public wariness of vaccines persists and has even in some cases increased—perhaps, ironically, owing in part to the decline in disease incidence produced by vaccines. This useful, fair-minded, and extremely informative book explains how vaccines are produced and how they work; discusses the diverse reasons behind some parents' hesitancy to inoculate their children; explores the prospect of employing vaccines for not only preventing but also curing some diseases, including AIDS and even some cancers; and examines the potential for the total elimination of particular diseases, such as measles.

Behemoth: A History of the Factory and the Making of the Modern World
BY JOSHUA B. FREEMAN. Norton, 2018, 448 pp.

This fascinating book is a history of the large factory's importance as a symbol of modernity from early-eighteenth-century Europe to early-twenty-first-century Asia. It tells the stories of companies (mostly private but also some state-owned enterprises), offers sociological portraits of factory workers, and considers the portrayal of factories in art, literature, and films. The earliest large factories were established in England in the 1720s, produced silk yarn, and employed around 300 people. By 1945, Ford's River Rouge facility in Dearborn, Michigan, employed 85,000 people, who mainly worked on building bombers. Today, some factory complexes in China employ over 100,000 workers. Building factories on a large scale has sometimes involved erecting whole cities for their employees, which has introduced a myriad of logistical problems; this was often the case in the Soviet Union. In their heyday, big factories signaled and celebrated the arrival of a modern technological age and new opportunities for laborers. Later, they facilitated the organization of dissatisfied workers. In recent decades, factories have declined in size in Europe and the United States, not least because large and densely concentrated facilities increase the risk of disruption to value chains owing to human events or natural phenomena such as earthquakes and storms.

Military, Scientific, and Technological

Lawrence D. Freedman

The Doomsday Machine: Confessions of a Nuclear War Planner
BY DANIEL ELLSBERG. Bloomsbury, 2017, 432 pp.

Before he became famous for leaking the Pentagon Papers, Ellsberg was a bright analyst at the RAND Corporation who worked on some of the most perplexing problems in U.S. national security. This candid and chilling memoir describes how he came to recognize that the U.S. military's approach to preparing for nuclear war was terrifyingly casual. If war came, the United States was ready to obliterate not only the Soviet Union but also China, as a matter of course—a plan that would have immediately produced 275 million fatalities and then led to another 50 million, owing to the effects of radiation. And those numbers do not even include the lives that would have been lost by the United States and its allies. Ellsberg was appalled, but he understood the logic of deterrence and the policy challenges that had allowed such an approach to develop. This gives his account credibility and poignancy: at one point, he drafts an alternative war plan that would still have horrific consequences—just not as awful as the one it would replace. His experiences have led Ellsberg to argue that however much he might like to see nuclear weapons abolished, the first step in

addressing the danger must be to make them harder to use.

The Pentagon's Wars: The Military's Undeclared War Against America's Presidents
BY MARK PERRY. Basic Books, 2017, 368 pp.

Ignore the off-putting title and subtitle of this book, which suggest that it alleges a militaristic conspiracy against elected leaders. In reality, the book is an enthralling, gossipy account of the interplay between senior U.S. military and political leaders since the end of the Cold War. The events covered in the book are already well known (the U.S.-led wars in the Balkans, Afghanistan, and Iraq), as are the personalities, including generals such as Wesley Clark, Tommy Franks, David Petraeus, and Colin Powell. What Perry adds are accounts of personal rivalries and interservice competition and details about how Presidents Bill Clinton, George W. Bush and Barack Obama looked to the generals to get the advice they wanted—which was not always the advice they really needed. Clinton's first term opened with a public spat with Powell over whether gay people should be allowed to serve in the military, yet when it came to the wisdom of a war with Iraq a decade later, senior officers kept their misgivings to themselves. The book demonstrates that far from forming a cabal against the White House, U.S. military leaders have often failed to challenge civilian leaders who were making poor decisions.

The Virtual Weapon and International Order
BY LUCAS KELLO. Yale University Press, 2017, 336 pp.

Digital World War: Islamists, Extremists, and the Fight for Cyber Supremacy
BY HAROON K. ULLAH. Yale University Press, 2017, 336 pp.

The debate about how digital communications technology is transforming conflict takes place on a spectrum: on one end sit those warning of a "cyber–Pearl Harbor"; on the other sit a variety of skeptics who point to the difficulty of gaining a lasting political benefit from cyberattacks. Kello situates himself closer to the first group and argues that the emergence of cyberweapons in the twenty-first century has been as revolutionary in its implications as the introduction of nuclear weapons was in the twentieth. Atomic arsenals threatened unprecedented mass destruction, but they mostly fit within traditional models of interstate war. Cyberweapons, on the other hand, do not kill directly but can interfere with systems that do, and they empower nonstate actors as much as states. Using familiar examples—the Stuxnet virus, which the United States and Israel directed against Iranian nuclear enrichment facilities; North Korea's hacking of Sony Pictures; the Russian cyberattack on Estonia in 2007; and Russian interference in the U.S. presidential election in 2016—Kello addresses the danger of escalation, the prospects for cyberdefense and cyberdeterrence, and the problem of crafting legal remedies for malevolent behavior.

Ullah zeroes in on one part of the virtual battlefield. Drawing on observations he made while working for the

U.S. State Department during the Obama administration, he presents a series of case studies from the Muslim world. He reveals the sophistication and enthusiasm with which Islamists have exploited social media to proselytize, nurture new recruits, and spread propaganda or news of a coming demonstration. Violent jihadists also use encrypted sites to discuss how to carry out acts of terror in the real world. The potential for social media to circumvent official censorship, especially in countries where Internet access is widespread, means that it can provide a vital outlet for public frustrations and can be used to support a variety of causes. But as Islamist leaders have learned, it is difficult to impose message discipline online; radical groups often wind up arguing among themselves. The most powerful lesson Ullah draws—illustrated best by the example of Egypt in the years after the revolts of 2011—is that when it comes to seizing power, as opposed to merely expressing and stoking disaffection, the winners tend to be strong leaders with a clear purpose and an effective organization.

Withdrawal: Reassessing America's Final Years in Vietnam
BY GREGORY A. DADDIS. Oxford University Press, 2017, 320 pp.

In 2014, Daddis, a U.S. Army veteran, published a well-regarded book on General William Westmoreland's period of command during the Vietnam War, which spanned from 1964 to 1968 and ended when he was replaced by General Creighton Abrams. The conventional wisdom holds that Abrams developed a more credible strategy that was showing results, until it was undermined by Congress, which failed to back the military, and the press, which stoked public opposition to the war. In his latest book, Daddis is having none of this. He argues that the changes Abrams made were less significant than many assumed, and he shows that the narrative of military victory snatched away by Congress and antiwar sentiment misses a vital point. The real problem had less to do with U.S. military strategy than with the South Vietnamese government's failure to develop an authentic national identity that could sustain it through the next stage of what had already been a long civil war.

The United States

Walter Russell Mead

National Security Strategy of the United States of America
White House, 2017, 68 pp.

The 2017 U.S. National Security Strategy attempts to integrate President Donald Trump's aversion to trade agreements with his emphasis on American sovereignty at the expense of multilateral institutions and his skepticism about the prospects for democratization in the developing world with a policy of U.S. global engagement. The authors articulate a Jacksonian view of world order, in which a sovereign United States, secure in its military, technological, and economic power, frustrates revisionist great

powers, maintains a global alliance system, and actively counters terrorism and other threats to the homeland. The keys to this strategy are domestic: reviving the economy through tax cuts and deregulation and promoting U.S. energy production. U.S. military spending will increase. China, as the most important economic and security competitor to the United States, will be the central concern of American strategy. There are many reasons to be skeptical that this approach can succeed—or that Trump will prove disciplined enough to follow it. But the political pressures to which it responds are real and won't go away anytime soon. The post–Cold War foreign policy era is over, and as U.S. policymakers think about what comes next, they will find that the domestic political dynamics that helped shape this strategy statement will remain relevant even when the Trump administration comes to an end.

The Republic for Which It Stands: The United States During Reconstruction and the Gilded Age, 1865–1896
BY RICHARD WHITE. Oxford University Press, 2017, 968 pp.

White's fascinating and comprehensive book could not be more timely. When questions of race, economic inequality, and the rise of giant corporate monopolies and a plutocratic elite dominate U.S. politics, it is time to take another look at Reconstruction and the Gilded Age, the period of American history stretching, roughly, from the assassination of President Abraham Lincoln in 1865 to William McKinley's election as president in 1896. This was a frustrating time. The Civil War did not end with the triumph of democracy and racial brotherhood but rather in an ugly and ultimately losing fight against the forces of white supremacy. The Industrial Revolution left Americans divided by class; meanwhile, mass immigration led to ethnic polarization. It was a time when U.S. institutions and ideologies were unable to cope with the problems the country faced and when populist movements surged as governments failed to meet public needs. The rich history of those years can be difficult to follow; readers will thank White for the clear prose and strong narrative drive that makes this complicated story easier to understand.

The Iran Nuclear Deal: Bombs, Bureaucrats, and Billionaires
BY DENNIS C. JETT. Palgrave Macmillan, 2018, 481 pp.

Despite occasional cries from the academy that domestic politics are—or should be—irrelevant to foreign policy, practitioners and policymakers know that the two are irrevocably linked. In this book on the politics of the Iran nuclear deal, Jett takes an interesting, if imperfect, look at the domestic actors that sought to influence U.S. policy before and after the international negotiations that led to the deal. Jett, whose belief that no truly rational argument can be made against the agreement shines forth on every page, gets at least one important thing right: although some of the most prominent individuals and organizations that opposed the deal were Jewish, the U.S. Jewish community

was deeply divided over Iran policy, with most Jewish Americans siding with President Barack Obama and supporting the agreement. That said, Jett's inability to grasp the salience of the procedural and policy arguments that opponents of the deal brought forward leads to a somewhat one-sided account of a complex debate. At its weakest, the book reads like a collection of talking points; at its best, it helps readers understand the complicated links between domestic politics and foreign policy that presidents and diplomats neglect at their peril.

The Ghosts of Langley: Into the CIA's Heart of Darkness
BY JOHN PRADOS. New Press, 2017, 320 pp.

There are few government agencies as controversial as the CIA, and few researchers have brought as much passion and determination to understanding it as Prados. His story begins with the Office of Strategic Services (the precursor to the CIA, established during World War II), continues through the disastrous CIA-backed Bay of Pigs invasion of Cuba, and gains energy and detail when it arrives at the Iran-contra scandal of the Reagan years and the George W. Bush administration's use of "enhanced interrogation techniques" after the 9/11 attacks. Prados' research and unrelenting search for the truth are admirable, and his conclusions command respect, if not always assent. He highlights serious problems at the agency but says very little about any successes it has enjoyed. The secrecy and isolation of the CIA can lead to excessive suspicion among outsiders; it can also lead to a hothouse environment inside the agency, in which flawed planning can lead to serious mistakes. *The Ghosts of Langley* is not the last word on the CIA, but it contains information and perspectives that those concerned for the future of this important institution would do well to consider.

Western Europe

Andrew Moravcsik

Go, Went, Gone
BY JENNY ERPENBECK. New Directions, 2017, 320 pp.

This brilliantly understated novel traces with uncommon delicacy and depth the interior transformation of a retired German classicist named Richard. One day, he stumbles upon a group of unauthorized African migrants encamped in the center of Berlin. First, he sees only the immediate life-and-death challenges they face. As many Germans have done recently, he helps mobilize churches, organizations, and individuals to assist them. Most of the refugees disappear anyway. But Richard gets to know the ones that remain. He witnesses their struggle to retain vivid memories of lost families, loves, communities, and cultures—without which they find it difficult to maintain their dignity. In the end, Richard comes to realize that his life, too, is lived on "the surface of the sea," beneath which lie many things "one cannot possibly endure." He, too, must cope with troubling traumas and decide which memories to foster and which to repress. Erpenbeck

possesses an uncanny ability to portray the mundane interactions and routines that compose everyday life, which she elevates into an intimately moving meditation on one of the great issues of our times. Her economical prose lends existential significance to the most commonplace conversations, defined less by what they include than by what they omit.

Dilemmas of Inclusion: Muslims in European Politics
BY RAFAELA M. DANCYGIER.
Princeton University Press, 2017, 264 pp.

The participation of Muslims in European politics has spawned a heated debate often dominated by anti-immigrant prophets of doom. Dancygier sheds a cooling light on the issue. With a sophisticated analysis of thousands of elections in Austria, Belgium, Germany, and the United Kingdom, she shows that European political parties have been ruthlessly pragmatic in attracting Muslim votes. As soon as a pool of Muslim voters reaches a significant size, parties select candidates who can best appeal to them. Yet this poses difficult political dilemmas. The easiest Muslims for a party to attract, and those who will offer the most electoral advantage, tend to be those who are geographically concentrated—and thus also the least assimilated and most conservative. Often, the traditional bases of European parties hold different views on gender, religion, and sexuality than the typical Muslim in such enclaves. So tailoring messages to new Muslim voters can fragment parties and ultimately undermine their electoral success. Meanwhile, such tactics tend to degrade solidarity in society as a whole—blocking inclusion, fostering anti-Muslim sentiment, empowering conservative religious leaders, and undermining the influence of Muslim women. In the long term, the best way to resolve these dilemmas may be to dilute ethnic enclaves and challenge traditional social structures.

European Civil Service in (Times of) Crisis: A Political Sociology of the Changing Power of Eurocrats
BY DIDIER GEORGAKAKIS. Palgrave Macmillan, 2017, 329 pp.

Many believe that the civil servants who manage the EU—labeled "Eurocrats" by critics—are too numerous, unaccountable, powerful, and pampered. In this book, Georgakakis debunks that myth. The population of Eurocrats (around 40,000) is no larger than the number of public servants typically employed by a major European city—and thus only five percent of the average per capita number of public employees in the EU member states. In recent years, moreover, civil-service reforms have much diminished the power and perks that Eurocrats enjoy. Ironically, the British government led the effort to impose a distinctively Anglo-Saxon bureaucratic model on Eurocrats, only to suffer criticism from Brexiteers who view the Brussels bureaucracy as a foreign imposition. More broadly, the influence of the most independent part of the EU, the European Commission, has waned relative to that of national governments, technocratic bodies, and the elected European Parliament. No wonder

Eurocrats today are less idealistic than they used to be: fewer now believe that they are spearheading a grand, open-ended experiment in supranational governance. Despite its academic verbosity and occasionally awkward prose, this book details an important and overlooked transformation in how contemporary Europe is governed.

The Gourmands' Way: Six Americans in Paris and the Birth of a New Gastronomy
BY JUSTIN SPRING. Farrar, Straus and Giroux, 2017, 448 pp.

Spring recounts the experiences of Julia Child, Alice B. Toklas, and four other mid-twentieth-century culinary writers who introduced Americans to fine French cooking. The book's aim is neither to illuminate French culinary culture nor to explain why so many Americans were receptive to it in the postwar era. It is rather to examine the six authors' individual foibles and the idiosyncratic ways in which they led each one to become a gastronomic guru. In doing so, the book serves heaping portions of snarky gossip, sharp criticism, and insight into the commercial side of cookbooks and cuisine. Obsessively detailed, the book spares no one, and its vivid prose keeps the reader going through a seemingly inexhaustible catalog of moneygrubbing schemes, lovers' spats, and personal weaknesses. Intermittently visible behind the biographical pastiche lies the uniquely romantic atmosphere of Paris, the city that attracted all the main characters with its unique mix of deeply rooted cultural traditions, tolerance of bohemian lifestyles, and class snobbery. For those who enjoy long afternoons with friends in a good café, dishing dirt on the rich or famous, this book is a must-read.

Absolute Power: How the Pope Became the Most Influential Man in the World
BY PAUL COLLINS. PublicAffairs, 2018, 384 pp.

U.S. President Donald Trump, Chinese President Xi Jinping, and German Chancellor Angela Merkel need not panic. Collins, a former priest, never advances the hyperbolic claim in this book's subtitle. His more modest aim is instead to show how popes have consolidated their hold within the Catholic Church itself since the turn of the nineteenth century. In the process, he argues, the papacy has suppressed reformist elements, local parishes, and women everywhere. Yet this blinkered vision of the church treats papal power as resulting entirely from infallible theological pronouncements and the bureaucratic influence of the Roman Curia, the Vatican's administrative body. The reader gets little sense of even the most obvious social and cultural trends that surround and shape any religion. Such developments have transformed modern Catholicism beyond recognition. The declining number of active Catholics in Europe and North America, for example, has left more developing-world believers, who tend to be more conservative, in control. South America is now home to more Catholics than any other continent, and Catholicism is growing most rapidly in sub-Saharan Africa. For a full understanding of the

church's role in the world, readers should look elsewhere.

Western Hemisphere

Richard Feinberg

Acting Globally: Memoirs of Brazil's Assertive Foreign Policy
BY CELSO AMORIM. Hamilton Books, 2017, 486 pp.

Rethinking Global Democracy in Brazil
BY MARKUS FRAUNDORFER. Rowman & Littlefield, 2017, 250 pp.

During the 2003–10 presidency of Luiz Inácio Lula da Silva, the energetic foreign minister Amorim traveled widely to expand Brazil's global influence. In his highly intelligent and richly detailed memoir, the wily, sharp-tongued diplomat seeks to justify his controversial and ill-fated attempt to insert Brazil into negotiations over Iran's nuclear program and to explain his more sure-footed and well-informed but equally unsuccessful effort to secure a deal during the World Trade Organization's failed Doha Round of trade negotiations. He blames others for both outcomes: France, Russia, and the United States foiled his Iranian gambit, and protectionist nations (particularly India and the United States) impeded the trade accord. Amorim sought to establish Brazil as a trusted, balanced interlocutor and as a prestigious player on the world stage. Yet in his caustic asides, Amorim reveals his own skewed sensibilities, his sensitivity to perceived slights, and his obvious receptivity to personal flattery—all of which help explain why his efforts often came up short. Lula's Brazil sought to punch above its weight. The more recent near collapse of the country's political system and economy has at least momentarily returned Brazil to mere middle-power status.

In *Rethinking Global Democracy in Brazil,* Fraundorfer finds reasons for hope that multilateral institutions will do a better and more evenhanded job at tackling pressing global problems by sharing power with civil society organizations and affected local communities. Fraundorfer closely examines four recent cases in which such interactions took place, all involving Brazil: the development of the World Health Organization–backed international drug purchase facility called Unitaid; the promulgation of rights-based doctrines by the UN's Committee on World Food Security; the establishment of the eight-nation pro-transparency Open Government Partnership; and the NETmundial global meeting, a one-off effort to advance ethical Internet governance. During the reign of Lula's Workers' Party, Brazil served as a fascinating laboratory for these democracy-expanding innovations. Brazilian representatives, including Amorim, possessed the expertise and credibility to play leading roles in all four international exercises. To his credit, Fraundorfer recognizes that such experiments are extremely fragile, typically entail only voluntary commitments, produce more doctrinal posturing than policy implementation, and depend on the goodwill of progressive governments—which is currently in short supply.

Paladares: Recipes From the Private Restaurants, Home Kitchens, and Streets of Cuba
BY ANYA VON BREMZEN AND MEGAN FAWN SCHLOW. Abrams, 2017, 352 pp.

Havana Living Today: Cuban Home Style Now
BY HERMES MALLEA. Rizzoli, 2017, 224 pp.

Cuba, like its cuisine, is a grand fusion of African, Amerindian, French, and especially Spanish influences. Prior to the country's 1959 revolution, Cuban chefs produced a rich cuisine. Once in power, however, the revolutionary leader Fidel Castro closed private restaurants, and government canteens took on a Soviet-style blandness. Even worse, the end of Soviet subsidies in the 1990s resulted in severe food scarcities, and many Cubans suffered significant weight loss. In recent years, however, with Cuba under the more relaxed rule of Raúl Castro, private restaurants (*paladares*) are reemerging, and the country is experiencing a rebirth of its culinary culture. Von Bremzen and Schlow introduce readers to the brave owners and innovative chefs who run these new business ventures, who struggle to locate essential ingredients and avoid the glare of government inspectors. Von Bremzen's well-researched backgrounders on the many mouthwatering, simple recipes—illustrated by Schlow's handsome photographs—provide an education in culinary history. The new Cuban cuisine, like the island's political economy, is very much a work in progress. But *Paladares* reveals the spirit and promise of a vibrant nation, brimming with entrepreneurial improvisation and artistic creativity, striving to rejoin global currents.

In *Havana Living Today*, Mallea, a Cuban American architect, does for contemporary Cuban interior design what *Paladares* does for today's Cuban cuisine. Taking readers inside a diverse range of professionally photographed high-end homes, Mallea perceptively reveals sophisticated blends of eclectic prerevolutionary architecture, vintage furniture, and fixtures accented with contemporary design concepts and inspired by cutting-edge Cuban artists. But it's not just the homes that are revealed; it's also the people who own them, members of Havana's wealthiest one percent: the remnants of prerevolutionary elites, well-heeled Cubans returning from aboard, internationally renowned artists, expatriates, diplomats, and the owners of new local businesses, including *paladares* and inviting boutique guesthouses. (The book notably omits the luxury homes of the revolutionary elites.) Each fashionable residence represents "the owner's personal triumph over the island's cultural and economic constraints," Mallea writes. Looking ahead, Mallea believes that these elegant living spaces portend an exciting rebirth of Cuban design, even as he warns of the need to balance the pursuit of international design trends with the preservation of the authentic Cuban identity flowering in Havana today.

Hunter of Stories
BY EDUARDO GALEANO. TRANSLATED BY MARK FRIED. Nation Books, 2017, 272 pp.

Galeano (1940–2015) exemplified the literary left that held sway in Latin America from the 1960s through the 1980s. Sales of the Uruguayan's most famous polemic, *Open Veins of Latin America*, spiked in 2009, when Hugo Chávez, the populist strongman president of Venezuela, handed a

copy to U.S. President Barack Obama at a summit meeting. *Hunter of Stories* collects bite-sized anecdotes and narratives, generally just a few paragraphs long, many with ironic intent. They often revisit the central theme of Galeano's work: the majesty and wisdom of the indigenous people of the Americas juxtaposed against the grave injustices imposed on the oppressed masses by the most powerful, be they Spanish conquistadors, military dictators, hypocritical "democrats," large U.S. corporations, or the International Monetary Fund. Galeano, a self-proclaimed eternal optimist, had a passion for giving voice to the weak and illiterate and for recording the heroism of the vanquished: "the eternal battle of indignation against indignity," he called it. Galeano was also a close observer of the marvels and rhythms of the natural world. Contemplating his own sickness and old age, this passionate rebel and storyteller once viewed an astonishing sunset and lamented: "It would be so unfair to die and see it no longer."

Eastern Europe and Former Soviet Republics

Robert Legvold

What You Did Not Tell: A Russian Past and the Journey Home
BY MARK MAZOWER. Other Press, 2017, 336 pp.

What one might expect to be merely a charming family portrait, albeit one blessed by Mazower's silk-textured writing, turns out to be a riveting account of people caught up in the last century's most dramatic moments. At the center stands the author's grandfather, Max, a taciturn, somewhat mysterious man, who was a key organizer for the turn-of-the-century Russian Bund, a Jewish Marxist movement. Hunted by the tsar's police and twice exiled to Siberia, he later became a dapper marketing representative for the London-based Yost Typewriter Company. His wife, Frouma, had fled revolutionary Russia for the United Kingdom, but most of her family had remained, suffered, and survived. Mazower's father, William, grew up thoroughly English, a middle-class secular Jew in Depression-era and wartime England. His half brother, André, in an ironic contrast, joined the extreme right and wrote anti-Semitic tracts. Mazower engagingly weaves together these lives and traces how they crossed paths with Felix Dzerzhinsky, the founder of the Soviet secret police; Maxim Litvinov, Stalin's foreign minister; the poet T. S. Eliot; the anarchist Emma Goldman; and a host of other prominent interwar political and literary figures.

Orders to Kill: The Putin Regime and Political Murder
BY AMY KNIGHT. Thomas Dunne Books, 2017, 384 pp.

The number of prominent political figures, journalists, and dissidents murdered in Vladimir Putin's Russia raises a fundamental question: Have these crimes occurred, Knight asks, because Putin has "created an environment for the violence but may not be personally involved?" Or do "the political

motives of the Putin government that hover over the killings and the vast amount of circumstantial evidence" suggest Putin's direct participation? She comes down squarely on the side of the more sinister explanation. The book is a detailed examination of the most dramatic cases, beginning with the 1998 murder of Galina Starovoitova, a charismatic liberal politician, and including a multitude of others, among them the killings of the former intelligence officer Alexander Litvinenko and the opposition politician Boris Nemtsov. In each case, she details the events leading up to the murder, lays out the evidence, and describes the subsequent arrests and trials. And in each case, neither Knight nor those close to the victim are satisfied with the verdict. As she recognizes, the evidence, with the partial exception of the Litvinenko case, is largely circumstantial. But the book's value is that Knight supplies enough of it for readers to decide for themselves.

The Ukrainian Night: An Intimate History of Revolution
BY MARCI SHORE. Yale University Press, 2018, 320 pp.

Putin's War Against Ukraine: Revolution, Nationalism, and Crime
BY TARAS KUZIO. Self-published, 2017, 490 pp.

These two books take radically different approaches to exploring Ukraine's dramatic recent history. Shore's book is written at the deepest human level and is built on the testimony of those who participated in the 2014 revolution that rocked Ukraine or who experienced firsthand the war in the eastern part of the country known as the Donbas, which broke out in the aftermath of the revolution. In the first half of the book, Shore shares the vivid accounts of those who took part in the Maidan uprising and their reflections on how the drama redefined their lives and the bleak realities of Ukraine. The second half records the simple but searing thoughts and impulses of those who fought or were caught up in the war. Most of them were on the Ukrainian side; those who came from the pro-Russian separatist regions provide homely but telling insights into what the war meant to them and the people among whom they grew up. Literature offers added resonance: for Shore, echoes from novels and short stories run through the tales she hears; for some of those who lived through these events, poetry was a sustaining force.

Kuzio's core theme is Russia's aggression in Ukraine. He examines Russia's motivations from many angles—a renewed imperialist nationalism, historical "Ukrainophobia," anti-Semitism (both in Russia and in the Donbas), and criminal profiteering. He disagrees with those who explain Russian actions in terms of geopolitical competition with the United States and NATO and, even more so, those who see Russia as simply avenging the abuse and discrimination it believes it has suffered at Western hands. Instead, he locates the explanation in what he calls "Ukrainian-Russian identity relations," by which he means the process through which Russian identity has evolved toward a more primal nationalism, including chauvinism toward Ukraine, while Ukraine has gravitated toward Europe and its values. Complicating everything, the Donbas, for long-standing

historical and cultural reasons, aligns with Russia. The depth with which Kuzio explores these factors, along with the corruption rampant in the Donbas and the wider region's diseased politics, represents his book's most unique value.

Crime and Punishment in the Russian Revolution: Mob Justice and Police in Petrograd
BY TSUYOSHI HASEGAWA. Harvard University Press, 2017, 368 pp.

Russia in Flames: War, Revolution, Civil War, 1914–1921
BY LAURA ENGELSTEIN. Oxford University Press, 2017, 856 pp.

As Hasegawa notes in his compelling book, approaches to the history of Russia's October Revolution of 1917 have evolved over time. Social history eventually supplanted political history, but then gave way to history "across the divide," which welds together the events that took place before and after the revolution. Hasegawa adopts the social-history approach and focuses on less studied elements of Russian society. Engelstein's book, meanwhile, is very much an example of the "across the divide" approach.

The story of the October Revolution, Hasegawa argues, is thoroughly bound up with the collapse of law and order that followed the dissolution of the tsarist police after the February Revolution. In Petrograd, all forms of crime soared. Quality of life also deteriorated, because the police had been responsible for a wide range of public services, from sanitary inspections and garbage collection to issuing permits. Within months, as public order collapsed, vigilantism and mob violence took over. The breakdown, according to Hasegawa, greatly abetted the Bolsheviks' seizure of power, not least by leaving the public indifferent to the outcome of the revolution. Once in power, the Bolsheviks did little to restore public safety, treating the disorder as another hammer wrecking the old system—until it threatened their own position. Then, they reacted with a brutality that set a precedent for what would follow in the decades ahead.

Engelstein, in this culmination of her life's work, examines the October Revolution in extraordinary breadth and depth. She places it in the context of the powerful currents generated by the collapse of the Russian empire and the ravages of World War I, and also broadens the frame to capture what was happening outside the major Russian cities, with whole chapters devoted to Finland, Ukraine, Volhynia (which included parts of present-day Belarus, Poland, and Ukraine), and the Baltic region. At its most profound, the book penetrates the deep subterrain of this history. Whatever else the revolution was when it began in early 1917, it expressed a popular desire for democracy, even if different social segments had diverging views of democratic rule. The October Revolution closed that door. Regardless of whether one sees Vladimir Lenin and the Bolsheviks' commitment to social and economic justice as genuine, their most important legacy was a new authoritarian state that they pursued with single-minded determination. Violence was its author. Engelstein develops these themes with great subtlety.

Middle East

John Waterbury

Hezbollah: The Political Economy of Lebanon's Party of God
BY JOSEPH DAHER. Pluto Press, 2016, 248 pp.

What is original about Daher's useful treatment of Hezbollah is his emphasis on the transformation of its base, which used to draw on the lower-middle class and the clergy but is now more closely aligned with a new Shiite capitalist class. As a result, Hezbollah is comfortable with Lebanon's neoliberal economic policies. Daher explores the group's changing relationship with organized labor and Lebanese civil society, the rising levels of corruption in the party, and the role of Hezbollah's military apparatus in the Syrian civil war. Daher sees Hezbollah as an increasingly status quo force that uses its religious and military power to enhance its national and regional influence, rather than to merely confront Israel, which had been its traditional primary objective. There is one major lacuna in Daher's narrative, however, which partly prevents him from clinching all his arguments: he makes no comprehensive analysis of Hezbollah's finances, which depend on support from Iran; the Lebanese Shiite diaspora in the United States, Latin America, and West Africa; and the levying of a tithe on Shiites at home.

Yitzhak Rabin: Soldier, Leader, Statesman
BY ITAMAR RABINOVICH. Yale University Press, 2017, 304 pp.

In 1995, near the end of his tenure as Israel's prime minister, Yitzhak Rabin was assassinated by a right-wing Jewish zealot. As with all high-profile assassinations, one asks, futilely, what might have been. Rabin had guided Israel through the Oslo Accords and a treaty with Jordan and had engaged in a long-distance dance with President Hafez al-Assad of Syria before concluding that Assad was not ready for peace. In this thorough book, Rabinovich, who served for a time as Rabin's point person on Syria and as Israel's ambassador to the United States, portrays Rabin as old school: a military man from 1941 on. He was harsh in his treatment of Palestinians during the war in 1948 and then again, 40 years later, during the first intifada. He pushed for the development of Israel's nuclear arsenal. Yet he saw Israel's security as inextricably linked to peace with all its neighbors. He was not in favor of giving up all of the West Bank, occupied by Israel in 1967, but he knew that hanging on to it would mean that Israel would remain forever a garrison state. Had he survived, Rabin would have been at loggerheads with Likudniks and neoconservatives in Washington, who have long wanted to separate the Palestinian issue from broader questions of regional security.

Egypt
BY ROBERT SPRINGBORG. Polity Press, 2017, 272 pp.

Much ink has been spilled on "deep states." Springborg takes readers inside one. Under President Abdel Fattah el-Sisi,

Egypt's deep state is deeper and darker than ever before. In one of his more surprising claims, Springborg depicts the Egyptian state under King Farouk in the 1940s in relatively flattering terms and asserts that a succession of Egyptian autocrats have led the country down a path to politically vicious, economically unsustainable authoritarianism. Sisi has built on this dubious inheritance. Economic strategy has been sacrificed to prop up the intelligence services and to enrich the military, which controls much of the economy. Consumer subsidies, debt servicing, and civil-service wages take up 90 percent of the budget. The military lives off external and internal rents. Springborg examines how the presidency, the military, and the intelligence apparatus manipulate and control Parliament, the judiciary, and the bureaucracy. He then shows how the regime deals, in turn, with citizens (Muslims and Copts), labor, and students. He ends with a kind of Malthusian portrait of Egypt as living so far beyond its neglected means that it will surely fall off a cliff.

Kings and Presidents: Saudi Arabia and the United States Since FDR
BY BRUCE RIEDEL. Brookings Institution Press, 2017, 272 pp.

The U.S.-Saudi alliance is peculiar. It began with a 1945 meeting between U.S. President Franklin Roosevelt and King Ibn Saud and has always rested, as Riedel states, "on shared interests, but no shared values." The terms of the arrangement have not changed: Washington offers Riyadh security protection in exchange for affordable oil for the world economy. Riedel, a former National Security Council staffer and CIA analyst, relies on unclassified sources to present a lucid account of an often troubled relationship. He makes clear that Saudi leaders have shared a sincere commitment to the Palestinian cause and a consistent desire to see Washington involved in seeking Arab-Israeli peace. Riedel echoes others who have depicted the Saudi monarchy as shocked by U.S. President Barack Obama's abandonment of Egyptian ruler Hosni Mubarak during the uprising that rocked Egypt in 2011. But it is hard to believe that successive Saudi leaders had not closely followed the fates of a parade of fallen autocrats who had enjoyed American support—the shah of Iran, Suharto of Indonesia, Ferdinand Marcos of the Philippines, Augusto Pinochet of Chile, and others—and drawn the logical conclusion.

The Hazaras and the Afghan State: Rebellion, Exclusion, and the Struggle for Recognition
BY NIAMATULLAH IBRAHIMI. Hurst, 2017, 288 pp.

The Hazaras of Afghanistan are Shiites who are widely believed to have roots in Mongolia and are thus both ethnically and religiously distinct from the Pashtun Sunnis who dominate the country. In the 1890s, Afghanistan's Pashtun leader, Abdur Rahman Khan, perpetrated what can be legitimately termed a genocide against the Hazaras: killing, enslaving, and dispossessing the bulk of the population. For decades afterward, the Hazaras were at the bottom of what Ibrahimi, in this sympathetic but nonpolemic book, calls a caste system. Despite the absence of

an official census, the Hazaras today are estimated to represent somewhere between ten and 20 percent of Afghanistan's roughly 30 million inhabitants. Their homeland, in the middle of the country, is grossly underdeveloped. Ibrahimi has undertaken field and archival research to trace the efforts of the Hazaras to protect their identity and patrimony and to find a legitimate place in the Afghan state. The Hazaras were recognized as a group by the 2004 Afghan constitution. They hold ministerial positions and have elected representatives to the national assembly. It takes a strong state, Ibrahimi avers, to mitigate ethnic politics, but a strong state will almost inevitably be an instrument of the Pashtuns, the group to which the fiercely anti-Shiite Taliban belong.

Asia and Pacific

Andrew J. Nathan

Japanese War Criminals: The Politics of Justice After the Second World War
BY SANDRA WILSON, ROBERT CRIBB, BEATRICE TREFALT, AND DEAN ASZKIELOWICZ. Columbia University Press, 2017, 440 pp.

Although studied less often than the Nuremberg trials, the prosecution of Japanese war criminals after World War II was a major undertaking. The United States and its European allies tried 5,707 people; 4,524 were found guilty. (Few data are available regarding people prosecuted by the Chinese and the Soviets.) This legal and political history explores with exemplary nuance and clarity how the Allies handled difficult issues, such as the boundaries of necessary violence in war and the limits of command responsibility, thus forging new precedents for international law. It also shows how attitudes toward the trials changed as Japan became a Western ally during the Cold War, leading to the release of all Japanese prisoners by the late 1950s. For several reasons, the trials did not produce the kind of acceptance of historical guilt among Japanese that the trials of Germans yielded in Germany. The Japanese were less inclined to view their actions as unprovoked aggression, because many thought the West had started the conflict when it tried to strangle Japan's access to resources. The Japanese had not committed ethnic genocide, so they were tried only for the kinds of crimes that the Allies themselves had committed before or during the war, leading many to see the trials as victors' justice.

Authoritarian Legality in China: Law, Workers, and the State
BY MARY E. GALLAGHER. Cambridge University Press, 2017, 264 pp.

The Contentious Public Sphere: Law, Media, and Authoritarian Rule in China
BY YA-WEN LEI. Princeton University Press, 2017, 304 pp.

China's 2008 Labor Contract Law and 2011 Social Insurance Law set high labor-protection standards for factories and for local governments that had powered their export-driven economies with cheap, temporary migrant labor from rural areas. Yet the central government has not enforced the laws, empowered the official labor union to enforce

them, or tolerated the formation of independent unions. Instead, workers can pursue their rights only by undertaking mediation or arbitration or by suing in court. Gallagher argues that the government's purpose in providing "expansive rights that are weakly protected" is to use workers as a "strategic lever" to force enterprises and local authorities to take on higher labor and welfare costs without giving workers the tools to create fundamental change. As is true elsewhere in the Chinese system, officials use laws more to articulate policy goals than to regulate behavior. But such "authoritarian legality" has created its own inconsistency: workers expect more protection than they actually get, so labor protests have increased. The regime now faces a choice between giving workers more power to fight for their interests or cutting back on legal protections. Gallagher says the government is considering the latter option.

Lei likewise explores what she calls the "authoritarian dilemma of modernization." Even the Chinese Communist Party's idiosyncratic version of the rule of law must be administered by legal professionals, and even government-dominated mass media require professional journalists; those are two groups that tend to have their own ideas about how to serve the public. The government's legal-education campaigns have made citizens more conscious of their rights, and Internet portals such as Sohu and Sina have created new networks of discourse. The result has been waves of public criticism on the Internet—which authorities refer to as "public opinion incidents"—in which citizens make use of legal concepts to criticize censorship, corruption, unsafe consumer products, and environmental pollution. As in labor relations, so, too, on the Web and on social media: the government struggles to keep control over social forces it has created.

Thailand: Shifting Ground Between the US and a Rising China
BY BENJAMIN ZAWACKI. Zed Books, 2017, 448 pp.

Zawacki indicts U.S. policy in Thailand since the turn of the century for ceding influence to a rising China. Thailand is important to the United States for trade and for the U.S. military facilities the country hosts, and to China for the access route it provides to the South China Sea and the Bay of Bengal. Even though Thai elites are polarized between the populist Red Shirt movement and the royalist-cum-militaristic Yellow Shirt movement, both sides approve of Chinese-style authoritarian capitalist development, and this has led to more trade, cooperation on infrastructure, and weapons sales between China and Thailand. Zawacki believes that the erosion of U.S. influence could have been stemmed if the State Department and the Pentagon, backed by academia, had fielded a cadre of Thai experts who spent the time necessary to understand the country and build trust. He himself has done so. Although the book overwhelms the reader with details in some places, Zawacki's frank interviews with scores of former and current officials offer insight into the reasons why Thai elites have shifted from a pro-U.S. alignment to a tilt toward China.

The China Mission: George Marshall's Unfinished War, 1945–1947
BY DANIEL KURTZ-PHELAN. Norton, 2018, 416 pp.

In the 1940s, China was filled with towering personalities who left behind highly quotable archives. Kurtz-Phelan, the executive editor of this magazine, has produced an intimate portrait of U.S. General George Marshall's year-long mediation effort, launched in 1946, to stave off civil war between the Nationalists and the Communists. The book is at once a character study of the charismatic and dedicated Marshall; a narrative account of the mission's miraculous early successes and prolonged, painful collapse; and a meditation on the impossibility of reconciling parties that are determined to remain enemies. In Kurtz-Phelan's telling, most of the blame for the peace effort's failure falls on the Nationalist leader Chiang Kai-shek, who refused to remedy the misrule that ultimately doomed his regime. But a deeper obstacle was Washington's inability to uphold the mediator's core requirement of neutrality. Both Chiang and the Chinese Communist Party chief, Mao Zedong, could see that Marshall's true purpose was to get the Communists to accept continued Nationalist rule so that China would remain aligned with the United States. This might have been a reasonable goal if one believed the Communists could not win the civil war. But Mao did not accept that premise—and he turned out to be right.

The Broken Ladder: The Paradox and Potential of India's One Billion
BY ANIRUDH KRISHNA. Cambridge University Press, 2017, 314 pp.

Krishna examines the wasted potential of the two-thirds of the Indian population that is effectively locked up in villages by a lack of education, networks, and job opportunities. The belief that they can't move up in society is well founded but also self-reinforcing, and Krishna argues that India will never succeed without tapping this reservoir of talent. With a mix of data and vivid anecdotes, he shows why the problem can't be fixed with macro-level policies, such as easing licensing requirements, courting foreign investment, and building roads and schools. The bottom-up policies that he suggests—local control of school boards, village-level mentorship programs, internships for village children in cities, more rural libraries, empowered field-level officials and new local institutions to hold them accountable—are rooted in his development experience and aim to transform a culture of hopelessness. But it's not clear who will carry out those steps in a country whose government and elites remain wedded to a city-centric development model.

Africa

Nicolas van de Walle

The Away Game: The Epic Search for Soccer's Next Superstars
BY SEBASTIAN ABBOT. Norton, 2018, 304 pp.

In 2007, Qatar, in an effort to build up its national soccer team, began a project to identify the most talented young soccer players in Africa and bring them to Doha for training. The effort was led by a Barcelona-based talent scout whose claim to fame was that he had discovered perhaps the most famous soccer player of the current era, the Argentine forward Lionel Messi. Abbot's book follows the fortunes of three young African players who participated in the Qatari program and for whom soccer represented a ticket out of poverty. In the end, none of the three made it: it turns out that it is hard to predict who will be the next Messi, particularly in countries where it is easy to forge a birth certificate and convince a scout that a 12-year-old is actually 16. African recruits have become stars on many of the world's top professional teams, but a far more common trajectory for them involves shameless exploitation by a motley assortment of fixers, coaches, scouts, and other intermediaries who all hope to profit off the players. Abbot's book is an excellent introduction to this shady world.

Searching for Boko Haram: A History of Violence in Central Africa
BY SCOTT MACEACHERN. Oxford University Press, 2018, 248 pp.

African Border Disorders: Addressing Transnational Extremist Organizations
EDITED BY OLIVIER J. WALTHER AND WILLIAM F. S. MILES. Routledge, 2017, 210 pp.

These two exceptional books offer significant new insights into the rise of jihadist violence in Africa. MacEachern situates Boko Haram, the Islamic State affiliate based in Nigeria, in the history of a complex region that includes parts of four countries: southern Chad, northern Cameroon, northeastern Nigeria, and southeastern Niger. This is a borderland between the Sahara to the north, where Islam prevails, and the savanna and forest areas to the south, which are home to various animist traditions. Boko Haram's leadership is currently thought to have retreated to the Mandara Mountains, on the Nigerian-Cameroonian border, which MacEachern demonstrates have long been a haven for smugglers, slave traders, and various militias. His book explores the interesting parallels between Boko Haram and Hamman Yaji, a notorious warlord who, in the early twentieth century, struck out from his stronghold in the Mandaras to attack local communities and enslave young women—just like Boko Haram. It comes as no surprise, then, that local residents interpret Boko Haram through the lens of the story of Hamman Yaji, as MacEachern reports.

The contributors to Walther and Miles' strong edited volume focus on the cross-border networks in central and western Africa on which jihadist groups rely. The book reminds readers that jihadist rebellions have long been a feature of the region's politics. During the precolonial era, Muslim extremists used violence to enforce "purer" forms of Islam and to subjugate local non-Muslim populations. Later, during the colonial period, jihadists fought against the infidel invaders. Echoes of both periods can be detected today. Groups such as Boko Haram deny the legitimacy of modern borders (even as they exploit them to great advantage), because their ideology harks back to a "golden age" before foreigners drew the lines. And just as civilians in colonial times suffered from both British and French "pacification" campaigns and jihadist violence, so, too, do Nigerians today often fear the violence of the Nigerian army as much as the brutality of Boko Haram.

Economic Development in Africa Report 2017: Tourism for Transformative and Inclusive Growth
BY THE UN CONFERENCE ON TRADE AND DEVELOPMENT. UN Conference on Trade and Development, 2017, 206 pp.

This UN report makes available a trove of interesting data on the recent development of tourism in Africa. The number of international tourists arriving on the continent increased from 24 million between 1995 and 1998 to 56 million between 2011 and 2014; the revenue they generated in the respective periods rose from $14 billon to around $47 billion. Tourism now accounts for 8.5 percent

of the continent's GDP. Such numbers are still relatively small, and the benefits of tourism are distributed unevenly: the poorer countries of central and western Africa receive far fewer visitors than the middle-income countries of northern and southern Africa. But the report makes a strong case for the potential of tourism, a relatively labor-intensive industry that can create significant employment possibilities, including for skilled workers. In addition, the report suggests that growth in tourism is likely to boost other sectors of African economies, in part by spurring investment in human capital and in physical and communications infrastructure.

Burkina Faso: A History of Power, Protest, and Revolution
BY ERNEST HARSCH. Zed Books, 2017, 352 pp.

Harsch's is the first English-language political history of Burkina Faso to appear in many years. It is a superb introduction to this small, landlocked country in the Sahel region, covering the precolonial era, the era of French colonization, and the postcolonial period, culminating in a popular uprising in 2014 that forced out the country's longtime dictator, Blaise Compaoré. The heart of the book is a glowing assessment of the regime of Thomas Sankara, an idealistic junior military officer who took power following a coup in 1983 and ruled until he was ousted by Compaoré in 1987. Sankara's status as a Third World revolutionary icon rests on his personal charisma, his considerable skill as an orator, and the relative success of the socialist reforms his regime put in place, which Harsch describes in extremely favorable terms. Harsch ends the book on a note of tempered optimism. The army has run the country for most of its postcolonial history and has instilled in the Burkinabe state a paternalistic culture of control that is not compatible with its limited capacities. But Harsch believes that the protests that helped topple Compaoré invigorated civil society in a way that will force greater accountability in future governments.

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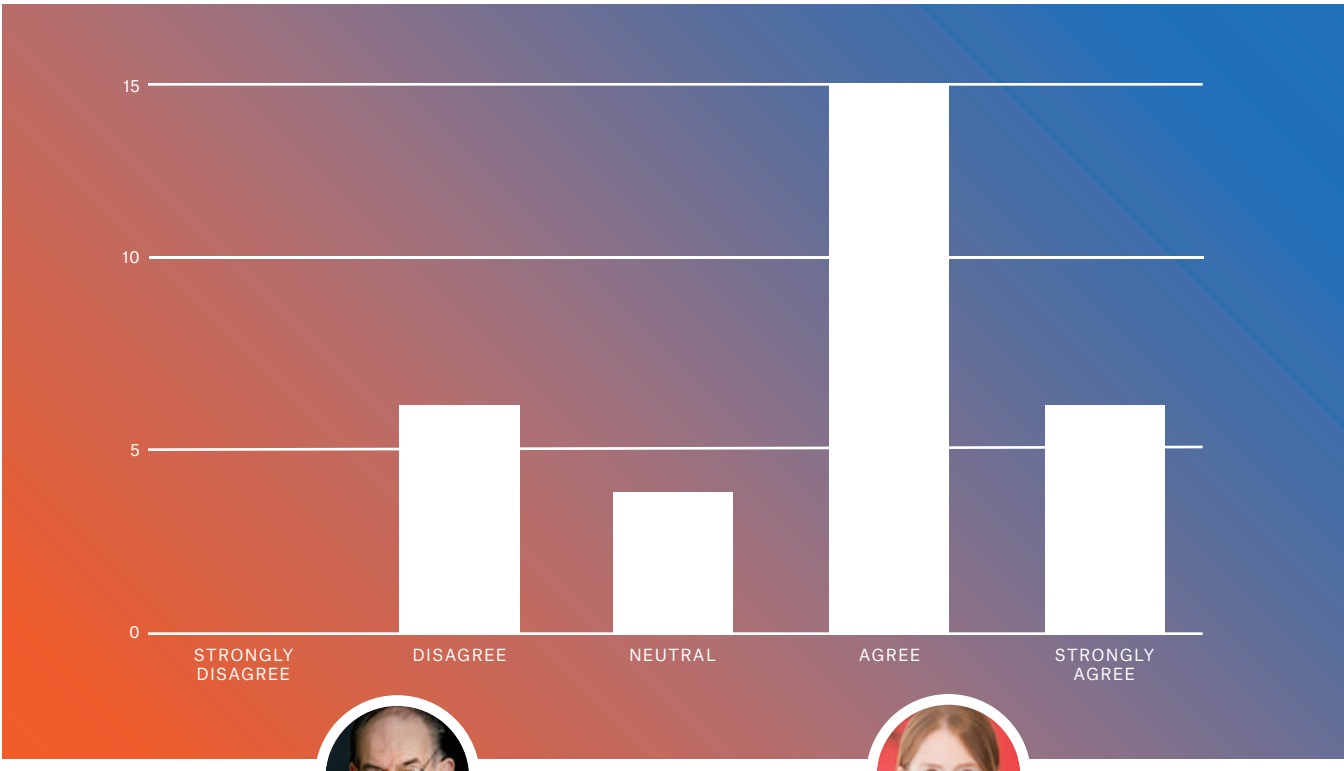
A Brave New Foreign Policy?

Foreign Affairs Brain Trust

We asked dozens of experts whether they agreed or disagreed that U.S. foreign policy has changed dramatically over the past year. The results from those who responded are below:



DISAGREE, CONFIDENCE LEVEL 8

John Mearsheimer

R. Wendell Harrison Distinguished Service Professor of Political Science, University of Chicago

"If you look beyond President Trump's hot rhetoric, U.S. foreign policy certainly has changed in a handful of ways, but not in most ways, and certainly has not changed dramatically."

AGREE, CONFIDENCE LEVEL 10

Rachel Vogelstein

Douglas Dillon Senior Fellow and Director of the Women and Foreign Policy Program, Council on Foreign Relations

"The Trump administration's retreat from global leadership and erratic decision-making have eroded trust in the United States and fueled doubts about our role in the post–World War II international order."

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