




THE EVOLVING AMERICAN PRESIDENCY



The Trump Doctrine and the Emerging International System

Edited by
Stanley A. Renshon · Peter Suedfeld

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Editors

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For
Harold D. Lasswell [1902–1978]
and
Alexander L. George [1920–2006]
American Foreign Policy, Political Psychology, and International Relations
Pioneers

PREFACE

The Trump Doctrine, like the president and his presidency, is enormously controversial and potentially extremely consequential. President Trump is attempting not only to change specific policies, but also change and reform the foreign policy paradigms that have dominated strategic thinking and analysis for the last several decades. Many of his policies—regarding Israel, Iran, trade, migration and immigration, and America’s role in the world, to name a few—have ignited concern, debate, resistance, grudging legitimacy; and from other sources, respect and approval. What Trump’s policies and doctrine have not sufficiently generated to date is fair-minded, evidence-based, and substantive analysis of their actual foundations, elements, applications, and implications. This book is designed to help provide that kind of analysis.

The editors of the volume, aside from our other academic work and our long personal friendship and mutual scholarly interests, have collaborated before on an edited volume on the Bush Doctrine that also combined a focus on presidential leadership, international relations, political psychology, and American foreign policy. (Renshon and Suedfeld 2007). Our focus in the current book is to bring together scholars with a range of theoretical and political perspectives to help analyze the foreign policy doctrine of one of the most controversial of modern presidents. We aimed to assemble the views of a diverse group of scholars, some of whom are moderately left or right of center, and many of whom have no

discernible location on that kind of political spectrum. What does distinguish the contributors is their proven scholarship, supplemented in many cases by substantial real-world policy experience.

The book's title—*The Trump Doctrine and the Emerging International System* reflects its dual frame of focus. One is President Trump himself and his views and strategies regarding American foreign policy. A substantial number of the president's policies run counter to the conventional wisdom, shared by foreign policy establishment figures on both sides of the political aisle, that have been the premises of traditional political narratives for decades. Trade, migration, and immigration, international institutions and their policy preferences, and relationships with allies, competitors, and adversaries, have all moved decisively in new directions by President Trump.

It is not surprising that the number and nature of these changes in policy direction have been controversial, especially among those who had been quite content with the performance of the dominant paradigms that the president is seeking to reform, and in some cases, discontinue. It is unusual and controversial that a president would seek to change so many core foreign (and domestic) policy areas, against the consensual wishes of the major establishment leaders and foreign policy institutions associated with both Democrats and Republicans. Yet, that is precisely what President Trump has done. Those efforts have provided the direction of his presidency, but also its purpose. It is unclear at this point whether, and to what degree, he will be successful. At the same time, it is equally clear that it takes a president with an unusual personality and character to undertake such an effort, against massive odds and relentless opposition, and to have a chance to succeed. Although we do not address President Trump's personality *per se*, several chapters do address the role that the president's psychology and worldview play in his doctrine.

The second point of focus of this book is the development of the international system itself since 1945. That system has, to state the obvious, changed since then. There have been periods of international bipolarity, multipolarity, and unambiguous American primacy. Moreover, in all these periods the United States has played variable leadership roles. There has been a period when the United States has been the only major power left relatively economically and politically intact after a brutal World War. There have been periods when it has been the world's sole "superpower," one of two superpowers, or one of many major international powers with nuclear weapons and all that they entail. Since the end of

World War II, the United States has been the sole undisputed leader of the free world, and it has led a coalition of its allies, even if sometimes “from behind” (a senior Obama White Official, quoted in Lizza 2011). It has concentrated on nation-building abroad, but also refocused on domestic policy concerns. It has led internationally as the “indispensable nation” (Albright 1998) in a broadly based coalition of liberal world order allies, and it has most recently made manifest what has always been present, but quietly latent: the view that a primary priority of American foreign policy is American national interest.

Some of these changes in the international system are a consequence of President Trump’s foreign policy initiatives. Some of them, however, are the result of changes in the nature and structure of the international system and America’s place within it. The international system has been changing, both before and since President Trump came into office. Therefore, a number of chapters in this volume reflect that comparative historical perspective by examining President Trump in the context of what some of his presidential predecessors faced and did.

That dual perspective allows us to ask a number of important questions. Have the considerations that govern the use of deterrence, containment, and their strategic siblings changed since they became tried and trusted strategies during and after the Cold War? How has President Trump used, or modified, or abandoned, some of these strategies? How have changes in the international system and the Trump presidency affected relations between the United States and other nations whether allies, rivals, or adversaries? And, what do these developments mean for President Trump, the United States, and the world going forward? One major question, among many covered in this book, is whether President Trump’s efforts to change existing dominant foreign policy paradigms are, in reality, reformist or restorative and meant to address “new realities” that characterize the emerging international system.

THE STRUCTURE OF THE BOOK’S CHAPTERS AND ANALYSIS

This book was designed, and the chapters written, as the Trump Administration enters its fourth year in office. It therefore lays no claim to being a final analysis or assessment of the nature or outcomes of the Trump Doctrine. Mr. Trump is a president who likes to be unpredictable, and often is, in his strategies and tactics. Yet this should not obscure an equally important truth. President Trump’s basic policy premises and

goals are clearly and publicly evident in his policy choices and initiatives. On a host of central issues—immigration, trade, climate, relationships with allies, international liberal institutions, and the cosmopolitan outlook that supports them, to name a few—that form a basis for his Doctrine and his core positions are quite clear. At this point, the same, however, cannot be said of their eventual impact.

As the president nears the end of his first term, the question is how to interpret, understand, and evaluate the strategies and policies that constitute his foreign policy doctrine. Answering those questions is a primary purpose of this book. Within the parameters of that purpose, the analysis that follows lays no claim to comprehensiveness. The book does not cover every Trump foreign policy initiative or response, nor is its purpose to provide a grand policy tour of Trump's policies in every geographical area of the world. Like every president, Mr. Trump's responsibility as worldwide steward of American foreign policy does not mean or require that he be equally attentive to everything that happens in the world. President Trump has made his priorities very clear, and they in turn provide the most productive venues in which to explore the meaning of his foreign policy premises and doctrine. An overview of the book's four major structural parts and the chapters within them follows.

Part I: Theoretical Foundations of the Trump Doctrine

This part analyzes the basic foundations and core elements of the Trump Doctrine. Any presidential doctrine reflects the worldview of the president himself, his purposes and his strategies for achieving them. Stanley Renshon argues in his chapter that Trump's core domestic and foreign policies are linked through *Conservative American Nationalism*, and that the personal psychologically based origins of his strategies are a key element in understanding his doctrine.

Basic to the Trump Doctrine is his starting premise of "America First." What exactly does that mean? Realists argue that all countries pursue their self-interest, so what is new or different about the Trump Doctrine in this respect? Peter Suedfeld, Bradford Morrison, and Lawrence Kuznar explore how Trump actually uses that phrase and what it means to him. Their data provide an interesting perspective and not a few surprises.

What are President Trump's ultimate goals for his doctrine, and how are they related to the goals of his presidency? In one respect, one can discern Trump's foreign policy purposes by analyzing his approach to key geographical areas and actors as the book does in Part III. Yet, it is also

possible to take a step back to look at the large theoretical picture and conclude, as Henry Nau does in his chapter, that Trump wants to change the world by blending America's nationalist and realist traditions. Paradoxically, there is ample evidence that in the historical context of American foreign policy Trump is, in many ways, a traditionalist.

Finally, this section closes with one of the most controversial elements of the Trump Doctrine: its relationship with the Liberal International Order. James Carafano's chapter examines the origins and development of that order in some detail and asks whether Trump is trying to reform or destroy it. He concludes that Trump is the latest in a long line of American presidents who have been trying to balance national interests with support for transnational institutions that contribute to global stability.

Part II: Functional Foundations of the Trump Doctrine

Using theoretical lenses to understand the Trump Doctrine is a starting point for understanding the functional foundation of the doctrine's applied impact in the real world. Every president must organize a White House capable of informing him about the problems he faces and his choices in dealing with them. As Martha Cottam's chapter makes clear, Trump is a particularly difficult president to work with in this regard, because of his tactical and strategic flexibility and his pride in being "unpredictable." As a result, his relationships with advisors are also changeable. Even at this point, almost four years into his presidency, the sources and nature of the advice he requests, receives, accepts, or rejects, are difficult to bring into clear focus.

The key to any president's foreign policy doctrine involves the question of how he mobilizes and uses America's vast resources to marshal and project diverse forms of power in pursuit of American national interests. Does a president rely on threats, and if so, what kind? Do his threats, whether subtle or overt, clear or implied, carry any real consequences? Is he more likely to use diplomacy or deterrence? What are the circumstances where he feels the use of force may be necessary? These questions are the focus of Thomas Preston's analysis.

As Douglas Foyle's chapter makes abundantly clear, Trump's policies and his presidential leadership are controversial both at home and abroad. Foyle examines how publics, both domestically and abroad, understand, support, or oppose the Trump Doctrine and its major elements.

*Part III: Allies, Adversaries, and Rivals: The Trump Doctrine
in the World Arena*

The Trump Doctrine has worldwide consequences, though not equally everywhere. Trump himself has clearly chosen the areas, issues, and specific countries on which he has focused his attention. He has spent considerable presidential time on these key areas of Russia, Asia, and the Middle East. As already noted, we are not pursuing a case-by-case analysis of the workings of the Trump Doctrine everywhere in the world; this part is comprised of selective considerations of some of the major foci of the president's policies.

Trump has been involved in the dispute between South Korea and Japan (Reuters 2019), but we treat in detail only the centers of gravity of his Doctrine's Asian policies: China and North Korea. Similarly, with regard to the Middle East we have an overview and a specific consideration of policy toward Israel.

Another area for which we do not include specific, focused chapters is Latin America. President Trump has imposed sanctions on both Cuba and Venezuela (Crowley & Anatoly 2019; DeYoung 2019), but the real center of Trump Doctrine gravity in the Americas has been the southern border of the United States and the challenging migration problems fueled by Central Americans and the countries that they pass through on their way to the United States. That situation is usefully considered within the rubric of Trump's *Conservative American Nationalism* (Renshon, Chapter 1) and Douglas Foyle's chapter on "The New Normal?: Public Opinion, Partisanship, and The Trump Doctrine" (Chapter 7).

To begin this Part, Jeremy W. Lamoreaux looks through the dual lenses of the "Trump Doctrine" and the "Putin Doctrine" to analyze the relationship between the United States and Russia, two leading rivals for global influence. Since 2016, the situation has been made even more complicated by the seemingly perennial controversy about Russia's role in the election of Donald Trump. The chapter considers how the two leaders' personal relationship, foreign policy objectives, and other factors such as the changing nature of the international system affect the relationship, and how this relationship may develop in the future.

Next, Michael Beckley examines the history of the United States–China relationship and the policy twists, turns, miscalculations and wishful thinking on both sides that got us to this complex point. China is one of the triad of Great Power competitors in today's world, challenging the

United States for global influence. President Trump is the first president in nearly 50 years to wage full-spectrum competition with China, short of war but spanning major domains—military, strategic, and economic, as well as the new competitions in both cyberspace and outer space. Yet, although Trump’s policy goals are clear, the outcomes at this point are not. He has reached a major Phase 1 economic agreement with China, but the overall relationship between the two countries is still evolving and has soured because of Trump’s view that China could have done much more to warn the world and contain the Coronavirus.

Another focus of Trump’s foreign policy in Asia has been the Democratic People’s Republic of Korea. Lawrence Kuznar makes use of a powerful methodology that examines the communications of Presidents Trump and Kim Jong Un over time in relation to their unfolding circumstances. He charts their seemingly mercurial alterations of invective, bombast and declarations of rapprochement, to examine the underlying and often hidden meanings of their public stances. His data are both interesting and surprising.

Our next area of interest is the Middle East, which before and since 9/11 has commanded enormous presidential attention. Great Power proxies, the flow of oil, and a strategic location combine to attract American involvement up to and including warfare. Desert Shield and Desert Storm and the invasion of Iraq are now over, and the Afghanistan war once again appears to be winding down (Mashal 2019a, b). However, the situation continues to be unstable, and made even more so by political-religious hostilities between Iran, one of America’s fieriest adversaries and a continuous sponsor of anti-US propaganda and terrorism, and Israel, one of America’s most reliable allies.

Michael Doran provides a comparative analysis of the policies of Presidents George W. Bush, Obama, and Trump in the Middle East generally and concerning Iran in particular. He examines the Iran policies of Presidents Obama and Trump and their approach to the nuclear question and the strategies of amelioration of the regime’s extremism and hostility, including coercive deterrence as a strategy.

Amnon Cavari then focuses on Trump’s policy regarding Israel. He examines this alliance through the prism of the personal affinity between President Trump and Prime Minister Benjamin Netanyahu, the long-time leader of Israel. He analyzes the effects of this partnership on their domestic political and partisan interests. He then assesses the costs and

benefits of their policies to American standing in the world and their long-term consequences to the way Israel is viewed by American political elites and the mass public.

*Part IV: The Trump Doctrine in Comparative and Historical
Perspective*

Part IV places the Trump Doctrine in comparative perspective and examines its prospects. Robert Singh's chapter provides an in-depth look at the nature of presidential doctrines, which serves as a framework for the comparative analysis of the Bush, Obama, and Trump Doctrines. He concludes that Obama and Trump parsed elements of isolationism, primacy, leadership, and restraint, tailored to specific problems, that defied easy categorization. None fully adhered to pre-written scripts.

As to the future of the Trump Doctrine, Colin Dueck concludes that future Republican leaders will have to strike balances among more purist versions of non-intervention, hardline unilateralism, and conservative internationalism. Coalition-building will be inevitable. However, the specific way in which this is done, in terms of character, style, and substance, will be up to future presidents, just as it has been in the past. Contingent events will no doubt provide new, currently unexpected opportunities for one or more factions. For conservatives of all varieties, because of President Trump and his doctrine, the possibilities on foreign policy are now more widely open.

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PRAISE FOR *THE TRUMP DOCTRINE AND THE EMERGING INTERNATIONAL SYSTEM*

“A needed assessment of US foreign policy during the Trump Administration that goes far beyond recent journalistic accounts. Putting the psychological and policy dispositions as well as the decision-making processes and policy outcomes into historical and comparative perspective, this volume makes an important contribution. It includes chapters by leading scholars each taking a dispassionate look at the aspect of Trump’s foreign policy closest to their own expertise. It includes excellent analyses of Trump’s Conservative American Nationalism and its relation to previous traditions in American conservatism and nationalism, as well as insightful studies of the decision-making process in the administration and how the policy outputs relate both to the institutions of the liberal international order and to previous doctrines and strategies. Area specialists delve carefully into the Trump Administration’s policy toward China, North Korea, and the Middle East.”

—Richard K. Herrmann, *Emeritus Professor of Political Science,
The Ohio State University, USA*

“President Trump’s foreign policy will be debated for years to come, but a great place to start is with *The Trump Doctrine and the Emerging International System*, which brings multiple methods and careful analysis to a

topic that is more often characterized by heat than by light. Both comprehensive and penetrating, these essays can be read with profit by students, scholars, and members of the interested public.”

—Robert Jervis, *Adlai Stevenson Professor of International Affairs, Columbia University, USA*

“This is far and away the best book on Donald Trump’s foreign policy. Its thoughtful essays by distinguished contributors explore the President and his policies from historical, psychological, and comparative perspectives. They recognize that Trump is highly idiosyncratic but also that his policy visions are rooted in American traditions. The chapters tell us much about this outlier but also about American foreign policy more generally because of the appeal and tensions inherent in the kind of nationalism that Trump espouses.”

—Richard Ned Lebow, *Professor of International Political Theory, the King’s College London, UK*

“Renshon and Suedfeld have brought together an excellent group of scholars from a variety of theoretical and political perspectives to analyze President Trump’s world views, goals, and strategies in the context of a changing international system. The book’s theoretical and comparative historical studies provide wide-ranging and provocative analyses of the foreign policy of an idiosyncratic and unpredictable president. It is important reading for scholars, students, and policy analysts.”

—Jack S. Levy, *Board of Governors’ Professor of Political Science, Rutgers University, USA*

“It is tempting to believe that Donald Trump’s foreign policy goals are as ephemeral as his tweets. The studies in this book bring a different view, that Trump has shown persistence and flexibility in pursuing his vision of ‘America First.’”

—Clark R. McCauley, *Research Professor of Psychology, Bryn Mawr College, USA*

“The surprise win of the 2016 election by Donald Trump has triggered, among other outcomes, dramatic changes in American defense and foreign policies. The President, an opinionated novice in foreign policy, is determined to eliminate his predecessor’s heritage and stamp his

own imprint on core strategic policies, including relationships with allies, adversaries and rivals, as well as the reform of the post Second World War global institutions. These ambitious goals and their pursuit were driven more by the President's intuition rather than knowledge-based. This turbulent policy style has often left observers at home and abroad puzzled and perplexed in search of comprehension and policy consistency. Professors Stanley Renshon and Peter Suedfeld, two of the foremost experts on political psychology, presidential politics and foreign policy analysis, rise to the challenge of clearing the underbrush and provide a detailed interdisciplinary picture of the Trump Doctrine and its implications for the international system. With a team of expert contributors, they produce a well-crafted volume that covers systematically the most important issue areas of foreign policy and the underlying ideological concepts of the Trump Doctrine. This book is simply indispensable to students and practitioners of American foreign policy. No future studies of Trump's administration policies could ignore this authoritative volume."

—Yaacov Vertzberger, *Professor of International Relations,
The Hebrew University of Jerusalem, Jerusalem*

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PART I

Theoretical Foundations of the Trump
Doctrine



The Trump Doctrine and *Conservative American Nationalism*

Stanley A. Renshon

Foreign policy is traditionally a setting in which the president is said to have more discretion because the checks and balances of domestic politics don't operate there. That has never been quite true since the international system has its own version of restraining checks and balances—economic, political, and military consequences for serious miscalculations. That is one major reason why presidential worldviews and foreign policy thinking weigh so heavily in assessing any president.

In my work on the G. W. Bush and Obama Doctrines (Renshon 2010, 2012, 2013, 2017; see also Renshon and Suedfeld 2007), I have pointed out what purposes doctrines serve and why they matter. Often they are policy markers for a president's thinking helping allies and enemies alike to gauge their policies and thus further the benefits and opportunities of deterrence theories for the international community (Pach 2006; Brinkely 1997).

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Doctrines often refer to specific geographical areas (e.g., The Monroe Doctrine for South America) or circumstances (e.g., the Truman Doctrine for the Cold war with the Soviet Union). The Trump Doctrine is different. It reflects a wide-ranging reassessment of *what* American policy will be worldwide- and *how* it will be carried out.

The most fitting conceptual name for the Trump doctrine is *Conservative American Nationalism*. It is a framework that this analysis argues is composed of six essential elements: (1) An America First premise in Trump policies; (2) An emphasis on American National Identity as a cornerstone of America's elemental and dual relationship with itself and the world; (3) Highly selective involvement, with a non-exclusive emphasis on its own terms and interests in defining America's role in the world; (4) An emphasis on American strength in all its forms, including resilience and resolve; (5) The use of maximum repeated pressure along a continuum of points in pursuit of key goals; and (6) Maximum tactical and strategic flexibility.

All of these elements are meant to further one basic core Trump presidential purpose that I conceptualize as the *Politics of American Restoration* (Renshon 2020). That means reversing the policies and assumptions that have resulted in decades of many Americans feeling the country is moving in the wrong direction. To do so, he wants to pivot away from the failed or outdated conventional policy "wisdom" of the last four decades.

It includes pivoting away from those in both political parties who have assured the American public that: unlimited immigration and limited enforcement of immigration laws have no downside; that low economic growth is the new normal and Americans should get used to it; that free trade is always a "win-win" for everyone; and that it is better not to insist on greater reciprocity abroad with American allies, or take a strong stance against adversaries.

The Trump Doctrine is not only controversial but also mysterious. What is it? One headline captures an essential feature—"..Depends who you ask" (Warren et al. 2019).

Not everyone believes there is a Trump Doctrine (Lissner 2017; Larison 2019). Among those that do, the error is rampant. Some erroneously reduce the doctrine to one foreign policy advisor (Zakaria 2019)—John Bolton, while neglecting the fact that especially for this president his own views carry enormous weight (Collins 2016), as they did for President Obama (Jones 2008; Seib 2009; Singh 2012). Others erroneously see Trump as being concerned with one real foreign policy

goal—one-upping President Obama (Friedman 2019). That characterization of a single shallow motivation neglects Trump’s decades-long publicly stated concerns with a few of them like trade and immigration that lie outside the conventional wisdom narratives (Laderman and Simms 2017).

Along similar lines, some NeverTrump pundits, again dismissing any policy thinking on Trump’s part (Gerson 2018a), argue that:

Defining a foreign policy theory that might merit the title of ‘doctrine’ is difficult in the Trump administration, which is dismissive of reflection, consistency and precedent. But in practice, it is the replacement of national pride with personal vanity.

Still, others reduce the Trump Doctrine to one sound bite—“America First,” which Larison (2019) notes amounts to a truism, if not an unstated premise, for almost every American president. And finally, there has been an attempt to rush, erroneously and prematurely, to note that Trump embraces “key pillars” of President Obama’s foreign policies (Lander et al. 2017). As his presidency has progressed, it is abundantly clear that he does not as his withdrawal from the Paris climate accords and Iran nuclear deal demonstrate.

This analysis argues that the Trump Doctrine is best understood as a doctrine of *Conservative American Nationalism*—as the president understands that phrase. The doctrine consists of a formulation of America’s role in the world, as is generally the case for presidential doctrines. Yet, it also, unusually, makes a direct statement and envisions a direct relationship between America’s role in the world and Trump’s view that there is a core American national identity that helps define it. It is at its core, a traditionally conservative nationalist view that emphasizes American strength, patriotism, and sovereignty.

As with any presidential doctrine, these views are the president’s, and in Trump’s case particularly and idiosyncratically so. Unlike many other presidential foreign policy doctrines, the goals of Trump’s *Conservative American Nationalism* doctrine are also partially defined by the psychological capacities needed to carry them out. These include the president’s unusual, perhaps unique, leadership style that combines bluster, unusual flexibility, and equal amounts of pragmatism and hyperbole. It also includes core commitments to “strength,” persistence, and a willingness to stand apart from a conventional consensus and, if necessary, alone

in pursuit of his view of American interests. The Trump Doctrine owes as much to the president's psychology as it does to his policies. Indeed, it is hard to difficult to imagine the latter without the former—which holds implications for its historical half-life.

IMPATIENCE, ACTION, AND AMBITION: THREE PSYCHOLOGICAL SOURCES OF THE TRUMP DOCTRINE

Every president experiences the frustration of having his ambitions tempered by a constitutional system designed to stymie them. Trump also has to attempt to lead and govern in political circumstances, unprecedented in the modern presidency. A powerful array of opposition forces have signed on the premise that Trump (Ohehir 2019).

...must be contained, neutralized, resisted, defeated and, if possible, humiliated. By any means necessary.

Those circumstances are particularly vexing for this peripatetic president. Mr. Trump is able to bide his time when necessary—some of his New York City projects played out over decades (Blair 2005: 59–93) and he has been forced to adjust a number of his policy initiatives to a court's schedule, not his (*cf.*, Johnson 2019; Wagner and Paul 2019). President Trump has adjusted, most likely begrudgingly to these facts of presidential life.

About talks with China, “there is no need to rush.” [<https://twitter.com/realdonaldtrump/status/1126815126584266753>] About talks with North Korea, Trump says, “I’m in no rush” (Trump 2019). About talks with Iran, he says, “I’m ready when they are, but whenever they’re ready, it’s OK. And in the meantime, I’m in no rush. I’m in no rush” (Trump quoted in Wilkie 2019). We could add to these examples many of Trump’s negotiations on trade with American allies. The message, and the reality is the same—what one analyst referred to as “Trump’s ‘no rush’ foreign policy” (Restuccia 2019).

Yet, it is also abundantly clear that Mr. Trump is a president who likes to get things done. Jeff Walker, a military school classmate who worked for the Trump Organization for more than a decade, had this to say about Trump’s style, quoted in Blair (2018),

He thought you could figure it out. That's what made him exciting to work for—no bureaucratic red tape. You got an assignment, you went off and did it, didn't let anything stand in your way. Move it, knock it down. He wouldn't tolerate it, neither should you.

Years later, his former Secretary of State, Rex Tillerson agreed, (Transcript 2019, 117, emphasis added):

A lot of these -- a lot of the early issues had to do with immigration policy, actions, implementation. And, you know, I shared the President's endpoint objective. *It was how do you want to get it done, you know. And he was -- often times wanted to do it: Boom, you know, this is it. Let's issue this.*

Mr. Trump's style is to not let problems continue without doing something about them. In an early *New York Times* interview, President Trump had this to say about North Korea (*New York Times* 2017):

SCHMIDT: So what are you going to do [about North Korea]?

TRUMP: We'll see. That I can't tell you, Michael. But we'll see. I can tell you one thing: This is a problem that should have been handled for the last 25 years. This is a problem, North Korea. That should have been handled for 25, 30 years, not by me. This should have been handled long before me. Long before this guy has whatever he has.

Conservative American Nationalism: *Implementation at Trump Speed*

Trump's peripatetic leadership style has been evident in his attempts to quickly change the direction for American foreign policy not just in a limited range of areas, but a substantial number of them is a joint function of two core elements of his psychology. There is, first, his temperament—he likes to get things done, and his circumstances—he may or may not have enough time in office to accomplish his presidential purposes which is to change several long-standing narratives. This is not the typical approach of conservative nationalists who tend to emphasize incrementalism. However, Trump clearly feels that reforming the entrenched narratives he wants to change will be more likely if he is able to establish another operating set of premises.

Not only does President Trump want to change and reform the dominant foreign policy narratives that have served as “conventional wisdom” for the past four decades, he also wants change the actual policies and

organizational assumptions of a number of major international institutions. Reforming the United Nations is an international policy perennial, but Trump wants to go much further. He wants to change the way that W.H.O., WTO, and NATO are organized, along with their actual policies. He wants to change and reform the international trading system. And he wants to, as President Obama did before him, albeit with a much more battle ready set of forces, recalibrate the use of American force abroad.

In the meantime, these efforts have another consequence as well, well captured by *Times* columnist Thomas Friedman's (2019) complaint that¹:

It's Trump's willingness to unravel so many longstanding policies and institutions *at once*— from NAFTA to Obamacare to the global climate accord to the domestic clean power initiative to the Pacific trade deal to the Iran nuclear deal — without any real preparation either on the day before or for the morning after.

Of course, Trump campaigned on exactly the policies that Friedman mentions. So, while Trump's follow-through, as president may have been a surprise to some, his intentions were not. Moreover, it is true that for each change, Trump has tried to provide explanations for why he has done so (*cf.*, Trump 2017b). However, most people cannot absorb and make sense of all the changes Trump has set in motion. And that probably includes the president himself. He has put into motion so many whirling policy elements any one time, that any president would find it difficult to explain them all, and Trump's impressionistic and associative rhetorical style exacerbates this explanation gap. His critics of course, make little if any effort to fairly address the president's goals or his diverse efforts to reach them.

Trump is no "hidden-hand" president (Greenstein 1994). Making substantial substantive policy changes in a number of major areas, publicly, and dramatically, within a short span of time can be politically and emotionally disorienting for allies and ordinary Americans alike. Ordinary Americans are aware that the president is making a number of substantial changes and that Trump opponents are upset to the point of repeated

¹Friedman undercuts his observation by introducing it with an *ad hominem* attack—"...the most frightening thing about the Trump presidency. It's not the president's juvenile tweeting or all the aides who've been pushed out of his clown car at high speed or his industrial-strength lying."

outrage about them. However, cutting through the many and varied accusations and counterclaims associated with the Trump Presidency and its policies in any detail is not a primary motivation for most Americans.

Moreover, it is highly unlikely that the president himself has been able, or interested in absorbing all the implications of what he is doing. Trump seeks to reduce American commitments and responsibilities abroad in part by calling on allies to more fully share international leadership's burdens. That has been difficult to accomplish. His approach in this and other foreign policy areas is to set things in motion and see where they lead. He is much too occupied with implementing his doctrine and scrambling to deal with the fallout out that his new policies predictably cause than in providing detailed public education before he tries to implement them. So many goals, so little time captures some of Trump's *restoration* dilemma. Trump's presidential goals cannot afford to patiently wait decades for implementation as he did with his plans for the old Penn Central railroad properties that he bought and developed in New York City. One four year term and out, or two terms at the most are the Constitutional rules that limit any president's transformational ambitions.

The dilemma of the Trump presidency and doctrine is that he is really undertaking major policy reforms of long unchanged premises that are reflected in new policy initiatives. They are unfolding in a Constitutional system designed to frustrate major changes. He is also trying to do so while dealing with an opposition determined to stop him by any means necessary. Yet the composite scope and potential implications, both domestically and abroad, of Trump's *Conservative American Nationalism* doctrine are potentially enormous. One term as president is hardly sufficient to implement this doctrine much less gain public understanding and acceptance of it.

Trump's first term is best understood then, as an audition for which he was barely selected, not a mandate of confidence that his plans would work or be supported even if they did. In the meantime, as is Trump's style, and the necessity of his circumstances, its full speed ahead.

Trump's full speed ahead leadership style has some obvious advantages when trying to make progress within what amounts to a Constitutional system of speed bumps. It is also a decided advantage by keeping on the offensive against determined opposition. It conveys a willingness and determination to fight for his goals. This is an important consideration not only for his supporters but also for those who might become

supporters. If the President doesn't believe in his goals strongly enough to fight hard for them, why should anyone else take them seriously?

The Risks of Trump Speed

As noted, Trump's presidential purposes are to provide Americans with alternative policy models based on reformulated basic premises to consider. A president's time in office is (relatively) short; opposition to his presidency is fierce and in those circumstances full speed ahead is an understandable strategy.

However, that said, full speed ahead is sometimes a recipe for mistakes, sometimes even substantial ones, as has been the case for the Trump presidency. That has raised the concern voiced by Wright (quoted in Farrell 2017; see also Wright 2017) among others as to whether the president is able to see beyond his latest front—line battle:

Trump is no gardener. He can't look beyond the immediate. The very essence of America First is to say that the United States is like any other power and is essentially abandoning the long-term vision that diplomats like Acheson and Shultz believed in.

It is unclear that the president cannot “.. look beyond the immediate.” His focus on “getting things done” has to be understood in a context of an enormous policy range of presidential policy ambitions, almost all of which are challenges to the dominant consensus premises of American foreign (and domestic) policy. As a result, he faces enormous opposition—generated headwinds. If anything is to be accomplished in those circumstances, a great deal of presidential attention to the here and now is required.

Yet, it is true that President Trump sometimes gives, for good reason, the impression of slapdash policy thinking and implementation. The most egregious example of the latter was the implementation, very early in his presidency, requiring additional screening from those traveling from seven Muslim-majority countries that caught everyone, including those charged with carrying out the policy, by surprise. The new restrictions applied to countries that had already been excluded from programs allowing people to travel to the United States without a visa because of terrorism concerns by the Obama Administration, but there was little advanced preparation for the policy's rollout.

The result could fairly be described as chaotic (Blake 2017) and it set the stage for years of litigation (Lowry and Dawsey 2018) in which Trump ultimately prevailed at the Supreme Court (Liptak and Shear 2018) after numerous tweaks of that policy.

That very flawed rollout helped establish a narrative of the Trump presidency as “chaotic”: That narrative was in some respects accurate. That narrative was legitimately reinforced by the unusual turbulence at the top tier of Trump administration officials (Tapas 2019) as Trump tried to find advisors who were a good fit for his style and views. Some substantive evidence along with anonymously sourced he said/they said “tell all” books filled with hyperbole, score settling, virtue signaling and NeverTrump invective (Wolff 2018; Simms 2019) added to the impression of a narrative of disarray.

SIX PILLARS OF PRESIDENT TRUMP’S CONSERVATIVE AMERICAN NATIONALISM DOCTRINE

We are now in a better position to make clearer the conceptual and strategic foundations of the Trump Doctrine. They consist of: (1) An America First premise in Trump policies; (2) An emphasis on American National Identity as a cornerstone of America’s elemental and dual relationship with itself and the world; (3) Highly selective involvement, with a not exclusive emphasis on its own terms and interests in defining America’s role in the world; (4) An emphasis on American strength in all its forms, including resilience and resolve; (5) The use of maximum repeated pressure along a continuum of points in pursuit of key goals; and (6) Maximum tactical and strategic flexibility.

Some of these elements, for example an emphasis on American national interests are certainly not new, although their use in the Trump presidency does differ from past practices. Others like the repeated use of maximum and often public pressure are a new feature of the Trump presidency and doctrine. It is the combination of these elements, not a single individual feature that defines the Trump Doctrine of *Conservative American Nationalism*

1. *America First*

No single element of the Trump doctrine has generated more discussion, much of it mistaken, than Trump’s emphasis on America First.

There is first the muddled claim that “America First” really means Trump First (Sargent 2018) because, “He’s putting his own naked self-interest over what’s good for America, and prioritizing the real-world policy realization of his own prejudices and hatreds over any good-faith, fact-based effort to determine, by any discernible standard, what might actually be in the country’s interests.” *Translation*: The author disagrees with Trump’s policies.

There is also the lazy claim that America First is a barely concealed endorsement of the term’s association with, “the name of the isolationist, defeatist, anti-Semitic national organization that urged the United States to appease Adolf Hitler” (Dunn 2016). That racially charged accusation is inaccurate and unsustainable.

It turns out that Mr. Trump, had never heard of the America First doctrine and was innocent of its historical meaning. The term was suggested to him in an interview exchange with David Sanger of the *New York Times*, and it resonated with his policy instincts (Sanger and Haberman 2016b, *emphasis added*):

SANGER: What you are describing to us, I think is something of a third category, *but tell me if I have this right, which is much more of a, if not isolationist, then at least something of “America First” kind of approach*, a mistrust of many foreigners, both our adversaries and some of our allies, a sense that they’ve been freeloading off of us for many years.

TRUMP: Correct. O.K.? That’s fine.

SANGER: O.K.? Am I describing this correctly here?

TRUMP: I’ll tell you—you’re getting close. Not isolationist, *I’m not isolationist, but I am “America First.” So I like the expression. I’m “America First.”*

The more interesting questions about America First concern the issues of isolationism, national selfishness, and international leadership. Those issues are captured through a narrow frame in a *New York Times* headline—“In Donald Trump’s Worldview, America Comes First, and Everybody Else Pays,” (see Sanger and Haberman 2016a that reports excerpts from a major foreign policy interviews; see also Sanger and Haberman 2016b). In other words, according to critics (Klaas 2017), “‘America first’ is becoming America alone.” That view is contradicted by the fact that Trump has repeatedly demonstrated- with his questions about the role of NATO, international trade [reforming NAFTA and China trade] or reaching out to old adversaries (North Korea, Russia, and Iran) that he is very much

involved in furthering and refining America's role in the world. In these areas, and in his efforts to reform specific international institution already noted, he sees the United States as being very engaged in the world.

Trump's view of America's role in the world, going back almost forty years ago (Reelin' In The Years Production 1980), is that the United States has accomplished a lot, and could do more but has been taken advantage of by others—including its allies, and the incompetence of its elites. That's a broad indictment that contains enough truth to serve as a campaign platform. More importantly, it is what Trump believes, and he has acted on those beliefs as president.

International altruism is an illusion for true realists (Morgenthau 1948). The liberal international order exists because it serves the purposes of the United States and its allies that created and make use of it. Allowing a certain degree of free-riding by allies, as the United States has done over the decades, is self-interested in that view. It is the price that hegemons pay for burden-sharing given the cost of international leadership. For America's allies such an informal agreement affords not only protection in a dangerous world but also a discount for the costs of their safety.

Problems arise in this arrangement when the imbalances of trade, burden sharing, or the increasing reach of international institutions themselves (e.g., ICC, WHO etc.) acting as if they have, or ought to have, real power begin to really encroach on America's power. Part of that power rests on the premises of American sovereignty. Those premises have begun to erode as some American leaders see themselves as international citizens as well as American nationals. And that is, as will be noted shortly, another major concern of President Trump.

One major unresolved question about this aspect of the Trump Doctrine is the effect of the Coronavirus pandemic. There is no question that this experience will have a dramatic impact on the "world order" (Kissinger 2020) and already has had a dramatic effect on U.S.–China relations, but its nature is at this point very unclear. The need for international cooperation on these issues is clear. Yet the same will be true of protecting ones' own nationals. How and if these two can be reconciled, is one major question facing the "international system" going forward.

2. *An American President Against liberal Cosmopolitanism*

President Trump is more than a conservative-minded American nationalist. He is, at the core of his identity, an American from Queens coming of age in the 1950s. That is a more important and less obvious observation than it seems.

Although Trump grew up in a wealthy family, his father lived by a depression era mentality—always working hard to succeed and saving money—pinching pennies (Blair 2005: 3). He tried to teach his children by example and expectation that you succeed by working hard and paying attention to details.

Donald Trump grew up in a wealthy household, but he was not pampered. As a child he had a paper route and made money by collecting empty soda bottles and returning them for the deposit. Most importantly, on weekends, as a younger child and on through his teenage years and into his early adulthood he would often go with his father to visit worksites where he was expected to make himself useful. He, therefore, spent a lot of time around, and was comfortable with, ordinary working people. His populism has authentic roots.

Along with wealth and hard work, the most basic foundation of his identity was as an American, a born and raised kid from Queens for whom the urbane sophistication of “Manhattan” was another world. Trump grew up in the 1950s when “America was on a roll” (Blair 2005: 2). The American dream of mobility and success was a widely accepted part of the American dream (and being lived out every day in Trump’s own family life). The United States was the preeminent, even dominant power in world affairs. And the many conflicts that began to seriously divide Americans in the decades after the 1960s lay beneath what seemed to be a broad, if ultimately illusionary, surface of consensus.

Recent presidential campaigns have witnessed Democratic presidential contenders speaking Spanish during presidential debates to tout their bicultural identities. It is a political period in which Jeb Bush, a major Republican candidate for president, whose father and mother were decidedly from WASP background, said of himself, “I’m bicultural—maybe that’s more important than bilingual,” (Quoted in Frum 2015). Bush also wrote on his voter registration card that he was “Hispanic” (Rappaport 2015). That was meant to underscore his strong bicultural Spanish identity thought to be an important appeal as a modern presidential candidate in a political

context in which some argued for the primacy of ethnic or racial identities.

Trump is the antithesis of an international cosmopolitan elite equally at home anywhere because of a fluid personal national identity. What distinguishes Trump is that “The unifying thread running through his seemingly incoherent policies, what defines him as a candidate and forms the essence of his appeal, is that he seeks to speak for America” (Krein 2015). The question is what does he want to say when he speaks?

That sentiment is distilled and reflected in his CPAC remarks (Trump 2017a, emphasis added):

Global cooperation -- dealing with other countries, getting along with other countries -- is good. It's very important. But there is no such thing as a global anthem, a global currency, or a global flag. *This is the United States of America that I'm representing. I'm not representing the globe. I'm representing your country.*

3. *The Trump Doctrine and Isolationism: Standing Apart & If Necessary, Standing Alone*

The president's foreign policy initiatives are not isolationist in any meaningful sense of that term. If they were, it would be hard to explain his repeated outreach to China, North Korea, Russia, and most recently even Iran (King 2019), or his numerous repeated efforts to revise and in his view reform some of the country's major alliance (NATO, South Korea, Mexico) relationships. Being able when necessary to stand apart is not the same as the isolationist premise that “fortress America” must always stand alone.

That basic element of Trump's leadership style is one area where an understanding of his doctrine and his view of America's place in the world, rests on understanding an important element of Trump's psychology—his ability to stand apart and alone if necessary.

It takes a particular kind of psychology to develop and maintain such a stance. Such a person must be emotionally comfortable standing apart and be able to withstand some degree of emotional isolation. He must be able to withstand the disapproval that comes with standing against the crowd, especially if that crowd holds some degree of legitimacy and authority, as a number of Trump critics do. All things considered, it is a highly unusual and odd set of psychological characteristics for a president to clearly have at the same time

he is repeatedly accused of needing adulation for his supposedly narcissistic ego.

At a presidential Town Hall on October 26, 2015 (emphasis added) (<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=TXEOFHflq9A>) the following exchange took place:

Q: With the exception of your family, have you ever been told no?
Trump: Oh, many times...*My whole life really has been a no and I've fought through it.* [Re: building in Manhattan] I was always told that would never work. Even my father [said]..you don't want to go to Manhattan that's not our territory. Cause he was from Brooklyn and Queens where we did smaller things..all my life I was told no, even for this [running for president] ..they said what do you want to do that for,. don't do it, don't it... you'll be up against professional politicians ...its always been you can't do this, you can't do that ...

In short, Mr. Trump has spent a lifetime not accepting what other people have told him he couldn't do, starting with his father's response to his childhood dream of building skyscrapers in Manhattan. Early in his development he learned to stand up to his strong-willed father. And that determination continued through a lifetime of being able to forge his own way, often in the face of enormous odds against him, and a great deal of conventional wisdom that advised "that can't be done," or you can't do it.

Whether it is building skyscrapers in Manhattan, withdrawing from the Paris Climate accords, or continuing to press to add a citizenship question to the Census—Trump the man and Trump the president is comfortable standing apart. And that is a key to his understanding of America's role in the world. He is not an isolationist operating with the premise that America must stand alone. He is an engaged internationalist who believes that sometimes the United States must be willing and able to stand apart, and even alone if necessary.

Early characterizations of Trump claimed he was a president whose policy views could be bought with flattery (Aleem 2017; Farkas 2018). These claims were wrong (Nicholas 2017; Rogers and Rich 2019). Trump has a capacity and a willingness to stand apart, and to take and keep unpopular positions, even if those opinions are the ones uniformly held by elite international cosmopolitans.

It is very obvious that Trump is willing to fight for what he thinks is right and what he wants to accomplish. It is not fighting for

fighting sake or primarily to avenge some insult, but to accomplish his purposes. If he is not willing to fight back to achieve them how much can they be worth to him and those who do and might in the future support him.

His basic stance is well captured in two interviews. In one, asked why he would want to antagonize the judge who was handling the Trump University lawsuit, by calling him unfair for allowing the lead plaintiff in the case to withdraw after a poor performance on her deposition (Cillizza 2016) [<https://www.c-span.org/video/?410401-1/donald-trump-holds-news-conference-donations-veterans-groups&start=1868>]. He responded: "...because I don't care."

There is of course the danger that by antagonizing someone with who you have to deal and want their favorable response—a judge, a NATO ally, a county [China] you've imposed tariffs on but want their help reigning in their ally [North Korea] there might be negative consequences. Yet, Trump seems disinclined to suppress his views or change his policies to curry favor for short term gains, as America's allies [Mexico, NATO] and competitors [China] have learned.

In Osaka, Japan where the president made some remarks and answered some question the following exchange took place (Trump 2019b, emphasis added).

Q (Jim Acosta-CNN): And what is it with your coziness with some of these dictators and autocrats at these summits? With Mohammad Bin Salman, the Crown Prince of Saudi Arabia, when you were asked about the case of Jamal Khashoggi, you did not respond to that question in front of the Saudi Crown Prince.

THE PRESIDENT: I don't know that anybody asked me.

Q: Were you afraid of offending him on that subject?

THE PRESIDENT: No, not at all. I don't really care about offending people. I sort of thought you'd know that (Laughter).

There is understandable attention paid to Trump's public brusqueness, combativeness, and sometimes rudeness. They are real and very clearly antithetical to traditional notions of ordinary presidential demeanor. Given the all-out war declared by his opponents against the president, his policies, his administration, his supporters, and his family with few if any boundaries to what is alleged or how erroneously or vilely, they are characterized, what is a president to do?

For Trump, as a matter of his psychology and history, the answer is easy. You fight back—hard with traditional rules of presidential decorum put aside in the service of hitting back just as hard, and harder than you were hit. No modern president has ever adopted that strategy, and it is questionable whether it would be psychologically possible for them to do so.

However, as unsettling it is to many Americans, that willingness to fight sends an unmistakable signal both to Trump’s allies and opponents both domestically and abroad that you had better be ready for a real fight if you attack him. It is not often observed, but it takes a great deal of personal strength, and resilience to withstand the enormous, unceasing, and personally and politically brutal criticism leveled against Trump and his presidency. He has done so and it is therefore no surprise that those traits play key roles in the Trump Doctrine.

4. *Strength and Resilience: A Foundation of the Trump Doctrine*

Every American president has emphasized “strength” as a foundation of American foreign policy and Mr. Trump is no exception. Yet, as noted, those elements have a strong foundation in Trump’s personal and business life. They are also a reflection of one of his most deeply held policy views—which is that the United States must be strong, tough, and resilient to survive and prosper in a dangerous world. Strength is also a vehicle for gaining respect—not by adhering to a liberal international group consensus. Trump is aiming for the respect, even if given begrudgingly, that comes from independent thinking and action and that reflects the traditionally deeply held American values of freedom, opportunity, sovereignty, and democracy.

These traits are gained from standing up for yourself, following your own path even when many others tell it’s not possible, and living a life in which freedom, opportunity, and a sense of personal autonomy. These are exactly the formative experiences that defined Trump’s childhood and later his adulthood. It is no surprise that they are a basic part of his essential foreign policy doctrine.

This amalgam of strength and respect is easily seen in several Trump’s pre-presidential interviews:

Plaskin: And how would President Trump handle it? [American foreign policy]

Trump: He would believe very strongly in extreme military strength. He wouldn't trust anyone. He wouldn't trust the Russians; he wouldn't trust our allies; he'd have a huge military arsenal, perfect it, understand it. Part of the problem is that we're defending some of the wealthiest countries in the world for nothing.... We're being laughed at around the world, defending Japan.

And further:

Plaskin: Do you think George [H. W.] Bush is soft?

Trump: I like George Bush very much and support him and always will. But I disagree with him when he talks of a kinder, gentler America. I think if this country gets any kinder or gentler, it's literally going to cease to exist. I think if we had people from the business community—the Carl Icahns, the Ross Perots—negotiating some of our foreign policy, we'd have respect around the world.

And finally (Transcript 2016, emphasis added):

Costa: Did you read Jeffrey Goldberg's article about Obama's foreign policy? In *the Atlantic*, '.... Real power means you can get what you want without having to exert violence.' That's Obama on global power. Do you agree?

DT: Well, I think there's a certain truth to that. I think there's a certain truth to that. *Real power is through respect. Real power is, I don't even want to use the word, fear...*

There in premise form is Trump's theory of deterrence and international primacy. Power in all its dimensions, and the demonstrated willingness to use it leads to nations taking the United States seriously and acting accordingly. That included an element of fear. It is considered an unmentionable aspect of American foreign policy, but it exists in the background none the less. For opponents and enemies the fear of what will happen if the United States is truly provoked is an indispensable element of deterrence. Yet for Trump, fear also plays a role with allies, not the fear of military action, but the fear of what will happen if the United States insists that its interests, as Trump understands them, be respected.

That formulation however leads to the following question: If President Trump trusts no nation, ally, or opponent, how will they respond? One possibility: for allies, a more honest appraisal of the net value and real costs of their relationship; for opponents, a more sober and realistic assessment of the risks and opportunity costs of

provocative or reckless behavior. Is that not what deterrence seeks to further?

5. *Maximum Repeated Pressure Along a Continuum of Points in Pursuit of Key Goals*

Every president has available a variety of tools to advance their goals and counter resistance to them. These range from outright military and economic coercion to quieter more subtle political efforts to influence the behavior of others. What distinguishes President Trump's leadership style is that it is primarily, but not always, neither quiet nor subtle. It is weighted toward pushy, if not forceful coercion. The harsh, pejorative word used for this strategy is "bullying"; the more traditional international relations words used for this through conventional strategy is "compellence."

Trump's doctrine is further distinguished by its application of numerous tools to accomplish his purposes along a continuum of pressure points. It is the presidential leadership equivalent of concurrent full-court presses on several policy basketball courts. And it is further distinguished by flexibility in viewing the major policy changes he wants to put in place as long-term projects. Trump governs by his long-standing personal premise—where there's a will there's a way. Trump has demonstrated what can best be described as fierce determination throughout his life (Kranish 2017) and in his presidency.

For a president who is mistakenly thought to govern by impulse Trump has the ability to take the long view and bide his time, and find some firm policy footing from which to move forward. Trump has a well-deserved reputation for impatience, but he can when necessary, wait. It took Trump more than 20 years to receive the government approvals, and be in the right economic circumstances he needed to develop the large former Penn Central rail yards site on the upper west side of Manhattan (Blair 2005: 182–201). Enforced patience is both a difficult but necessary strategy given Trump's restorative ambitions and the opposition to them. However, necessary or not, it still requires substantial political dexterity and cognitive flexibility.

Consider the President's immigration policies. He is on record as saying that American sovereignty requires enforcing immigration laws and that, "A country without borders is not a country at all" (Trump 2018). It is quite clear that his effort to build a wall at

the Southern border has been stymied in a variety of ways, but that he still presses on step by step and mile by mile (*Associated Press* 2019). It is also clear that Trump's long-term immigration goal is to move the United States to a more merit-based system (Trump 2019a; Hermani 2019) and that he is very far away from legislatively achieving that goal.

In the last year, a crisis has developed at the Southern border literally overwhelmed the immigration system's capacity to successfully address it. The reasons are legion and varied—court orders that limit policy flexibility (and to which the Trump Administration has adhered to), a lack of House Congressional interest in fixing the legal issues, economic and political issues in a number of Central American countries, and migration opportunities exploited worldwide by those who want to be in the United States and those who assist them either for political or economic reasons.

Limited by some courts, facing determined political and legal opposition from the anti-Trump opposition, and having little leverage with Democrats who control the House, Trump's options, in theory, seem quite limited. In reality, they were as robust, within the existing law, as presidential and administrative creativity and determination could make them. They would include, but not be limited to, the following efforts: new rules that limit asylum claims from those, "who did not apply for protection from persecution or torture where it was available in at least one-third country outside the alien's country of citizenship, nationality, or last lawful habitual residence through which he or she transited en route to the United States" (DHS 2019b; Kanno-Youngs and Malkin 2019).

Trump has also taken a number of other initiatives including but not limited to the following: put into place new more enforcement friendly guidelines for dealing with those not legally entitled to be in the country (DHS 2019a); he has moved to expedite removals for those not legally entitled to be in the country (DHS 2019c); has revised and tightened bail requirements for asylum seekers (Shear and Benner 2019); he has cut aid to several Central American countries that he feels have not done enough to stem the tide of migrants traveling through their countries to the United States (Wroughton and Zengerle 2019) and has successfully threatened to impose tariffs on Mexico which led them to make a serious effort to stem the flow of migrants coming through their country to the United States

(Semple 2019): And under new Coronavirus pandemic immigrations restrictions, undocumented aliens are being removed from the United States under very expedited rules (Miroff 2020). All of these efforts have been effective in lowering the level of crisis at the Southern border (Orsi 2020).

And his efforts here also reflect the bedrock Trump Doctrine principles of maximin pressure along a series of policy lines to accomplish his purposes. In all these ways and many others in his approach to migration problems at the Southern border Trump demonstrates the bedrock template to major national and international issues: (1) Take on the problem, and don't avoid it; (2) Keep the bottom line of your policy premises [in this case no border; no country] as your policy North Star; (3) try every conceivable legal and legitimate solution and do not stop with what has been the norm or be deterred by what your opponents say you can't do; (4) be prepared for the strongest political and personal accusations to be made against you, the policy and those who help carry it out and press on none the less; (5) be prepared for legal and political setbacks as opponents marshal their forces, and press on legally through every legal avenue including court appeals and executive actions that can have an impact on other countrys' behavior; (6) use victories in any area where you've made an effort to gain further traction keeping in mind that large issues are rarely decided in one quick political stroke.

Repeat as necessary.

6. *President Trump's Governing Strategy: Maximum Flexibility to Realize Core Goals*

Consistency is important in a presidential doctrine's application. A publicly stated presidential doctrine backed up by related institutional and policy initiatives signal intent and seriousness—which are part of the underlying rationale for issuing such policy statements. Of course, doctrines change with time and circumstances to some degree. The Truman Doctrine and its key strategy of containment was applied across decades of diverse circumstances and developed and changed in response to them. Yet, the basic point remains; coherence and consistency are net advantages for a doctrine's clarity and impact.

And therein lies a large set of issues for the Trump Doctrine. As one somewhat generally overwrought critic wrote (Gerson

2018b), not without reason in this particular case, “the collection of impulses, deceptions, assertions, retractions, revisions and compromises that constitute President Trump’s foreign policy record are difficult to gather into a consistent doctrine.” And therein lies the issue of trying to understand the Trump Doctrine.

If you focus on his basic policies and their premises Trump has been consistent. He has slowed and tried to manage immigration. He has reframed America’s commitment to globalization. He has resisted getting into wars and committing American troops. And he has downsized America’s commitment to ceding American sovereignty to international organizations.

President Trump prides himself on being unpredictable and he is. That’s generally a plus for negotiations, but a difficulty for developing long-term strategies. His frequent hyperbole, combativeness, and unconventional beliefs are considered “out of the mainstream.” They are, but that is not necessary always undesirable. Trump’s view—for example if we have no border, we have no country would seem on its face to be too elementary to need to be stated. Yet, the idea of extremely permeable borders has gained a solid foothold among some. As a result, what seems so simple and obvious is anything but.

They are then honest, though not always entirely correct, elements of Trump’s personal beliefs and presidential leadership style. That combination of personal Trump characteristics allows critics to misunderstand and misinterpret Trump’s decision-making and leadership style, and they frequently do. It also allows them to criticize his understanding of the circumstances he addresses since his understanding is quite different than theirs.

Ivo Daalder, President Obama’s ambassador to NATO, now president of the Chicago Council on Global Affairs writes,

I don’t think he has a strategy. The reality is he shakes the tree, and then he walks away. (Quoted in Toosi 2019)

His first point is demonstrably true; his second demonstrably false. Trump certainly “shakes the tree,” but he keeps at it trying to put his policies in place. Trump is a president who dislikes giving up, as his response to getting a citizenship question on the census discussed below and his setbacks on immigration in some court jurisdictions and continuing efforts suggest.

Trump is not a president who feels the need for consistency. Indeed being “unpredictable” is one of his important tactics for trying and realizing his goals. This tendency was clearly on display in his response to the Supreme Court’s ruling against adding a question on citizenship for the 2020 Census. Trump’s administration gave up; President Trump didn’t, seeking to find a way to add the question (Wines and Liptak 2019). And he did eventually find a way to get some of that information that he wanted (Wang 2020).

One report, worth quoting at some length, noted (Wines et al. 2019),

The contentious issue of whether next year’s all-important head count would include a citizenship question appeared to be settled — until the president began vowing on Twitter on Wednesday that the administration was ‘absolutely moving forward’ with plans, despite logistical and legal barriers.

Mr. Trump’s comments prompted a chaotic chain of events, with senior census planners closeted in emergency meetings and Justice Department representatives summoned to a phone conference with a federal judge in Maryland.

On Wednesday afternoon, Justice Department officials told the judge that their plan had changed in the span of 24 hours: They now believed there could be ‘a legally available path’ to restore the question to the census, and they planned to ask the Supreme Court to help speed the resolution of lawsuits that are blocking their way.

The reversal sends the future of the census — which is used to determine the distribution of congressional seats and federal dollars — back into uncertain territory.

You could correctly place these efforts to Daalder’s “shake the tree” observations of Trump’s strategy, but not simultaneously to his supposed “walk away” proclivities. The Trump Administration figured out another way to accomplish his census purposes and took it (Rogers et al. 2019). This seems like a clear example of Trump’s pursuit of his goals, and the use of alternative innovative vehicle to accomplish them when necessary.

It is a fair observation to make that Trump has many large presidential policy goals—and has made some progress in bringing a number of them to fruition. Yet in some cases, he is still at work on his primary goals. Moving America’s immigration system from a

more family-based to a more merit-based system was, and remains, one of Trump's most important domestic policy goals, yet it remains very distant if it gets done at all. Trump wants to move North Korea and Iran into serious new negotiations to accomplish his foreign policy goals. Yet, these two goals also remain at the level of distant aspirations and may never happen. Does this mean that he has no concrete specific strategy to reach these distant goals? That seems unlikely.

Trump's strategy of change is nicely captured in an interview with the *New York Times* (2017, emphasis added):

TRUMP: But the Democrats should come to a bipartisan bill. And we can fix it. We can fix it. We can make a great health care plan. Not Obamacare, which was a bad plan. We can make a great health care plan through bipartisanship. We can do a great infrastructure plan through bipartisanship. And we can do on immigration, and DACA in particular, we can do something that's terrific through bipartisanship.

SCHMIDT: It sounds like you're tacking to the center in a way you didn't before.

TRUMP: No, I'm not being centered. I'm just being practical. No, I don't think I'm changing. Look, I wouldn't do a DACA plan without a wall. Because we need it.

SCHMIDT: So you're not moving. You're saying I'm more likely to do deals, but I'm not moving.

TRUMP: I'm always moving. I'm moving in both directions.

And that movement in "both directions," which is to say several directions at once, can easily and for some people, be a reflection of a lack of core convictions. At the March 3, 2016 GOP Debate the following exchange took place (Team Fix 2016, emphasis added):

KELLY: But the point I'm going for is you change your tune on so many things, and that has some people saying, what is his core?

TRUMP: Megyn, I have a very strong core. *I have a very strong core. But I've never seen a successful person who wasn't flexible, who didn't have a certain degree of flexibility. You have to have a certain degree of flexibility.*

This is not a matter of simply accepting what the president says at face value. There are numerous examples in the public record making clear that Mr. Trump has stood very fast in his core convictions (the Iran nuclear deal, the China and Mexico tariffs, the

effort to add a census question and others) even as he searched for different and improved outcomes.

This is not solely a matter of “keeping them guessing,” although there is some of that going on in Trump’s personal leadership strategy. At a much more basic level, Trump is quite certain where he wants to go, but with no deeply thought-through must follow strategy on how to get there. Trump is an improvisational president who is not afraid to try many options. Many will not work, but often one or more innovative efforts, as in the case of the crisis on the Southern border will allow him to make progress.

In theory it might be better if he had one specifically announced and followed plan. What, realistically is the proven and effective strategy to get your allies to shoulder more of the economic burden? Ask? That’s been done for years. Remind them quietly behind the scenes and on occasion lightly and publicly? That’s been tried too. Forget about asking for more burden-sharing? Not a likely Trump approach. Publicly and privately demand a more forthcoming response? That’s Trump’s tack given the failures by other presidents.

What exactly is the proven long-term strategy to truly reform American immigration policy? Is it by making grand bargains that wind up being repositories of every congressperson’s wish list in which a little more enforcement capacity is traded for major expansions in admissions of all kinds? That has been the leitmotif of “comprehensive immigration reform,” which is much more expansively comprehensive than it is about really reforming and reorienting American immigration policy.

This observation is simply a truism about how large congressional laws are put together. Trump appears to be serious about immigration reform. He wants to close a number of loopholes, bolster enforcement, and usher in a more merit-based system. Is he not better off starting out trying to put a wide range of his ideas into place until he’s in a political position, (Pierce 2019) if he ever is, to have a very different kind of grand bargain focused on his own policy premises?

Trump Speed: Impulsiveness v. Impatience

The kind of cognitive flexibility necessary to search for improvised but possibly useful alternative solutions in order to move further toward your goals is not necessarily synonymous with impulse. Glasser (2019) writes,

Donald Trump is a really hard person to read on foreign policy because I don't think he actually knows what he thinks. I think he acts on impulse.

Both points contain a grain of truth but miss a larger more important understanding. Since improvisation, one hallmark of Trump's presidential leadership is by nature creative and dependent on circumstances, it is hard to anticipate. It may superficially resemble impulse, but it is more tethered to reality than that, since its purpose is to advance a goal. Trump knows what he thinks about where he wants to go; the questions for his political and policy improvisations are whether they will help him get there.

Trump's immigration change strategy, like that of his trade strategy with China or his effort to get Iran to accept a new nuclear agreement is to apply maximum pressure along a continuum of policy fronts, make progress where possible, and await an opportunity to come to a larger agreement. That may be the most realistic strategy possible given the president's political circumstances, the extremely consequential nature of what he is trying to accomplish in his presidency. Trump is an incremental president by necessity, and a reforming transformative president by design.

Yet there is an important piece of Trump's psychology underlying this dynamic.

Looking back on his life in one interview, Trump wistfully noted, "When I was 38, it was all going to last forever." (Trump quoted in Bowden 1977) In the near-collapse of his business empire, he apparently learned a basic but searing life lesson. That is one reason why time matters so much to him and he is so impatient.

It is true that Mr. Trump can be impulsive, but he is more often impatient. The two are not synonymous. Impulsiveness reflects an inability to restrain the discharge of impulses. Impatience is a reflection of annoyance and frustration at having to wait and knowing that there is only so much you can do to move things along and limited time to do so (Bradsher 2018). It also reflects an unwillingness, as Trump sees it, to waste precious time, doing more of what hasn't worked before (De Luce, Kube, and

Yusufzai 2018; see also Hudson, Dawsey, and Leonnig 2018). Trump is and has been all his life highly oriented toward getting results and as president this has both facilitated his success (Nicholas 2017), and undermined it. As one news analysis accurately noted, “An impatient New Yorker by nature, Mr. Trump has been unable in his first months in office to bend Washington to his ‘you’re fired!’ ways” (Shear, Savage, and Haberman 2017). Trump’s effort to do so has led him to make errors. Unexpected or rapidly made decisions without preparing staff or the general public for them are a recipe for a degree of dysfunction and stress (Salama and Youssef 2018).

Yet, as noted, in examining Trump’s business career, it is clear that he was been able to bide his time and control his impulses and his impatience. In a detailed interview with the *Washington Post* Trump recalled the property he owns in Aberdeen, Scotland that became one of his signature golf courses: “Okay. I got it zoned. Nobody believed it. It took me four years, I got it zoned. I then built a golf course.” (*Washington Post* 2016). That interview then continued:

But I also got housing, and I have other things. It’s a major development, but I haven’t chosen to do the development because I don’t have time to do it. But if I wanted to do it, or if I wanted to sell the land, or I wanted to do something I could. *I’m in no rush*. I don’t need to do the housing because I don’t need the money.

There are other examples. One of Trump’s first big projects was a very large complex of apartment buildings and stores on the Upper West Side of Manhattan named Trump City. On the West- Side rail yards, Trump wanted to build the world’s tallest building and largest shopping center, plus 7600 luxury condos. That plan ran into a hornet’s nest of opposition from city politicians, community leaders and activists (Brown 2018). In a 1989 interview on his plans and the opposition Trump had this to say (Trump quoted in Plaskin 1990).

No problem. Believe me, if I don’t get the zoning now, I’ll sit back and wait until things get bad in the city, until construction stops and interest rates go up. And then I’ll build it. But I will build it.

He did wait—decades in this case. And he did build it (Hughes 2014). The final design for the project that was built differed substantially from the original design. However, in 30 years many battles had been

fought, lost and won. Zoning, economics, politics, and administrations had changed. Of course, the design of the project developed and changed. The fact that this gigantic project was built was and remains an accomplishment. The fact that the project changed over thirty years is not a reflection as one serial critic alleged that Trump had “failed” (Kruse 2018).

The botched rollout of the first travel ban is an example of the consequences of Trump’s impatience that took place very early in his presidency before he fully understood his office and how it’s politics worked in a system of checks and balances really worked (Blake 2017). Since that lesson, he has been patiently pursuing a determined legal strategy through the many twist and turns of the various court findings to prevail (Liptak 2018), as he must if he is to succeed within the American Constitutional system. One might say here that Trump has, on occasion, graduated from impulsiveness to impatience.

The same dynamic can be seen in the president’s attempt to revise or repeal “Obamacare.” After the repeated failures of a Republican Congress to overturn it (Roubein 2017), Trump has patiently and persistently chipped away at its underpinning (Pear and Abelson 2017). He has signaled his intent to revisit that issue in 2018 (Jackson and Shesgreen 2018), and has done so (Luhby 2018), showing some adjustment on his part to the varied rhythms of the presidency—an adjustment that other presidents have had to make as well (Seib 2017).

TRUMP AND THE USE OF FORCE

One of the many paradoxes of the Trump presidency is that critics repeatedly warn that he will either blunder or drag the country into war. Indeed, one of the most often repeated claims concerning Trump’s fitness for office is exactly this concern. In reality, President Trump has been extremely cautious with actual military force and has used it judiciously and sparingly.

There was the Seal Team Six counter-terrorism operation in Yemen (Schmidt 2017). There were the airstrikes against President Assad’s suspected chemical warfare targets in Syria after he violated a US warning against using those weapons (Arkin, Bruton, and McCausland 2018). There was the strike on Iran that was approved because of Iran’s role in the attacks on Saudi oil facilities but called off at the last minute and a cyberattack ordered instead. (Shear et al. 2019). And there was the special operations raid that killed Abu Bakr al-Baghdadi, American born leader

and spokesperson for ISIS (Schmitt et al. 2019). And there was the drone strike that killed Gen. Qassim Soleimani, the head of Iran's elite Quds Force (Hassan et al. 2020).

What do all of these uses of force by the Trump administration have in common? There are all focused, limited, and not part of any major military deployments. Even the cyberattacks on Iran in response to its actions against Saudi Arabia (Barnes and Gibbons-Neff 2019), reflected, at the time, another in a series of steps away from being on a war footing with Iran (Bender et al. 2019).

Trump clearly prefers bluster and sanctions to war, whether he is dealing with allies to get a fairer deal, or doing the same with adversaries. A *Washington Post* headline and analysis captured this point well: "No president has used sanctions and tariffs quite like Trump" (Taylor 2018). Yet, he is clearly comfortable with using military force when he feels it necessary. These paradoxical facts complicate the narrative about Trump's unfitness for office, namely that he would involve the country in wars to satisfy his need for attention or to deflect attention away from his malfeasance.

Far from the impulsive acting out president that he is said to be, in these most lethal of presidential decisions there is substantial evidence of his prudence. Entrenched Anti-Trump narratives die hard when they die at all. The *Washington Post* characterized the drone strike that killed Gen. Qassim Soleimani as follows: "The moves also underscored how Trump's impulsive approach to the presidency can swiftly upend the status quo to produce a sense of disarray" (Olorunnipa et al. 2020). Actually, there was very little evidence that the administration or Trump's decision was "impulsive."

Detailed reconstructions of the decision by several news organizations described a process that took place over a number of days (Moore 2019). It involved widespread debate and analysis of various options by senior officials and the president (Jacobs and Fabian 2019; Ryan et al. 2019). It also involved presidential outreach to a number of his confidants to gauge their reactions (Lippman et al. 2019). It also involved a final decision that was itself dependent on another contingency—whether or not Soleimani was or was not met as he deboarded the plane by Iraqi officials. Had he been the strike would have been canceled (Schmitt et al. 2020).

Trump's initial tentative decision to set airstrikes against Iran in motion in response to the Iranian downing an American drone (Berlinger et al. 2019), was followed by further thinking, reflecting and information

gathering, and an eventual stepping back from the original plan. This was not really a surprise on two counts.

First, “Trump has said of himself that,” “I have second thoughts about everything.” (Trump quoted in Palmer and Sherman 2019). Aides scrambled to “explain” his comments which were in response to a question about Chinese tariffs (Dawsey 2019). Tariff policy aside however, Trump exhibits a serially flexible approach to his goals. He may well be a “gut decider,” but that doesn’t forestall his revisiting his decisions.

Second, Trump apparently has deep feelings about the lethal consequences of the actions he must sometimes take. The *New York Times* headline captures this: “In Bracing Terms, Trump Invokes War’s Human Toll to Defend His Policies” (Crowley 2019).

In an interview after one year in office Trump was asked about making decisions that ordered American forces into combat (Lane 2017, emphasis added):

D’Vorkin: Is it at times lonely?

Trump: It’s a lonely position, because the decisions are so grave, so big.

D’Vorkin: Did business prepare you for that decision?

Trump: No, *nothing prepares you for that. Nothing prepares you for—when you send missiles, that means people are going to die. And nothing really prepares you for that.*

Contrary to the Trump is a narcissist devoid of empathy meme that poorly informed critics claim, Trump is clearly a president. who along with his hyperbole, combativeness, and frequent lack of presidential demeanor, has some of those feelings when it counts—in considering literally life and death decisions. And recall, it was the harrowing pictures of the suffering caused by the Assad’s gas attack on his opponents that Trump repeatedly cited as having moved him to use military force (Parker et al. 2017).

THE FUTURE OF THE TRUMP DOCTRINE

The future of any presidential doctrine, after its originator leaves office depends on his successor and their circumstances. The Truman Doctrine and containment lived on because it continued to be an effective response to unfolding circumstances. The same is true of the Bush Doctrine, although it became a smaller overall part of a much differently focused Obama Doctrine.

Mr. Trump has, in almost all essential respects, reversed the premises and policies of his predecessor. It is obvious that most, if not all, of the premises that underlie the Trump Doctrine will be discarded if Senator Biden wins the presidency in 2020 (Lee and Weissert 2020). In that case the narrative will quickly become established that the Trump Doctrine was an aberrant and abhorrent deviation from long-established conventions and their consensus premises and policies.

If Trump wins reelection, he would have more of a chance to firmly establish his *Conservative American Nationalism* doctrine as a viable conceptual, strategic, and practical alternative to the policies he campaigned against and tried to change as president. The premises and policies that are the foundation of his doctrine would have eight years to work, or not and the same number of years for the president to better learn how to convey his understanding and rationales for what he is doing.

That outcome is possible, even plausible, if he wins reelection. The one part of the Trump Doctrine that will have trouble surviving his presidency even if he wins a second term are those elements related to his own psychology. His ability to fight back, hard; his capacity to stand apart and even alone; and his unusual combination of a tough set of core beliefs coupled with the flexibility to be able to scramble in pursuit of his goals will be difficult to replicate.

Yet it can also be said with some degree of certainty that win or lose reelection, President Trump. “.. is raising questions about the foreign policy of the United States—about its external purposes, its internal cohesion, and its chances of success—that may not be fully answered for years” (Sestanovich 2017).

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National Interests and the Trump Doctrine: The Meaning of “America First”

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“AMERICA FIRST” AND FOREIGN POLICY

“America First”: A Brief History

During his campaigns for the Republican nomination and then the presidential election in 2016, Donald Trump frequently reasserted that “America First” was a—perhaps *the*—fundamental watchword of his political outlook. The phrase was identified as the basis of his planned foreign

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policy regarding alliances, mutual defense and treaty relationships, his attitudes about foreign aid and international trade, his domestic economic policies, his stance on immigration...a two-word catchall that would reflect the beliefs and actions of his administration.

The slogan, “America First,” has a long history. It has been used both sarcastically and seriously to evoke the concept of US exceptionalism. For example, Cole Porter’s 1920s musical by that title was a parody, while the political movement that adopted the name between the world wars based its platform on the slogan to argue that the United States would be ill-advised to get involved again in a European war. Unsavory groups and movements, such as the Ku Klux Klan, have sometimes cloaked themselves in it; self-styled progressive groups in the Western world have equated it with other supremacist assertions such as “Deutschland über Alles,” and deplore it as though it actually were an equally and exclusively far-right position. This purported equivalence became popular in some political circles as a shorthand accusation of Trump’s retrograde nationalism, a peril to globalization and international amity.

The two studies reported in this chapter used quantitative thematic content analysis to score President Trump’s speeches. The analyses are based on the total text of each speech, thus avoiding possible researcher bias in selecting excerpts to be scored. The conclusions we draw relate to Trump’s information processing, decision-making, appraisal of and reaction to other people, nations, and events, and trace the relationship between those variables and the results of our scoring.

The fundamental strengths of thematic content analyses are the following:

1. The measures are subtle, and less susceptible to deliberate manipulation—for whatever reason—than interviews and self-report questionnaires. People are normally not aware of what their conversations, speeches, or letters reveal about the complexity of their thinking, or the relative strengths of various goals they may pursue, or how distant they feel about other people. The scores are not based on obvious or direct variables, but rather on patterns that can be seen in a variety of content or structural markers.
2. The scored material is produced as part of the normal life activities of the subject. Thus, it is not affected by the knowledge that it will

form the basis of a psychological study, or by the setting of an interview in which the subject presents views, plans, or emotions with a view to influencing the interviewer or the eventual audience.

3. What is scored by hand is either the entire expression or a randomly drawn sample thereof. With automated scoring, as we did here, it is possible to score 100% of the available relevant texts. The researcher does not select portions of the text in an attempt to amass evidence for or against a particular hypothesis, theory, dogma, or bias.

With regard to President Trump, we can ask questions that have been raised by observers concerning what he “really” thinks, feels, or intends. For example, is his expressed liking for Kim Jung-un genuine? How about his anger at Chinese economic maneuvers that take advantage of American laws to profit at America’s expense? Does he feel strongly about a revised North American trade agreement? Is his often-mentioned, and often-criticized, variability and its consequence, unpredictability, reflected in the subtle bases of his thinking, or are they merely surface—and possibly merely strategic—changes designed to project an image, baffle possible adversaries, and gain an advantage in negotiations and other interactions?

How do such analyses illuminate the meaning of “America First”? Only indirectly, as we cannot create an ordinal scale of the importance the material ascribes to positive outcomes for America versus the outcomes for other countries. We look at the number of times the President’s speeches mention a particular member or issue of the world community, as an index of how much importance he attributes to that member or issue in various contexts; and we assess the level and kind of psychological processes engaged in the President’s communications. The point in every case is the status of the relationships between the United States and the other country or leader, and whether thematic content analysis of the President’s comments can be shown to differ systematically across countries whose status differs.

Our analyses do not involve speculation about President Trump’s mental health, the early experiences that may or may not have played a role in the development of his personality, or how his constellation of characteristics affects his fitness for office. Our approach does not address President Trump’s basic traits, and makes no judgments or even inferences (much less, diagnoses) concerning his personality or the quality of his performance in office.

The Structure of the Chapter

This chapter contains two independent studies. Study 1 used Quantitative Discourse Analysis (see below) to examine Donald Trump's public speeches over four key phases of his recent political career: Trump as a candidate was assessed during the presidential campaign of 2016, Trump as president was assessed via his speeches and interviews during 2017 and 2018, and President Trump the campaigner was assessed from his speeches at rallies during the midterm campaigns of 2018. Study 2 applied measures of cognitive, motivational, and interpersonal orientations of the President with regard to selected other nations as revealed in his speeches during the early years of his presidency.

Study 1. Quantitative Discourse Analysis

Quantitative discourse analysis focuses on the content of what is said. Our aim in this study is to approach Donald Trump's public speeches with both methodologies to see how their results complement one another or provide unique insights. The approach used in this analysis draws from thematic analysis (Bernard and Ryan 2010; Guest et al. 2012; Ryan and Bernard 2003), grounded theory (Corbin and Strauss 2008), critical discourse analysis (Fairclough 2005; van Dijk 2005), and conversation analysis (Maynard 2006). It borrows from qualitative traditions a concern for sensitivity to cultural perspective and social context (grounded theory, critical discourse analysis, conversation analysis), but is systematized so that it can produce repeatable quantitative results useful for inductive pattern recognition or hypothesis testing. The specific methodology employed in this analysis has been applied in both the vernacular and translated material to state leaders (Fenstermacher et al. 2012; Kuznar and Aviles 2018) and leaders of non-state violent extremist groups (Kuznar 2017; Kuznar and Hunt 2015).

An underlying theoretical component of the approach is that a leader's speech is likely to reveal that leader's political views, whether or not the leader intends to reveal them (van Dijk 2005). This does not preclude deceit; the point is to determine what meaning the communication is intended to convey. Its veracity can be determined with longitudinal analysis to assess whether the communicator maintains a consistent view, or with checks on empirical reality to assess the degree to which the communicator's views agree with verifiable fact.

Another theoretical underpinning is the attempt to understand the cultural context that can give meaning to a communicator's discourse (Fenstermacher and Kuznar 2016; Maynard 2006). To that end, any leader's discourse is analyzed after extensive cultural research, often involving native cultural experts. An epistemological position in this approach is that the analysis be scientific, that is, systematic, methodologically objective, aiming to limit bias and if possible, rendered quantitatively so that assumptions and propositions can be tested and not presumed (Kuznar 2009).

Study 2. Analysis of Cognition, Motivation, and Interpersonal Emotion

This study addresses aspects of Trump's cognitive, motivational, and emotional orientation toward selected international actors, both individuals and their nations. This research also uses content analysis, this time of written as well as spoken materials, and scores them according to well-defined criteria to reveal nonobvious evidence from which one may draw equally nonobvious conclusions. The approach is similar in nature to that used in a counterpart chapter, "The New Psychology of Alliances" (Suedfeld et al. 2007), in a book on the Bush Doctrine (Renshon and Suedfeld 2007).

In the Bush Doctrine chapter, the countries to which the president referred were assigned to categories based on two dimensions (see Table 2.1). The first was the degree to which the other nation shared America's general values and ideologies. These included equal rights for

Table 2.1 Categories of international relations with the United States After 9–11

		<i>Did the country share America's general values?</i>	
		<i>Yes</i>	<i>No</i>
Did the country support the Coalition?	Yes	Affinity Ally (Simple Friendly)	Strategic Ally (Complicated)
	Ambivalently	Affinity Ambivalent (Complicated)	Strategic Ambivalent (Complicated)
	No	Obstructionist Ally (Complicated)	Enemy (Simple Adversarial)

all citizens; civil liberties; free elections engaging diverse political groups; freedom of expression, religion, peaceful assembly, and so on; a basically capitalist and free enterprise economic system; and the supremacy of the law over any individual or group. Broad agreement between the other country and the United States on these issues, and their role as the basis of civic life, we termed “affinity.”

The second dimension was specific to the era about which (and in which) we were writing. It was whether the leaders of the nation in question supported or opposed Bush’s coalition-formation against the Taliban and Saddam Hussein. In the aftermath of the atrocities of 9/11, the United States had undertaken a forceful response to Islamist terrorism and further threat. President Bush initiated the formation of a multinational force to end the Taliban’s power over Afghanistan, and later, Saddam Hussein’s rule over Iraq. The Taliban regime was brutal, enforcing strict obedience to the strictest versions of Islamist tenets through violence and providing safe haven to terrorists who waged “war” against Western countries including the United States. Saddam Hussein was a tyrant who was known for using murder, torture, oppression, and poison gas against his own citizens and who had started several wars against neighboring countries. The two made up the category President Bush defined as “enemies.” We classified countries that supported the American effort against Saddam Hussein as “allies,” sometimes with appropriate qualification. For example, leaders and nations that shared American values but opposed the war on the Iraqi regime were “obstructionist allies.” In President Bush’s terminology, enemies were “the Axis of Evil,” obstructionist allies were “the Axis of Weasels,” and the allies—no qualification—were “the Coalition of the Willing.” The schema was somewhat complicated by the existence of “ambivalent” nations, as shown in Table 2.1.

This classification points to one serious difference between our study of the Bush Doctrine and the current examination of the Trump Doctrine. In the period of the American response to 9/11, the reactions of most governments did not change drastically after the first shock. Most leaders were on one side or the other, and the two dimensions of our study fairly clearly defined where most countries stood. The invasions of Afghanistan and Iraq by the US-led coalition posed clear and dramatic choices for the international community. Consequently, the classification problem faced by President Bush, and by our research team, was relatively easy.

When we tried to apply such a classification to 2017–2018, the situation was quite different. There was a plethora of diverse and shifting

relations between the United States as led by Trump and the rest of the world. Although some governments were mostly friendly, and others mostly hostile, many relationships were ambiguous. Additionally, their positions frequently changed according to the context of a variety of specific issues and events. There were no major armies contending in battle, and no existential clashes between major power blocs. Competition rather than conflict, rivalries rather than enmities, had to be managed. Thus, the Trump Administration could—and had to—deal with its counterparts on a much more one-by-one basis rather than as members of a particular category.

Nevertheless, we undertook the research with an interest in the same psychological variables as had been investigated in the Bush study. Having collected a large number of President Trump's verbal productions, we applied thematic content analysis to the material. Three sets of variables that had been scored in the chapter on the Bush Doctrine were also used in the current study. They were integrative complexity, motive imagery, and nonimmediacy (language connoting psychological distance). These variables are described below.

Integrative Complexity

Integrative complexity (IC) is an aspect of cognitive information processing. It has two major components. *Differentiation* is the person's realization and recognition that a particular topic or domain of thought contains more than one dimension, and/or that there are more than one legitimate attitudes or viewpoints regarding it. *Integration* is the perception that these differentiated dimensions or viewpoints can be related to each other in different ways; for example, as a synthesis, a trade-off, or an interaction. Differentiation is, of course, a prerequisite for integration.

High IC is associated with flexible thinking, open-mindedness, realistic information processing, active information search, perceptiveness regarding the perspectives of other people, and tolerance of uncertainty and lack of closure. It may also lead to hesitancy, vacillation, inconsistency, and decision paralysis. An important aspect of IC is that scores are based on the structure, not the content, of thought. Any idea, belief, or plan can engage any level of IC and, conversely, any level of IC can generate any idea, belief, or plan. More concretely, any level of IC can be engaged for moral or deplorable purposes and can generate brilliant or dismal decisions and plans.

The existing literature on IC is massive. In the realm of political psychology, the IC of communications from national leaders has been reliably found to drop in advance of the outbreak of war, but to increase or remain stable prior to a confrontation continuing or being resolved peacefully (see, e.g., Suedfeld 2010). IC is also reliably connected to the individual's position (e.g., incumbent vs. challenger), performance under stress (retaining high IC is likely to lead to longer term in office), topic (experts show higher IC), and the audience (higher IC appears when addressing a hostile or mixed audience). One interesting aspect is higher IC when the individual is trying to reconcile two important but mutually conflicting personal values. This has been advanced to explain why the communications of moderate politicians are likely to be higher in IC than those of extremists; and the freedom vs. equality conflict, specifically, has been advanced to explain the frequently noted gap in IC between moderately liberal and moderately conservative political adherents (Tetlock 1986).

Motive Imagery (MI)

The scoring of motive imagery addresses the relative importance of three motives in the person's hierarchy. The point is that in communications the *relative* importance of the three is the basis of inference is crucial. Importance is signaled by the frequency with which each of the three is mentioned or alluded to in the text being scored. Verbal material scored for IC can also be scored for MI. The three motives are crucial psychosocial needs: those for Achievement, Affiliation, and Power. Achievement is scored from references to excellent performance, reaching one's goals, victory in competition, setting a new personal best, and the like. Affiliation is counted by evidence of the motive to establish and maintain warm, close emotional relationships. Power refers to the need to influence, persuade, or force others to do, think, or feel as one wishes (Winter 1991).

The application of MI scoring to political texts has shown an increase in Power motivation among governmental texts prior to the outbreak of war, and no such change prior to peaceful resolution. The pattern of need for power changes is thus the opposite of IC changes, and the two are negatively correlated. Of the many findings based on MI in political, social, and personality psychology, one of the most intriguing and

surprising is that high achievement need predicts success and satisfaction among business executives but not among political leaders in the American and similar political systems (Winter 2010). This is explained by the different power structures in the two contexts. A CEO's direction of a private business is relatively less subject to internal resistance, and an achievement-oriented CEO can succeed even without high motivation to influence others (i.e., high power motivation). In the government of the United States, an achievement-oriented president is more likely to be frustrated by the relatively high degree of interacting social, political, and bureaucratic obstacles (e.g., division of powers, checks and balances, partisanship). On the other hand, the system fits well for presidents with a high need for power, who are motivated to influence others and therefore enjoy overcoming such obstacles.

Nonimmediacy

Nonimmediacy and its converse, Immediacy, are measures, respectively, of psychological distance from, or psychological closeness to, other persons or groups. Scoring this characteristic from running text was originated by Wiener and Mehrabian (1968) for analyzing materials that emerged from clinical interviews, and that could reveal interpersonal emotions that the speaker may have tried to conceal or may not even be aware of. Nonimmediacy scoring has had very few tests in political psychology. One study (Ramirez and Suedfeld 1988) reported that Fidel Castro's remarks about "Che" Guevara changed from very low to quite high nonimmediacy during and after Guevara's parting with Cuba and embarking on his unsuccessful (and fatal) attempt to start a revolution in Bolivia, indicating greater psychological distance and a rift in the friendship. Nonimmediacy was also measured in the Bush Doctrine analysis mentioned previously in this chapter. It showed a high level in Bush's references to Enemies, a low level with regard to Allies, and a mean score between the other two for Ambivalents.

In the current study, we automated the scoring of nonimmediacy by counting the frequency of appearance in the text of words connoting each of six categories:

1. Spatial distancing, e.g., "those people," "over there," rather than "these people" (or a specific name, noun, or pronoun)," "here";

2. Temporal distancing, e.g., past or future tense rather than the present;
3. Unilaterality, e.g., “he did” as opposed to the reverse coded “we did,” “together,” “collectively”;
4. Passivity, e.g., passive voice;
5. Modified epistemic relationship, e.g., “believe,” “feel that,” “probably”; and
6. Intensity-Extensivity, e.g., “some,” “never,” “greatly.”

We follow the pattern established in other studies by reporting the results for Nonimmediacy rather than Immediacy, but it should be clear that each of these is merely the opposite of the other.

METHOD

Study 1. Quantitative Discourse Analysis

The quantitative discourse analysis employed a core codebook or dictionary that contains words and phrases that our research team has found repeatedly and reliably to be associated with specific themes. In addition, the dictionary can code for rhetorical devices, ways of using speech such as intensifying adjectives, hyperbole, example use, and others. Themes constitute culturally and emotionally salient concepts such as danger, dignity, pride, hope, victimization, religious ideology, political concepts such as democracy, socialism, economy and development, sovereignty, organizations including state and non-state entities, and key individuals. The codebook used for analyzing President Trump’s discourse contained 72 cultural/emotive themes, five events, 19 individuals, 57 political themes, 95 organizations, and 14 rhetorical devices for a total of 212 codes.

Two corpora of Donald Trump’s speeches were analyzed, and whole speeches were analyzed and used as the basic unit of analysis. One corpus consisted of official statements and interviews he made either as a presidential candidate or as president, obtained from the University of California, Santa Barbara Presidency Project.¹ It consisted of 171 documents: 14 delivered during his presidential candidacy in 2016, 25 from his first year as president in 2017, 20 from his presidential addresses in

¹ <https://www.presidency.ucsb.edu/people/president/donald-j-trump>.

2018, 18 during his 2018 midterm campaign speeches, 93 from his presidential addresses through June of 2019, and the speech in which he announced his candidacy for 2020. The 171 speeches have a combined total of 610,337 words. Using the codebook, 44,617 segments were coded into the 212 codes, one of which was America First. The other corpus consists of his tweets obtained from the Trump Twitter Archive,² in which he explicitly uses the term, “America First.” This provided 31 tweets from [@realDonaldTrump](https://twitter.com/realDonaldTrump). The tweets were coded for themes and the percentage of tweets that contained a particular theme was recorded.

Density is the standard metric for quantitative discourse analysis and is calculated by dividing the number of coded segments for each code by the number of words per document in order to normalize the extent to which each concept or rhetorical device was used (Guest et al. 2012; Ryan and Bernard 2003). Density permits averaging of codes and comparisons between leaders and across different periods of time.

Study 2. Thematic Content Analysis of Cognition, Motivation, and Interpersonal Distance

In most of our research, variables of the content analyses were scored manually, by trained scorers who had demonstrated high interscorer reliability with experts. However, in this study all of our variables were scored using automated systems, i.e., software, rather than manual scoring. The equivalence of the two kinds of scoring has not been established, but we judged that the economy of automated scoring in labor and time, and its wide use by other researchers, justified testing it.

The second study reported here applied quantitative scoring to three major variables previously analyzed in political speeches and writings. These are integrative complexity (IC), a measure of cognitive state (as opposed to trait) complexity; motive imagery (MI), which compares the relative prominence in the text of three seminal motives, and Nonimmediacy, a measure of psychological distance between the speaker/author and the object of the communication.

As discussed previously, choosing and categorizing the countries to which President Trump’s comments referred was considerably less clear than it had been for President Bush. Trump’s expressed attitude toward,

²<http://www.trumptwitterarchive.com>.

and relationship with, various nations and their leaders was less consistent and more subject to change than Bush’s had been. For example, his expressions of opinion toward North Korea and Kim Jong-un veered from contemptuous hostility to affection and admiration, and then to a less extreme benevolent regard. Toward NATO and its members, the President expressed support on some issues, strong disagreement on others, and a constant substrate of criticism about their insufficient financial contributions. And so on.

Scoring Integrative Complexity

The unit of scoring IC is the paragraph. There are two major ways of scoring texts for IC. One is a labor-intensive, time-consuming procedure followed by trained individuals who have passed a test of reliability with expert scoring on a sample of paragraphs taken from a variety of sources. A detailed scoring manual is used throughout training and throughout the scoring of materials for research purposes (Baker-Brown et al. 1992). The second is the use of one of several software packages that include cognitive complexity scoring. Manual scoring is considered the gold standard, and the equivalence of automated to manual scoring varies (Suedfeld and Tetlock 2014).

There are general aspects of the procedure that characterize both manual and automated scoring methods. As shown in Table 2.2, IC scores are distributed along a 7-point scale. A score of 1 indicates that the passage reveals a lack of differentiation; for example, it may consider only one characteristic of, or one point of view about, the topic. A Manichean bipolar evaluation would be scored as 1. A score of 3 indicates the presence of differentiation among several perceived aspects. Integration can

Table 2.2 IC scoring

<i>Structural complexity</i>	<i>IC score^a</i>
Undifferentiated	1
Differentiated, no integration	3
Integrated	5
Integrated with overarching cognitive schema	7

^aScores of 2, 4, and 6 indicate that some characteristics of the next higher score were present, but not sufficiently clear for that score to be assigned

only occur if differentiation exists: the score of 5 recognizes the description of how the components identified for a score of 3 might be related to each other. When the differentiated and integrated aspects are formulated as existing within a larger, overarching cognitive schema, a score of 7 is assigned. Such a schema may be religious, political, historical, scientific, etc. At the end of the scoring, the mean score for all paragraphs—i.e., the entire set of materials—is calculated.

In this study, complexity was scored with the use of Auto IC software (Conway et al. 2014; Houck et al. 2014). We used the original Auto IC software, written in Excel Macros. We used the version that scores paragraphs, which is closer to the traditional manual scoring than another version of the software, which scores entire documents. The total IC score is the mean of the paragraph scores.³

Scoring Motive Imagery

As in the case of IC, there are both manual and automated versions of MI scoring. In the present case, unlike in earlier studies, we have used the latter. The three MI variables (needs for Achievement, Affiliation, and Power) were scored using Linguistic Inquiry and Wordcount (LIWC) software (Pennebaker et al. 2015). These variables are included by default in LIWC's internal dictionary. LIWC has several versions, developed over time; their basic architecture is a count of how many times the text being scored contains words that are stored in the software's dictionary. In scoring, words are interpreted to imply that the wording reveals the source's motives, personality traits, cognitive styles, etc., including the three seminal motives scored for MI. The scores reported in this chapter reflect the number of times such references appear per 100 words of text.

Scoring Nonimmediacy

We scored Nonimmediacy using a system that we built in-house (version 0.1), our first attempt at creating an automated scoring method for this variable. The system includes: (a) an in-house code that cleans the verbal materials, and that runs in R, version 3.5.1; and (b) in-house dictionaries

³We are grateful to Dr. Lucian G. Conway III, developer of the Auto IC software, for sharing it with us to be used in this research.

that run in LIWC 2015 (Pennebaker et al. 2015). We based this automated system on the one developed by Mehrabian and his colleagues for manually scoring Nonimmediacy (Gottlieb et al. 1967; Mehrabian and Wiener 1966), especially their book (Wiener and Mehrabian 1968).

Our automated system first scores six different categories of nonimmediacy. Scores for these categories are straight counts of words and short phrases that appear per 100 words in our dictionary for the category in question. In order to generate an overall nonimmediacy score, we z-transformed each nonimmediacy category to give equal weight to each, and then summed the results.

RESULTS AND DISCUSSION

Study 1. Quantitative Discourse Analysis: What Donald Trump Talks About

Even though America First has become an iconic linguistic symbol of Trump's political discourse, ironically, his speeches rarely use that specific phrase. It is mentioned only 50 times compared to the 44,612 other coded themes, representing only about 1 of every 1000 themes he expresses. Furthermore, he has tweeted America First only 31 times out of the over 30,000 tweets at @realDonaldTrump, remarkably only 1/1000 tweets, identical to his use of the term in the general corpus of speeches and interviews. Of course, frequency of expression is not the only measure of the importance of a concept to a communicator or an audience.

While the term is seldom used by Donald Trump in his common tweets and presidential speeches, he uses it five times as often when campaigning, whether for himself or others, a highly significant difference ($t = 3.79$, $p < 0.001$). This is almost as often as he typically uses any other theme. America First is, first and foremost, a campaign slogan. Political slogans often function as shorthand to represent more complex agendas that involve other interrelated concepts (Denton 1980: 13; Newsome 2002: 22); therefore, America First potentially conveys a more complex set of meanings.

Correlations between the densities of America First and other themes may provide some insight into the concept's broader meaning. Themes that occurred infrequently (< 50 times) were excluded to avoid spurious

Table 2.3 Themes correlated with America first in Trump's speeches and interviews

<i>Themes correlated with America first</i>	<i>r</i>	<i>p</i>
Economy	.293	.000
USA	.289	.000
Victory	.270	.000
Prosperity	.201	.009
Trump	.193	.011
Strength	.171	.025
Victimization	.163	.033

correlations from this analysis. The densities of fifteen themes were statistically significantly correlated with the density of America First, although some of these were clearly negative associations made between adversaries during campaign speeches (Secretary Hillary Clinton, President Barack Obama, left-wing radicals) and contribute to the meaning of America First only as anti-heroes. Excluding these, seven themes were positively correlated with America First. The most strongly associated themes were the economy, the United States, victory, prosperity, and Trump, followed by strength and victimization (Table 2.3).

Fourteen themes were identified in Trump's America First tweets (Fig. 2.1). Thirty-five percent of the tweets only invoked America First with no other information. The primary themes associated with America First were, in descending order, trade deals and dealing with foreign powers, economic prosperity and jobs for the United States, the border and immigration, and the military. Eight less common themes included winning, the need for the United States to be respected, security, US energy, Second Amendment rights, tax cuts, the need for American strength, conservatism, and the media.

Only one tweet dealt with foreign political affairs (a criticism of the U.N.), the rest of the foreign affairs concerned achieving trade deals positive for the United States. The following tweet expresses most of the main issues related to America First in tweets.

[President Trump Tweet December 25, 2018 06:18:44 PM] I hope everyone, even the Fake News Media, is having a great Christmas! Our Country is doing very well. We are securing our Borders, making great new Trade Deals, and bringing our Troops Back Home. We are finally putting America First. MERRY CHRISTMAS! #MAGA

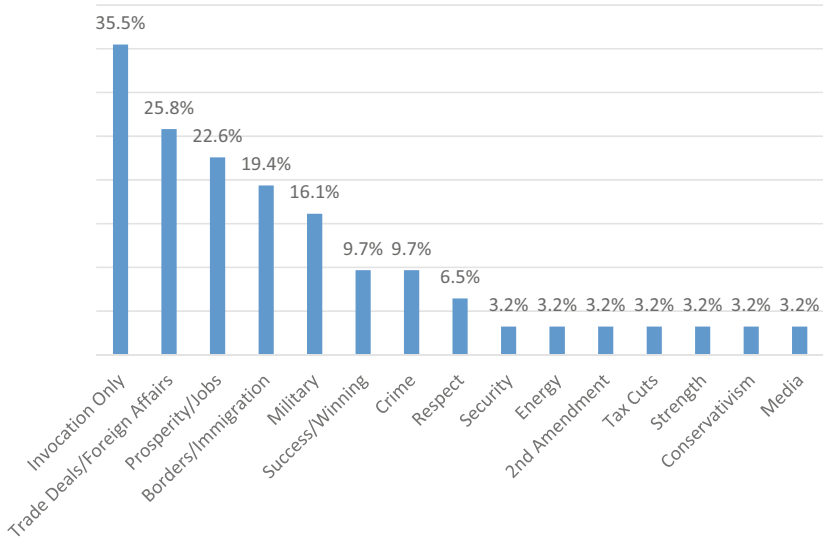


Fig. 2.1 Theme prevalence as percentage of @realDonaldTrump tweets that invoke America first

Comparing associations within Trump’s official speeches and tweets demonstrates a general alignment and overall pattern. First and foremost, America First means economic prosperity for business and providing jobs for workers in the context of a hostile environment in which the United States is taken advantage of by foreign entities.

I’m with you: the American people.... Our country lost its way when we stopped putting the American people first. We got here because we switched from a policy of Americanism – focusing on what’s good for America’s middle class – to a policy of globalism, focusing on how to make money for large corporations who can move their wealth and workers to foreign countries all to the detriment of the American worker and the American economy. We reward companies for offshoring, and we punish companies for doing business in America and keeping our workers employed. This is not a rising tide that lifts all boats. This is a wave of globalization that wipes out our middle class and our jobs. We need to reform our economic system so that, once again, we can all succeed together, and America can become rich again. That’s what we mean by America First.”

(Candidate Donald Trump, Trump SoHo Hotel, New York City, June 22, 2016)

The victimization theme in the general corpus and the respect theme in his tweets is associated with this sense of unfairness and the need to rectify it.

As long as we are led by politicians who will not put America First, then we can be assured that other nations will not treat America with respect, the respect we deserve. (Candidate Donald Trump, Republican Party Nomination Speech, July 21, 2016)

With your help, we are reversing decades of blunders and betrayals. These are serious, serious betrayals to our Nation and to everything we stand for. It's been done by the failed ruling class that enriched foreign countries at our expense. It wasn't America first. In many cases, it was America last. Those days are over. Long over. (President Trump, Remarks at the Conservative Political Action Conference, National Harbor, Maryland, March 2, 2019)

The United States and Donald Trump are very much identified with America First. Trump and America are nearly synonymous.

The issue of illegal immigration and the need for a wall on the US southern border is also a prominent issue in the tweets associated with America First. This is also a foundational issue in the general corpus (see below). Strength is correlated with America First in the general corpus and in the tweets and is also highly correlated with the military in the general corpus ($r = 0.236$, $p = .002$), linking these themes. The military is another prominent and key theme associated with America First in the tweets and is a prominent theme in the general corpus (see below).

And everything is made in the USA. It's a good thing. No, we're building our military bigger, stronger, better than ever before and we hope we never have to use it. But you know when you don't have to use it, when you're bigger, better, and stronger. Right? (President Trump, Remarks at a "Make America Great Again" Rally, Pensacola, Florida, November 3, 2018)

[President Trump Tweet Jan 14, 2018 08:19:06 AM] I, as President, want people coming into our Country who are going to help us become strong

and great again, people coming in through a system based on MERIT. No more Lotteries! #AMERICA FIRST.

Winning is a theme expressed in the tweets, possibly linked to the victory theme in the general corpus.

[President Trump Tweet Nov 1, 2018 09:43:46 PM] I love you Missouri! Under Republican leadership, America is BOOMING, America is THRIVING, and America is WINNING - because we are finally putting AMERICA FIRST. Get out and VOTE Josh @HawleyMO for the United States Senate! #MAGA.

THE TRUMP DOCTRINE WRIT LARGE

Examining Trump's general corpus of official statements yields further insights into what his doctrine may be and how it articulates with the America First concept.

There are four political themes that occur statistically significantly more often than all other themes. They are the economy, the border, the military, and governance (issues such as Congress, political parties, and democratic procedures). Four other political themes occur at densities greater than one standard deviation above the mean and appear to provide support to the most dominant themes. These supportive themes include crime, appeals to the masses (population, the people, workers), the political process (issues such as negotiations, settlements, summits, reforms, voting, and elections) (Fig. 2.2).

Turning to cultural referents and emotively charged themes, only one, strength, has a statistically significant density. However, six occur at densities greater than a standard deviation above the mean, including ability, need for protection, progress, metaphysics (religious concepts and appeals to religion), friendship, success, and dignity (Fig. 2.3).

The data on political themes help to identify Trump's core political issues while the cultural emotive theme data provide a broader significance to these issues. First and foremost, Trump's political agenda is an economic one, but with a uniquely pro-business and especially pro-worker twist.

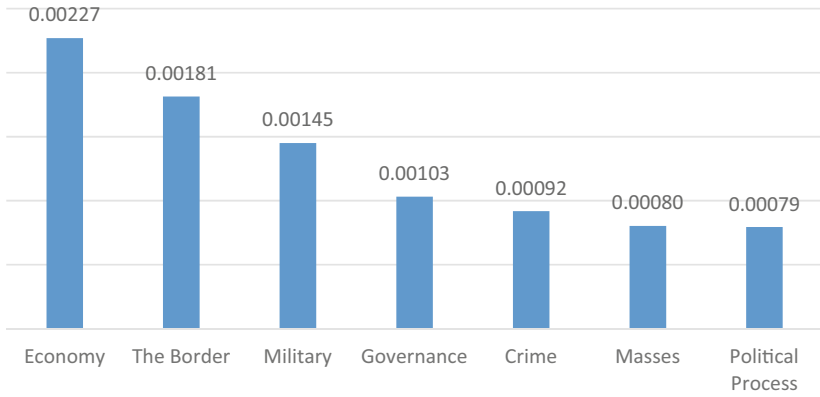


Fig. 2.2 Density of themes associated with America first in Donald Trump political themes

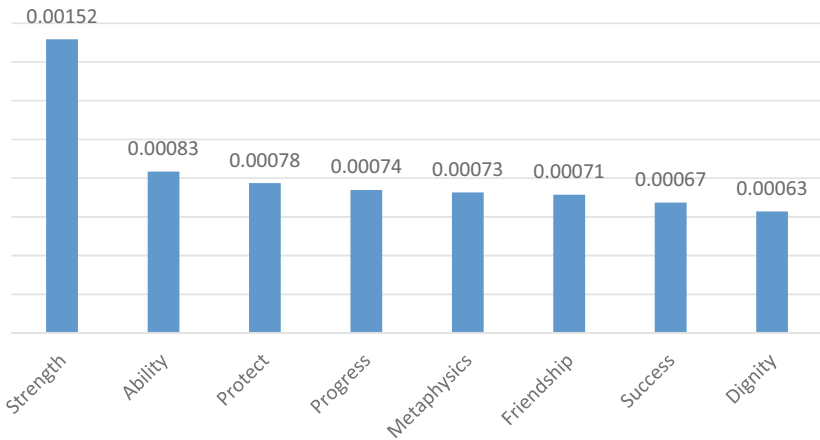


Fig. 2.3 Donald Trump cultural emotive themes

Our agenda is pro-worker, pro-family, pro-growth — 100 percent pro-American. It's America First. (President Trump, Press Conference, July 12, 2019)

A concern with securing the southern US border and protecting the country from illegal immigrants is his second-most densely discussed issue.

When do we beat Mexico at the border? They're laughing at us, at our stupidity. And now they are beating us economically. They are not our friend, believe me. But they're killing us economically. (Candidate Trump, Announcement of his Candidacy, Trump Tower, New York City, June 16, 2015)

His third issue is praise for and support of the military, mostly materiel (weapons systems and platforms) and military personnel.

We make the greatest military equipment in the world. We make the greatest jets. We make the greatest ships. We make the greatest missiles. We have the anti-missile missiles that shoot down missiles many, many miles away in the sky, like a needle in a haystack. They shoot them down, hard to believe. (President Trump, Remarks at a "Make America Great Again" Rally, Wilkes-Barre, Pennsylvania, August 2, 2018)

And I'm very proud to report that we have given our service-members their largest pay raise in over a decade. (President Trump, Remarks at a "Make America Great Again" Rally in Lewis Center, Ohio, August 4, 2018)

Trump's fourth most important issue appears to be a concern over the organs of governance in the United States. He is very attentive to the need for electoral voting, congressional voting, and the manipulation of governmental processes; he is very much a politician. For example, the following quote concerning immigration emphasizes compromise, lawfulness, and Congressional action.

These four pillars⁴ represent a down-the-middle compromise and one that will create a safe, modern, and lawful immigration system. For over 30 years, Washington has tried and failed to solve this problem. This Congress can be the one that finally makes it happen. Most importantly, these four pillars will produce legislation that fulfills my ironclad pledge

⁴The four pillars referred to are: path to citizenship for children who immigrated, border security to include a wall, ending the visa lottery, ending chain migration.

to sign a bill that puts America first. So let's come together, set politics aside, and finally get the job done. (President Trump, State of the Union Address, January 30, 2018)

The supporting political themes concern political issues (the threat of and need to deal with crime), appeals to the common folk, and actual political processes.

On crime:

I have a message for all of you: the crime and violence that today afflicts our nation will soon—and I mean very soon – come to an end. (Candidate Trump, Republican Party Nomination Speech, July 21, 2016)

On popular appeal:

My pledge reads: "I'M WITH YOU – THE AMERICAN PEOPLE." I am your voice. So to every parent who dreams for their child, and every child who dreams for their future, I say these words to you tonight: I'm With You, and I will fight for you, and I will win for you....

It's because of him⁵ that I learned, from my youngest age, to respect the dignity of work and the dignity of working people. He was a guy most comfortable in the company of bricklayers, carpenters, and electricians and I have a lot of that in me also. I love those people. (Candidate Donald Trump, Republican Party Nomination Speech, July 21, 2016)

On political and negotiation processes:

Six months ago, Republicans passed the biggest tax cuts and reform in American history. (President Trump, Remarks at a "Make America Great Again" Rally in Fargo, North Dakota, June 27, 2018)

And I had this time, we were—we've been negotiating a lot of different transactions to save money on contracts that were terrible. (President Trump, News Conference, February 16, 2017)

Trump's political concerns lay out an agenda designed to protect the American economy and jobs, secure the southern border from presumably undesirable immigrants, support the military, and maintain the support

⁵ His father, Fred Trump.

he needs from political organizations to wield power. Issues such as the border, the threat of crime, appeals to the masses, and attacking the media clearly also have cultural and emotional salience to him and his supporters. Examination of other cultural and emotive themes provides more context for assessing what his agenda means to him and his supporters.

A Trump America is a strong America. Strength is valued as a virtue in its own right, and as a necessary component for defending America. Trump speaks of the world as a threatening and dangerous environment where there is a constant need for strength to protect his America.

“As we rebuild America’s strength and confidence at home, we are also restoring our strength and standing abroad. Around the world, we face rogue regimes, terrorist groups, and rivals like China and Russia that challenge our interests, our economy, and our values. In confronting these horrible dangers, we know that weakness is the surest path to conflict and unmatched power is the surest means to our true and great defense. (President Trump, State of the Union Address, January 30, 2018)

The supporting cultural emotive themes occur in roughly equivalent densities. Ability, success, and progress constitute positive attributes of Trump’s America. While Trump is not known as a pious individual, he also appeals frequently to religion and religious-like concepts.

Because of hard-working citizens like you, the people of Lima, the people of Ohio, and the people of America will always fight on to victory, victory, victory. You don’t know how to lose. You never will have to find out. You’ll never have to find out about losing. Together, we shall forever be one Nation, under God. (President Trump, Remarks at the Joint Systems Manufacturing Center in Lima, Ohio, March 20, 2019)

Finally, dignity and respect are fundamental values he expresses and that he clearly feels have been lost and must be regained and maintained.

And I signed certain bills, and I’d have farmers behind me, and I’d have house builders, home builders behind me. And these are tough people, strong people. They’ve fought hard. They’ve worked all their lives, hard. And they’d be—half of them would be crying because we gave them their property back. We gave them the right to earn a living. They couldn’t do it. They couldn’t do what they had to do. We gave them their property back. We gave them their dignity back. (President Trump, Remarks at the

Conservative Political Action Conference, Oxon Hill, Maryland, February 23, 2018)

And because if you look at us all around the world we're respected again. We're not pushovers anymore. We're not pushovers. (President Trump, Remarks at a "Make America Great Again" Rally in Washington Township, Michigan, April 28, 2018)

Study 2. How Trump Thinks and Feels: Cognition, Motivation, and Psychological Distance

This part of the chapter presents the application of thematic content analysis to the measurement of cognitive (integrative) complexity, motive imagery, and nonimmediacy to Mr. Trump's foreign policy speeches. The analysis is based on 826 paragraphs, all from speeches delivered between January 27, 2017 and July 26, 2019.

It should be noted that because of a change in technology from manual to automated scoring, the scores reported in these analyses are not directly comparable to results from manual scoring as reported in other studies. For IC, there is evidence (Suedfeld et al. 2014) that automated and manual scoring are roughly comparable, especially at the lower ranges (1-3). The level of comparability between automated and manual scores for MI and Nonimmediacy awaits direct testing. Table 2.4 summarizes (means and standard deviations) the scores for the variables in Study 2. Further information (medians, ranges, kurtosis, etc.) is available from P. Suedfeld or B. H. Morrison.

The most striking and unexpected finding is the primacy of affiliation motivation among the three variables scored for MI. Most political speeches by high-level leaders emphasize achievement or power, or a mixture of the two. Affiliation is almost always a poor third in the

Table 2.4 Summary of mean scores by variable

<i>Variable</i>	<i>Mean</i>	<i>SD</i>
IC	1.80	0.73
Achievement	1.24	1.87
Affiliation	4.50	3.71
Power	2.91	2.71
Nonimmediacy	0.08	2.69

Table 2.5 Intercorrelations by variable

<i>Variable</i>	<i>IC</i>	<i>Achievement</i>	<i>Affiliation</i>	<i>Power</i>	<i>Nonimmediacy</i>
IC	1.00				
Achievement	0.60	1.00			
Affiliation	0.19	0.42	1.00		
Power	0.09	0.20	−0.38	1.00	
Nonimmediacy	0.23	0.19	−0.48	0.64	1.00

motive hierarchy. The current finding may be a methodological artifact of the LIWC scoring system, whose dictionary may incorporate different numbers of baseline words for the three motivational variables; but even the possibility that Trump may be so strongly oriented toward close emotional relations with other countries and/or their leaders is interesting and calls for further investigation.

Table 2.5 shows the correlations among the five variables of this study: integrative complexity, motive imagery for achievement, affiliation and power, and nonimmediacy. The level of aggregation for these correlations is the country being discussed, not the paragraph. Thus, e.g., if Trump shows high achievement motivation when discussing a country, then he also tends to be high in IC when discussing that country.

The relatively high correlation between achievement motivation and integrative complexity is not surprising: in politics, the drive toward excellence, high accomplishment, and success may be enhanced by flexible, open-minded thinking. The negative relationship between the needs for affiliation and power is likewise intuitively fitting, a note that a desire for warm, friendly relations does not fit comfortably with the wish to dominate and manipulate the other person. Likewise, those friendly motives conflict with the feeling of high psychological distance from the individual in question, explaining the negative correlation between affiliation and nonimmediacy.

Table 2.6 presents the mean scores on our variables by country. We will examine the sources and implications of these patterns below.

Trump’s overall IC level, 1.80, is in the range of implicit differentiation. It fits within the range typical of statesmen speaking or writing about international or domestic political matters (Suedfeld 2010). Because of the change in scoring methodology, as discussed earlier, comparisons of the other scores with those from previous research are not appropriate.

Table 2.6 Mean scores by country

<i>Country</i>	<i>IC</i>	<i>Achievement</i>	<i>Affiliation</i>	<i>Power</i>	<i>Nonimmediacy</i>
Canada	1.89	1.71	6.15	2.43	−0.88
China	1.82	1.09	5.32	2.90	0.13
Gt. Britain	1.80	1.34	4.32	3.29	0.08
Iran	1.77	1.12	2.21	3.45	0.21
Israel	1.61	1.38	4.37	3.09	0.11
Mexico	1.59	0.75	4.13	2.19	−0.70
North Korea	1.82	1.49	4.66	3.24	0.89
Russia	1.90	1.35	3.25	2.60	0.60
GRAND MEAN	1.80	1.24	4.50	2.91	0.08

There is noticeable variation in the complexity with which the President talks about different countries: the IC difference among Trump's references to the various countries approaches statistical significance, ANOVA $F(7,818) = 1.891$, $p = 0.068$. Those that evoke the most complex texts are rivals of the United States (Russia and China) or important allies that are also involved in affairs closely affecting Trump's policies (Canada and Great Britain: the renegotiation of NAFTA, NATO, parliamentary and electoral instability, Brexit). To the extent that IC is a sign of how much serious thought is devoted to a particular topic, this pattern is compatible with those of other leaders facing both enemies and somewhat troubled alliances (e.g., Suedfeld et al. 2007).

Along with IC, inter-country differences in the other variables are also of interest. Table 2.7 summarizes the statistical analysis.

Turning to Trump's orientation toward specific countries, Canada is an unusual case. The United States is Canada's immediate neighbor, major trading partner, close ally and supporter through several wars and quasi-wars (such as the War on Terrorism); we even have some linguistic

Table 2.7 Summary of ANOVA results (all df 's = 7,818)

<i>Variable</i>	<i>F(7,818)</i>	<i>p</i> ≤
IC	1.89	0.068
Achievement	1.91	0.068
Affiliation	11.28	0.001
Power	1.95	0.059
Nonimmediacy	4.44	0.001

affinity, although not without a complicating factor in official Canadian bilingualism.

On the other hand, Canada has disagreed with American strategies and decisions in several instances: the deployment of nuclear weapons, the Iraqi portion of the Gulf Wars, higher commitments to defense spending, and a long list of domestic political arrangements. We expected that those complicated relations would result in an interesting and perhaps unique pattern of references.

And so they do: Canada evokes about the highest level of IC, very high numbers of achievement and affiliation references, and very little evidence of power motivation and nonimmediacy (see Fig. 2.4 for an illustration of Canada’s outlier status in the immediacy-affiliation relationship). According to our analysis, the President likes Canada, feels psychologically, not just geographically, close to it, and wants a relationship reaching for high accomplishment; but he is not oriented toward manipulating or controlling the country. Leaders concerned about Mr. Trump’s feelings toward Canada, a concern that reached a high level when he abrogated

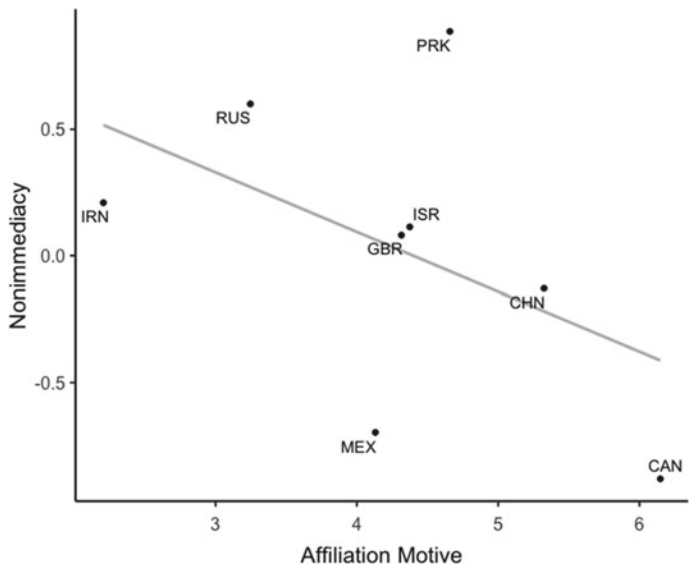


Fig. 2.4 Scatter plot of Trump’s affiliation motivation and nonimmediacy toward countries

the original NAFTA, may take some comfort in these findings, and critics of the President may be surprised at his nuanced but consistent position toward this sometimes difficult ally.

Figure 2.4 shows the scores and regression line linking affiliation motivation and nonimmediacy for the President's references to the countries covered in this study. Remember that nonimmediacy is psychological distance between the speaker and the topic, so that low scores indicate psychological closeness.

Another outlier relationship is revealed in Trump's comments involving Mexico. Just as close physically to the United States as Canada, but with a very different history, culture, economy, religious and ethnic makeup, and language, Mexico presents the President with political problems. One of these is illegal immigration and, to a lesser extent, the growing presence of a cultural and linguistic minority, many of whose prominent figures are his political opponents. Another is the rampant criminal violence, especially near the US-Mexican border. It is noteworthy that, despite all of these factors and the involvement of Mexico in the North American Free Trade complications, the texts show low complexity and little interest in achievement, or even in exerting power and influence, vis-à-vis Mexico. Trump's moderate score for affiliation indicates relatively little desire for an emotionally warm relationship. Interestingly, this is coupled with low psychological distance (see Fig. 2.4). It may be that Trump feels psychologically close toward Mexico, but may see little need to engage with the country cognitively—e.g., he may feel that Mexico's positions are unlikely to affect the United States in undesired ways.

The fact that Canada and Mexico score the lowest in the list on nonimmediacy, despite their very different scores on other variables, may reflect their close and active involvement with the United States during the negotiations from the American breaking up of NAFTA in January 2017 to the 2019 signing of the new United States-Mexico-Canada Agreement (USMCA). Compared to the original NAFTA, the USMCA is generally considered to be advantageous to the United States.

The scores involving Israel are another surprise. The Trump Administration is widely recognized as being among Israel's strongest supporters in the world. With the exception of a high score for achievement motivation, the scores are around the middle of their ranges. Such a score for IC shows less complex thinking than one might expect, considering Trump's unique and dramatic steps in favor of Israel on the international

scene (although dramatic moves are often fairly simple); and a surprisingly low affiliation motivation in view of his support for the country and widely cited personal friendship with Prime Minister Netanyahu. It appears that, with respect to Israel, Trump is primarily motivated by the desire to achieve important or historic changes. It is certainly true that his policies have changed the relationship, perhaps more significantly than any previous American president since Truman. A partial list includes withdrawing financial and voting support from anti-Israel international bodies and initiatives (e.g., in and by the UN), moving the US embassy to Jerusalem, officially recognizing Israeli sovereignty over the Golan, supporting Israel's right to self-defense and counter-terrorist actions, and accepting the legitimacy of Israeli "settlements" (e.g., Togoh 2019).

Next, we consider the interesting mix of evidence concerning countries that may variously be considered rivals, competitors, or enemies: China, Iran, North Korea, and Russia. Mr. Trump's orientation toward Iran, which has been about as close to an outright enemy as exists among the nations listed in the study, is relatively easy. It engages little interest in achievement. Its scores for affiliation and nonimmediacy place it among the least liked and most distant psychologically; references to influencing or controlling it are the most numerous of any of the countries. It is clearly a nation whose leadership the President wants to influence, but toward which he feels little need for closeness, friendship, or cooperative progress.

The Democratic People's Republic of [North] Korea is a special case in the adversary category. After a period of mutual insults and acrimony, Mr. Trump has invested considerable time, effort, and perhaps prestige, in trying to move US relations with it into a more positive realm. As thematic content analysis indicated (Suedfeld and Morrison 2019), optimistic reports of progress along that path have stalled without major concessions by the DPRK. Nevertheless, the President occasionally still refers to hopes that the negotiation will progress. This view is reflected by North Korea having the highest achievement score of all, and a high score for power, the desire to exert influence. It is also compatible with the view expressed in the other chapter in this volume by Lawrence Kuznar, suggesting growing affability between Trump and Kim Jong-un. One very interesting datum is the combination of moderate affiliation motivation and very high nonimmediacy, as shown in Fig. 2.4. In most cases, these two variables are negatively correlated. This could imply personal liking

for Kim Jong-un coupled with a sense of the cultural and political chasm between the two countries.

There are interesting differences between President Trump's references to China and Russia, America's two strongest adversaries. Both attract respectable levels of complex thinking, with Russia's the highest in the database. In addition, China receives one of the highest affiliation scores while Russia's is close to lowest. The nonimmediacy score for Russia also indicates high psychological distance; China's is much lower. It may be that China's economy-oriented global deal-making leadership seems more compatible with Trump's own worldview. With respect to China, this high affiliation and low nonimmediacy suggest that Trump is open to returning to more co-cooperative relations, or at least to avoiding further deterioration. His recent easing of the US-China "trade war" supports that interpretation (BBC 2020). His scores for Russia are inconsistent with assertions by critics that he is too closely linked with Putin's regime, affiliation showing the lowest score after Iran and nonimmediacy the highest distance after North Korea. President Trump seems to see a high possibility for accomplishments with both Russia and China, but demonstrates limited motivation (or perhaps not much prospect) for influencing them.

Our findings counter some of the widely promulgated opinions of President Trump's critics in the spheres of media, politics, academia, entertainment, and among the general public. Trump's cognitive complexity is within the range of national-level political leaders of the United States and the world. The diversity of his implicit motives and emotions as he addresses his perceived relations with different international protagonists is compatible with the known relationships between the United States and the other nations. It is clear that his worldview does not result in monolithic disdain, thoughtlessness, or inexplicable perspectives toward other countries or international relations. Not unreasonably for an American president, he clearly does consider other nations from the point of view of how America relates to them, not from a magisterial global perspective. Perhaps that is what he means by "America First."

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Trump and America's Foreign Policy Traditions

Henry R. Nau

Consider the following. A president of the United States comes to Washington and challenges an entrenched bureaucracy, offends coastal elites, makes every issue a personal one, upsets Washington society, insults foreign countries, threatens war if tariffs are ignored, picks a fight with the central bank, fiercely defends US borders, mistreats non-US citizens, toys with and then fires most of his cabinet, confronts states who defy federal law, talks loudly about intervening militarily in another country but then does nothing when the opportunity arises, and blames the press for unfair coverage and reckless insults to his family.

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Who might that president be? Donald Trump, right? Wrong, it is Andrew Jackson. Jackson championed the western and southern pioneers against the established eastern elites, engaged in numerous duels and canings to defend his personal honor, insulted the French and refused to recant during negotiations for 1812 war reparations, used a confrontation over tariffs to persuade South Carolina not to secede from the Union, vetoed legislation to renew the charter of the US Central Bank, spurned a sanctimonious Washington society by standing with his war secretary's wife accused of having an abortion, thundered against Mexican forces oppressing Texan settlers and then did nothing when Texas appealed to the United States for annexation, exiled native Americans to the "trail of tears" and oblivion beyond the Mississippi, and defended America's borders against marauding Indians and filibustering Europeans (Brands 2005).

Compared with Andrew Jackson, therefore, President Trump is no outlier. If you get beyond the personality and style (not easy but let's try), Trump operates well within the guard rails of America's foreign policy traditions. Those traditions include nationalists like George Washington and Jackson who put America First, realists like Teddy Roosevelt and Richard Nixon who played the great power game of balancing power, liberal internationalists like Woodrow Wilson and Franklin Roosevelt who bet on trade and multilateral institutions to resolve disputes without the balance of power, and conservative internationalists like Harry Truman and Ronald Reagan who championed freedom and pursued the democratic peace.

As he campaigns for a second term, Trump is anchored in the nationalist tradition. He places American interests first against a globalizing world that has long taken advantage of American generosity (or stupidity as Trump would say). He denounces allies who free ride on American security and claws back trade deals that steal American jobs and technology. He builds up America's defenses but reduces US military interventions abroad. And he takes diplomatic risks with China, North Korea, and Iran but uses military force only sporadically, more to intimidate than balance power or achieve specific objectives.

At the same time, Trump has realist rudders that steer him in the direction of preserving the basic features of the status quo. He is not dismantling America's Cold War alliances or withdrawing from great power relations, as nationalists would urge. He spends more not less on NATO, asks America's allies to do the same, and keeps open prospects

of good relations with authoritarian leaders in Russia, China, and North Korea.

There are even spotty undercurrents of internationalism in Trump's approach. He challenges the allies to reduce all tariffs to zero, successfully renegotiates the United States–Mexico–Canada Agreement (USMCA), and speaks in Poland like Ronald Reagan: “we value the dignity of every human life, protect the rights of every person, and share the hope of every soul to live in freedom” (Trump 2017d). For the greater part, however, Trump eschews internationalist traditions. He rejects new multilateral agreements like the Iran nuclear agreement, Paris Accords, and Trans-Pacific Partnership and prefers bilateral to multilateral negotiations where American leverage is uppermost. He speaks little about human rights and clearly opposes the use of military force to spread democracy.

If he gains a second term, which way will Trump swing? He may lose patience with the allies, pull American troops out of Europe and Asia, let other great powers manage regional orders, and revert to an offshore balancing strategy focused mainly on the western hemisphere. On the other hand, he may break through to achieve more balanced global security and trade agreements that keep America engaged and China on board. The result might be a much-needed course correction in globalization in which democracies share leadership on a more equitable basis and autocracies share markets on the basis of common rules.

The rest of this essay explores these observations. First it defines America's foreign policy traditions, assesses Trump's national security and foreign policy strategy (or impulses) against those traditions, and projects where Trump might be headed if he wins a second term.

THE TRADITIONS

President H. W. Bush once famously said, “labels are for soup cans” (Bush 2016). He might have added “and for clear thinking.” Distinctions are indispensable for rational analysis. How many times have you heard the adage: “The Devil is in the details?” Well, if that's true, “God must be in the design” because long before you get to the details someone has already decided what the problem is and where you need to look for the details.

So, let's begin with some distinctions. Every country has two sides to its national security—defending its territorial safety and material well-being, and nurturing a global political environment in which it

feels comfortable. A country can improve its material circumstances by building up a strong defense. But it can also enhance its national security by cultivating politically like-minded countries on its borders and elsewhere. A world of democracies would be much less threatening to the United States than a world of authoritarian powers. Think if the United States had to defend itself today against Germany and Japan as well as Russia and China. Authoritarian countries understand this reality as well. That's why democracy in Ukraine threatens Russia and in Hong Kong China. As Robert Kagan writes, "The mere existence of democracies on their borders, the global free flow of information they cannot control, the dangerous connection between free market capitalism and political freedom — all pose a threat to rulers who depend on keeping restive forces in their own countries in check" (Kagan 2017). Little wonder that Vladimir Putin and Xi Jinping have both called for a rollback of the "liberal" international order.

Countries rely on two major instruments to achieve greater material safety and political comfort—force and diplomacy. Russia halted the potential alignment of Ukraine with NATO and the EU by annexing Crimea and invading eastern Ukraine. President Obama relied mostly on diplomacy to halt the Iranian nuclear program, refusing to use force except as a last resort (Nau 2015). Sometimes force substitutes for diplomacy. President Roosevelt insisted in 1943 that the war against Germany and Japan be fought to unconditional surrender, that is, no diplomatic offramp. More often, force and diplomacy interact. Diplomacy offers a way to end a war—the cease-fires in Bosnia and Kosovo—or the deployment of force leads to a diplomatic solution—President Kennedy's threat to invade Cuba securing the withdrawal of Soviet missiles.

Figure 3.1 juxtaposes these two dimensions. The matrix offers a clear way of distinguishing among America's foreign policy traditions (or the traditions of any country, see Nau and Ollapally 2012). The preference for material security vs. political comfort defines the vertical axis, the preference for force vs. diplomacy the horizontal axis.

Nationalists and realists group together in the upper quadrants of the diagram. They place primary emphasis on material or geopolitical security and do not engage in the business of building international institutions or converting countries to their particular political ideology. Internationalists group together in the lower quadrant of the matrix. They seek to surmount a decentralized world in which countries compete for geopolitical security. Liberal internationalists do this by building

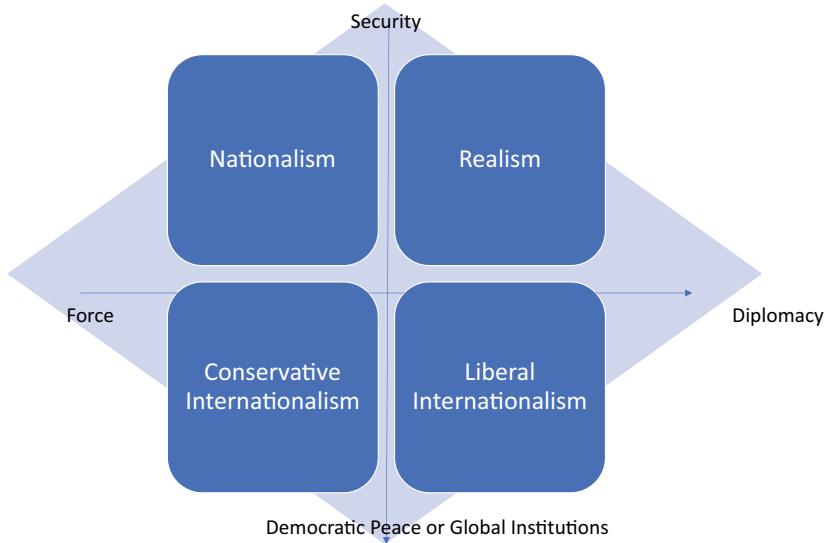


Fig. 3.1 Four types of US grand strategy

international institutions that establish procedures for resolving disputes peacefully. Conservative internationalists do it by moving more foreign countries toward democracy and establishing a democratic peace in which democratic nations remain independent but live side by side in peace.

Nationalists and conservative internationalists group together in the left-hand quadrants. They place the greatest emphasis on strong defense and use of force. They see diplomacy as effective only if it is backed up by the use of force. Realists and liberal internationalists occupy the right-hand quadrants. They pay more attention to diplomacy. Liberal internationalists hope diplomacy will eventually minimize the balance of power. Realists emphasize diplomacy (think of Henry Kissinger's book *Diplomacy* 1994) to perfect the balance of power.

Let's look more closely at each of the traditions in their respective quadrants.

Nationalism

Of all the traditions, nationalism is most comfortable with the geopolitical world, namely politically unlike and competitive states balancing power to survive. It has no ambition to change the world or create a more centralized system. The nationalist system of independent states is a virtue not a vice (Hazony 2018). Every country provides for its own security and is neutral toward other countries.

George Washington established this tradition in the early American republic. In his Farewell Address, he warned against entanglement in the affairs of other countries (Washington 1796):

Why forego the advantages of so peculiar a situation? Why quit our own to stand upon foreign ground? Why, by interweaving our destiny with that of any part of Europe, entangle our peace and prosperity in the toils of European ambition, rivalry, interest, humor or caprice?

It is our true policy to steer clear of permanent alliances with any portion of the foreign world...

On behalf of President Monroe, Secretary of State John Quincy Adams enshrined Washington's injunction in the Monroe Doctrine (Monroe 1821):

Wherever the standard of freedom and Independence has been or shall be unfurled, there will her [America's] heart, her benedictions and her prayers be. But she goes not abroad, in search of monsters to destroy. She is the well-wisher to the freedom and independence of all. She is the champion and vindicator only of her own...She well knows that by once enlisting under other banners than her own, were they even the banners of foreign independence, she would involve herself beyond the power of extrication, in all the wars of interest and intrigue, of individual avarice, envy, and ambition, which assume the colors and usurp the standard of freedom...She might become the dictatress of the world. She would be no longer the ruler of her own spirit.

Nationalists therefore put the interests of their own country first and expect all other countries to do the same. Because their security is the primary interest, countries will defend themselves and there is no need for other countries to become involved in their defense. Under exigency, alliances may be necessary but never permanent. Trade with other countries, if you wish, but make sure you gain more than the other country.

Defend trade only if it involves vital raw materials or national security supplies. In general, stay out of the affairs of others, and they will stay out of your affairs.

In a nationalist world, there is little need for diplomacy. Power balances emerge automatically, especially since great powers offset one another in other regions—Germany against Russia in Europe, Japan against China in Asia, and so on. Rivalries between these powers will contain threats long before those threats reach America's shores. Use force therefore only if attacked and then respond with ferocity. Win victory and come home. There is no nation-building for nationalists.

The nationalist tradition remains a venerable one in American history. By staying out of European and world affairs, the nation expanded and prospered in the nineteenth century. When it joined the ranks of great powers, it entered both World War I and II late and at a decisive moment, minimizing casualties. In World War II fifty-three Russian soldiers died for every one American soldier. Today America remains the only great power separated by two oceans with no great power rival in its hemisphere. Let other great powers balance power in their regions and become alarmed only when those conflicts spill over into our hemisphere.

Realism

Realists like nationalists accept the world as it is and have no desire to transform geopolitics. But unlike nationalists, realists believe it is necessary to balance power globally and in a timely way. Great powers in other regions may not react to threats in time. A hegemon or dominant power might emerge, as Nazi Germany did in Europe and Tojo Japan in Asia. That power may then intervene in the western hemisphere and threaten American interests. Germany intervened in Mexico during World War I, and Japan bombed US territory in World War II. For the realist unlike the nationalist, it is better to confront these threats before they reach America's shores. American security thus depends on preventing a hegemon from emerging in Europe or Asia. The United States cooperates flexibly with other great powers to that end. When the United States weakened after Vietnam, President Nixon allied with Maoist China to offset the increasingly powerful Soviet Union.

Maintaining world order is dangerous enough, realists argue; don't complicate it by paying too much attention to the type of domestic regime another great power may have. A balance of power accommodates states

of different political persuasions. And diplomacy is designed to deal with political adversaries not huddle together with political friends. Trade with friends, to be sure, but not with enemies because they may gain more. Even then be careful because today's friend may become tomorrow's adversary. Realists warned for some time that opening trade with China was a mistake (Mearsheimer 2001). China would simply become more powerful and not more democratic.

Realism also occupies a venerable place in American history. Alexander Hamilton urged the young republic to cooperate with Great Britain, the great power that could do the most harm to the United States. He warned against aligning with other countries based on political sentiments. He rejected the internationalist sentiment of Thomas Jefferson who favored France over Great Britain because France had a republican regime. By the end of the nineteenth century, America joined the realist club of great powers. President Teddy Roosevelt painted American naval ships white and sailed the "Great White Fleet" around the world to signal America's ascent. Eager to play the great power game, Roosevelt urged Wilson to enter World War I.

Liberal Internationalism

Wilson, however, preferred a different tradition. He wanted to domesticate international affairs, convert a system of independent states pursuing national security into an international community of interdependent states pursuing collective security (Smith 2017). Instead of chasing the chameleon of the balance of power, states would pool power in a universal institution such as the League of Nations, reduce overall levels of power by disarmament, and then use collective power only with multilateral consent. They would settle disputes by diplomatic means of negotiation and arbitration and identify threats to the international community by the country (or countries) that refused to follow these peaceful procedures. The community would then impose economic sanctions on the transgressor and back it up if necessary with the military might of the entire world. In effect, the world community would function as a police force to uphold the rule of law, the same way a domestic government enforces the law in independent nations.

President Franklin Roosevelt modified Wilson's scheme in one important respect. Recognizing that great powers were unlikely to support a system in which they counted no more than small powers (the United

States refused to join the League for that reason), he gave the great powers veto rights on the United Nations Security Council. Now the system would depend on great power cooperation, a realist feature, operating inside an international institution, a liberal internationalist feature. The United Nations failed because the great powers, the United States and the Soviet Union, did not cooperate. But when the Cold War ended and the great powers did cooperate, the United Nations worked exactly as it was designed. UN forces expelled Iraq from Kuwait in 1991 and restored the sovereignty of Kuwait. It was the first and thus far only example of collective security in the history of the world. (The UN action in Korea in 1950 was authorized by the General Assembly without the consent of the Soviet Union which was boycotting the Security Council at the time).

Liberal internationalism counts heavily on interdependence to bring countries together. As two scholars of liberal internationalism explain, “as long as interdependence – economic, security-related, and environmental – continues to grow, peoples and governments everywhere will be compelled to work together to solve problems or suffer grievous harm” (Deudney and Ikenberry 2018). Whatever the type of domestic regime, authoritarian or democratic, countries will be forced to compromise and develop a habit of cooperation. Over time, the processes of international negotiations will bring about a spirit of pluralism, tolerance and mutual respect. Ideological differences among countries will narrow or not matter as much as they did before. Betting entirely on diplomacy, President Obama consistently deemphasized the role of ideology in foreign affairs (Kaufman 2016; Lieber 2016; Singh 2016).

Central to the functioning of liberal internationalism is a willingness to refrain from the use of military force until negotiations fail. Using military force before or during negotiations, as realists might advocate, only increases distrust. Tensions spiral rather than subside. Negotiations must take place free of intimidation. Only after all peaceful procedures have been exhausted is the use of force legitimate and then only with the consent of all countries, especially the great powers. When the United States invaded Iraq in 2003 without the consent of the great powers (not only Russia and China but France and Germany as well), the intervention was considered by liberal internationalists to be illegitimate (Nau 2008).

Conservative Internationalism

Not all internationalists believe that interdependence is more important than ideology. Conservative internationalists worry that ideology limits peaceful cooperation. As Secretary of State James Byrnes told President Truman in 1945, “there is too much difference in the ideologies of the U.S. and Russia to work on a long term program of cooperation” (quoted in Trachtenberg 1999: 16). Even if cooperation is possible, compromise with authoritarian regimes such as Russia and China may undermine the rule of law and pollute the prospects for democracy.

Conservative internationalists worry too about refraining from the use of force before and during negotiations. Authoritarian states use force all the time. They use it at home to stay in power and abroad to expand that power. Thus, negotiations based on the use of force as a last resort abandons the playing field during negotiations to the most ruthless players. If those players can use force to change the conditions on the ground, they will negotiate until they achieve their objectives outside negotiations. Or they will gain concessions inside negotiations that match the dominance they have gained on the ground. Critics of President Obama faulted his Iran policy for precisely these reasons (Kroenig 2014). Iran continued to develop its nuclear program, test missiles and conduct aggressive operations throughout the Middle East while negotiations were underway. Meanwhile, Obama openly refrained from the use of force, expecting as he later said that the agreement itself would subsequently moderate Iran’s aggressive behavior (Nau 2015). The agreement that emerged, critics charged, favored Iran because its behavior during negotiations preempted more stringent provisions (such as banning rather than just restricting a uranium enrichment program, which was started during negotiations).

Conservative internationalists rely on force like realists but pursue more ambitious diplomatic objectives than realists. Realists preserve the status quo, conservative internationalists change it toward a more politically like-minded world of democracy. As Condoleezza Rice once put it, we seek “a balance of power that favors freedom” (Rice 2002). The way to spread freedom, however, is not through multilateral negotiations while refraining from the use of force, as liberal internationalists insist, but through “armed” diplomacy that secures incremental compromises weakening authoritarian regimes and strengthening democratic ones. As President Ronald Reagan said, the goal in the long run is: “we win; they lose.” He armed his diplomacy by building up defense capabilities,

launching the Strategic Defense Initiative, and deploying NATO intermediate range nuclear (INF) missiles in Europe. He then negotiated with the Soviet Union to eliminate INF missiles (rather than confirm the Soviet advantage that existed before negotiations) and invite the Soviet Union to join the global free market system (opening up and thereby weakening the Soviet statist economy) (Nau 2013, chapter 7).

TRUMP AND THE TRADITIONS

Where does Donald Trump stand in light of the four major foreign policy traditions? We take a look at four areas: NATO and Japan, Middle East and terrorism, trade and immigration, human rights and developing countries. At the end of his first term, Trump's worldview straddles the nationalist/realist divide. His realism is more nationalist and defensive than global and strategic, less ambitious than the world order pursued by Richard Nixon and Henry Kissinger (Schweller 2018; see also Walt 2018b; Sestanovich 2017).

NATO and Russia

Alliances may be the most crucial area for assessing Trump's foreign policy orientation. In this area Trump stakes out nationalist priorities combined with realist predispositions to preserve the status quo, a status quo that includes NATO and the Asian alliances as well as prospects for great power cooperation with Russia and China.

In his Inaugural Address, Trump laid out his nationalist North Star: "We will seek friendship and good will with the nations of the world, but we do so with the understanding that it is the right of all nations to put their own interests first. We do not seek to impose our way of life on anyone but rather to let it shine as an example" (Trump 2017a). In an earlier campaign speech, Trump was more graphic: "We will no longer surrender this country, or its people, to the false song of globalism. The nation-state remains the true foundation for happiness and harmony. I am skeptical of international unions that tie us up and bring America down, and will never enter America into any agreement that reduces our ability to control our own affairs" (Trump 2016a).

But there is nothing in these statements that Ronald Reagan or Margaret Thatcher would not endorse. The question is what this means for America's alliances and the defense of the free world in the twenty-first

century. Are NATO and the alliances with Japan and South Korea still in America's national interest?

Trump came into office declaring: "NATO in my opinion is obsolete because it's not covering terrorism...and also you have many countries that aren't paying their fair share" (Trump 2016b). But once in office, Trump said NATO was no longer obsolete (Shiffrinson 2017). He called for reforming not dismantling alliances.

While Trump thunders against NATO in words, he strengthens it in deeds. He increased US NATO spending by 40% for troop deployments on Russia's borders (Pellerin 2017); and he sharply increased not decreased US defense expenditures overall. Defense spending, after declining from 2010–2015, went up from \$586 billion in 2015 to \$716 billion in 2019 (and a projected \$750 billion in 2020—see Stein and Gregg 2019). These steps suggest no weakening of US alliance commitments either in NATO or around the world. Moreover, Trump accelerated the trend toward higher contributions by other NATO members. NATO Members agreed in 2014 to increase their defense budgets over the next decade from the then-current average of 1.42% of GDP to 2.0% of GDP. At the time, only three Members met the 2% target; by 2019 nine members did, and fifteen are on track to reach that level by 2024 (Lawler 2018; Kupchan 2019). Increases began under Obama in response to Russia's invasion of Ukraine but they accelerated under Trump. Unlike Obama who used liberal internationalist pressures to prod allies, Trump uses nationalist threats to abandon NATO as the only real leverage he has to save NATO.

The United States still accounts for 70% of all defense expenditures by NATO members even though it accounts for only 50% of NATO GDP. NATO members like to say that is because America is a world power. US military spending projects US power beyond Europe into Africa and the Middle East. True, but in Africa and the Middle East, Europe too has primary security interests. These regions are much closer to Europe than the United States. Until the allies acknowledge that they too are now world powers and assume proportionate burdens to that end, NATO may indeed fail. Yet it will not fail because of Trump. The German cabinet decided in 2019 to keep defense spending as low as 1.25% of GDP for the next five years. As Walter Russell Mead concludes, "Berlin is thumbing its nose not only at Donald Trump but at the U.S." (Mead 2019). In the short term Trump is giving the NATO allies the benefit of the doubt. He is encouraging the allies to do more while the United

States does the same. In the longer run, he is sending the Europeans a clear nationalist message. “What Mr. Trump is making clear,” former Australian Prime Minister Tony Abbott points out, “is what should always have been screamingly obvious: that each nation’s safety now rests in its own hands far more than in anyone else’s” (Abbott 2018).

There is no evidence that Trump’s NATO policy has weakened the West’s position with Russia. In contrast to Obama, who bent over backwards to reset relations with Moscow—scuttling NATO missile defense systems in eastern Europe and famously promising Putin he would be more flexible after the 2012 elections—Trump has managed constructive relations with Russia despite preposterous charges that he was an agent of Moscow (on Obama, see Kaufman 2016; Singh 2016). On the one hand, he has been tough, much tougher than Obama. He endorsed the placement of NATO, including US, forces on the borders of Russia for the first time since the end of the Cold War (four battalions in Poland and the Baltic states), a step that Obama supported but only after he had withdrawn in 2013, a year before Russia invaded Ukraine, the last of America’s armored combat units from NATO (Vandiver 2013). Trump authorized the sale of lethal weapons to the Ukraine government in Kiev to raise the costs of further Russian aggression, which Obama refused to do. Under Trump, US forces confronted Russian mercenary forces in Syria killing several hundred of them while Obama deferred to Russia in Syria embracing Moscow’s help to remove some chemical weapons. And Trump imposed sanctions on European firms to stop the construction of the Nord Stream 2 gas pipeline to supply Russian gas to European markets under the Baltic Sea, a step which Obama never seriously considered. On the other hand, even under the pressure of Moscow collusion charges, Trump kept open the possibility of cooperating with Russia—to manage ground and air conflicts with Russian forces in Syria, to update or abandon Cold War arms control agreements in Europe (INF and START), and to maintain logistical arrangements in central Asia for NATO forces in Afghanistan (Gurganas 2018). To be sure, Trump did nothing to challenge Russia’s intervention in Syria. But he inherited a bad hand. George W. Bush alienated Turkey by invading Iraq without Turkey’s support, and Obama looked the other way when Russia expanded its naval base and installed new air bases in Syria.

Asian Alliances and China

Trump has also defended alliances in the Pacific. His first meeting with a foreign leader after his election was with Japan's Prime Minister Shinzo Abe. Over the next two years, the two leaders met ten times personally and spoke thirty other times. (Crowley 2019). For Trump Japan is the ideal ally. It is not only expanding its military role (albeit still only 1% of GDP due to domestic political constraints), it is also solidly backing American policy toward China and North Korea. The one trouble spot that threatens alliances in Asia is a lingering brouhaha over history between Japan and South Korea.

Cleansed of tweets and erratic style, Trump's approach in Asia makes sense. The key target is China. Beijing aspires to great power status, which Trump is ready to concede, but does not want to play by great power rules, which Trump is unwilling to ignore. China's power, unlike that of the former Soviet Union, depends heavily on ties with western markets and technology. Trump exploits those ties to leverage China to decide: go your own way in which case you cannot expect future markets and investments from western powers, or accept binding and enforceable commitments in the global trading system and continue to prosper as a friendly economic and political rival.

North Korea and Taiwan are the pivot of US-China tensions. When Xi Jinping took power in 2012, he abruptly changed course. He abandoned China's "peaceful rise" under Hu Jintao and fortified islands in the South China Sea (Shambaugh 2016). US policy did not provoke this U-turn. Obama's pivot to Asia was a relatively weak response, under heavy pressure for US allies, to counter China's aggressiveness. For its own internal reasons, China chose a hard right turn, most likely to contain a burgeoning middle class emboldened by China's rapid rise in prosperity. China, Xi promised, would not let the world economy unravel the communist political system the way he believes it did the Soviet Union.

As a nationalist, Trump is not unsympathetic to China's dilemma. He repeats on multiple occasions that he admires China's policy to promote Chinese interests. That's what all nationalists do. Trump is not nuzzling up to tyrants. He is simply acknowledging that all countries, allies and adversaries, think and act like nationalists. The trick is to empathize with them, determine where national interests collide and overlap, and make deals. As Trump occasionally emphasizes, the United States clearly has more overlapping interests with allies than with adversaries. That's

why the democracies line up on one side of the geopolitical divide and China, Russia, and their clients North Korea and Syria on the other. Thus Trump's beef is less with the allies than with the internationalist thinking of his predecessors in the White House. Those predecessors discounted national interests in favor of global integration. They concluded deals that required more from America's soldiers and workers than from the soldiers and workers of other countries. They gave away too much and Trump is set about to right the balance.

On the other hand, Trump is not withdrawing from Asia. He is a realist and seeks to preserve the strategic status quo in Asia. That means nurturing the alliances with Japan and South Korea (and in the wider region with India and Australia), selling F-16 fighters to Taiwan (which he authorized in summer 2019), and encouraging China not to disrupt the status quo on the Korean peninsula or in global markets.

Thus, Trump's first move in Asia was to thwart North Korea's attempt to change the status quo by acquiring nuclear and missile capabilities that threatened South Korea, Japan, and eventually the American west coast. He rattled the cage of Kim Jung Un by maneuvering US naval forces along the peninsula and threatening fire and fury if "little rocket man" dared to light the fuse. Here again, he used force like a nationalist, blustering from strength ("my button is bigger than yours") but careful not to get America drawn into another distant war. He reinforced the alliance with South Korea and coaxed Seoul to complete the deployment of theater missile defenses. He then cultivated an unprecedented, not to say unorthodox, *pas de deux* with Kim Jung Un, respecting South Korea's right to play a lead role in this duet and urging China not to let Pyongyang endanger wider global stability. Talks resumed, an achievement in itself, but previous patterns of posturing persist.

Potentially, in this complicated balancing act, Trump may do some harm to the alliances, especially if he restricts alliance activities such as training exercises before obtaining firm and enforceable commitments from North Korea to denuclearize. South Korea pushes in this direction because, as a homeland matter, it values reconciliation with the North more highly than any other country. South Korea also tempts fate by repeatedly raising emotional issues that alienate Japan. Japan occupied South Korea; South Korea never occupied Japan. Japan should accept responsibility for that history, and South Korea should finally let that history go, the way France and Germany did in Europe. Korea cannot be stably reunited if it alienates China, and it cannot remain democratic

if it alienates Japan and the United States. In Asia, Trump confronts the limits of a nationalism that is not moderated by overlapping democratic values.

On balance, Trump's alliance policies appear rooted in the nationalist premise that every country must pay for its own defense and in the realist objective that the United States and its allies must defend the status quo in both Europe and Asia, a status quo that reflects the broad advances of democracy since the end of World War II. Except on occasion, as in his speech in Poland in 2017 (Trump 2017d), Trump does not talk much about the values of democracy and freedom. Nor does he pay homage to the multilateral institutions of the postwar liberal order. It might be better (I would prefer it, as a conservative internationalist, see Nau 2013) if he acknowledged that the spread of democracy and multilateral institutions after World War II created a far more comfortable political world for the United States than existed before. While there may be no need to expand that world at this stage, its existence makes US and alliance burdens much less onerous. But Trump, like Obama, has been inoculated by the Iraq and Afghanistan wars to steer clear of foreign military interventions particularly for the gauzy aim of promoting democracy. The American people have voted now in the last three presidential elections for less involvement abroad. And Trump is campaigning in a fourth to maintain that stance.

Middle East and Terrorism

In the Middle East, Trump's strategy is already more nationalist than realist. There are no broad alliances of democracies to defend and balancing power, Trump believes, is largely a local affair not requiring the permanent placement of large US troops in the region. America remains ready to intervene from offshore, as it did against ISIS, but the nationalist objective then is to demolish the adversary and get back out. The question is whether Israel and a ragtag group of Arab allies, led by Saudi Arabia, will suffice to hold the line against Syria, Russia, Turkey, and Iran.

Obama based his strategy in the Middle East on accommodating Iran's regional power ambitions, asking the Saudis to share the region with the Iranians, and anticipating that Iran would moderate its support of terrorism in the region if the western powers and Iran came to terms on Iran's nuclear program (Kaufman 2016; Nau 2015). By contrast, Trump pushed back against Iranian hegemony. Arguing that the nuclear

agreement did little to moderate Iranian behavior, he withdrew from the agreement and reimposed maximum sanctions on Teheran (Thiessen 2019). He then sought to piece together a coalition of local Arab powers to defeat ISIS, hold ground in eastern Syria where ISIS might reemerge, and prevent Iran from building land bridges (they already ship thousands of missiles by air) to supply extremist groups in southeastern Syria, Lebanon, and Gaza preparing for another war with Israel. The objective was to construct a local balance of power to deter terrorists and support Israel without deploying large numbers of American troops.

Trump's first foreign visit was to Riyadh, where he urged the Crown Prince to stop private Saudi funding of jihadists and work with other Arab countries principally the United Arab Emirates to control territory seized from ISIS. He rejected pressures to break with the Saudi regime over its involvement in the murder of a Saudi journalist, a move consistent with nationalist rather than internationalist logic, and resisted military pressures to put more US boots on the ground in Syria. He talked tough with Iran and coordinated with Great Britain to protect commercial shipping. But he did not retaliate when Iran shot down a sophisticated US military surveillance drone in the Strait of Hormuz. He negotiates with Turkey to untangle complicated relationships among terrorists, Kurdish forces, and Syrian militia on Turkey's border with Syria and Iraq. And he maintains efforts to "deconflict" incidents between US and Russian forces in southeastern Syria. Most importantly, he reaffirms support for Israel, his second stop after Riyadh in 2017, a relationship that Obama had significantly weakened. In summer 2019 he unveiled a Palestinian peace plan, focusing on economic development in the region, a nonstarter in the current environment dismissed instantly by Palestinian officials as an attempt at economic "bribery."

The strategy involves the sporadic use of force to display resolve and defeat terrorists. Trump bombed Syria twice to protest chemical weapons violations (which nevertheless continue). And he removed military restrictions imposed by Obama (for example, directly arming the YPG, a splinter Kurdish group that seeks independence from Turkey) and quickly cleaned out the remaining ISIS forces in Syria and Iraq that at one point occupied territory equal to that of Belgium. No small accomplishment, the victory over ISIS now sets the stage for the more serious challenge—keeping terrorism at bay, counterbalancing Iran, working with weak and divided Arab states in the region, and remaining a stalwart supporter of Israel, all

without putting large numbers of US troops on the ground again in the fashion of Iraq and Afghanistan (McGurk 2019).

The terrorist problems in Iraq and Afghanistan remain unresolved. Iran exerts undue influence in Iraqi affairs through the Islamic Revolutionary Guard Corps (IRGC) and Shiite militia in southern Iraq. The IRGC coordinates terrorist missile attacks against Israel in the Golan Heights. The Taliban and terrorist groups on the Pakistani border wage a seemingly endless war against the internationally supported government in Kabul and control roughly a third to one-half of the Afghan countryside. Peace talks between the United States, Taliban, and Kabul negotiators flash on and off. The focus is clearly counterterrorism not nation-building. The United States anticipates withdrawing most if not all of US and NATO forces in return for Taliban commitments to keep terrorists from training again to attack America or its allies. Trump hopes that the threat of offshore intervention will be enough to deter the Taliban.

In sum, Trump's policy in the Middle East already aims for an offshore balancing strategy. While US troops remain forward deployed in Europe and Asia, Trump is drawing them down, and perhaps out, in the Middle East. Small numbers may remain to facilitate intelligence and rapid reentry if necessary. But no trip wire alliance arrangements are likely; and Israel, the only mature democracy in the region, is capable of putting up a formidable defense on its own without direct support of American forces. The strategy may not work, but Trump should be given some credit for trying an alternative because Obama's strategy was not working either.

Trade and Immigration

Trump's nationalist tendencies are perhaps most unguarded in trade and immigration areas. He entertains mercantilist views that trade surpluses are good (China is winning) and trade deficits are bad (the United States is losing). He strongly prefers bilateral to multilateral agreements. And he is willing to deploy tariffs not only as leverage in trade negotiations but also to influence broader strategic objectives, such as Mexican cooperation on immigration.

For Trump, trade and immigration flows signal the worst effects of a globalization process spun out of control. The admission of China to the World Trade Organization was the major disrupter in trade. In the late-1990s China sent a negligible share of its exports to the United States. By 2018, it exported \$540 billion or 20% of its exports to

the United States (United States Census Bureau 2019). This dramatic and sudden escalation of China's presence in US and global markets rattled US labor markets and created the impression if not reality that China was overtaking the United States. When the Cold War ended in 1991, Japan was declared the winner because it exploited global markets without contributing much to western defense. When the financial crisis hit in 2008, China was declared the winner because it manipulated its currency and flooded US and global markets with its products, many of them produced by technology stolen from western firms. China's statist economy seemed to prosper while the global capitalist system floundered.

Add to these economic changes the advent of global terrorism and the shock of 9/11. The American people, already reeling under the onslaught of Chinese and other global exports, were called upon to fight two distant wars in Afghanistan and Iraq. They got little help from their allies. Indeed, France and Germany bitterly opposed the Iraq war and provided little more than token support to rebuild these war-torn countries. A bitterness mounted among the American public, resenting ungrateful allies and scorning an American establishment that dismissed their concerns as deplorable, xenophobic, or worse.

Trump was more in tune with these popular sentiments than anyone else. He summarized it well in his Inaugural Address: "For many decades, we've enriched foreign industry at the expense of American industry, subsidized the armies of other countries while allowing the sad depletion of our military. We've defended other nations' borders while refusing to defend our own. And spent trillions and trillions of dollars overseas while America's infrastructure has fallen into disrepair" (Trump 2017a).

He acted early to reverse these perceived injustices. He unleashed a cannonade of tariff wars and bilateral negotiations with America's trading partners. By 2019 he successfully renegotiated the United States–South Korean Free Trade Agreement and replaced the North American Free Trade Agreement (NAFTA) with the USMCA. By most accounts, both of these agreements are helpful updates of their predecessors (Whiting and Beaumont-Smith 2019). The USMCA improves the prospects of labor gains for the United States, particularly in the auto sector, requiring 75% of a product's components to be produced inside the three countries to qualify for zero tariffs, while improving US access to dairy markets in Canada and strengthening labor laws in Mexico. Both agreements have been ratified by Congress, and important tariff negotiations with Japan,

the European Union, the United Kingdom (after it officially leaves the EU), and China remain outstanding.

The China trade talks are the most critical. China's global firms are state-owned. Mining, shipping, and construction companies that backstop the Belt and Road Initiative—a trillion dollar plus Chinese government project to construct new land and sea highways between Chinese and global markets—make mega-billion dollar deals with foreign countries. If those deals go sour, China seizes the assets. In 2017 Sri Lanka handed over a commercial port to China which might now be used as a Chinese naval base (Reuters 2017). Giant telecommunications companies such as Huawei not only require foreign partners to give them their technology as the price for entering the Chinese market, they also sell products in global markets that then provide backdoor access for Chinese intelligence and military surveillance. Trump has decided that these links between Chinese firms and the Chinese government must become distinct and transparent or China's role in global markets must be curtailed. He has almost unanimous support for this approach both in Congress and among foreign allies. Thus, he has ratcheted up tariffs as high as 25% on half and potentially all of the Chinese goods. The United States has also placed high tech Chinese firms on so-called entity lists requiring them to apply for licenses to ship products to the United States. China has retaliated with tariffs and entity lists of its own.

Where do such tariff wars lead? Some analysts conclude that China will not give up meaningful government control of its key industries; others like Trump believe it might if the Chinese economy falters. A Phase 1 agreement was reached in early 2020. Then the covid-19 pandemic hit. Now the crunch point comes when and how the pandemic and current business cycle ends. Can China, whose economy is sagging, avoid or survive a prolonged global downturn? Can Trump survive both a pandemic and market crisis in the November 2020 elections? If the West hangs tough on the China challenge, western markets are likely to prove more robust than Chinese markets. Trump's instincts here are sound. At the G-7 summit in 2018 he challenged the allies not to raise tariffs but to reduce them to zero. Perhaps a bluff, the challenge nevertheless reveals a desire to disarm rather than rearm trade relations, similar to Ronald Reagan's approach to military armaments—build them up (NATO deployment of INF missiles in 1983) in order to build them down (US-Soviet INF Treaty in 1987 which reduced INF missiles to

zero). Nor is it evident that he spurns in practice multilateral agreements. Of the two major trade agreements he has concluded thus far, the most significant one, the USMCA, is multilateral.

From 1965 to 2015 the United States absorbed 59 million immigrants, legal and illegal (Pew Research Center 2015). In 2019, despite Trump's crackdown, immigrant flows were on track to top 2 million legal and illegal immigrants (Olson 2019). With ISIS on the run in Syria, refugees swelled in Europe and, through central America, on the US–Mexican border. Trump won the presidency with the promise to squelch illegal immigration and reform the legal immigration system. He made the construction of a wall on the US–Mexican border a signature issue of his presidency.

Trump attacks immigration as a nationalist. “A nation without borders,” he argues, “is not a nation at all” (Trump 2019). A border wall therefore is emblematic of nationhood. Most of the illegal immigrants do not come in over the border, of course. They come in through expired visas and chain migration of family members. Thus, while Trump touts the wall, he aggressively deports illegal immigrants and reduces as well as reforms legal immigration. Despite vitriolic domestic divisions, Trump may be making progress. He convinced Mexico, under threat of tariffs, to tighten control of its southern border with Guatemala. Caravan traffic and border crossings went down (Olson 2019), and immigration authorities accelerated deportation arrests.

Human Rights and Developing Countries

Trump is not much interested in the developing world. In general, he takes a strong nationalist view that countries should take care of themselves, fist and foremost. If they succeed, they can join the community of responsible nations; if they don't, they can languish in troubles of their own making. Foreign aid is not going to matter much, either way.

Trump exhibits few internationalist instincts, either liberal or conservative. He hails the United Nations but as a community of independent nations not as a design for collective decision-making or common values. He tells the General Assembly: “We do not expect diverse countries to share the same cultures, traditions, or even systems of government. But we do expect all nations to uphold these two core sovereign duties: to respect the interests of their own people and the rights of every other sovereign nation. This is the beautiful vision of this institution, and this is

foundation for cooperation and success.” “Strong, sovereign nations,” he adds, “let diverse countries with different values, different cultures, and different dreams not just coexist, but work side by side on the basis of mutual respect” (Trump 2017b). There is no pressure to push human rights or democracy.

Trump believes the United States went off track after the Cold War when it promoted democracy instead of stability. Talking at the Center for the National Interest (CNI) in April 2016, he said: “It all began with the dangerous idea that we could make Western democracies out of countries that had no experience or interest in becoming a Western Democracy.” “We are getting out of the nation-building business,” he reported, “and instead focusing on creating stability in the world” (Trump 2016a). When Trump talks about values, he does not consider them universal. Rather values are embedded in civilizations. In the same speech at CNI he said: “Instead of trying to spread ‘universal values’ that not everyone shares, we should understand that strengthening and promoting Western civilization and its accomplishments will do more to inspire positive reforms around the world than military interventions.” Then he echoed the famous nationalist dictum of John Quincy Adams: The world must know that “we go not abroad in search of monsters to destroy...”

In this respect, Trump reflects the nationalist creed of Teddy Roosevelt. Civilization is not one world but a variety of cultures that separates civilized peoples from barbarians. Today the barbarians are the radical Islamists. In Saudi Arabia, he said: “above all we must be united in pursuing the one goal that transcends every other consideration. That goal is to meet history’s great test—to conquer extremism and vanquish the forces of terrorism.” In Riyadh he endorsed the opening of “a new Global Center for Combating Extremist Ideology” which “represents a clear declaration that Muslim-majority countries must take the lead in combatting radicalization.” Muslim countries, he said, cannot wait for American power to crush this enemy for them: “The nations of The Middle East will have to decide what kind of future they want for themselves, for their countries, and for their children. It is a choice between two futures – and it is a choice America CANNOT (sic) make for you. A better future is only possible if your nations drive out the terrorists and extremists” (Trump 2017c).

CONCLUSION

Trump has been called a transactional president, interested in the deal and not the design or the destination of diplomacy. If that's the case, however, his transactions still represent one consistent premise, namely self-interest. In his business deals, it was all about the company's interest; and in his diplomatic deals, it is all about the national interest. Self-interest is without question a nationalist premise. America must take care of itself as all countries are obligated to do. If they don't, they cannot continue to expect others to defend them. A nation that does not take care of itself is not worthy of being taken care of by others. The first prerequisite of foreign or domestic policy, therefore, is national independence and strength. Trump puts the revival and vitality of the American economy first. It remains the bedrock of his nationalist orientation.

Trump builds on that nationalism to accept the world bequeathed to him by his predecessors. While he rants against globalization, he makes business deals (before he became president) in a global capitalist market and diplomatic deals (now that he is president) in a largely democratic world. Both contexts are significant. They constitute a world far different from 1945 that Trump is ready to defend. So far, this realist instinct keeps him engaged in the world. If he succeeds in rebalancing trade and security commitments, his nationalist/realist policies might offer a valuable course correction and sustain globalization far into the future. Better balanced trade may expand markets, as the new USMCA and China Phase 1 trade deals suggest. And more balanced alliances may target and safeguard the prospects for freedom where it counts the most, in Ukraine and on the Korean peninsula.

In the meantime, there are no guarantees, especially with Trump. He might become more nationalist and less realist. If allies in Europe and Asia do not step up and share greater leadership and burdens, he may bring American forces home. Realist pundits, who are now more nationalist than realist (because realists traditionally favored forward defense), increasingly advocate such withdrawal (Mearsheimer 2018; Walt 2018a; for my review of these books, see Nau 2019). Trade disputes may also push him in the nationalist direction. If balanced trade means less trade, the Cold War legacy of free trade may be at risk. And if US forces pull back to the western hemisphere and China and Russia succeed in undermining the confidence of democratic societies on their borders, the Cold War legacy of democracy may wither. The jungle of illiberal nationalism

that ravaged Europe in the early twentieth century may grow back (Kagan 2018).

To avoid this outcome, however, as much depends on what the allies do as what the United States does. The allies today are powerful and wealthy democracies. Germany and Japan have had 75 years to recover from the traumas of World War II. They are no longer semi-sovereign because they are untrustworthy in military affairs or middle powers because they have only regional not global interests. They are world powers and democratic states. They have to decide if they want to face the future with or without the United States. Does it matter to them whether their partners are democratic or not? Can open societies live next door to autocratic ones, as Europe and Japan do but the United States does not, without being divided and contaminated by authoritarian undercurrents? The allies have to decide: is Russian aggression in Ukraine and Chinese assertiveness in the Pacific a bigger threat to stability and values in their neighborhood than a more petulant and parsimonious American ally?

For the moment internationalists (like me) are on the sidelines. Too many of them are angry and blame Trump for destroying the liberal world order. They should take a deep breath and enjoy a victory lap instead. They can take credit for the unprecedented spread of democracy and markets after World War II (Nau 2011). And they should exhibit more faith in the durability of their legacy. They are wrong to see any effort to slow down and recalibrate globalization as an attack on free trade and the democratic peace. The political orientation of the world remains remarkably favorable from the point of view of democratic countries. And internationalists are also wrong to identify populism with illiberalism. The populist movement in Europe, Asia, and the United States is not antidemocratic (Mead 2017). It is in fact a democratic check on cosmopolitan elites at home and in international institutions who value their own expertise more than their accountability to democratic nations. It is stunning that after seventy-five years, not one international institution elects its top officials. That includes the European Union. Why doesn't it occur to cosmopolitan elites that this may be the principal threat to the liberal order, not populist parties pushing back against exploding trade and immigration?

Trump is hard to decipher and his bombastic style makes it even harder (Hanson 2019; Laderman and Simms 2017). But on the basis of what he represents and does, he is acting not only in an understandable way but a way that may salvage the liberal international order and conserve

the democratic peace for decades to come. Instead of acting outside the foreign policy traditions of the United States, he is counterbalancing an internationalist tradition that became a bit too obsessed with its own success. He is reasserting a more nationalist and realist tradition that potentially conserves the world of free nations to advance the cause of freedom again at a later time.

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CHAPTER 4

The Trump Doctrine and the Institutions of the Liberal International Order

James Jay Carafano

When history looks back on the presidency of Donald John Trump the consensus view could well be that his appreciation of the international order fits comfortably within the traditional Republican attitudes that have prevailed since the middle of the 1950s.

Trumpian rhetoric distorts contemporary appreciations of his presidency. In this policy area, the actions of the White House so far are not only unremarkable, arguably they are beneficial to the sustainment of global peace and stability.

There is a cottage industry debating what constitutes the liberal world order (for example, see Kundnani 2017). For this essay, the concept broadly refers to institutions intended to establish norms moderating how nations seek to protect and advance their self-interests.

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SUPPORT FOR THE LIBERAL INTERNATIONAL ORDER: THE PAST REALLY IS PROLOGUE

A balanced assessment of contemporary US policy requires context. Over the course of the twentieth century, supporting the role of institutions serving the liberal international order has become a fixture of American foreign policy. Though a general consensus among US policy elites has emerged over time, the spectrum of mainstream views is broad. That is an important framework to understand when attempting to conceptualize how the Trump administration fits into traditional American views of statecraft. Fair point.

The conception of modern institutions as instruments for structuring international affairs and moderating the behavior of states emerged in the early twentieth century, though antecedents predate the turn of the century. The mediation and arbitration movement emerged out of Geneva, Switzerland in the mid-nineteenth century focused on adapting international law and organizations to resolve disputes. The effort culminated in the Permanent Court of Arbitration established in 1899 by the first Hague Peace Conference.

While American voices interested in alternatives to consensual treaties as a means for resolving disputes were not absent in international discourse, in the new century they became more prominent as America emerged as a significant industrial and global power. For instance, when Andrew Carnegie retired from business in 1901, he directed vast portions of his wealth toward philanthropic endeavors, including the movement to establish a system of binding arbitration to supplant interstate conflict. Carnegie helped fund the Peace Palace in The Hague which would eventually house the Permanent Court of Arbitration. Carnegie also sponsored scholarly work and lobbied the US government to accept binding treaties of arbitration as American policy.

Arguably, despite the efforts of Carnegie and others, American mainstream foreign policy remained decidedly realist. World politics were governed by states vying for power and security. The only real constraint on the exercise of their will was their capacity to wield power to protect or further their interests.

The unprecedented devastation of World War I changed everything, creating a crisis of confidence in the realist framework that had underpinned the global order. President Woodrow Wilson's proposal to introduce international organizations into the structure of post-World War

I governance revolutionized the American conception of global diplomacy. Though Wilson failed to achieve Congressional ratification for US entry into the League of Nations (established in 1918), his efforts mainstreamed structuralism in US foreign-policy discourse. Structuralism held that “structures” could be established that would impose norms mediating the behavior of states, creating a less chaotic international system.

The Origins of America First

The increasing integration of structuralism into US foreign policy followed anything but a linear path. Prior to the outbreak of World War II there was a significant backlash against integrating the United States into global institutions, principally out of fear that America would be drawn into the deepening disputes in Europe. The most notable expression of this movement was the America First Movement. Celebrated leader of the movement Charles Lindbergh, the America First Committee, and a cadre of noninterventionist leaders in Congress spearheaded the political defense of the United States’s stance of neutrality in the war right up until the eve of the Japanese attack on Pearl Harbor (see Carafano 2016).

Like any mass political movement, America First was an amalgamation of groups and fellow travelers who sometimes shared little more in common than an opposition to America’s entry into the war. The ranks of the antiwar movement included pacifists and communists (at least until Germany attacked the Soviet Union in 1941), wild-haired liberals, straight-laced conservatives, and everything in between.

While the America First crowd was a fractious coalition, it was hardly a fringe political movement. Right up to the US entry into World War II, the majority of Americans supported the group’s basic aim. Even as war looked more likely, Lindbergh argued it was not what Americans wanted. “The pall of the war seems to hang over us today. More and more people are simply giving into it. Many say we are as good as in already. The attitude of the country seems to waver back and forth,” he wrote in his diary on January 6, 1941. “Our greatest hope lies in the fact [that] eighty-five percent of the people in the United States (according to the latest polls) are against intervention.” Until the day after Pearl Harbor, many Americans sided with Lindbergh.

Most importantly, the core of the America First movement was not ideologically isolationist or antimilitary. Lindbergh, in particular, based his

opposition to the war on a strategic assessment of how best to weather the great storm. In fact, he wanted a significant American military build-up. An expert in airpower, he believed that a combination of beefed-up air defense and a robust strategic bomber force could keep the enemy at bay.

Lindbergh was, at his core, a strategic realist. To be fair, not every segment of the movement was. Nevertheless, the popular movement reflected the deep skepticism that structural solutions were adequate for maintaining peace and stability. The League of Nations was held as a poster child for the inadequacy of multinational institutions. Doubts about their efficacy were decidedly mainstream in America.

The biggest problem with the anti-interventionists' case wasn't the vitriolic rhetoric, but the way the war evolved; it undercut the strategic rationale of Lindbergh's vision of continental defense. By 1941, Lindbergh's argument was on demonstrably shaky ground. Months before Pearl Harbor, it was becoming quite apparent that, if the United States had to fight against multiple foes without any major allies, even just defending the Western hemisphere or the continental United States (options favored by anti-interventionists like Lindbergh) was increasingly impractical. Serious military planners in the services had already discounted such options. In the end what undid the America First movement was a triumph of geostrategic realism. The United States had no practical options for defending itself on the world stage.

America First quickly waned as a mainstream political movement. Many of its leaders, including Lindbergh, in the end supported the war effort. And, while the League may have failed to prevent the outbreak of World War II, the effort inspired the construction of new world organizations after the Second World War.

FDR and the Rise of the Liberal International Order

US President Franklin Delano Roosevelt (FDR) stood out as an enthusiastic proponent for international structures as a component of postwar reconstruction. Yet, it might be too much to argue he directly followed in Wilson's footsteps. Though Roosevelt served in the Wilson administration and shared his progressive ideology, particularly on domestic affairs, his conception of the role of international organizations was more nuanced. Roosevelt tried to reconcile realist and structuralist world views with his experiences as a political leader in global war.

Roosevelt's most pressing challenge was coping with policy toward the Soviet Union. While the Soviets had been staunch allies during the war, the prospects for *détente* after the conflict were tenuous at best. Though the president never fully articulated his personal vision, his ideas have been described as a conception of open spheres. The great powers would legitimately maintain spheres of influence where they would exercise diplomatic, military and economic dominance. This was a decidedly realist, as opposed to structuralist, notion.

But Roosevelt's expectation was that the spheres would "open," allowing for the free exchange of goods, peoples, services, and ideas. The interchange would enhance trust and confidence building toward sustained bridges that would create alternative paths to ameliorating conflicts and differences. Further, Roosevelt looked to establish international organizations, chief among them the United Nations, which would create routinized structures for establishing and managing global norms. Through the participation of the great powers in the management of the organization he expected to overcome the weaknesses inherent in the now moribund League of Nations. This component of the president's future vision clearly drew from the progressive conception of the administrative state that aligned more closely with a structuralist conception of foreign policy.

FDR believed he could attract realists to his vision, because the open order he envisioned was "liberal." Reflecting the Atlantic Charter, the August 1941 declaration of joint US–British war aims, the postwar liberal order would commit to advancing democracy, free markets and human rights, objectives that would protect the interests of the state by advancing a more peaceful and prosperous international environment. The feasibility of Roosevelt's open spheres policy aside, his conception blended elements of traditional realist thinking with structuralist aspirations. This approach evolved into an orthodoxy of American statecraft.

While the American envisioning of the postwar international order enjoyed widespread support both in the United States and with its allies and strategic partners, the view never represented a complete consensus—not even in the West. For example, Charles DeGaulle, while President of the French Republic (1959–1969) harbored deep reservations about the conception of liberal international order. In particular, he was skeptical of the intertwining of American leadership with international and multinational organizations. DeGaulle consciously sought means to preserve the independence of France's international role. As the Cold War roiled,

for instance, he looked to establish détente with the Soviet Union, while keeping France a reserved but continuous member of the transatlantic community.

In addition, during this same period the global nonaligned movement emerged following the 1955 Bandung Conference. Although many nonaligned countries actually aligned with sides during the Cold War and participated in numerous multinational and international organizations, the existence of the movement reflected there was anything but universal consensus over whether there was a legitimate liberal international order or what such an order should represent.

These divisions were not only global. They were also reflected in American politics. Notably a powerful wing of the Republican Party remained skeptical of integrating US power with frameworks of efforts to establish global governance. The most notable leader among the reluctant internationalist was the powerful Republican Senator Robert Taft from Ohio who opposed the UN (1945) and US participation in the North Atlantic Treaty Organization NATO (1949).

Nor were views on international organizations the province of particular political parties. Pre-war isolationist, Michigan Republican Senator Arthur Vandenberg supported FDR in his efforts to forge postwar bipartisan foreign policy. “Blue-Dog” Southern Democratic politicians aligned with many conservative Republicans on domestic issues. On foreign affairs, however, most were internationalists. Further while Republicans were generally adverse to structural elements of global governance in the 1950s, the Republican Party of the 1960s grew far more diverse. The Republican 1968 Convention Platform, for instance, included a strong endorsement of the UN and proposed the United States be brought under jurisdiction of the International Criminal Court.

Presidents and the Liberal International Order: Reagan to Obama

Under Ronald Reagan’s presidency, Republican foreign policy was dominated by more conservative voices skeptical of international organizations and concerned that these organizations could be undermining US sovereignty. Reagan did not envision abandoning the UN. Nevertheless, many US policies were highly critical of the organization’s policies and practices. They were championed by his appointee as UN ambassador, Jeane Kirkpatrick, a staunch neoconservative, who considered the assembly “a dangerous place” (Finger 1984).

However, Reagan's policies did not revolutionize American statecraft in regard to the institutions that evolved after World War II. In the end, "Ronald Reagan has come full circle in his opinion of the United Nations," Lou Cannon wrote for the *Washington Post* in 1988, "which he once admired, then opposed and now appreciates as a constructive force in a dangerous world" (Cannon 1988). Indeed, at the end of Reagan's term the United States began to pay its arrears in UN dues. In addition, from the onset of his presidency Reagan embraced collective security and strongly supported NATO.

When George H. W. Bush followed Reagan to the presidency, he confronted a rapidly changing geostrategic environment.¹ He tried to address the collapse of the Soviet Union within the context of a traditional approach to American statecraft that included a reliance on the instruments of the liberal world order, albeit in a more constrained and modest manner than is popularly remembered.

President Bush's embrace of structuralist solutions for global order is often linked to his 1989 address in Mainz, Germany when he called for a "Europe whole and free," an apparent endorsement not just of German unification, but the larger European integration project.

Bush's Mainz address presaged his September 11, 1990 speech to a joint session of the US Congress when he introduced the proposal of a "new world order...a new era—freer from the threat of terror, stronger in the pursuit of justice, and more secure in the quest for peace. An era in which the nations of the world, East and West, North and South, can prosper and live in harmony." In many ways, the Europe whole and free speech was the first draft of this broader geostrategic formulation.

Though his language was grand and even utopian, Bush's "New World Order" was actually in conception not an "order" and certainly not a vision of global governance through international institutions. Rather, Bush's objectives were more limited, laying the groundwork for a soft landing for the collapse of the Soviet Empire. Chief among the concerns in Washington was the question of the role America would play in determining the governance of the post-Soviet space.

Washington's answers were reasonable and wholly unremarkable—the United States looked for the clearest path to stability as quickly as

¹The section on Bush's conception of the New World Order was adapted from James Jay Carafano, "Democracies Journey East Continues," in *A Europe Whole and Free*, Polish Institute of International Affairs, Warsaw, forthcoming.

possible. Here, there was no practical option other than the reunification of Germany and the gradual reintegration of Central Europe into the European Union and NATO. Moscow could barely manage its homeland. Leaving Central Europe to navigate through the chaos of the post-Soviet era without a guiding lifeline made no sense. Bush's speech signaled the United States would provide one. Democracy marched east and with it NATO enlargement and an emphasis on good governance and Western "norms" of international behavior.

Bush's primary goals of peace and stability were reflected in his well-intentioned but disastrous August 1991 "Chicken Kiev" speech that he delivered in Ukraine. The president dampened rather than encouraging the country's shift toward Europe and away from the Russian Federation. Many critics pointed out the obvious. A Europe whole and free that didn't include space for all of Europe to be free didn't sound very whole. The speech was a decidedly illiberal note in the chorus calling for expanding the liberal international order.

Rather, the president's Ukraine speech reflected the modest ambitions of the New World Order. His vision was constrained in other ways as well. Nowhere, for example, in the Mainz, Germany speech of two years earlier did Bush mention the European Union as the end state for new Europe. On the other hand, throughout his presidency he did emphasize the centrality of NATO and the transatlantic community. Bush's policies reflected a willingness to use structuralist institutions, so long as they worked toward his narrower strategic objectives—an element of continuity that threaded through previous and subsequent presidencies.

While there were predictions that the end of the Cold War and the collapse of the Soviet Union would gradually lead to a world managed by international norms following democratic principles, the result was anything but. Nevertheless, the post-World War II institutions of the liberal world order continued to play significant roles in maintaining global peace and stability. Most notably, the United States continued its commitments to NATO, including supporting a controversial and trying war for the liberation of Kosovo (1999) under President William J. Clinton.

In a further demonstration of solidarity with international organizations, Clinton signed the Rome Statute under which the United States would formally join the International Criminal Court (ICC). Clinton, however, did not submit the agreement to the US Senate for ratification. The United States did not participate in the court.

When Republicans returned to the presidency under George W. Bush in 2001, many similarities could be found between his administration's approach to international organizations and Reagan era policies. On the one hand, in 2005 Bush appointed UN-skeptic and neoconservative scholar John Bolton as UN ambassador. Further, the United States took aggressive policies toward the assembly including boycotting the Human Rights Council for three years. The United States also reversed some Clinton-era policies. Bush, for example unsigned the United States from the Rome Statute, declaring the United States had no intention of joining the ICC.

On the other hand, Bush did not entirely eschew international organizations. The administration, for example, was keen to obtain UN authorization for the military intervention in Iraq, demonstrating the Bush team recognized the legitimacy that endorsement would provide.

The Obama administration was much less restrained in embracing international forums and compacts. Most notably, where the Bush administration used its influence at the UN to scuttle efforts to criticize Israel, a key strategic ally, in contrast the Obama administration allowed resolutions to pass without US objection and in some instances supported the anti-Israeli lobby position at the UN. The administration also assiduously tried to address arrears in US dues for peacekeeping dues. All these efforts demonstrated an intent to reinforce US commitment to the international institutions.

Meanwhile, neither the Bush nor Obama administrations wavered from their commitments to collective security. Although the US force structure in Europe declined, this reflected the shifting of concern away from the Russian threat to Europe and toward other threats, not any loss of faith in the transatlantic security partnership. Most notable, both administrations remained steadfast in their commitment to NATO enlargement.

While both were staunch supporters of collective security, Bush and Obama also continued to emphasize the importance of burden sharing, a consistent theme of American administrations going back to the Eisenhower era. In 2014, for example, over a year before Trump made defense spending by NATO countries a high-profile campaign issue, President Obama declared "every NATO member has to do its fair share." The call for burden sharing, while also emphasizing the benefits and stability provided by collective security, reflected the intertwining of realist and structuralist impulses present in both Democratic and Republican presidencies.

THE WORLD ACCORDING TO TRUMP

The confusion and consternation over how Trump's elevation to the presidency would impact America's commitment to the liberal international order was understandable. Before Trump, American presidents over the last half-century consistently tried to balance national interests with support for transnational institutions that contributed to global stability, though they differed in where exactly they struck that balance along the realist–structuralist spectrum. They fit within the mainstream of American statecraft. There were, however, other voices in American politics: voices of staunch isolationists like the conservative commentator, presidential advisor and three-time presidential candidate Pat Buchanan; neoconservatives like John Bolton, the recent US National Security advisor who advocated a muscular realism as the best means to protect American interests; and others like Robert Kagan who in his recent book *The Jungle Grows Back: America and Our Imperiled World* (2019) made an impassioned plea for American leadership of a waning liberal world order.

With virtually no track record on foreign policy and international relations, Trump was the undecipherable cipher of global politics. Interpreting Trump was complicated by his completely unconventional approach toward statecraft both as a candidate and as a president. Unpacking the way Trump is interpreted is important. Misunderstanding Trump clouds any attempt to place him in the spectrum of past presidents' conception of the liberal world order and the United States's place in that order.

Both rhetoric and action define statecraft—and in the end, words are only the handmaiden of governance, not its mistress. History remembers Reagan's historic 1987 foreign-policy demand: "Tear down this wall." It still resonates, not so much because it was a great line, but because the words were backed by action. Pushing back against the Soviet Union was a core tenet of Reagan's foreign policy.

While analysis of traditional leaders recognizes the essential need to assess both words and deeds in evaluating policies, that requirement seems lost when it comes to deciphering President Trump. Even with three plus years of a "track record" on foreign policy the tendency is often to give prominence to presidential rhetoric, and even more pointedly to cherry-pick which particular phrase, tweet, or comment contains the most merit. For insistence, critics often harp on critical statements the president

has made of NATO and ignored reassuring statements Trump has made supportive of the alliance.

The Idea of America First

Further complicating an understanding Trump was his adoption of the “America First” moniker during the presidential campaign. Many critics automatically associated the label with Lindbergh’s antiwar movement—and, in particular, with the caricature of the movement as isolationist. That said, over the course of the long campaign Trump did little to explain what he actually meant by the term. The candidate spent scant time on the campaign trail laying out a fulsome security and foreign-policy agenda. That created no little uncertainty.

Inevitably, many developed their own interpretations. “Whatever you think of Trump’s interpretation of ‘America First’ what interests me as a historian is his use of this particular phrase to summarize his views,” wrote David Stebenne (2016), professor at The Ohio State University “[t]he main reason in this instance was because ‘America First’.... chosen as a name by leading isolationists for an organization they created to lobby against American entry into World War II.” Stebenne was, at the time, one of many to draw the analogy between the antiwar movement and Trump’s attitude toward foreign and security affairs. He warned that regardless of what the candidate intended, the term would invoke memories of “a revived form of American isolationism (with respect to security and trade policies) or, even worse, anti-foreign sentiment in general.” While that is the legacy of Lindbergh’s America First movement, the actual history, as noted, is more complicated.

The rapid dissolution of the original America First movement reflected that it was not a doctrine, but a creature of a moment in American politics. Its ambivalent legacy makes a bad precedent for understanding much more than the popular opinions of its time. Other than borrowing the words “America” and “First,” and the coincidence of a shared notion that the government’s first obligation is to put the vital interests of America first, the movement tells us virtually nothing about the roots of Trumpian statecraft. Lindbergh’s America First Movement is the wrong past to look at for understanding the future of Trump’s America First.

Yet, many continue to view the Trump presidency through this paradigm. Well into his presidency confusion persists. Recently, “America

First” has been described as “America alone.” Others refute this description (see Glasser 2018; Long 2018). In practice, however, the term probably meant little more than another campaign slogan.

Trump, who announced he was running for president on June 16, 2015, was well into his campaign for the nomination of the Republican Party as their candidate for the president of the United States, when he first rolled out “America First,” as the descriptor of his foreign policy. One report of an April 27, 2016 campaign address noted:

“America first will be the overriding theme of my administration,” Trump said in his remarks at Washington’s Mayflower Hotel, delivered from a prepared text and in a subdued fashion starkly at odds with the free-wheeling rhetorical style that has powered his political rise on the campaign trail. “Under a Trump administration, no American citizen will ever again feel that their needs come second to the citizens of foreign countries,” Trump said. He added, “My foreign policy will always put the interests of the American people and American security first.” (Collinson and Diamond 2016)

Trump did not use the term again, or make a major foreign policy address until well after he garnered enough convention delegates in the Republican primaries to secure the party’s nomination.

On May 26, 2016, Trump was established as the presumptive Republican nominee for US presidency. He did not mention the term again in a campaign speech until June 7. On June 14, 2016, he marked “Flag Day” in the United States by tweeting the tag line “AMERICA First!” on Twitter. A week later, on June 22, 2016, candidate Trump talked about the slogan during a campaign address in New York. After that, the term became a ubiquitous part of the campaign, though there was never any additional clarity in exactly what the slogan implied for a future Trump foreign policy, reinforcing the conclusion that it was little more than what the president intended—campaign rhetoric.

On many foreign-policy topics—from the future of NATO to dealing with Putin—there were no hard and fast promises made during the campaign or, unsurprisingly, in the first flurry of executive orders spewing from the administration in the first few weeks of the new presidency. These issues crop up mostly in tweets, offhand comments, interviews, and many leaks. They were further exacerbated by forays of public diplomacy that left many bewildered over the course of US policy, including

Trump's first speech to the general assembly at the UN, a puzzling press conference following a summit with Russian President Vladimir Putin, and a contentious European trip including a fractious meeting of NATO leaders.

While the rhetoric of Trump isn't particularly helpful in understanding his world views or presidential policies in regards to international institutions and the global order, there are readily available clues that better suggest where this president fits on the spectrum of modern presidents.

Trump and Reagan's America

A far better bellwether for understanding the origins of the Trump approach to foreign and security policy is the presidency of Ronald Reagan. Reagan was a standard-bearer of modern American Republican foreign policy. Trump saw Reagan as a model for the kind of leader he wanted to be on the world stage.

In the mid-1980s, Trump came to prominence as real-estate developer and businessman. Among his most high-profile achievements, the reconstruction of the dilapidated Wollman Rink in New York City's Central Park was taking over. Trump rebuilt the ice rink on time and under budget, promoting the project as a symbol of his "can-do" leadership style. The Trump presidential campaign highlighted the story during the primaries and at the Republican National Convention in Cleveland, Ohio, projecting the image of a practical results-oriented leader.

In the 1980s, as Trump was establishing his own national identity, the national leader at the time who matched Trump's self-image was Ronald Reagan. Reagan was at the mid-point of his second term as president. On April 15, 1986, President Reagan directed the United States to launch a series of airstrikes against Libya in retaliation for a terrorist attack at a Berlin discothèque targeting American servicemen. The incident was illustrative of Reagan's "peace through strength" approach to foreign and security policy, demonstrating his willingness to protect US interests, and show strength, but not become deeply engaged in protracted wars or debilitating commitments. Reagan's mantra of "peace through strength," appealed to Trump. Trump used the dictum as the centerpiece of his only major speech on defense policy during the campaign.

Trump's adoption of peace through strength also suggests where the president's worldview fits in the pantheon of international relations theories. President Reagan's "peace through strength" approach has been

described as “defensive realism,” a conservative, but mainstream view common in Republican circles. National power was the principal instrument for protecting vital national interests. Reagan did not embrace an overly aggressive use of force to drive policy outcomes. Rather, his conviction was to demonstrate enough willingness to use power to protect vital interests. This particular model attracted Trump as he was, in a sense, coming of age in thinking about the role of the impactful strategic leader, all at a time Reagan was demonstrating real impact on the global stage—something that Trump could both admire and later emulate.

This model of international relations did not specifically reject instruments of the global order as part of the practice of protecting American interests. Indeed, as noted above, in the later years of the Reagan presidency the administration was not averse to strengthening its relations with the UN.

The influence of Reagan is clearly reflected in Trump’s National Security Strategy. Administration officials have referred to this concept as “principled realism.” Notably, the Trump approach does not seem sympathetic with either the views of ardent American isolationists like Pat Buchanan or the proactively muscular realism of John Bolton.

The Trump administration sees its approach to foreign affairs as more mainstream, midway between Bush and Obama, and reflecting a distinctly different but responsible view of world politics. The Bush administration approach has been described as “offensive realism” or “neo-conservatism.” Trump rejected this approach as overly muscular in asserting US interests. Likewise, he rejected what Trump described as the Obama administration’s attempt to withdraw from the world stage, a structuralist course of “leading from behind” that assumed the rules-based order could substitute for American power in protecting America’s interest. Trump wants to lean forward and protect America’s interests, but he has no interest in remaking the world order.

Trump’s Doctrine

This view of Trump is more sophisticated than the caricatures of “America First.” Arguably, he is closest to Reagan in his worldview, which definitely makes him more skeptical of the instruments of the liberal international order than some presidents, but still places within the mainstream of modern statesmen that was outlined above.

Nevertheless, Trump is not Reagan. He has an approach to global politics all his own. While Trump's worldview may be conventional, his manner of employing statecraft is uniquely Trumpian. Several characteristics of how Trump employs American power shape Trump's doctrine.

Strategic Communications. There is little question that the president views strategic communications as an important tool in advancing his policies. Yet, Trump appears to have little interest in promoting a grand strategic narrative. In contrast, Reagan famously used his rhetoric to frame the struggle between the United States and the Soviet Union as a battle between good and evil. Trump uses the voice of the presidency for a variety of near-term tactical purposes, including intentional gibes to drive the news cycle. Trump uses the pulpit of the presidency in this manner in part because he believes he is very good at it; in part because he believes it is effective; and in part because he believes he has to—it is his primary means to combat a hostile media and critics.

It is seldom recognized, but Trump can be very disciplined in his seemingly “random” tweets and public comments. For instance, in August 2017 the president announced a new policy on Afghanistan. Part of that strategy demanded significant changes from Pakistan. The US gave the Pakistanis a firm timeline for implementing them. When they missed the New Year's deadline, Trump called them out in his first tweet of 2018. The tweet was not an impulsive act, but a deliberate choice to send Islamabad a high-profile message. The example is illustrative. Since Trump uses his public utterances for a variety of tactical purposes, the remarks can only be appreciated by understanding the context of the remarks, the intended audience and their purpose.

Deal-making. It is not surprising that Trump likes to make deals. Indeed, at one time or another with every major strategic competitor, the president has offered the prospect of negotiation. Even in his major address, withdrawing from The Joint Comprehensive Plan of Action (JCPOA), Trump finished the speech offering Iran the prospects of further negotiations.

It would, however, be incorrect to view Trump's foreign policy as purely transactional and deal oriented. While dollars and cents might have been the metric by which Trump measured his business decisions, foreign and security policy are different. In matters of state, he judges deals against US vital interests.

An example of Trump's attitude toward deal-making was clearly apparent in negotiations with North Korea over its nuclear program.

When the DPRK signaled reluctance to discuss complete and verifiable denuclearization, a key US objective, Trump sent the North Korean leader a letter canceling the proposed summit. When the talks were reinstated, the administration not only made its objectives clear, but also set the expectation that there would be benefits for the DPRK regime as well. Thus, the art of the Trump deal is that US vital interests had to be unequivocally protected, but also that a deal was not truly sustainable unless the other party received tangible benefits as well—and as long as those benefits did not represent a threat to US vital interests, a deal could be done.

Risk-taking. Managing risk is an important attribute of Trump's approach to foreign affairs. He is more than willing to challenge conventionality if it is not delivering results, so long as the proposed alternative action does not incur undue risks.

The best example of informed risk-taking was the administration's decision to relocate the US embassy in Israel from Tel Aviv to Jerusalem. The president was repeatedly advised against the move. Conventional wisdom held that relocating the embassy would imperil the peace process, enflame the Arab street and turn the Arab states against the United States. Trump determined that the peace process was already going nowhere. The White House also believed that threats of an intense Arab reaction were overstated. In the end, the president concluded it was worth taking a prudent risk and doing something different. The generally muted response to this initiative seems to justify his initial risk assessment.

Activism. Trump's policies are anything but passive or isolationist. If anything, the president seems to have an inexhaustible capacity to move on multiple tracks simultaneously. Now that he has been president for several years; made all the big policy decisions; met all the key world leaders; and had all the high-level intelligence briefings, he seems adamant to put US policy on "Trump time," implementing and executing at a much faster pace—and overwhelming his competitors with a blitzkrieg of activity.

No area of American policy more reflects Trump's readiness to move on multiple fronts than his management of the strategic relationship with China. The United States has been active across the breadth of diplomatic, economic, and security linkages at the same time. Washington is, for example, imposing economic sanctions; pressing Beijing on the South China Sea; enhancing its engagement with Taiwan; and attempting to resolve the North Korea nuclear issue all at once. Further, the United

States has seemed reluctant to link any of these issues with one another in dealing with the Chinese government.

Dealing with Authoritarian Regimes. One frequent criticism of President Trump is that he favors authoritarian regimes. This critique is particularly relevant to assessing the administration's attitude toward the liberal order, since by definition the order is meant to promote more liberal states in the international system by defining, policing, and disciplining norms of behavior.

On the one hand, the Trump administration has been criticized for lack of vocal democracy promotion and failure to emphasize human rights issues. On the other, the president has been disparaged for complimenting dictatorial rulers, including Putin and North Korean strongman Kim Jong-un; embracing right-wing populists in Europe; and maintaining uncritical relations with authoritarian regimes including Saudi Arabia, Egypt, and Turkey.

Arguably, the administration's track record is far more nuanced than these criticisms. This administration has, for example, been very active in its support on religious liberty and persecution issues. The United States is the lead donor in dealing with the Rohingya refugee crisis. The administration has been assiduously pressing on authoritarian regimes in Venezuela and Iran.

What this eclectic mix of policy positions demonstrates is that Trump takes a decidedly realist approach to balancing values and interests in foreign policy. The president believes the first duty of government is to defend the vital interests of the state. The demands of defense and national security frequently require doing business with authoritarian governments. Further, out of respect for the sovereignty of other nations (and because of the practical limitations in intervention and nation-building), Trump reflects a realist's natural reluctance to interfere in the affairs of other countries and skepticism regarding doctrines like "right to protect" that would supersede the authority of states and require nations to act like the world's policeman rather than pursue national interests as a priority.

Trade Policy. No aspect of the Trump doctrine is more unconventional than the president's approach to trade. In no other aspect of the president's agenda does he depart from Republican orthodoxy. Further, it is perhaps the one aspect of foreign policy where the president acts in a truly transactional manner with competitors as well as friends and allies alike.

In short, the president's interpretation of free trade is that he is free to try to negotiate the most favorable trade deal he can for American workers.

The US president is myopically focused on US economic growth and, more specifically in lower- and middle-class wage growth. Trump believes that jump-starting US manufacturing and exports is the key to hitting these economic goals. These are the animating objectives behind his trade policies. The president, in particular, believes in using punitive tariffs to drive reciprocity in trade relations. He has less faith in the World Trade Organization (WTO) to battle unfair trade practices that disadvantage US competitiveness.

Trump's Way

One way to summarize Trump's doctrine is the willingness to try unconventional means to achieve conventional ends. Since Trump is at heart a defensive realist, there are real limits to how far he would stray from mainstream American foreign policy. The United States is a global power with global interests. Stability, prosperity, and security in the critical parts of the world that link US interests together—Europe, the Middle East, and the Indo-Pacific—are crucial to America. The United States does not have the capacity to ensure all three are secured without the assistance of allies and strategic partners. Further, all three are equally critical to the United States; Washington can't prioritize one over the other. Thus, Trump in the end will be unwilling to put any of these at risk.

In addition, while Trump won't shy away from protracted commitments (like forward-deployed US forces), he will seek to avoid costly protracted debilitating incursions that would consume American power at a high cost and great risk, such as preemptive wars. As expansive as US power is, it is spread too thin to conduct major operations in a single theater and not unduly put American interests in other regions at risk.

On the other hand, Trump cannot accept the status quo. While in and of themselves China, Russia, Iran, North Korea, and the threats of transnational criminal networks and transnational Islamist terror groups like ISIS and al Qaeda individually are not the equal of US power, together they constitute a significant threat to US interests. Trump won't be complacent in facing them.

In addressing these challenges to America, expect Trump to reinforce the elements of American power that enable "peace through strength," in particular US military and economic power. Additionally, expect Trump

to continue to try different tactics to advance his goals (pressing NATO allies on burden sharing is a case in point). Further, expect the administration to always put a premium on protecting American sovereignty when determining the extent of US participation in international and multinational organizations.

TRUMP AND THE LIBERAL WORLD ORDER

With the context provided above, it is worth surveying the Trump team's track record on the instruments of the liberal order. Provided here is a survey of some of the most notable multinational and international organizations. What this overview demonstrates is that: (1) the administration's policies are consistent with the president's doctrine; (2) they are well within the bounds of traditional postwar American statecraft; and (3) they largely conform to traditional Republican foreign policy.

International Criminal Court. The ICC, established in 2002 after sixty countries signed the 1998 Rome Statute, is often identified as a significant instrument of the liberal order. The UN supported the establishment of international courts both to foster international legal standards and create international mechanisms to reach individual citizens, as well as officials of their governments.

American conservatives have long been skeptical of the court. "Not surprisingly," write conservative legal scholars Lee Casey and David Rivkin (2009), "adherence to the ICC has become the litmus test for those who wish to fundamentally change the nature of sovereignty, as a means of moving power from the states to some type of not very well-defined 'international community.'" Not surprisingly, the Bush administration declined to participate in the court, an action completely consistent with an American conservative orthodox view toward national sovereignty.

Recently, the Trump administration made news, lauding the court's decision to reject ICC prosecutor Fatou Bensouda's request to open an investigation into crimes allegedly committed by US forces in Afghanistan since May 2003. Shortly before the decision, the administration demonstrated its antagonism toward the investigation. US Secretary of State Mike Pompeo threatened to "revoke or deny visas to International Criminal Court personnel seeking to investigate alleged war crimes and other abuses committed by U.S. forces in Afghanistan or elsewhere...." Following the decision, Secretary Pompeo concluded, "this decision is

a victory for the rule of law and the integrity of the ICC as an institution, given the United States is not subject to the ICC's jurisdiction." Clearly, the administration's actions follow in the precedent established under Bush, and which were unchanged by President Obama.

As Brett Schaefer and Charles Stimson (2019) at the conservative Heritage Foundation noted, "although the U.S. has occasionally supported ICC efforts to bring criminals to justice, the U.S. has repeatedly rejected the court's claims of jurisdiction and kept the ICC at arm's length even under President Barack Obama." This is not a rejection of the liberal order *per se*. Rather this policy reflects the US tendency to emphasize the importance of protecting legitimate state sovereignty from undue influences—a concern shared by both American realists and structuralists.

United Nations. Likewise, it is difficult to identify significant points of departure in the Trump administration's approach to the UN from past presidencies. Indeed, one of Trump's first appointments was naming a US representative to the United Nations. Initially, this was a prestigious cabinet-level post filled by a prominent conservative politician, former South Carolina Governor Nikki Haley. After Haley's departure, the administration downgraded the post to subcabinet level. This designation alone means little in determining how the United States sees the utility of the UN. Rather, the decision reflects each president's preference in balancing authority and responsibility between the UN mission in New York and the Secretary of State.

Further, consistent with past administrations, the United States has been very active and forceful at the UN. In particular, the United States used its participation in the Security Council to drive a consensus on policies toward the civil war in Syria and other contentious international issues. Further, the president spoke twice to the UN General Assembly.

On the other hand, the administration adopted several policies critical of the UN, but consistent with past Republican policies. The administration has been highly critical of oversight of UN peacekeeping missions; vocal about the lack of UN managerial reforms and lack of "whistle-blower" protections; and skeptical of the level of US financial contributions to the UN.

This administration has also taken a number of unilateral actions in regard to UN agencies and activities. For example, the United States withdrew from the Human Rights Council which conservatives long criticized as biased and ineffective. The Trump administration also withdrew

support for the UN Population Fund. These actions were not out of character from policies taken under other Republican administrations.

The Trump administration also announced it would no longer fund the United Nations Relief and Works Agency for Palestine Refugees (UNRWA). This was, to be fair, unprecedented. Since UNRWA's inception over 70 years ago, presidents, Republican and Democrat, supported the initiative as instrumental to the peace process by supporting the development of Palestinian communities.

Yet, many conservative policy analysts had long been critical of the organization, arguing its services are both ineffective and counterproductive. "The reality is that UNRWA obstructs its original mission of resolving the Palestinian refugee problem," concluded one report published almost two years before Trump came into office, "[w]orse, by encouraging the Palestinian fixation on their 'right to return' to Israel, UNRWA impedes negotiations for a permanent peace agreement" (Phillips and Schaefer 2015). The administration followed this advice for a very realist concern. The administration sees a solution to the Israel–Palestinian conflicts as a US interest, and believes undercutting support for the Palestinian Authority will create more pressure for Palestinians to come to the table and do a deal. Withdrawing from UNRWA was part of that pressure and not intended as an overall statement about US support for the UN.

Treaties. Another area where the United States has been active is in eschewing global compacts. Most famously President Obama signed the 2015 Paris Agreement under the United Nations Framework Convention on Climate Change, but in June 2017 President Trump announced the United States would withdraw from the agreement. Shunning the Paris Accords was not the only action where the administration bucked international consensus. The Trump administration declined to accede to the Global Migration and Refugee Compacts. In addition, the United States withdrew from the 2014 Arms Trade Treaty, also signed by the Obama administration (but not submitted to Congress for ratification).

In each case, the administration's rationale was not an explicit rejection of the international liberal order or norms. Rather, the United States framed its objections to the compact over the efficacy of the agreements or concerns over impinging US sovereignty. It is worth noting that Trump approved only one fewer treaty in his first two years in office than Obama did in his last two (Bromund 2019). Trump has no problem with treaties. He has a problem with symbolic treaties like the Paris Accords:

agreements unlikely to be effective which, if signed and passed into law, would infringe on US sovereignty. These are concerns that might be expressed by any Republican administration.

Arctic Council. Another area to assess is multinational consultative organizations that the United States participates in. The Arctic Council is a good example. The Arctic Council is the world's primary intergovernmental multilateral forum on the Arctic region and focuses on all Arctic policy issues other than defense and security. It was established in 1996 with the Declaration of Establishment of the Arctic Council, also known as the Ottawa Declaration, as a way for the eight Arctic countries—the United States, Russia, Canada, Denmark, Norway, Finland, Sweden, and Iceland—to work together on mutually important issues in the region.

The United States chaired the council from 2015 to 2017. The last few months of the US chairmanship were under Trump's presidency. The administration appeared largely indifferent to Arctic policy, and even stepped back from involvement in Arctic affairs. For example: the Obama administration created a Special Representative for the Arctic and appointed the former Commandant of the U.S. Coast Guard Admiral Robert Papp to the position, signifying the importance of the U.S. Coast Guard in America's Arctic affairs. During the first months of Trump's tenure, the position was scrapped, leaving the United States as the only Arctic power not to have a Special Representative or Arctic Ambassador.

Yet, in the last few months the United States has demonstrated renewed interest in Arctic affairs and its leadership role in the council. This suggests that the administration did not eschew such forums as a matter of policy. Clearly, as Arctic issues emerged as more important for the administration, it showed no aversion in working through the council to advance US interests.

Association of Southeast Asian Nations (ASEAN). It is also worth examining other consultative forums to which the United States is not a formal participant. ASEAN, a regional intergovernmental organization, is a good example.

There remain enormous uncertainty and confusion over US interests in the region under Trump despite the US adoption of the policy "free and open Indo-Pacific" and developing an accompanying strategy. That uneasiness is nowhere more reflected than in the ASEAN forum.

In November of 2018, Vice President Mike Pence attempted to assuage fears in speeches in Singapore and at the ASEAN meeting in Papua New Guinea. He reaffirmed US commitment in the Indo-Pacific

region. Pence also outlined plans for increased engagement including an economic strategy toward the region. Finally, he reasserted the US position on the importance and centrality of ASEAN to regional stability and growth. This was not as robust a US response as critics wanted, but it clearly reflected the Trump administration was not in the process of disengaging.

The US level of assurances and engagement by the Trump administration has been modest to be sure. Yet, it is not wholly inconsistent with the level of interests expressed under the Bush and Obama administrations. The measure of US engagement seems relative to the perceived value of ASEAN to US interests rather than a reflection of a particular ideological bent toward such organizations. If anything, the Trump administration seems inclined to be more activist, in large part because it perceives China as a growing threat to regional stability and interactions with ASEAN part of matching Beijing's influence.

North Atlantic Treaty Organization. Perhaps more instructive than its relationship with consultative institutions is the administration's commitment to collective security organizations. NATO is the prime case in point. While it is true other presidents have raised the issue of burden sharing, Trump's manner is unprecedented, strident, controversial, and off-putting to many Europeans.

Yet, as even the NATO Secretary acknowledged in 2019, Trump's demand did prompt nations to reenergize their commitments to increasing defense contributions. Further, unarguably in practice the administration has undertaken a significant series of concrete measures to demonstrate US commitment to the collective security of the transatlantic community. The Trump administration has sustained funding for the European Deterrence Initiative (EDI). EDI assists NATO members in expanding their capacity for collective defense. The United States has supported continued sanctions on Russia. The administration has given strong support to Ukraine and Georgia including additional military assistance. The United States has expanded planning, training, and exercises in Europe, increased pre-positioned equipment, and is expanding US forward basing in countries like Poland and Romania. In addition, the United States withdrew from the Intermediate Nuclear Forces (INF) treaty over concerns of Russian cheating and an increased nuclear threat to Western Europe. Further, the United States has opposed Nordstream II and other Russian projects that threaten to undermine European

energy security. Collectively, these measures are substantial and clearly reflect no lessening of US commitment to collective security.

European Union (EU). Many in the transatlantic community view European integration as an essential manifestation of the liberal world order. They interpret Trump's ambivalence over the EU as a threat to European peace and security and undermining one of the key pillars of the international order. Much of the mistrust of the president stems from his vocal support for the British vote to leave the EU (Brexit).

In practice, American presidents have never been uniformly supportive of the European project. President Dwight Eisenhower envisioned a United States of Europe. Over the course of the Cold War, other presidents (from both parties) were less confident in the long-term prospects for the integration of Europe. Even after the fall of the Berlin Wall, only Obama ranked among presidents who expressly pressed for European integration as an explicit US policy goal. Thus, in this respect, Trump is not as far out of the mainstream as many contemporary critics would assume.

Trump's support for Brexit was not because he was explicitly anti-EU, though personally the president is unconvinced of the need for greater European integration, but for the reason that he supported the right of the British people to withdraw from the EU and more independently exercise their sovereignty.

Further, this administration remains deeply skeptical of plans for an independent EU defense identity. This concern appears wholly for practical reasons. European efforts to enhance an EU defense capability would only come at the expense of undermining commitment to NATO and the capacity of NATO forces. The administration believes that Europe is incapable of independently defending itself. Collective security for Europe can only be achieved within the context of the transatlantic community. Since European security remains a vital US interest, it is unsurprising that the Trump team would opt for NATO first.

Free Trade Agreements (FTA). Free trade agreements are an embodiment of the liberal order. Trump was roundly criticized for not signing the Trans-Pacific Partnership (TPP). Critics read the White House rejection of TPP as a signal of disengagement and as a rejection of free trade and the accompanying economic instruments of the liberal world order. However, to be fair to the administration, TPP was already dead on arrival. During the presidential campaign, the Democratic candidate, Hillary Clinton, had announced that she wouldn't endorse the trade

agreement. Congress had sent clear signals it wouldn't pass enabling legislation. But while Trump rejected TPP, he failed to promise to replace it with a better deal, and that was interpreted as a clear rejection of a norms-based approach to global trade.

Nevertheless, there is ample evidence that the president does not reject FTAs as a matter of principle, though he has stated (and in several cases has acted upon) a preference for bilateral agreements rather than regional frameworks like TPP. The administration has already negotiated a new trilateral trade pact with Canada and Mexico. In addition, the United States has declared an interest in negotiating an FTA with Great Britain. The administration is also actively pursuing trade deals with Japan and others. The United States is also intensely pursuing trade negotiations with China and foresees a forthcoming round of hard bargaining with the EU.

What is clear is that the president is deeply dissatisfied with the current global trading regime. The administration has advocated for reform of the WTO, but so far has failed to advance a concrete agenda. In addition, the Trump team has expressed an interest in developing other means to advance trade negotiations without the constrictions of the formal FTA process, but again they have not developed a specific agenda. What these efforts and aspirations reflect is not a rejection of a free market component to the liberal order, but a deep ambivalence over the current instruments employed to manage global trade.

New Institutions. Finally, rather than disentangling from multinational forums, there is evidence of the administration's interest in creating new partnerships. One of the administration's notable efforts is the "Quad," a group of the United States, India, Japan, and Australia, in partnership to advance the concept of a free and open Indo-Pacific. While not a formal organization like NATO, the administration views the Quad as a capstone over a web of bilateral and trilateral efforts to ensure maximum cooperation between the four countries.

Another administration initiative is the Middle East Security Architecture, a concept midway between the formality of NATO and the informal Quad structure that would establish a collective security defense community in the Middle East. While this idea is still immature and appears at the moment moribund, it reflects the administration's willingness to embrace new collective security organizations where they make sense. Clearly, these proposals demonstrate the United States is interested in anything but withdrawing from the world stage.

Trump's Brave New World

Without question there are differences in foreign policy, tone, and emphasis from previous administrations but to paint these as a radical departure in US foreign policy is just wrong. Further, there is no question the liberal order is changing, but much of that has little to do with Trump. The president did not make China's rise destabilizing. He did not create the divisions in Europe. He did not make for a recalcitrant Russia. These are stresses on the international order that would be there with or without Trump. What the president is trying to do is to protect US interests in these turbulent times. He doesn't think the current global order is up to the task. While he isn't out to consciously unmake the liberal international order, he is intent on driving change that better safeguards US vital interests. This realist approach to foreign policy is neither new nor exceptional among modern presidents.

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PART II

Functional Foundations of the Trump
Doctrine



Foreign Policy Decision Making in the Trump Administration

Martha Cottam

Foreign policy decision making in the Trump administration can be divided into three time periods thus far: the chaotic first six months, the professionals period when former Generals McMaster, Kelly, and Mattis were in office, and the purely Trump agenda era that followed the departure of McMaster and Mattis. Each period witnessed the tension between those wanting to “let Trump be Trump” and those wanting to let the system continue to function balancing current policies and traditions with Trump’s foreign policy impulses. In other words, in all three periods there was conflict between those who shared Trump’s ideology, personalistic control and use of power, distrust of “globalists,” experts, process and institutions, versus those with careers in and expertise regarding foreign policy, reliance on process and institutions.

In the analysis of decision making within a presidency, one would normally search for the president’s worldview, personality factors such as cognitive complexity, information processing patterns, foreign policy

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experience, and various bureaucratic power dynamics and the use of and relationship with advisers. In the case of Trump, many of those variables are very unusual compared to other presidencies. This chapter will explore those analytical factors using examples from numerous foreign policy decision making events to illustrate.

Trump's worldview is commonly referred to as "America first," but it is far from a simple isolationist approach to foreign policy. Worldview is a product of a number of political psychological factors, and Trump's have been analyzed from a number of perspectives. McAdam (2016) examined Trump in terms of the Big Five personality factors: extroversion, neuroticism, conscientiousness, agreeableness, and openness to experience (see endnote definitions).¹ These traits are lifelong, and McAdam provides examples from throughout Trump's life. Most notably, he found that Trump is extremely extroverted, a trait which can produce an inclination toward reward seeking in fame, wealth, recognition, etc. He shares the high extroversion trait with Bill Clinton and George W. Bush and, like them, he is constantly on the go interacting with others. At the same time, Trump is found to be extremely low in agreeableness, a trait he shares with Richard Nixon. It produces behavioral predispositions that exhibit rudeness, callousness, a lack of empathy, and a willingness to stand apart from conventions, all while courting rewards and acknowledgment of prestige and superiority. It seems counterintuitive that the extroversion and disagreeableness traits appear in the same person, but it is a consistent pattern in Trump's behavior.² McAdam maintains that the

¹The Big Five definitions of these terms are: **Openness**: enjoyment of learning new things, insightful and imaginative. Those high in openness are curious, creative, with many interests. While those low are conventional with narrow interests. **Conscientiousness**: reliable, organized, thorough; extraversion: enjoying interacting with others, energetic, talkative. Those high in conscientiousness are organized, hard-working, and reliable while those low are aimless, unreliable negligent, and hedonistic. **Agreeableness**: compassionate, kind, sympathetic, and cooperative. Those high in agreeableness are trustable, good natured, helpful, and soft-hearted while those low are cynical, rude, irritable, and uncooperative. **Neuroticism**: emotional instability, negative vs. positive thinking, moodiness. Those high in neuroticism are worriers, nervous and insecure while those low are calm, secure, and unemotional. **Extroversion**: gregariousness, enthusiasm, social dominance, and reward-seeking. Those high in extroversion are sociable, optimistic, fun loving, and affectionate while those low are quiet, reserved, and aloof (See McAdam 2016; Cottam et al. 2016).

²Trump is known to be devoted to his family, and often a kind boss, as McAdam notes, so there are departures from the trait in his personal life.

combined traits produce several behavioral predispositions: high extroversion produces a tendency to take risks, while lack of agreeableness may lead to the practice of “hard-nosed realpolitik” (although this is also influenced by the degree of anger, which is high, in Trump’s agreeableness trait).

Looking at personality factors from a different set of traits, Preston (2017) conducted a Leader Trait Analysis (LTA) profile of Trump that supports and amplified McAdam’s Big Five assessment. They found Trump to be low in prior policy experience, low in cognitive complexity, extremely high in distrust of others, low in self-confidence, high in need for affiliation, pronounced internal locus of control (meaning a strong belief that he can control events), and medium to high in need for power (Preston 2017). Taken together these traits predict a pattern of behavioral predispositions to be heavily reliant on like-minded and loyal advisers irrespective of expertise, uninterested in information, particularly when he has strong beliefs about an issue, a black-and-white view of the world, and a desire to be the principal decision maker. Trump’s “nationalism” and identification with both the Republican Party and his base is questionable according to the LTA perspective. He does not have strong in-group attachments. Those who flatter him are in, but easily cast aside when they come into disfavor for one reason or another. Rather than being a nationalist, he knows how to use nationalism to attract followers.³

To summarize, together the Big Five and LTA analyses of Trump’s personality argue that Trump will be predisposed to take risks and to bargain aggressively while having no experience in foreign policy, lacking the cognitive complexity to learn the subtleties of foreign policy, while being heavily reliant upon advisers to whom he has no loyalty and little if any trust.

Finally, in terms of Trump’s imagery, or stereotypes of other countries, given his low cognitive complexity, one would expect him to have strong images resistant to change from disconfirming information or actual experience with those countries. His threats to pour “fire and fury” on North Korean, and to “have no choice but totally destroy North

³This discussion of Trump’s nationalism and group attachments is based on a conversation with LTA expert Thomas Preston. In addition to the LTA empirical measurement, Cottam and Cottam (2001) note that no nationalist would abide interference in sovereignty. Trump’s unwillingness to criticize Russia for interference in American elections is a strong indicator that he is not a nationalist.

Korea” if it threatens the United States as well as his name-calling Kim Jong-un “Rocket man” and “Little Rocket man” (Woodward 2018: 28–281) illustrate the classic Rogue image. Similarly, his tweets to Iran show the pattern of threatening and ordering about leaders of countries seen through the Rogue image:

“To Iranian President Rouhani: NEVER, EVER THREATEN THE UNITED STATES AGAIN OR YOU WILL SUFFER CONSEQUENCES THE LIKES OF WHICH FEW THROUGHOUT HISTORY HAVE EVER SUFFERED BEFORE,” Trump tweeted after returning to the White House from a weekend at his golf resort in Bedminster, New Jersey. “WE ARE NO LONGER A COUNTRY THAT WILL STAND FOR YOUR DEMENTED WORDS OF VIOLENCE & DEATH. BE CAUTIOUS!” (CNN, July 23, 2018)

Designating the Iranian Revolutionary Guard, a terrorist organization also reflects the Rogue image while unilaterally pulling out of the Iran nuclear agreement is another example of ordering the perceived Rogue to obey commands. It also reflects Trump’s deep distrust of the nuclear agreement and Iran’s trustworthiness. His contempt for countries seen through the Colonial image is graphically expressed in his disparagement of the countries of origin of immigrants to the United States such as Haiti, El Salvador, and all of Africa as “s**t hole countries.” Finally, although I would argue that a full-fledged enemy image of Russia has not emerged in American foreign policy,⁴ Trump’s policy toward Russia follows that of the Obama administration in terms of sanctions and other cautions. Given the lack of strong in-group attachments, even if Trump has an ally image of NATO countries and other alliances, it is only weakly if at all influential in his foreign policy approach to allies and alliances.

Where Trump differs fundamentally from other presidents in terms of imagery is that he does not appear to bring the images into play when he engages in personal negotiations with the leaders. Explaining this would require an in-depth investigation into psychology which is not possible here, but it is notable that he is not hindered in negotiations by strong pre-existing images. For better or worse, he deals with leaders of other

⁴This is largely because Russia does not have the full set of attributes of an enemy particularly equality in capability. However, the perceptions appear to be going in that direction.

countries individually. His admiration for Putin is in stark contrast to the sanctions policy (although there is ample evidence Trump is unhappy with it). His negotiations with Kim Jong-un are another clear example. After his threats and insults, he became the first American president to negotiate one-on-one with the North Korean leaders and afterwards announced that “we fell in love.” In addition, as his administration appeared to be moving toward a possible war with Iran in the spring of 2019, he encouraged Iran to “call him” saying he was “sure that Iran will want to talk soon” (CNN, May 16, 2019). Finally, his interactions with European leaders, as well as Canadian and Mexican leaders are atypical of past presidents’ treatment of these allies, and his interactions are highly personalistic. For example, in the July 2018 NATO summit he alternately personally harangued Angela Merkel but later at the meeting kissed her and said “I love this woman...Isn’t she great?” (Glasser 2018: 1). More will be said about the personal negotiating topic later.

Together, these personality factors help one understand Trump’s version of America first. It is not an isolationist policy, but one pursuing a unilateralist approach to threats and opportunities in the international environment. This, in turn, is influenced by Trump’s personal traits. He wants to be in direct personal control of policy, hence his desire to personally negotiate with leaders of countries with which the United States sees a threat. America first is also not a policy hostile to a military presence by the United States in the international arena. Trump may have pledged to get America out of involvement in wars in the Middle East, but that is not a reflection of opposition to the use of American military might. He has threatened to use the military against North Korea, Iran, and for a possible invasion of Venezuela. He trusts in his own instincts as a negotiator to enable him to pull back from the brink, but his lack of experience makes it highly unlikely that he knows anything about escalation, de-escalation, and pulling back from the brink in international politics. As Patrick Harris (2018–2019) put it “Trump is a primacist who cleaves to the Jacksonian belief that preponderant military power is something to be desired, even if he disagrees with the liberal internationalists over how this power ought to be applied” (p. 629).

Trump’s personality also assists in an understanding of his mistrust of multilateralism and international institutions in his approach to global American foreign policy. Deep distrust can lead him to regard all of international politics as a zero-sum game, even if the United States has not lost anything. Any gain by any actor other than the United States is a

loss (Harris 2018–2019). Any agreement that requires multi-party agreements is also to be distrusted, hence the withdrawal from the Iran nuclear agreement and the threats to withdraw from NATO and NAFTA (the renegotiation of which changed little).⁵ His low agreement trait leads him to threaten and insult NATO allies as well as Mexico and Canada, central trading partners as well as neighbors upon whom the United States needs cooperation to increase control of the borders. (While his supporters may note that he pressured Mexico into controlling its southern border, Mexico in fact started its own Southern Border Plan, *Programa Frontera Sur*, in 2014 which strongly affected illegal immigration into and deportations from Mexico.⁶) Finally, he seems determined to target specifically any and all policies made by his predecessor, Barack Obama.

ADVISORY SYSTEM AND INTERACTION WITH ADVISERS

Moving to more specific aspects of foreign policy decision making in the Trump administration, it is important to look at the advisory system. Since Trump had no prior foreign policy experience, he has had to rely on advisers. It has been a complicated road.

Trump began his administration with former General Michael Flynn as his national security adviser, former General James Mattis as his Secretary of Defense, and Exxon Mobile CEO Rex Tillerson as his Secretary of State. Of these three, Trump had a companion in worldview with General Flynn who campaigned for Trump. The only one of the three who had experience with foreign policy institutions and processes was General Mattis. The other two brought in their own people and side-lined the career staff in both the NSC and the State Department. In the case of the NSC, in particular, there was deep suspicion of anyone who had worked there during the Obama administration, and even career staffers were considered Obama loyalists (Toosi 2019). Also, less directly important in foreign policy were Steve Bannon, who was initially permitted

⁵For example, cars will now have 75% of their component parts made in the United States, Mexico, or Canada, up from 62.5, 40–45% of auto workers must make \$16/hour, and US dairy farmers get improved access to Canada's market.

⁶According to WOLA (2015), "Mexico deported 107,814 migrants in 2014, the vast majority of which were from Central America. That is a 35 percent increase from 2013, when authorities deported 80,079 migrants. The increase in Mexico's deportation of children is even more striking: the 18,169 children that Mexico deported in 2014 represents a 117 percent increase from 2013, when that number was 8350."

briefly to sit in on NSC meetings, Reince Priebus, Chief of Staff, Robert Porter, staff secretary, and Gary Cohn, an economic adviser. By January 2019, all of these advisers were gone.

The Flynn era was brief and represents the height of chaos in foreign policy in the first months of the administration. Although Flynn did not last more than 24 days, his brief tenure illustrates a pattern and a tension in Trump administration foreign policy decision making, ignoring process. The prime example of this under Flynn was Trump's decision during the first week in office to approve Pentagon raids against terrorists in Yemen. Rather than making the decision after deliberation by the NCS and consultation with other agencies, the decision was a result of a dinner conversation with Trump when the issue was raised by Flynn, Mattis, and others (Toosi 2019). It signaled a "wild card" pattern of decision making (Toosi 2019) that occurred throughout Trump's term when individuals such as Jared Kushner, Steve Bannon, and economic competitors had independent authority and the ability to bypass normal procedures for streaming information and policy advice to the president. Bannon's influence is evident in the fact that he was permitted to attend meetings of the Principals Committee in the NSC, at least initially.

Another pattern that emerged early in Flynn's brief tenure was Trump's disinterest in detailed information and policy options. The Obama administration put off the decision to arm Kurdish fighters for the Trump administration. According to Toosi (2019):

The NSC staff sent Flynn and his top deputies a detailed memo around 10 pages long that paid out the pros and cons of arming the Kurds, along with every document Trump needed to sign off on a decision. A few weeks passed, and a Flynn deputy told the staffers that what they'd sent was too long and complicated – could they shorten it? So the staffers cut the memo in half. Days later, a new instruction: Could they cut it down further and turn much of it into graphics? The president preferred pictures...The issue dragged on...it wasn't until May that Trump decided to arm the Kurdish fighters. (p. 11)

Flynn was replaced by General H. R. McMaster who tackled the chaos in the NSC generated by Flynn and replaced a number of appointees who lacked competence. But the order and discipline McMaster brought to the NSC and the performance of the National Security Adviser was not appreciated by Trump. Trump was never enthusiastic about McMaster,

and disliked his focus, the length of his briefings, and his style of directly disagreeing with him.

With the appointment of McMaster, Trump had two opposing foreign policy camps giving him advice or attempting to influence his decisions. One camp, the globalists (who could be more or less hawkish on US foreign policy in a traditional way), was composed of McMaster, Mattis, Tillerson, and to some extent the incoming Chief of Staff John Kelly. They represented continuity with the traditional internationalist focus of US foreign policy. Each differed in important ways. Tillerson's lack of experience in government (not with governments as he had extensive contacts internationally with heads of state) is evident in his appointments to the State Department. He often chose his own advisers, sidelining the career staff, but he also had a steep learning curve when it came to the influence of politics in the appointment of advisers.⁷ Perry (2018) argues that there was tension between Kelly and Mattis, on one hand, and McMaster on the other. Partly this was due to the fact that Kelly and Mattis had retired as four-star generals, and McMaster was only three star, and also partially due McMaster's hot temper which irritated Trump and made them have to run interference. Nevertheless, when it came to issues such as abrupt withdrawals from Afghanistan or NATO, the four argued for the status quo with some adjustments, not a major break from the past. Joining this group was Gary Cohn, an economic adviser primarily concerned with Trump's views on trade, but also his views of multilateralism and allies (Woodward 2018).

The other camp, the Trumpist camp, was composed of Steve Bannon and his allies, including, Steven Miller (in the beginning), Sebastian Gorka, Robert Lighthizer, and Peter Navarro.⁸ Bannon's foreign policy position was largely in sync with Trump's gut ideas, but Bannon was a true nationalist. Any agreement or alliance that was not a profit or clear-cut benefit for the United States was on his chopping block. He was very hostile toward agreements or arrangements that went against, in his view, American economic interests, and these included the Paris Accord, the Trans Pacific Alliance, NAFTA, and trade with China. He regarded the

⁷Tillerson discussed the staffing issue at length in testimony before the House of Representatives in May 2019. See his testimony at https://foreignaffairs.house.gov/_cache/files/e/7/e7bd0ed2-cf98-4f6d-a473-0406b0c50cde/23A0BEE4DF2B55E9D91259F04A3B22FA.tillerson-transcript-interview-5-21-19.pdf.

⁸Ironically Bannon played a role in McMaster's selection.

Iranian nuclear arms deal with alarm, was in favor of a border wall and strict limits on immigration. Bannon also advocated leaving Afghanistan and other areas with American military involvement in overseas conflicts.

A major battle over numerous policy issues pitting the two camps against each other came in August 2017 in a meeting at the Pentagon in a room called the Tank. Present were Mattis, Tillerson, Bannon, Miller, Trump, Priebus, Cohn, Kushner, and General Danforth as major players. Mattis led the meeting which was designed to present to Trump the strengths and benefits of the post-World War II liberal international order. The benefits of international organizations, free-trade, and alliances were discussed. Then Bannon and Trump began the counter argument, making the case for withdrawing from the Iran nuclear deal, for trade tariffs, against the continuation of troops in Afghanistan, South Korea, and so on (Woodward 2018). According to Simms (Sims 2019), Trump saw the meeting as a victory for his side against “the establishment.” He reportedly said to Bannon, “that was spectacular...we have them on the ropes...Rex didn’t have any idea what to say. He was totally unsure of himself” (Sims 2019: 154). The debate reflected conflict among the basic assumptions of both camps.

NATIONAL SECURITY CASES

Afghanistan

The two factions battled during the first year. One of the most volatile fights in July 2017 concern the continued US presence in and additional troops for Afghanistan. Trump had made clear his beliefs about the US continued presence in Afghanistan years before ascending to the presidency. In tweets as early as 2012 he complained about Afghanistan being a “total disaster” that is “robbing us blind” (quoted in Woodward 2018: 115). Troop forces shrunk by the end of the Obama administration to 8400 but Trump called for a complete withdrawal during his campaign. The position of the globalists was that withdrawal would be a mistake, and that Afghanistan’s government would collapse if the United States left. McMaster, who had managed to get Bannon ousted from meetings of the Principals, had to design a strategy for staying the course (Woodward 2018: 121). This included supporting the Afghani government where it had physical control of territory, getting it to achieve more legitimacy and inclusivity, and addressing the help and hindrance from its neighbors. It

also included a force increase of about 4000 troops in addition to the 8400 troops already there. The policy options were discussed at the Principals meeting, and both Attorney General Sessions and Reince Priebus warned that the plan would not go over well with Trump (Woodward 2018).

Their predictions were right when Trump was briefed by the NSC in July. Trump's reaction was a two-hour berating of those who had given him the troop surge advice. Trump was aware that a withdrawal could end in losing Afghanistan to civil war, making him a president who lost a war, but he did not like the options before him. He railed that Afghanistan was a disaster, and that he would not make a deal or compromise unless the United States received minerals from Afghanistan in payment (Woodward 2018). He also asked why mercenaries couldn't do the fighting for the United States, an option promoted by Bannon (Woodward 2018: 125). This debate continued, but ultimately Trump approved the additional troops, but he continued to complain and clearly continued to want to withdraw from Afghanistan.

NATO

Trump's dislike of NATO has followed a similar pattern during his time in office. During the campaign, NATO was used often as an example of the exploitation of the United States by its allies. Trump's primary complaint was that the United States spent more money on NATO than the other members. NATO members were supposed to spend 2% of GDP on defense. In this, of course, he is similar to his predecessors, although his treatment of NATO allies and the alliance itself is harsher, threatening to leave the alliance, which is an illustration of his lack of in-group attachments and willingness to take risks. The United States spent 3.5%, while other major NATO members spent less, and he particularly singled out Germany in that regard, spending only 1.2% of GDP on defense. Trump also castigated NATO as obsolete (Woodward 2018). Mattis and others started early in the administration to try to dissuade Trump from leaving NATO. They tried to explain that the 2% figure was a goal, not an obligation. In the end of the early meeting, Trump agreed to stay in NATO, but the issue came up again and again. During the July 2018 NATO meeting, Trump reaffirmed the American commitment but also threatened that the United States would go it alone if others did not pay more (Erlanger et al.

2018).⁹ Each time this happened, administration officials stated that the United States strongly support NATO, but the concern is that repeated doubts about Trump's true intentions strengthen Vladimir Putin's efforts to undermine it.

Iraq, Syria, and ISIS

As was the case with Afghanistan, Trump made clear in his campaign and after that he wanted to withdraw from Iraq and Syria. He inherited a confusing set of policies from the Obama administration that sought to support the opposition to Assad and defeat ISIS with the smallest footprint possible. When Trump came into office, there were 2000 American troops in Syria to train and support the Syrian opposition forces and anti-ISIS forces, with the main US concern being ISIS. The campaign against ISIS was clearly gaining ground when Trump came into office with significant territorial losses. Trump essentially continued the Obama era policies through 2018, and by then "the physical caliphate was near defeat, and the coalition was transitioning to a fight against a clandestine ISIS insurgency" (McGurck 2019: 72). Trump did cancel an Obama-era program in which the CIA trained anti-Assad forces. He also supported retaliatory attacks against the Syrian regime for the use of chemical weapons twice.

Nevertheless, it seems odd that Trump was not initially more insistent on an American withdrawal. Lund (2019) reports that from a series of interviews, Trump administration officials told him that Trump paid little attention to the war in Syria. Tillerson, on the other hand, spent time in 2017 trying to develop a policy which did *not* include a withdrawal from Syria. He announced the policy in a speech at Stanford University, stating the "United States will maintain military presence in Syria, focused on ensuring ISIS cannot re-emerge. Ungoverned spaces, especially in conflict zones, are breeding grounds for ISIS and other terrorist organizations" (Stanford News, January 1, 2018). Instead the United States would keep its troops with the Kurds to prevent the resurgence of ISIS and would use economic pressure to realize a future without Assad. Trump was furious

⁹In July, 2018 Trump claimed incorrectly that NATO members had vastly increased their contributions. In fact, the contributions of Canada and European members started to increase in 2015 from 1.4% of GDP to 1.47% in 2018. The spending increase is part of a long-term trend. See *The New York Times*, <https://www.nytimes.com/2018/07/17/us/politics/fact-check-trump-nato-spending-increase.html>.

when he learned of this speech (Lund 2019). Tillerson was out of office by March 2018, a result of this and other policy disagreements.

On December 19, 2018, Trump tweeted “We have defeated ISIS in Syria, my only reason for being there under the Trump administration” and ordered the withdrawal of all US troops. This caused an uproar among Republicans in Congress and Trump’s national security advisers.¹⁰ Secretary of Defense Mattis was so disturbed by the abrupt decision he resigned. Shortly afterward, Trump partly reversed himself by saying the withdrawal would not be immediate, then that he would leave some troops in Iraq, and finally that he could leave 400 troops in Syria. This episode shows Trump’s unwillingness to re-think his positions, to think in black and white terms, and his general disdain for experts. The intelligence community disagreed with his assessment of ISIS’s defeat and said so. The strength of ISIS and the dangers of a precipitous withdrawal from Syria were two areas the community addressed in early 2019, which resulted in Trump’s claims that they were “passive and naïve” and “should go back to school” (*Time* 2019). Once again, Trump’s disdain for experts and insistence that he alone grasped the issue is evident.

CLIMATE AND TRADE POLICY

During this first year, Trump may have delighted in humiliating the establishment in meetings, but he essentially followed them in national security strategy. Nevertheless, he repeatedly complained about the issue upon which he made concessions, offering the possibility that he would reverse his policy. This, despite his boasts that he knows more than the generals about various issues, is likely a result of his low self-confidence.¹¹ But in areas where he has more self-confidence and strong beliefs, he followed the policy commitments he made in the campaign. These are also the points where his lack of interest in opposing ideas and the policy process had their biggest impact. One example of this is the Paris accords, which Trump, true to his campaign promise, withdrew the United States from in 2017. Prompted by EPA chief Pruitt and Bannon, Trump was prepared

¹⁰By this time John Bolton replaced H. R. McMaster as the NSA. Bolton did not agree with a withdrawal.

¹¹In addition, Bannon was soon out of favor for a variety of reasons and was fired in August. This left Trump without the constant drum beat calling for true Trump positions in every aspect of foreign policy as Bannon interpreted them.

to withdraw bypassing the usual process of consultation with any relevant institutions, including a legal review. This is the infamous case in which Rob Porter, a staff secretary, took the draft statement prepared by Pruitt off of Trump's desk, hoping he would forget about it (Woodward 2018: 191).¹² Despite the importance attributed to Trump's daughter's and son-in-law's influence, they were not able to dissuade him from withdrawing from the Paris agreement.

Trade is another area in which personality characteristics come forth very strongly. His desire to be in control, refusal to listen to arguments for and against his policy ideas, and his lack of cognitive complexity are evident. Throughout, there is a clear inability to connect trade to national security. Trump maintained that the United States' trade deficit was not only a major economic problem, but one cause by decades of presidents letting the United States be exploited by others. He disliked every trade agreement the United States made and vowed to withdraw or renegotiate them. He also firmly believed in the power of tariffs to bring trade partners to their knees and bend them to his will to improve America's position. In this issue area, as in the national security areas, Trump had people who agreed with him in the White House, in particular Peter Navarro, and those who disagreed, including Gary Cohn and Rob Porter. But in this domain Trump regarded himself to be an expert.

Trump's position was that free trade in general and trade deficits in particular were bad for the United States. He believed that trade deficits were caused by "high tariffs imposed by foreign countries like China, currency manipulation, intellectual property theft, sweatshop labor and lax environmental controls" (Woodward 2018: 135). Lack of procedure gave Navarro many opportunities to get to Trump to continuously support this idea despite the fact that most economists did not agree. Cohn attempted to dissuade Trump, arguing that the United States had a service economy, would never return to heavy manufacturing, and that that was a good thing. The trade deficit was a signal of a strong economy engaged in economic growth. Free trade, not protectionism, brought great benefits to the American economy. Trump was not buying it. He maintained that he had held his economic views for thirty years, and they were right.

¹²Trump wasn't the only one to ignore process. Tillerson also bypassed the NSC and other agencies doing independent negotiations such as those with Qatar in July 2017 (Woodward 2018).

Subsequently, Trump embarked on his trade program. He withdrew the United States from the Trans-Pacific Partnership, thereby giving Asian trade over to China, refusing to take time to discuss the complexity of the TPP (Woodward 2018). By August, 2017, he was ready to withdraw from KORUS (the Korean US trade agreement), NAFTA (the North American Free Trade Association), and the WTO (the World Trade Organization). The threat to withdraw from KORUS was particularly alarming to the national security team which tried to make Trump understand the national security implications of getting into a trade spat with South Korea. Initially, in August 2017, they were able to get Trump to back down from signing a 180-day notice of intent to withdraw from the trade agreement. By January 2018 Trump's fury about the trade deficit with South Korea, which was \$18 billion, and the cost of stationing a permanent US military force in South Korea erupted (Woodward 2018). He returned to his long-held belief that American allies, including South Korea, are exploiting the United States by getting them to pay for their security (Cha and Kim 2019). Mattis, McMaster, Tillerson, Dunford, Cohn, and Kelly tried again to explain that having a forward base presence in South Korea was a cheap and effective deterrent for North Korea that applied across the region. The matter was dropped when the Olympics approached, and in the end, KORUS was renegotiated with minor changes that would, in theory, make it possible for US automobile makers to sell more cars in South Korea (VOX 2018).

TRANSITION TO PHASE THREE

If 2018 saw continuous combat between the status quo globalists and the Trump camp, it also saw the graduate withering of the globalist forces. Tillerson forged ahead with his own agenda, and was fired by tweet in March 2018. Trump moved Mike Pompeo over from the CIA to take control of the State Department. Pompeo is a Trump loyalist, a long-time foreign policy hawk, and consistently supports Trump's viewpoints. Pompeo takes care to never disagree with Trump publicly, and Trump told a reporter that he could not recall ever having an argument with Pompeo (Nuzzi 2018). This is despite the fact that Pompeo, like Bolton, favored regime change in Iran. Knowing that Trump did not share that view, he backed off (Ward 2019).

By April 2018, Donald Trump had had enough of this National Security adviser H. R. McMaster. He never really liked McMaster, finding

him “gruff and condescending” and “abrasive” (BBC 2018). The straw that broke the camel’s back was a speech McMaster made in Munich where he said that it was incontrovertible that the Russians had interfered with the 2016 election. Trump was furious that he did not add that the interference had no effect (BBC 2018). In his place Trump put John Bolton, a far right hard liner from the Cold War era who had served as George W. Bush’s UN ambassador in his first term. Bolton’s views were closer to Trump’s than McMaster’s had been. He too disliked multilateralism and international agreements. He differed from Trump in that he was not opposed to assertive unilateralism and believed that the United States should stay in Syria and Iraq and was more aggressive in his position on Iran advocating regime change. As National Security Adviser, he functioned more along the Flynn model (Toosi 2019). He seldom had the Principals Committee meet and ignores the policy process. Finally, Secretary of Defense Mattis left in December 2018, and was replaced by Deputy Secretary of Defense Patrick Shanahan. Mattis was career military, but Shanahan’s background was as an executive with Boeing. Trump may have liked the idea of having military advisers, but he liked Shanahan’s promise to run the Pentagon more like a business. Plus, Shanahan supported Trump’s idea of a “Space Force” and stated that the Pentagon would not be a “Department of No,” in reference to Mattis’ resistance to Trump’s efforts to radically change American foreign policy (Barnes and Schmitt 2018).

Phase Three Policies: Iran

The withdrawal of the United States from the Joint Comprehensive Plan of Action (JCPOA), or the Iran nuclear deal, was another of Donald Trump’s campaign promises. Trump insisted that Iran was not in compliance with the agreement, and that it benefitted Iran far more than the rest of the world. In the agreement, sanctions were lifted in exchange for Iran’s agreement not to proceed with building a nuclear weapons program. The agreement had to be renewed every 90 days, giving Trump multiple opportunities to withdraw. In fact, he had three opportunities to do so before he actually withdrew from the agreement on May 8, 2018.

The decision-making pattern was familiar. The language used to describe Iran is typical of the Rogue image: they are not “behaving,” they need to be “normal.” Trump repeatedly insisted that Iran was violating the agreement and that the United States should withdraw. In turn,

Tillerson, Mattis, and McMaster insisted that Iran was in compliance with the agreement and that the United States should not withdraw for multiple reasons. Tillerson argued that the other signatories and the intelligence community all agreed that Iran was in compliance. According to Woodward, in an exchange with Tillerson, Trump said, “This is one of my core principles...I’m not in favor of this deal. This is the worst deal that we have ever made, and here we are renewing this deal...This is the last time. Don’t come back to me and try to renew this thin again” (p. 130). Trump insisted that everyone who thought they were in compliance were wrong and told his advisers “They’re in violation...and you need to figure out how the argument is going to be made to declare that” (Woodward 2018: 131). Here again is an instance in which Trump refuses to believe facts contrary to his pre-existing beliefs, denies the expertise of intelligence, and insists that he is correct and in control.

Trump was unable to go against these advisers, but once he got rid of them and brought in Bolton and Pompeo, he had people who agreed with his desire to pull out of the agreement, whether Iran was in violation or not. Pompeo, for example, stated in his confirmation hearing that Iran was in compliance with the deal. Pompeo reportedly hoped for a “soft” withdrawal in which the United States exited the agreement but did not re-impose sanctions (Landler 2018). However, the withdrawal was quickly followed by the re-imposition of sanctions on Iran.

It is unclear of Trump thought through what he wanted to achieve other than fulfilling a campaign promise and dismantling another Obama achievement. Reporting for the *New York Times*, Landler argues that Trump thought this action would strengthen his hand with North Korea by demonstrating he is a tough negotiator. This fits with Trump’s self-image and reflects his disinterest in learning anything about North Korea, or Iran. Landler went on to note:

In his announcement, Mr. Trump recited familiar arguments against the deal: that it does not address the threat of Iran’s ballistic missiles or its malign behavior in the region, and that the expiration dates for the sunset clauses open the door to an Iranian nuclear bomb down the road.

Even if Iran was in compliance, he said, it could “still be on the verge of a nuclear breakout in just a short period of time.” In fact, under the deal, the limits on Iran’s uranium enrichment and stockpiles of nuclear fuel mean that Iran would not be on the verge of a nuclear breakout until 2030. Still, Mr. Trump said, the United States and its allies could not

stop Iran from building a nuclear weapon “under the decaying and rotten structure of the current agreement.”

In the year that followed the withdrawal, Trump increased second and third-party sanctions against those who do business with Iran. Matters escalated further when John Bolton asked the military to draw up contingency plans to send 120,000 troops to the region to counter mysterious Iranian threats to US assets. Trump’s rhetoric added fuel to the flames when he stated that if Iran tries to fight the United States, “that will be the official end of Iran” (NBC News, May 19, 2019). The United States also sent a carrier strike group and a bomber task force to the Middle East as well. Then, as though preparing for war, the United States ordered non-essential personnel out of Iraq. Tensions with Iran escalated further in June when the United States accused Iran of targeting oil tankers. Iran, in turn, made threats against the United States. Iran then announced it would no longer comply with the JCPOA.

It was argued above that Trump was often unable to fully realize his foreign policy plans because he was slowed down by his advisers in phase two. But the president who pledged to get out of conflicts in the Middle East brought Bolton into the administration, who pushed for a much more aggressive military response to Iran than either Pompeo or Defense Secretary Shanahan (NBC News, May 19, 2019). Bolton would clearly like to see regime change, while Pompeo looked for ways to get Iran to change policy. Trump may have thought his saber rattling will push Iran toward negotiations, as he believed is what happened with North Korea (with no results at this writing). As if caught by surprise at the war drum beating, Trump, announced that he “hoped” there would not be a war, and administration officials said they were “sitting by the phone” waiting for Iran to call (Wainer 2019). By September 2019, the differences between Pompeo, who dampened his position on Iran to fit with Trump’s, and Trump, and Bolton, on the other hand, reached the boiling point. Bolton and Trump had a disagreement about the prospect of easing sanctions on Iran in order to promote negotiations. Bolton remained strongly opposed, and after an exchange with Trump, he was no longer the National Security Adviser.

North Korea

North Korea's efforts to acquire nuclear weapons extend back to the 1960s and have been a problem for every administration since the 1980s. Obama, like his predecessors, regarded a nuclear North Korea as unacceptable. The Obama administration's policy of "strategic patience" followed an approach that increased pressure on North Korea by increasing sanctions and espionage efforts in hopes that the North would become increasingly isolated and impoverished and would thus choose to negotiate. By the last six months of Obama's administration, it was clear that the policy was not working, as indicated by massive weapons testing by North Korea.

Trump widely criticized the Obama policy of "strategic patience" while campaigning for office. He also said, in February 2016, that he would "get China to make Kim disappear in one form or another very quickly" (Woodward 2018: 181). However, as in other cases, Trump's thinking was contradictory. While he was belligerent on North Korea, he was also hostile toward the traditions of the US alliance with South Korea. He disliked the fact that the United States spent \$3.5 billion annually to keep 28,000 troops in South Korea, saying "I don't know why they're there. Let's bring them all home" (quoted in Woodward 2018: 224). He also complained about the fact that the United States, not South Korea, paid for the Terminal High Altitude Area Defense (THAAD) missile defense system that was put in South Korea to help defense against an attack by North Korea. Efforts by Kelly, Mattis, Cohn, and others to try to explain that the security the arrangement bought for the United States was far greater than the money spent failed to make a dent in Trump's beliefs, again a reflection of his inability to understand the interrelated nature of trade and security.

After Trump entered office, the intelligence about North Korea's weapons program became increasingly grim. The administration issued a North Korea Maximum Pressure strategy in April 2017. The administration stated that no diplomatic engagement with North Korea was going on and that arms control agreement was unacceptable: only complete denuclearization was acceptable. The strategy included efforts to get both Russia and China to increase sanctions on North Korea and to agree to increased UN sanctions (Pennington 2017). A military option was not included, but Tillerson hinted that it was not off the table, and the administration sent the aircraft carrier USS Carl Vinson to the area. In short, the

strategy was a continuation of the status quo of sanctions and potential diplomacy.

On July 4, 2017 North Korea tested an ICBM which, if targeted properly, could potentially reach the United States. During Trump's first year in office, North Korea launched 23 missile tests (CNN 2018). The ICBM launch was particularly worrisome, and the NSC Principals met without Trump to discuss options. Trump and his administration's faith that they could get China to influence North Korea (as had so many previous administrations) was evidently misplaced, given that China provided the mobile vehicle the North Koreans used to launch the ICBM (Woodward 2018).

The Principals discussed a number of ideas, ranging from increased sanctions under the UN auspices, cyber attacks, a ban on American travel to North Korea as well as additional efforts to get support from China, Russia, and the US allies (Woodward 2018). Trump, meanwhile, did not preclude the diplomatic option, but in the main traded insults and threats with Kim Jong-un. In a September UN speech, he taunted Kim calling him "rocket man" and stated "North Korea best not make any threats to the United States. They will be met with fire and fury like the world has never seen" (quoted in Wolff 2018: 292). He told Rob Porter "You can never show weakness...You've got to project strength. Kim and others need to be convinced that I'm prepared to do anything to back up our interests" (quoted in Woodward 2018: 281). This another illustration of Trump's conviction that if you bully an adversary enough, they will back down and do what you want. In return, Kim Jong-un insulted Trump calling him a "gangster" and a "mentally deranged U.S. dotard" (quoted in Woodward 2018: 281). North Korea also threatened a pre-emptive strike against the United States if it showed signs of military aggression (Chicago Tribune, April 14, 2017).

Remarkably, a series of events, including the Seoul winter Olympics and inter-Korea summits, led to an invitation to a summit from Kim to Trump which Trump accepted. The meeting was scheduled for June 12 in Singapore, but after another exchange of insults, Trump canceled the meeting only to reinstate it the following day. Following Trump's disregard for process and institutions, there was little formal preparation for the summit. By this time Bolton was the National Security Adviser and Pompeo was Secretary of State. Pompeo did hold a number of preparatory meetings including two meetings with Kim, but the NSC did not meet, nor were there Cabinet level meetings on the summit.

The normal process preparing for such an important summit, which Kelly had tried to implement as Chief of Staff across policy domains, was not followed (Johnson 2018). This is also a reflection of Trump's low cognitive complexity which leads to his assumption that he can simply intuit his way through a negotiation. He remarked "I don't think I have to prepare very much. It's about attitude, it's about willingness to get things done. So this isn't a question of preparation, it's a question of whether or not people want it to happen, and we'll know that very quickly" (Crowley et al. 2018).

The summit, although a historic meeting of the heads of state of both countries accomplished little more than a vague agreement to denuclearize the Korean peninsula at some point in the future. Trump also announced the suspension of some joint US–South Korean military exercises. Importantly, from Trump's standpoint, the two leaders "fell in love" and that there was no longer a nuclear threat from North Korea. This is another example of Trump's personalistic approach to diplomacy and his extraction of individuals from a standing image of a country. North Korea is now evaluated through his relationship with Kim rather than the Rogue image, at least until that relationship becomes negative. It led Trump to make remarks minimizing the tragedy of Otto Warmbier, the American student imprisoned by North Korea and returned to the United States near death.

The second summit with North Korea occurred in February 2019 and ended abruptly when Trump left the meeting. As in the first summit, there was relatively little preparation and what little did occur should have sent a signal that a leader summit was premature. Pompeo and special envoy Stephen Biegun met the North Korean officials before the meeting. One crucial issue was the meaning of denuclearization. Pompeo insisted that it includes "complete, verifiable, irreversible denuclearization" which would of course include releasing information about all of North Korea's nuclear capabilities (Boot 2019). The North Korean negotiators refused to make these concessions, in part because Trump did not back up his team, instead saying "I am in no rush...we just don't want the testing" (quoted in Boot 2019). With important issues unresolved, as they normally would be before a leader summit, Trump went to Hanoi thinking that he could make a deal, despite the fact that the intelligence community warned him that North Korea would not denuclearize (McCausland 2019). Trump's explanation for the failure to make a deal was that the North Koreans wanted all of the sanctions lifted (which they denied).

After the failed summit, Trump began to take control of the negotiations, believing that he alone could make a deal with his friend Kim Jong-un. He continued to reject the intelligence community conclusion that Kim would not denuclearize, and he “shut down an effort by Stephen Biegun...to reestablish a back channel through the North’s United Nation’s mission” (Walcot 2019). He continued to hope that the North would exchange its nuclear capability for economic development. Against the advice of his advisers, he rejected new tough sanctions placed by the Treasury Department on North Korea in March. For their part, the North Koreans tested another short range missile after the failed summit, Trump dismissed it as an effort to “get attention” while his acting Secretary of Defense, as well as John Bolton, said it was a violation of the United Nations Security Council Resolution.

Afghanistan

Negotiations with the Taliban in Afghanistan started in 2018 in another effort to reach an agreement that would allow the United States to begin to pull troops out of its longest war. The negotiations did not include the government of Afghanistan under President Ashraf Ghani. John Bolton, who strongly opposed the negotiations, was shut out and the negotiations were conducted under the leadership of Pompeo’s envoy former Ambassador Zalmay Khalilzad. By September, a tentative agreement was worked out, and, against the advice of both Pompeo and Bolton, Trump decided to hold secret meetings with the Taliban and, hopefully, Ghani, at Camp David. This was a risky maneuver given the multiple ways it could fail in addition to the fact that these talks were to be held just before the 9/11 anniversary, and at Camp David. The Taliban staged an attack shortly before the meetings were to be held, killing an American and a number of Afghans, and Trump canceled the talks. Trump tweeted “How many more decades are they willing to fight?” (NBC News, September 9, 2019). Indeed, that is the question.

CONCLUSIONS

Like every other president, Donald Trump’s worldview and personality have influenced his approach to foreign policy decision making. But this administration has been chaotic in that decision making in large measure because of Trump’s desire to be in control, his disinterest in opinion and

facts contrary to his issue position, and the administrations limited effort to produce and follow process. The initial months of the administration witnessed a series of battles between status quo advisers and Trump acolytes, with Trump being held back by the former, and goaded on by the latter. As a result, his main goals were tempered but he repeatedly went back to each topic and demanded again to know why his administration was not doing what he intended it to do. As he gradually fired or drove out of office those advisers with traditional expertise, the impact of his personality and worldview were increasingly evident. Experts and their expertise fell victim to Trump's absolute assurance that he and his pre-existing beliefs were correct, and that he and only he could achieve foreign policy goals. Process, alliances, and traditional ways of interacting with others on the world stage were out. In the absence of the advisers from phase two, Trump no longer faced resistance to his goal of withdrawing American troops from Syria, and ordered most of the troops out in October 2019. Phase Three, on the other hand, demonstrated that Trump is equally resistant to those who propose more radical change in the opposite direction. Bolton ultimately could not push him toward greater aggression while Pompeo backed Trump up at every public turn. As Trump stated to George Stephanopoulos, "A president can run the country. And that's what happened George. I run the country."

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Deterrence, Compellence, and Containment in the Trump Foreign Policy: Comparing Present and Past Strategies of American Leadership

Thomas Preston

For adversaries and allies of the United States alike, the signature challenge since the election of Donald J. Trump to the presidency has been the task of divining exactly *what was (and who was making) American foreign and national security policy* (see, Wright 2017; Sestanovich 2017; Woodward 2018)? It has been a source of confusion among NATO allies, seeking to understand whether America continues to be committed to the Alliance and European security in the wake of renewed Russian threats (Walt 2018; Barnes and Cooper 2019). It has perplexed adversaries like North Korea, who find themselves threatened with general war by the President only to later be embraced by warm words and summits, with

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little in the way of their own actions to explain the shifts. And while past administrations, to be fair, have often been inconsistent and not entirely clear regarding their policies (e.g., the Obama administration's Syria and Russia policies come to mind), this has taken on a new level of complexity in the Trump administration (Mattis and West 2019).

It is a period in which US policy can seemingly change from one moment to the next based upon the latest presidential tweet, and senior officials, like the Secretaries of Defense or State, can give the press or other countries' leaders specific policy pronouncements only to have them routinely contradicted by the White House (Collinson 2017; Woodward 2018). Indeed, the resignation of James Mattis as Defense Secretary was reportedly sparked by disagreements with the President over a raft of foreign policies ranging from Syria and North Korea to Afghanistan and Russia (see, Miller and Baldor 2017; Woodward 2018; Mattis and West 2019). These dynamics have left other countries unsure of exactly who to listen to regarding American policy (i.e., Mattis, McMaster, Bolton, Pompeo, Tillerson, or Trump), or to even have confidence that any stated policy (or official) would remain in place any length of time before being replaced by a contrary one (e.g., Wright 2017; Sestanovich 2017; Woodward 2018; Mattis and West 2019). This fluctuation is sometimes explained by Trump's style, one that seeks to create an environment of chaos to put others off-balance and give him the advantage in negotiations through these distractions. But it is also sometimes explained by Trump's own lack of policy knowledge or background, and his well-known lack of interest in "details" or expert advice (see, Woodward 2018; Leonnig et al. 2018).

To what extent does the Administration's use of force notions fit in with traditional American approaches by previous presidents, and how do they differ in substantially unique ways? And, since the notion of a "doctrine" requires a consistency and structure to policy that has largely been lacking, it is more useful to think in terms of what "patterns" of behavior we have seen in the Trump administration regarding deterrence, compellence, and containment in its foreign policy—and what might the implications of these patterns be for American security and foreign policy?

THE FOUR DIFFERENT TYPES OF USE OF FORCE—(DEFENSE, DETERRENCE, COMPELLENCE, AND SWAGGERING)

How have previous administrations used force, in all of its forms, to achieve their containment and security goals, and how has the Trump administration compared with its predecessors in this regard? In order to address these questions, it is important to have clear definitions of what we mean by different “uses of force” to guide our examinations. For this task, Robert Art (1993: 3–11) provides a very useful framework for considering “use of force” by outlining four distinct types (i.e., defense, deterrence, compellence, and swaggering).

The first described by Art (1993: 4) is the *defensive* use of force, which is simply “the deployment of military power so as to be able to do two things - to ward off an attack and to minimize damage to oneself if attacked.” It can take the form of big defense budgets to build up military capabilities that can accomplish these things (which is essentially a “peaceful” use of force), or can take the form (more controversially) of a pre-emptive attack against an opponent who is about to launch a major attack against a state. Examples of this would be the Israeli pre-emption of the Arab armies and air forces just prior to the 1967 war—where they were preparing to attack and were disabled before being able to do so. This defensive use of force requires clear evidence that an attack is *imminent*, which is why the Bush administration’s Iraq War of 2003 (and their claims of legitimate self-defensive pre-emption) were met with widespread skepticism (e.g., Pillar 2006; Jervis 2006; Preston 2011).

For containment policy, the defensive use of force often takes the form of creating and maintaining large militaries and alliance structures (like NATO) to provide the physical means of fighting off an opponent (like the Soviet Union), while seeking to minimize their ability to do damage to you if war breaks out. Certainly, previous administration’s high levels of defense spending, deployments of forces to locations like Europe, Japan, or South Korea, and the establishment of strong military alliances and base agreements around the world have sought to create such defensive capabilities. Similarly, the push for National Missile Defense (NMD), particularly during the Reagan and W. Bush administrations, was predicated on this type of defensive use of force notion.

The *deterrent* use of force, on the other hand, is a peaceful use of force that seeks to prevent an opponent from taking aggressive actions or attacking a state by credibly threatening to inflict costs or damages of an unacceptable level to the aggressor. It is a peaceful use of force because it is purely a threat—deterrence by definition has failed if the threat has to be carried out. And deterrent uses of force are usually tailored to an opponent to focus upon the things they value the most. During the Cold War, the superpowers held each others' population centers and cities hostage to nuclear attack to deter one another (see, Freedman 1981). Similarly, the North Koreans have deterred invasions of their homeland by threats of first massive conventional destruction of the South and now nuclear attacks. In both cases, the consequences of taking aggressive actions far outweighed any potential gains to be had, resulting in policymakers (even within very hostile interstate relationships) not resorting to direct force against one another.

And while deterrence requires the actual physical capabilities to inflict the threatened harm, it is a psychological relationship at its heart. It requires opponents to believe in the "credibility of threats" by a state by perceiving (accurately or not) that their opponent not only possesses the ability to inflict the threatened damage, but a willingness to do so if attacked. Indeed, the push for nuclear weapons by many proliferating states in the world (like N. Korea, India, Pakistan, Israel, etc.) arose from the need to establish such deterrent relationships vis-a-vis stronger regional opponents (see, Preston 2007). And the rationale for building and maintaining America's extensive nuclear arsenal has long been that of deterring attacks by other nuclear-armed opponents.

The *compellent* use of force is the actual physical employment of military force (or economic sanctions) to inflict harm or damage to an opponent to either force them to stop doing something they are already doing or to make them comply to your will by doing something they are not currently doing. For example, during the First Gulf War (1991), the Coalition forces demanded Iraq to withdraw from Kuwait, and when Saddam refused to comply, launched an air and ground campaign that inflicted damage upon the Iraqi forces until they were forced to surrender. Obviously, this was an example of successful compellence. Similarly, economic sanctions were placed on Iran by the international community during several US administrations to pressure them to adopt limits on their nuclear program, which eventually resulted in Tehran agreeing to

the Iran Nuclear Deal of 2015 that was signed by the Obama administration (see, Preston 2013). Of course, compellence efforts are not always effective, whether it be the B-52 bombing raids over North Vietnam in Operation Rolling Thunder to the nearly sixty years of US economic sanctions directed at Cuba. But what all these cases have in common is the physical (actual) use of force (whether it be military or economic) to try to force a state to change its behavior or concede to our demands. In recent years, examples of compellence would be US and Russian military intervention in Syria, the Western air campaign that resulted in the overthrow of Khadafi in Libya, and the US invasion of Afghanistan in 2001 to remove the Taliban from power after their refusal to hand over Al-Qaeda after 9/11.

The final category of force Art (1993: 8) describes is called *swaggering*, and is defined as a use of force that is:

expressed usually in one of two ways: displaying one's military might at military exercises and national demonstrations and buying or building the era's most prestigious weapons. The swagger use of force is the most egoistic: It aims to enhance the national pride of a people or to satisfy the personal ambitions of its ruler. A state or statesman swaggers in order to look and feel more powerful and important, to be taken seriously by others....to enhance the nation's image in the eyes of others....Swaggering is pursued because it offers prestige "on the cheap." Swaggering is pursued because of the fundamental yearning of states and statesmen for respect and prestige.

Obviously, building the era's most prestigious, powerful, and effective weapons (like the F-35, nuclear weapons, or aircraft carriers in the case of the United States) can provide defensive, deterrence, or compellence capabilities, but that is a side effect to enhancing the political standing or image of national leaders or their nations. Presidential candidates routinely campaign on being "tough on defense" by promising to increase defense budgets or buy prestigious weapons systems (like missile defense). Whether it is the massive Soviet military parades in Red Square during the Cold War, in Pyongyang under Kim Jong-un, or the unprecedented, large military parade in Washington (based on the Bastille Day celebration) that President Trump pushed for until domestic political pressure, cost, and Pentagon reluctance forced him to have a smaller (but still precedent setting) military display at the Fourth of July celebration in downtown

D.C. in 2019—all are examples of swaggering use of force (see, Baldor and Lucey 2017; Gibbons-Neff 2018).

In essence, swaggering involves the marshaling of force for either *domestic political purposes* (i.e., to increase support for a leader or their regime by impressing domestic elites or publics with their power or instilling within them a sense of political or nationalistic pride) or for *impressing other states* of one's power through a display of military power and sophistication. Indeed, aside from purely deterrence rationales, it is plain that a side benefit for many nuclear states (and sometimes a major rationale for their pursuit of nuclear programs in the first place) is the swaggering desire to be *seen* as a “Great Power” who must be taken seriously by the international community (like Britain, France, and China) or to be accepted as a prestigious regional leader (like India) by other states (e.g., Goldstein 2000; Preston 2007). Swaggering is a use of military force (albeit a peaceful one) that seeks purely political advantages for a state or leader, without being primarily one of the other three uses of force.

Containment and the Use of Force: Trump and His Predecessors

With these four definitions of the use of force in mind, we now turn to a long-standing, strategy used by American policymakers—containment policy. While containment was most famously employed during the Cold War against the Soviet Union, it has also been applied in recent years to constrain actors like Iraq, Iran, and North Korea through sanctions, arms agreements, and military alliances with neighboring states. It has certainly been applied to China, where military alliances or agreements with regional actors (like Japan, Taiwan, Australia, and India) have been coupled with economic strategies, like the Obama administration's Trans-Pacific Partnership (TPP), in an effort to contain Beijing's growing power in Asia. And though the Soviet Union of the Cold War era has vanished, containment logic continues to inform NATO policies *vis-a-vis* Russia, from the push for expansion into former-Soviet republics in order to offset growing Russian military and political influence to the system of international sanctions put into place after the occupation of Crimea and eastern Ukraine. While the policy specifics might have varied across administrations historically, overall, American policymakers have continued to rely upon and pursue “containment” policies in fairly similar ways over time.

It is a policy which is primarily a defensive use of force, though it at times has been coupled with compellence by previous administrations (i.e., examples would include Vietnam under Johnson and Nixon; Guatemala and Iran under Eisenhower, the proxy war using the Contras in Nicaragua under Reagan and H. W. Bush, or Iraq under W. Bush). It generally has involved the idea of building alliances and developing military and economic capabilities to cordon off an opponent to prevent the expansion of their power and influence. It also required accepting a global leadership role in order to not only establish these international organizations (like the U.N., WTO, or NATO), but to lead them where possible in advancing US containment and broader foreign policy interests.

It was an approach that necessitated abandoning the more isolationist US policies of the 1920s–1930s and focusing instead upon active American leadership in cultivating and maintaining global alliances—even if these sometimes did not directly involve US national interests (e.g., U.N. peacekeeping operations in distant regions; international aid programs, etc.). Beginning with the Truman Doctrine and Marshall Plan to the formation of NATO and other worldwide military alliances and economic organizations (like the WTO), American foreign policy helped to establish the “rules of the game” in the international economic and political system through its leadership and active role in global affairs.

Containment Policy Under Trump

It is in this arena that the “Make America Great” focus of the Trump administration, with its emphasis upon putting US interests first, ahead of those of the international community, existing alliances, treaties, or international organizations, represents a clear departure from the general pattern of post-WWII globalist policies pursued by previous administrations (see, Ambrose and Brinkley 2010). Indeed, even with the end of the Cold War, these security and economic organizations continued to be seen as critical by post-Cold War presidents because they protected United States’ business interests by maintaining Washington’s control over international institutions (like the World Bank and IMF through our appointment of their leaderships), and helped cement our influence over the WTO and G8. It was generally to Washington’s continued post-Cold War benefit that the most important parts of the global financial system were under American rather than Chinese control, and that the dollar remained the world’s premier currency. On the security side, NATO continued to be an avenue for Washington to be leader of the Western

World and have a dominant influence over European security policy. The defense organization didn't disappear with the end of the Cold War, but morphed into the main channel for continued American influence while still containing Russia through continued eastward expansion. NATO even became involved in the US war in Afghanistan after 9/11, a mission having only peripheral relevance to its original Cold War European security focus. It was a Western economic and security world developed and led by the United States which contributed to its global Cold War superpower status, and continued as a major part of its post-Cold War status as the sole remaining superpower. It was the vehicle through which the United States could continue its Western leadership role and protect its economic and security interests from a rising China, a reviving Russia, and other threats.

It was regarding this inherited security and economic infrastructure that the Trump administration's policies and approach significantly changed direction from his predecessors. From questioning the value of the European Union, NATO, and its Article Five (mutual defense) obligations to adopting more benign positions on Russian actions in Ukraine, Trump has unsettled traditional American allies in Europe. And, while his criticisms of European allies for inadequate defense spending certainly have merit (and are similar to the stated views of previous administrations), the degree of negative criticism and questioning of the value of the alliance itself is a clear departure from past policy whose focus was to maintain the clarity of the United States' commitment to NATO and economic relationships with the EU in order to support containment goals (Ambrose and Brinkley 2010; Walt 2018; Barnes and Cooper 2019).

Philosophically, Trump's approach argues that it is US interests that should be focused upon first and foremost, and that international organizations, alliances, and treaties represent unwelcome constraints on American freedom of action to pursue its own interests in the world. Coupled with the economic nationalism of the Trump administration's trade policies (i.e., the introduction of trade tariffs, pulling out of existing trade agreements/organizations, and engaging in trade wars with China and others), these actions represent a shift in American policy back toward the pre-World War II model that emphasized a more protectionist economic posture and "go it alone" approach to international affairs. It has not, however, been a full-scale return to isolationism, since the Trump administration continues to engage selectively on economic and political

issues (whether it be on trade agreements like NAFTA or Iran), and in some areas has actively pursued specific policy objectives. But these efforts have not generally involved or engaged allies or international organizations and have been more unilateral (or “go it alone”) in approach. Since there is little international support for most of the Trump administration’s actions (e.g., on climate change, economic protectionism, the Iran Nuclear Deal, Russia, the value of existing trade agreements, etc.), the President has felt forced to respond with a consistently unilateral approach characterized by limited cooperation or concessions to those who disagree with him. It is an approach that seeks to push through policies that Trump personally believes in, but one that does not necessarily build or maintain alliances.

Russia Policy

Since Russia has historically been the primary target of American containment policy, it is useful to examine whether the Trump administration’s policies have remained consistent or diverged from previous administrations. With the collapse of the Soviet Union in 1991, though Russia under Yeltsin was no longer the enemy and was even included under the Partnership for Peace, former-members of the Warsaw Pact in Eastern Europe, as well as former-Soviet republics (like the Baltic states) sought and received NATO membership to ward against any renewed Russian threat. The NATO alliance remained intact even after the Warsaw Pact was eliminated, and former-republics like Ukraine and Georgia openly discussed joining the Alliance. It was this continued containment policy and eastward creep of NATO under H. W. Bush, Clinton, and W. Bush that informed the views of Vladimir Putin and led to the more aggressively, defensive Russian foreign policy we see today.

In essence, containment policy remained intact and from the Russian perspective, continued to creep eastward. The Obama administration’s overt support for the 2014 uprising in Kiev that toppled the elected, pro-Russian government of Viktor Yanukovich was seen by Putin as a Western coup de etat and an attempt to bring Ukraine into both NATO and the EU. In response, Russia seized Crimea and supported a separatist uprising in eastern Ukraine, resulting in the application of extensive (and painful) Western economic sanctions (or compellence) on the Russian economy in an unsuccessful effort to force a withdrawal. Thus, the policy environment inherited by Trump in 2016 was one of enormous hostility between Moscow and the West, including active Western efforts

to increase economic sanctions on Russia, intense Russian interference in elections in Western Europe and the United States, and clear efforts by the Obama administration to pursue containment of Moscow through coordination with regional allies. Obviously, pursuing containment policy would have required the new Trump administration to maintain these efforts and potentially apply defensive uses of force to counter the attacks on these electoral systems.

But, in the face of massive Russian interference in the 2016 US elections, and continuing interference in elections across Europe, there was instead a general unwillingness by the White House to accept Moscow's involvement—despite universal concurrence by the American and European intelligence communities about the meddling. This included consensus across the entire US intelligence community, Senate testimony from Trump's own Director of National Intelligence Dan Coats, and findings flowing from the Mueller Report suggesting ongoing Russian influence operations (see, ODNI 2017; DOJ Special Counsels Report 2019). Nor were *significant* steps to counter further interference in future elections taken by either the White House or Congress, leaving the entire system vulnerable to further Russian attacks in 2020 (see, DOJ Special Counsels Report 2019; Barnes and Goldman 2019; Schmitt et al. 2019; Stone 2019).

Such a non-response to clearly compellent actions by a hostile power is unprecedented in US foreign policy history. In this sense, the Trump administration has refused to employ a defensive use of force to prevent or minimize future damage from Russian (or other state) interference, nor has it sought to employ compellent uses of force to punish Moscow or sought to establish deterrence against such future acts through threats of retaliation. The White House resisted imposing new sanctions on Moscow (until forced by Congress), and focused more attention upon criticizing NATO than Russia, to the point that NATO member states have openly questioned Washington's commitment to European defense. The EU was even listed by Trump as an economic adversary and a target of trade tariffs, while largely ignoring European security issues. Moscow's continued interference in eastern Ukraine and annexation of Crimea were answered with mild condemnations, general praise for Putin, and only insignificant anti-tank arms sales to Kiev. At the same time, Russia's influence in the Middle East greatly expanded with its successful Syrian intervention to support its ally, the Assad regime. Past administrations pursued traditional containment policies involving the building

alliances, working with allies, and opposing expansions of an opponent's influence outside of their regions. In this sense, the Trump administration has departed from traditional containment policies toward Russia, and avoided the kinds of defensive, compellent, or deterrent uses of force to constrain further actions threatening US security.

China Policy

Containment has also been viewed as important approach regarding another major American rival, China. The Clinton, Bush, and Obama administrations all took steps to strengthen the US strategic position in Asia and support smaller states that were feeling the pressure of Chinese economic and military growth. American foreign policy focused upon strengthening the existing military relationships with Japan and South Korea, enhancing Taiwan's security through US arms sales, emphasizing naval exercises meant to assert "right of free passage" through international waters claimed by China in the South China Sea, and the building of strategic partnerships with Vietnam, the Philippines, and Australia. Washington also began building strategic relations with India, a fierce rival of China, to contain Beijing's push for influence in the Indian Ocean.

In addition to these military measures, efforts at the containment of China also took the form of economic agreements with many East Asian countries in the hopes of reducing their vulnerability to Chinese economic pressure. This would eventually lead to the Obama administration's military "pivot" to Asia and the development of the 2016 Trans-Pacific Partnership (TPP). This trade agreement was meant to counter growing Chinese economic influence by creating a partnership, led by the United States, comprising most of the major East Asian economies. Its goal was to insulate these Asian states from "going it alone" against China's growing economic might while firmly anchoring them into a Western economic system (including the United States, Canada, and Mexico). Ideally, this would maintain and strengthen Washington's political influence in Asia and serve as a counter to China's growing influence. Indeed, it was to be the Western answer to the Chinese "Belt-and-Road" initiative, which is currently expanding Beijing's economic influence across Asia through economic aid and infrastructure development for countries along the path of this new "Silk Road."

What has been the Trump administration's policy approach in terms of containment and use of force toward China? In this case, the White House has pursued somewhat contradictory paths regarding Beijing.

Campaigning on an anti-China platform, Trump railed against the Obama administration's TPP initiative and criticized the cost of the military partnerships with long-time US allies like Japan and South Korea. Upon assuming office, Trump carried out his threat to withdraw from the TPP, essentially undercutting the main source of leverage possessed by the United States to actually contain Chinese economic influence. This essentially ceded Asia to China in the economic realm, which Trump accelerated by adopting hard line trade policies with US allies in the region (like S. Korea and Japan). Even with new bilateral trade agreements with these individual countries, this still does not replace the influence that Washington might have wielded from within the TPP—and pulls the United States out of the equation making the TPP much weaker for all the remaining states in resisting Chinese economic dominance.

In essence, the Trump administration has moved away from the more traditional containment approach pursued by his predecessors in favor of a more unilateral American approach to China. After some early flirtations with personal summitry between Trump and President Xi, the White House has pursued compellence against Beijing in the form of trade tariffs on Chinese goods in order to punish Beijing enough to get trade concessions for lifting them. However, China retaliated in-kind and by mid-2019, the two countries had moved into a full-blown trade war harming both economies without forcing major concessions from Beijing. Moreover, Trump's unilateral approach focusing upon compellence alone effectively undercut the application of a broader containment approach using allies and a competing TPP trade agreement that would have augmented compellence and increased its effectiveness. Though Trump has continued prior administration's policies, like arms sales to Taiwan and naval vessels asserting free passage in the South China Sea, the Administration continues to lack an answer to China's military expansion and buildup in the region (just like previous administrations). That Washington began the game with a weak hand of cards to reign in Chinese influence is certainly the case—and it is unfair to blame the Trump administration for the entirety of the problem. But, as the White House is likely to discover, it is always possible to make a bad hand worse by throwing away your few good cards.

The Uses of Force Under Trump

In terms of the defensive use of force, the Trump administration has continued a pattern similar to previous administrations by supporting

large defense budgets and building up American military capabilities. Indeed, Trump has pushed for increases in the defense budget in each annual request to Congress, a departure from the final years of the Obama administration when defense spending declined. And the Trump administration has so far not engaged in the kind of “pre-emptive” defensive uses of force like the Bush administration did in Iraq, but true to the Make America Great Again mantra, has focused upon building up US military capabilities independent of considerations of allies or alliance requirements. In the realm of deterrent uses of force, the Trump administration has also continued to follow the pattern of previous administrations by maintaining a robust nuclear deterrent along with sufficient conventional forces to create a measure of conventional deterrence as well. Moreover, Trump has built upon the efforts of previous administrations and sought to augment the existing American nuclear arsenal by pursuing a large-scale modernization of strategic forces that would enhance deterrence. In looking for the areas in which the Trump administration diverges from his predecessors’ general patterns, it is in the compellent and swaggering uses of force that the primary differences are seen—especially as they relate to efforts at containment policy.

Obviously, compellence has been a use of force typically utilized by previous American presidents, both during and after the Cold War. From Korea and Vietnam to overthrowing regimes in Guatemala and Iran during the 1950s, from George Bush’s use of force in 1991 against Iraq to liberate Kuwait to his son’s overthrow of the Taliban in Afghanistan in 2001 and the invasion of Iraq—administrations have often reached for the military tool to advance US interests. And as noted earlier, compellence can involve more than purely a military approach, but can involve the use of economic sanctions and containment policy to inflict pain on other nation’s economies to compel them to cede to our demands. Containment was applied to Iraq after the First Gulf War for nearly a decade using trade embargoes and economic sanctions (like the U.N.’s “Oil for Food” program) to enforce U.N. resolutions and try to force Baghdad to open itself up to weapons inspections (e.g., Mueller and Mueller 1999). These sanctions continued until the US invasion and occupation of Iraq in 2003 which eliminated Saddam Hussein’s regime. Both North Korea and Iran have also been subject to harsh economic sanctions and attempts at containment by the United States and the international community over their nuclear programs across recent administrations. In these cases,

the Trump administration has, for the most part, continued with this approach.

For North Korea, which sparked a crisis during the Clinton administration over its withdrawal from the Nuclear Nonproliferation Treaty and movement toward developing nuclear weapons, it was threats to use force followed by diplomacy that resulted in the Agreed Framework (1994) that temporarily defused the situation (see, Preston 2001, 2007). As a result, Pyongyang agreed not to reprocess some 8000 fuel rods containing plutonium and not pursue testing of a weapon—an agreement which held until George W. Bush’s reneging on elements of the Framework and declaration of North Korea as being part of the “Axis of Evil” in 2003, which led to the North reprocessing the fuel rods and testing its first weapon in 2006. Throughout the remainder of the Bush administration and the Obama years, sanctions were again tightened to try (unsuccessfully) to deter the North from continuing its weapons program, along with unsuccessful efforts at negotiating a settlement through the Six Party Talks.

By the time the Trump administration came on the scene, North Korea had staged a series of nuclear tests, developed an arsenal estimated at between 10–30 warheads, and begun work on developing long-range missile delivery systems. Interestingly, Trump began issuing bellicose threats against Kim Jong-un, threatening war with the North over the nuclear program, then seemingly overnight, shifted direction to seek direct talks and a summit with Pyongyang. It is a common negotiating tactic used by Trump in both business and politics—attempt to bully an opponent and make extreme threats in the hopes of making them cave (e.g., whether it be trade wars, threats of military force, or lawsuits), then back down if this doesn’t work. In this sense, Trump tried a deterrent use of force with his threats to use military force against the North in an attempt to make them halt their program, only to shift to negotiations and diplomacy when the credibility of that threat was lacking. Over the next year, the Trump White House engaged with the North by holding two summits between the two leaders, and announced significant progress (despite a lack of visible signs of movement). This process appeared to stall in 2019 as North Korea condemned the US approach and stated that it would not cave into the extreme US demands for it to give up its weapons prior to a final agreement. To this point, the Trump administration has not returned to the military threats and rhetoric of its initial approach in response, perhaps recognizing that given North Korea’s conventional

and nuclear capabilities, a deterrent relationship had already developed on the peninsula. In reality, the costs of actually taking real compellent military action against the North far exceeds any possible benefit for the United States—a factor that also influenced Trump’s predecessors in their approaches to the Kim regime.

Similarly, a compellence strategy was attempted against Iran in an effort to force it to end its nuclear weapons program by previous administrations, taking the form of harsh international sanctions (coupled with the threat of military options if Tehran continued its nuclear path) during both the Bush and Obama administrations. Large US weapons sales to surrounding states (like Saudi Arabia and the Gulf States) were undertaken to provide a counterbalance to Tehran in the region and to allow these states to potentially counter Iranian expansion of its influence in what Middle East analysts describe as a Cold War between Saudi Arabia and Iran (see Hiro 2019).

In essence, it was an attempt at containment policy, with US allies surrounding Iran and being provided with military aid and American forces in the case of Iraq and Afghanistan. But, in the end, it was a failed attempt since even with oil sanctions and the buildup of alliances against it, Tehran was still able to expand its influence into Iraq, Syria, and Yemen while continuing its nuclear program. This led to threats by Israel and the United States to use force if Iran continued down this nuclear path, even as negotiations continued during the Obama years involving the P5+1 countries (Britain, France, Russia, China, and the United States, plus Germany and the European Union) with Iran (see, Preston 2013). Toward the end of the Obama administration, the combined compellent effects of the sanctions on the Iranian economy, the emergence of reform elements in Iran domestically (led by President Rouhani), and the diplomatic efforts of the P5+1 resulted in the Iran Nuclear Deal (or Preliminary Framework) in 2015. This agreement saw Tehran open up its facilities to international inspections, saw Iran transfer enriched materials out of the country, and put into place restrictions that would prevent any significant restart to their nuclear weapons program for 10–15 years (see, www.iaea.org). It was a tremendous achievement and defused a rapidly developing crisis, while allowing time for reform elements in Iran to gain strength over the coming decade to hopefully allow even more moderation of Iranian behavior.

For the Trump administration, however, the Iran Nuclear Deal became a favorite target during the campaign, with the President calling for the

United States to pull out of it (regardless of its actual merits) even before winning the election. And despite the fact that the Iranians were fully complying with the terms of the agreement according to IAEA inspectors, Trump pulled out of the agreement and began re-imposing the crippling economic sanctions that had earlier been lifted on Iranian oil exports and restored restrictions on Iran's access to international financial markets. American economic sanctions were even applied to states in the European Union who sought to maintain the Agreed Framework by continuing to invest and trade with Tehran.

Essentially, this compellence effort was intended to coerce the Iranians to renegotiate the agreement and expand it to other policy areas that had not been part of the original agreement (i.e., Iran's missile program, its support for Hezbollah and the Assad regime in Syria, for Houthi rebels in Yemen, and Shia militias in Iraq). There was also a strongly held view by opponents of the agreement (like new NSC Adviser John Bolton and Secretary of State Pompeo) that unless it totally denuclearized Iran, it would merely delay and not prevent a nuclear-armed Iran from arising in the future. It was also an approach supported by American allies like Israel and Saudi Arabia, who wanted the United States to eliminate their regional rival, and who pushed both the Bush and Obama administrations to militarily pre-empt the Iranian nuclear program and not agree to any nuclear deal with Tehran.

By late-2019, after withdrawing from the nuclear deal and adopting a policy of "maximum pressure" involving increased US military deployments to the region and repeated White House threats to use force (including Trump acknowledging to the press that he called off a June military strike on Iran at the last minute due to a concern over potential Iranian casualties), the effort at compellence showed few signs of success. Iran's leadership responded with defiance, harassing and sabotaging tankers in the Strait of Hormuz (signaling a warning regarding their ability to restrict trade in that vulnerable waterway) and warned that while it wished to abide by the nuclear deal, Tehran would begin enriching fuel beyond agreed upon levels if the United States continued to violate the accord and European states did not continue trade with it in defiance of American sanctions. As both sides escalated their rhetoric and provocative actions, with no sign that either is prepared to back down, it has greatly increased the dangers of unintended escalation and military conflict with Iran. Whether direct military compellence would eliminate

the Iranian program is highly questionable, and in the absence of American will to occupy the entire country (which is clearly lacking), potential Iranian retaliation could destabilize the entire region without accomplishing Trump's objective of moderating Iran's behavior (see, Preston 2007). And while it is possible to point to existing Iranian behavior as already destabilizing the region, what the nightmare scenario involves is a threat of destabilization that would be *far greater* than what currently exists in the region. For example, worldwide economic disruptions due to attacks on oil infrastructure or blockage of oil traffic through the Strait of Hormuz, greater Iranian efforts to disrupt and destabilize Iraq, Afghanistan, and the Gulf States, and in the worst case scenario, a full-scale war with Iran that would make Iraq seem mild by comparison and cause extensive damage to oil production facilities throughout the region.

In an example of pure compellence, Trump did deploy US forces to Syria to combat the Islamic State and, along with Kurdish allies, succeeded in taking back the final strongholds of the group in Syria and Iraq. It was a policy success, certainly in contrast to the Obama administration's cautious, largely inactive Syria policy that called for Assad's removal by Secretary of State Clinton, but resisted taking significant military action due to a lack of congressional and public support. Yet, despite the success of Trump's compellent actions in Syria, it became a continuation of muddled Syria policy due to the President's withdrawing of American forces before ISIS was totally eliminated (allowing it the potential to regroup), his leaving the Assad regime in power, ceding the area to growing Russian, Iranian, and Turkish influence (which quickly occupied the vacuum created by the American withdrawal), and his betrayal of America's Kurdish allies after our withdrawal left them at the mercy of the Turkish military.

Essentially, Syria illustrates a broader, more general pattern for the Trump administration, even when they effectively utilize compellent force to achieve policy ends. Namely, that the approaches are often short-term focused and lack any sort of long-term thinking or strategic vision. Though this pattern is certainly not unique to Trump, and has been a problem for many of his predecessors, in the current administration's case, it is more pronounced because it fits the "America First" (or "go it alone") policies that have no long-term end game. Almost inevitably, these have resulted in a withdrawal of American leadership and a vacuum of influence waiting to be filled by others. This was certainly the case in both Syria, where Assad, Russia, and Turkey moved into replace the

United States, and in Asia, where Trump's withdrawal from TPP ceded the region to Chinese influence. The undercutting of NATO and the EU resulted in a similar withdrawal of American leadership in Europe to the advantage of Russia. In essence, the notion of globalism and American leadership of the West, championed by every previous administration since 1945 has been abdicated by the Trump administration's approach (e.g., Ambrose and Brinkley 2010), which is the biggest point of divergence between current and past American policy.

Finally, the swaggering use of force has also been employed by the Trump administration in significant ways. For example, the desire by the Trump team to have a military parade at his inauguration festivities (which was resisted by the Pentagon) and later, a massive military parade for Veteran's Day in Washington, DC. (modeled after the French Bastille Day parade Trump observed in Paris) were clearly attempts at swaggering. They would have been large political, patriotic spectacles showing American military might that President Trump would have presided over to improve his domestic political image. Only after an outcry over the hundreds of millions of dollars in costs for such a parade (and the precedent it would set) did the Administration retreat, though Trump would eventually have a smaller military display at his Fourth of July political rally on the Mall in 2019. Though it is true that military parades have been presided over by presidents in the past, these usually were victory celebrations following conflicts like the First Gulf War in 1991. Generally, overt militarization of political events, where presidents would be appearing in a political capacity, have been avoided by his predecessors and seen as a violation of the American principle of a non-political military that is separate from politics.

The repeated deployments of US military forces to the Mexican border to deal with various "crises" of illegal immigration (e.g., to repel *hoards* of immigrants that didn't exist or migrant caravan's that never materialized at the border prior to the 2018 midterm elections) are also examples of swaggering for domestic political purposes. During rallies, the President emphasized his strength to supporters and the media alike by declaring that he was taking charge and sending the military to deal with the border crisis. That no real security threat existed to merit the troop deployments became clear when the deployments were reversed immediately after the midterm elections (and dropped from the President's talking points) with no outward sign of any physical changes in the border situation. That

an immigration problem exists policy-wise is beyond doubt and Washington has refused to address it for decades. However, if there truly were a massive invasion of dangerous immigrants, why only a few thousand troops? Why pull them out? Why not put the entire US military on the border to repel the invasion if it truly was one? It beggars the question of how much of the crisis is legitimate, how much is exaggerated, and how much is the issue being used for political advantage (swaggering).

Add to this the Administration's large defense budget increases, both promised during the election campaign and afterward, which were made without linkage to any specific security needs or for development of any particular capabilities to address concrete threats, and we see another swaggering use of force. It should be noted, however, that this swaggering use of force has a long history in American politics not just with Trump, but practically all of his predecessors as well.

Finally, swaggering is also illustrated by Trump's many campaign rallies that, unlike all of his predecessors, have continued to take place throughout his presidency—not just during the election campaigns. It has marked what has become a “perpetual campaign” approach by Trump, with rallies before adoring crowds allowing him to make strong claims about his tough policy stands on Mexico, immigration, China, Iran, and other political opponents. They are geared to demonstrate his political strength, power, and resolve to his base, and typically invoke nationalist, patriotic, or marshal rhetoric—all hallmarks of swaggering. It is one of the most unique aspects of the Trump presidency, and one that has been unusually effective at maintaining support from his base and capturing control of the media narrative—a very different kind of “bully pulpit.”

The Implications of Trump's Use of Force Patterns for US Security Policy

In comparing previous administrations' patterns of use of force with those of the Trump administration, it is clear that while there are some similarities, the current White House has markedly departed from traditional US security policy. The areas of closest similarity are those involving defensive and deterrent uses of force (where Trump has basically followed the patterns of previous administrations) and in compellent uses of force applied against smaller opponents. Trump's deployment and use of military force in Syria against the Islamic State, for instance, is not that dissimilar from the Obama administration's use of force in Afghanistan,

Iraq, and Libya. Both administrations sought to withdraw from foreign conflicts inherited from their predecessors, but neither was willing to apply force in a significant manner nor maintain the required American presence afterward to maintain stability in the regions. For example, Obama, along with NATO allies, took down the Khadafi regime in Libya with airpower (in support of local militias)—but then left a chaotic scene behind as soon as regime change had occurred, which has continued as a civil war in that country since that time.

Similarly, George W. Bush utilized force to overthrow the Taliban in Afghanistan in 2001 and Saddam Hussein in Iraq in 2003, but in both cases did not go in with a large enough force structure to maintain security and prevent the situation from slipping into chaos (see, Preston 2011). In Afghanistan, this lack of focus, and the shift by the Bush administration to an invasion of Iraq that sucked most of the attention and resources away from that theater, resulted in a squandered opportunity during which the Karzai government was not strengthened and the Afghani military was not built up to prevent a return of the Taliban and Al-Qaeda. A similar pattern would emerge in Iraq during the Bush years, where the US military easily overthrew the Hussein regime, but was unprepared and insufficiently supplied to maintain security, prevent arms depots from falling into insurgent hands, or maintain order.

Obama, who campaigned on ending Bush's wars, proceeded to try to extricate American forces from both countries during his time in office, but this was done in a security environment in which the home governments in Baghdad and Kabul were unprepared and ill-equipped to maintain their security. The rapid advance of the Islamic State across much of western Iraq and the seizure of Mosul, as the Iraqi Army disintegrated and ran away, illustrated this problem. In all of these cases, compellent force easily succeeded in overthrowing the existing governments and accomplishing regime change in the near term. The problem is that, as Colin Powell famously observed in his pottery barn analogy, "you break it, you bought it"—and nation-building is a much more difficult task than regime change and requires patience and a long-term strategy that Washington (regardless of administration) seems ill-equipped to provide (see, Woodward 2006, 2008).

In Syria, Trump has repeated this pattern with compellent use of force. Supporting its Kurdish allies, American air power and ground forces made possible the taking back of all the remaining territory occupied by the Islamic State caliphate. Assad regime forces, backed by their Iranian

and Russian allies, were also attacking the ISIS strongholds at the same time in their own application of compellent force. But before the final Islamic State strongholds were even taken, Trump was announcing a withdrawal of US forces from the country without providing protection to his Kurdish allies (who had done the majority of the ground fighting) against Turkey. Moreover, the American withdrawal left the Assad regime victorious and empowered both Russia and Iran to determine what the final outcome of the Syrian conflict would be. It was a startling retreat of American influence and leadership that created a vacuum quickly filled by opponents of the United States, with no real end game in Washington for influencing the final outcome. Complicating matters was the fact that whether it was Trump or Obama, there was no political or public support in the United States for larger American troop deployments or use of force in Syria, resulting in “minimal” approaches that both failed to utilize the compellent force required for nation-building or have the long-term patience required to see such a policy succeed.

In terms of containment policy, the Trump administration has also dramatically departed from traditional US foreign and security policy. In terms of Russia, it was clear during the Bush, Obama, and Trump administrations that use of military compellence against Moscow, regardless of its actions in Georgia, Syria, or Ukraine, were unrealistic due to the clear dangers of escalation and Russia’s conventional and nuclear deterrence capabilities. Indeed, this general deterrence is why containment policy became the long preferred policy solution for American policymakers (both during and after the Cold War), since it contained Soviet (and then Russian) power through military buildups and the use of alliances (like NATO) without requiring actual conflict in Europe. It created a stability that allowed the Cold War to end without becoming a hot one, and helped support a political environment allowing for the creation of the European Union. It has been a policy that continued unabated across every post-WWII American presidency until the Trump administration.

After taking office, Trump didn’t take any actions against the blatant and overt Russian interference in either the US or European elections, criticized and questioned the value of NATO (and the EU), as well as our mutual security commitment, and appeared to support Putin against our traditional European allies over Russian misbehavior. These actions (never undertaken by previous administrations) undercut US containment policy against Russia and weakened the EU/NATO. It also had the serious consequence of not deterring further Russian aggression or developing

defensive uses of force to counter our military or cyber vulnerabilities to Moscow. Indeed, the White House shut down the cyber security unit tasked with countering Russian activities at State Department and Senate Republicans have refused to take steps to increase security and reduce the vulnerabilities of our electoral system to outside attack.

A similar pattern of undercutting allies and dismantling trade agreements (like the TPP) that were meant to counter China have also led to a collapse of American containment policy against Beijing. The abandonment of TPP and attacks on the existing trade agreements with allies like South Korea and Japan (though merited in some cases) broke down the existing economic containment that previous administrations had sought to put into place. And again, bilateral trade agreements with individual countries cannot replace the unified strength that would have been possible under TPP. Coupled with Trump's outreach to North Korea, that did not take into account Seoul or Tokyo's legitimate security concerns, and his comments questioning the deployment of American forces in the Asian theater (due to cost, while ignoring US security requirements, as well as that, in the case of Japan, it is cheaper to station naval vessels there than in Washington State due to Tokyo's subsidies), have seriously undercut American leadership and alliances. Moreover, the growing United States–China trade war and absence of the United States in the TPP has forced a number of countries in the region to work out their own deals with China, especially in the wake of the massive “belt-and-road” initiative that is greatly enhancing Chinese influence throughout Asia. This unilateral withdrawal of American leadership has created a political and economic vacuum in Asia that has quickly been filled by Beijing. It is effectively a reversal of the previous seventy years of American foreign policy and has left the United States weaker and our allies more vulnerable.

In the final analysis, Trump's patterns of use of force have in some ways been totally consistent with past administrations, especially regarding defensive and deterrent uses of force (e.g., large defense budgets, modernization and emphasis on strategic forces, etc.). Certainly, the President's use of swaggering has significantly diverged from that of his predecessors, who mostly emphasized their commitment to and level of defense spending instead of the large military parades and troop deployments pursued by the current White House. In terms of compellence, the Trump administration has applied it in some ways similar to previous

administrations (e.g., Syria), but has generally adopted a more unilateral approach emphasizing mostly economic instruments (i.e., trade tariffs against China, sanctions against Venezuela, etc.). However, the most singular departure from previous policy, and the one that has significantly harmed US security interests, has been the Trump administration's undercutting of existing containment policy. By taking actions knocking away this central pillar of post-WWII American security policy (e.g., his hostility directed at NATO/EU, withdrawal from the TPP in Asia, scuttling of the Iran Nuclear Deal, and his embrace of Russia and North Korea while ignoring much of their misbehavior), Trump has undercut deterrence, weakened our defensive use of force and political influence by questioning our alliances (like NATO or US forces in Asia), and ceded a great deal of US influence in critical regions to adversaries. The real question moving into 2020 is whether or not the Trump administration will use actual military compellence against Iran or are these threats just furthering the extreme, negotiating tactics fitting the President's style?

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The New Normal?: Public Opinion, Partisan Division, and the Trump Doctrine

Douglas C. Foyle

Our moments of greatest strength came when politics ended at the water's edge. ... I will seek a foreign policy that all Americans, whatever their party, can support....

—Republican Presidential Candidate Donald J. Trump, April 27, 2016

It has been said that foreign policy is really domestic policy with its hat on. In a sense, this is true.

—Democratic Vice President Hubert H. Humphrey, June 29, 1966

In this quotation from the 2016 campaign, Republican presidential candidate Donald Trump embraced the common rhetoric of the separate realms of domestic and foreign policy and the desire for a bipartisan foreign policy. While partisan difference can reign in the domestic arena, so it goes, there is only one “American” view regarding foreign policy. It harkens to the time in 1966 when scholar Aaron Wildavsky (1966)

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argued for the “two-presidencies” thesis that provided an analytical explanation for partisan division at home and bipartisan unity abroad. Yet, somewhat counter to the common assertion that “politics stops at the water’s edge,” Democratic Vice President Hubert Humphrey’s observation implies that the processes of foreign policy mirror that of domestic policy. Humphrey’s *Mad Men* era metaphor imagines an individual at home (the domestic policy) who puts “on a hat” to go outside (the foreign policy) to adopt a more formal personal presentation. While the policy’s presentation might be “dressed up,” with a hat on, there is no real distinction between the individual at home and outside or the politics of domestic and foreign policy. Or, put a little more bluntly, as Trump White House Chief of Staff Mick Mulvaney said on October 17, 2019, “And I have news for everybody. Get over it. There’s going to be political influence in foreign policy.”

In considering recent trends in public opinion on foreign policy, this chapter suggests that the reality of current foreign policy reflects a blend of the views expressed in the Trump and Humphrey quotations. At the general level and particularly on the foreign policy issues the public cares the most about, broad agreement across parties exists. As the questions about policies become more specific and more closely associated with the Trump Doctrine, greater partisan divisions emerge suggesting a blurring of the lines between domestic and foreign policy. Although a deep examination of why this is the case is beyond the scope of this chapter, suffice it to say that all the factors central to the opinion and foreign policy process, such as information acquisition, attitude formation, media effects, presidential leadership, and elite cuing now mirror the processes observed at the domestic level (Foyle 2017). As observed in the public’s reaction to Trump’s foreign policies as president, the public has largely responded to his policies as they have to his domestic policies. That is, the public views his policies through a decidedly partisan lens such that the partisan divisions regarding Trump and his policies over domestic issues now largely occur over the foreign policies the Trump Doctrine emphasizes. In many senses, the Trump Doctrine has completed the blurring of the lines between domestic and foreign policy attitudes such that foreign policy might no longer even have “its hat on” as Vice-President Humphrey suggested a half a century ago.

PARTISAN DIVISION AND FOREIGN POLICY CONSENSUS

Much has rightly been made in recent discussions about potential “partisan gaps” in foreign policy attitudes where Republicans and Democrats in polls express support or opposition to issues at varying levels (Chicago Council on Global Affairs 2015). This chapter distinguishes between smaller gaps between the parties where majorities might even agree with each other and larger gaps where majorities disagree with each other. In this chapter, “partisan gaps” will refer to differences in attitudes between Republicans and Democrats on policy issues (e.g., 65% of Republicans favoring a policy and 73% of Democrats favoring the same policy results in a partisan gap of 7%). Although partisan gaps can be measured statistically (Holsti 2004), this paper will rely on describing opinion differences which is common in more policy-focused research (Chicago Council on Global Affairs 2015). “Partisan division” will refer to a particular type of partisan gap where majorities of the two parties oppose each other (e.g., 28% Republican support and 73% Democratic support). While partisan gaps have long been a source of interest for scholars (Foyle 2017; Holsti 2004) and observers of public opinion on foreign policy (Chicago Council on Global Affairs 2015), examining the extent of partisan division will help us consider the implications of these attitudes for foreign policy. A 5 point difference between the parties where 75% of one party and 70% of the other favor an issue is less politically important from a partisan perspective than situations where majorities oppose each other. Of course, not all partisan divisions are created alike with a 75–25 division (and large partisan gap) likely more substantively important than a 52–48 division (and small partisan gap). Although this chapter discusses both partisan gaps and partisan divisions, the main focus is on partisan division and especially those with larger partisan gaps.

Public opinion’s increasingly partisan divide over some foreign policy issues reflects a long-term shift in attitudes (Pew 2017). Though partisanship and ideology as a basis of foreign policy attitudes are well-established (Holsti 2004), the extent and depth of current partisan gaps are new. In the past, partisan gaps on foreign policy, though measurable and potentially quite large, less often rose to the level of partisan division on highly salient foreign policy issues. While this shift had begun before Trump became president, President Trump’s focus in words or actions on particular foreign policy issues, such as immigration and climate change,

exacerbated and accelerated underlying trends. In this sense, Trump's presidency amplifies a shift already underway rather than instigating it.

The Trump Doctrine and Partisan Gaps in Foreign Policy

This chapter examines the public's reaction to Trump's foreign policies. We consider them in the context of previous public attitudes on threats to the United States, goals and priorities for foreign policy, foreign policy means, and specific substantive foreign policies. This evaluation focuses on the public's reactions to core aspects of the Trump Doctrine with attention to partisan similarities and differences. This analysis points to the varying effect of the Trump Doctrine with some public attitudes unchanged, some new differences created in opinion, and old partisan differences exacerbated.

A core finding of this analysis is that areas of agreement between partisans are roughly shaped like an "upside-down pyramid" with more agreement on general perspectives (e.g., role of the United States in the world, importance of trade) and increasingly more division as the issues become more specific (e.g., approach toward China, tariffs). At the broadest level, a bipartisan consensus agrees that the United States should remain engaged in the world. More mid-range views about foreign policy goals, priorities, and threats reflect a similar partisan agreement on the main problems facing the United States (terrorism, spread of nuclear weapons, danger from cyber-attacks). However, on issues that the public prioritizes less (e.g., immigration, climate change), strongly partisan differences emerge. Since these lower priority issues are both prone to partisan division and the core areas of focus for the Trump Doctrine, current foreign policy debates give an outsized impression of partisan division on foreign policy and obscures areas of core bipartisan consensus.

Attitudes about the Trump Doctrine's policy components display a similar pattern. A central approach of the Trump Doctrine is the willingness and ability to go it alone in foreign policy. At the general level, a bipartisan consensus breaks with the Trump Doctrine on its more unilateralist underpinnings and regarding allies with both Republicans and Democrats supporting alliances and alliance partners. More narrowly, partisan divisions emerge over international organizations with Republicans dubious and Democrats more favorable. Moving more specifically, with some exceptions, the public largely divides along party

lines regarding *the substance* of issues the Trump Doctrine has emphasized (e.g., immigration). When policies toward specific issues (Iran, Russia, China, trade, immigration) are considered, moderate agreement on broader issues gives way to more differences on policy specifics (e.g., “getting tough” or not on a particular issue). And of course it depends on what those words mean and how they are understood. As discussed later in the chapter, little public consensus supporting the Trump Doctrine exists regarding *how* the policies on these issues should be pursued with the public either disagreeing with the broad Trump Doctrine approach (alliances) or splitting along partisan lines over policies to achieve American goals (tariffs to achieve trade goals).

Stepping back to think about what these attitudes portend for American foreign policy, the strong and prominent disagreements that exist over some substantive issues and means raised by the Trump Doctrine mask a bipartisan consensus on many core priorities, and approaches. These findings suggest that there is no necessary reason that the foreign policy consensus has permanently fractured. The attention by the political system on the disagreements gives the impression of more division than actually might exist if the leaders, in particular the president, emphasized issues around which agreement currently exists rather than highlighting those issues on which strong partisan disagreement reigns. At least some reporting suggests that political and electoral calculations provide a partial explanation for why the president focuses on issues of partisan division (Toosi 2019). It pays politically to highlight those issues where the public, especially one’s partisans, agree with you and disagree with your opponent. The political incentives would seem to spur politicians to continue to emphasize points of disagreement. Because foreign policy now operates like domestic politics where politicians emphasize issues that favor their political positions, it is unlikely that the perception of partisan division will change. Since politics has made partisan political bases more important, party leaders tend to emphasize those issues that motivate their partisans. We will likely see more division in future because of this political incentive even though there is fundamental agreement on the basics. While the political interests of political figures will likely be served by this approach, the foreign policy issues that the public considers the most important and around which partisan consensus exists will continue to receive relatively less attention. It also begs the question of whether United States foreign policy is being served by this process.

THE ROLE OF UNITED STATES

At a very general level, there appears to be some continued and long-standing agreement on whether or not the United States should take an active role in world affairs. The Chicago Council on Global Affairs has posed a repeated question asking whether the United States should “take an active part in world affairs” or “stay out” since 1974. Since that time, with small variations, roughly two-thirds have favored an active part and one-third favored staying out. Notable exceptions occurred in 1982 and 2014, when the United States was in the depths of an economic recession. In 2019, 69% of the public favored an active part, with little variation among Democrats (75%), Republicans (69%), and Independents (64%). While some differences exist on the type of role the United States should play (dominant leader, shared role, or no leadership role), these partisan gaps do not rise to partisan division with Democrats (75%), Republicans (51%), and Independents (69%) all favoring shared leadership (Chicago Council on Global Affairs 2019). These attitudes changed very little since the question was first asked before the Trump presidency in 2015 (Democrats 72%, Republicans 57%, independents 63%, and overall 66% favoring shared leadership). None of these results suggests a significant shift in attitudes since Trump’s election.

In a question directed more closely at a potential inward looking inclination that is present in the Trump administration rhetoric, a slightly different wording of a similar poll hints at some small changes at the margins. A 2017 Pew poll asked whether “It’s best for the future of our country to be active in world affairs” or “we should pay less attention to problems overseas.” Before Trump’s election in 2014, both Democrats (58%) and Republicans (60%) thought it was best to pay less attention to foreign affairs and roughly 1/3 favored being active in world affairs (38% of Democrats and 36% of Republicans). With the election of Trump, 2017 Republican attitudes remained consistent (54% favoring less attention and 39% supporting an active role). Conversely, Democratic attitudes flipped, with a majority favoring an active role (56%) and a minority (39%) supporting paying less attention to foreign affairs (Pew Research Center 2017). This implies that while the Trump foreign policy did not affect Republican attitudes, the Trump administration’s inclination for withdrawal spurred a reactive response in Democrats so much so that a partisan division emerged between Republicans (54% less attention) and Democrats (56% active role). Perhaps closer to Trump’s “put America

first” approach was a question asking whether the United States should “follow its own national interests” or “take into account the interests of its allies.” A modest change occurred after Trump’s election, with Democrats shifting toward considering allied interests (62% in 2016 to 74% in 2017) while Republicans shifted in favor of focusing on the national interest (from 43 to 54%) creating partisan division. This shift would seem to suggest that Republicans are inclining toward the Trump approach to “put America first” while Democrats are moving away (59% of the overall public favored considering allies while 36% supported the America first view) (Pew Research Center 2017).

The simple explanation of these attitudes is perhaps that the “pay less attention to allied interests” approach has become more closely associated with Trump in the period since the question was first asked in 2014. Before Trump’s emergence in 2015, a significant withdrawal sentiment in the Democratic Party was voiced by Vermont Senator Bernie Sanders. As Trump emphasized “putting America first,” a significant proportion of the Democrats likely shifted away from this policy stance. This shift in Democratic attitudes hints at other growing partisan divisions on more specific foreign policy inclinations. The end result is that foreign policy attitudes shifted, with Republicans aligning themselves with a core component of the Trump Doctrine and Democrats inclined otherwise. At the same time, these shifts occurred in a context in which the public preferred that the president focus on domestic policy rather than foreign policy with little partisan variation. With the overall sample in 2019 believing it is “more important for President Trump to focus on” domestic policy at 69%, Republicans (74%) and Democrats (66%) agreed. Dating back to the Bill Clinton administration in 1993, this poll indicated a domestic policy focus favored by a public majority (often by two-thirds or more) with only one exception (at the height of the Iraq War in January 2007) (Pew Research Center 2019). Contextually then, while this chapter focuses on foreign policy attitudes, domestic issues consistently remain the public’s most salient concerns, especially the state of the economy.

FOREIGN POLICY GOALS AND PRIORITIES

When questions move from broad inclinations on foreign policy to more specific goals, clear partisan divisions emerge that closely align with partisan responses to the Trump Doctrine. Across a number of items, Republicans favor policies associated with Trump’s policies while

Democrats fall in opposition. A late-2018 Pew Survey (Pew Research Center 2018) polled the public on 23 questions regarding whether an issue should be a “top priority,” “some priority,” or “no priority” when “thinking about long-range foreign policy goals.” Partisan division existed on about half (10 of 23) of these questions (see Table 7.1). Compared to the previous time the question was asked by Pew (Pew Research Center 2013), only 3 of 13 issues exhibited partisan division (Democrats favored “strengthening the United Nations” 50%/25%, “dealing with global climate change” 57%/16% compared to Republicans while Republicans favored “reducing illegal immigration” 62%/38%). On the other 10 issues, partisan gaps were small.

Two things are notable from the 2013 to 2018 comparison. First, gaps that existed in 2013 continued largely unchanged into 2018. The 2018 public remained as divided on climate change, illegal immigration, and strengthening the UN as before (as this chapter defines it, given a small decline in the Democratic support for the strengthening of the United Nations, the difference no longer exhibited partisan division). Given the

Table 7.1 Foreign policy priorities: partisan division

<i>% top priority</i>	<i>Republican</i>	<i>Democrat</i>	<i>Total</i>
<i>Majority support</i>			
Taking measures to protect the United States from terrorism	84	61	72
Protecting jobs of American workers	81	65	71
Preventing spread of WMD	64	68	66
<i>Partisan division, Democrats support</i>			
Improving relationships with allies	44	70	58
Dealing with global climate change	22	64	46
Reducing spread of infectious diseases	44	56	51
Limiting power and influence of Russia	32	52	42
<i>Partisan division, Republicans support</i>			
Maintaining US military advantage over all other countries	70	34	49
Reducing illegal immigration into the United States	68	20	42
Getting other countries to assume more of the costs of maintaining world order	56	26	40
Reducing our trade deficit with foreign countries	54	33	42
Limiting power and influence of Iran	52	29	39
Promoting US business interests abroad	51	40	45

Source Pew Research Center (2018)

priority placed on the issues of illegal immigration (by Republicans) and climate change (by Democrats), the stability of these differences is not surprising.

Second, a moderate degree of partisan consensus exists regarding support for “protecting the United States from terrorism,” “protecting the jobs of American workers,” and “preventing the spread of WMD.” Interestingly, these are the three most supported priorities. Items not supported by either party are items that traditionally receive sparse support and might fall into the category of political and economic development such as promoting human rights, improving living standards elsewhere, and promoting democracy. Others, might fall within the category of a general “pulling back” of the American public and letting others take care of themselves such as limiting North Korea’s power, strengthening the United Nations, preventing genocide, limiting China’s influence, aiding refugees, and solving the Israeli/Palestinian conflict. Taken together, lower support for these priorities could be seen as some underlying support for the inward realignment of United States foreign policies toward domestic factors.

That said, perhaps most important is the third factor, which is that the breadth of issues that divide the two parties has grown in a manner that aligns with the components of the Trump Doctrine with Republican support and Democrat opposition or vice versa. The strongest divisions over priorities emerge from issues that either divided the public previously that Trump has emphasized (climate change, illegal immigration) or seem to be a reaction in favor of or opposition to Trump’s foreign policies (improving relationships with allies, maintaining US military advantage, reducing the trade deficit, limiting Russian influence, greater burden sharing, and limiting Iranian influence). Simply put, the public has responded to the Trump Doctrine based on its partisan perspectives.

A similar pattern is notable in looking at foreign policy goals (see Table 7.2 Chicago Council on Global Affairs 2018). Although question items varied from 2015 (Chicago Council on Global Affairs 2015) which prevents a direct item by item comparison, the existing questions align with the Pew poll results. The long-standing questions ask respondents to indicate whether the foreign policy goal is very important, somewhat important, or not an important goal at all. Comparisons are normally made among those responding that the item is a very important goal. In 2015, partisan division existed on six of the 14 issues polled. Two of these

Table 7.2 Foreign policy goals: partisan division

<i>% very important goal</i>	<i>Republicans</i>	<i>Democrats</i>	<i>Independents</i>	<i>Overall</i>
<i>Majority support</i>				
Preventing the spread of nuclear weapons	74	76	66	72
Protecting the jobs of American workers	79	65	67	69
Improving America's standing in the world	53	68	55	60
<i>Partisan division, Democrats favor</i>				
Improving America's reputation with the world	39	73	54	58
Strengthening the United Nations	29	61	34	43
Promoting international trade	37	56	43	46
Defending our allies' security	38	53	36	43
<i>Partisan division, Republicans favor</i>				
Controlling and reducing illegal immigration	71	20	43	42
Maintaining superior military power worldwide	70	41	47	51
Reducing our trade deficit with foreign countries	53	34	42	42
<i>Minority support</i>				
Protecting weaker nations against foreign aggression	24	42	25	31

Source Chicago Council on Global Affairs (2018)

questions (regarding superior military power and controlling illegal immigration) were repeated in 2018 with continued division. Four questions on goals in which gaps existed were not repeated in 2018 (a majority of Democrats favored combatting world hunger, improving access to clean water in other parts of the world, limiting climate change, and safeguarding against global financial instability).

In the 2018 survey, partisan division existed on seven of the 14 issues polled. Republicans favored goals of “controlling and reducing illegal immigration,” “maintaining superior military power worldwide,” and “reducing our trade deficit with foreign countries.” Each of these items directly engaged core components of the Trump Doctrine. Democrats favored issues directly responsive to the Trump Doctrine where they supported “improving America’s reputation in the world,”

“strengthening the United Nations,” “promoting international trade,” and “defending our allies’ security.”

On goals directly related to the Trump Doctrine, polarization is apparent. On the two repeated questions, partisan division seems to have gotten marginally stronger. Between 2015 and 2018, the goal of maintaining superior military power received 1% greater support from Republicans and 7% less Democratic support, while Democratic support for reducing illegal immigration dropped 16% and Republican support increased 5%.

The pattern that emerges in the goals and priorities is that the partisan foundations for the Trump Doctrine existed prior to Trump’s emergence as a candidate in public opinion on several core issues that are part of “Making American Great Again,” including favoring increased American military power, focusing more on the United States, limiting the influence of international organizations, and preventing illegal immigration. These Trump Doctrine components represent goals supported by Republican segments of the population. For their part, Democrats have aligned against these goals and added others in reaction to the Trump Doctrine (improving America’s reputation, protecting American allies, limiting Russian influence). Beyond these differences, there is a core of agreement across parties against terrorism, for limiting the spread of nuclear weapons and in favor of protecting American jobs. It should be noted that these areas of consensus are in the top handful of foreign policy goals supported dating back a number of years. In total, Americans agree on the core goals and priorities for American foreign policy. Serious partisan differences on secondary foreign policy priorities exist that happen to be directly associated with the Trump Doctrine.

ON THREATS

A similar pattern exists regarding foreign policy threats. The Pew Organization asked about whether “possible international concerns for the United States” are a major, minor, or not a threat “to the well-being of the United States” in 2015 and 2019 (Pew Research Center 2015, 2019). This allows a comparison between the times before Trump became president and polls after he became president (see Table 7.3). Overall, partisan division emerged on 3 of the 7 questions asked in each of the polls and the effect of the Trump Doctrine is apparent in the responses. As with goals, climate change as a threat continued to divide the parties, with

Table 7.3 Foreign policy threats: partisan division

% major threat	<i>Republican</i>		<i>Democrat</i>		<i>Total</i>	
	2019	2015	2019	2015	2019	2015
<i>Partisan division 2019</i>						
Global climate change	27		84		57	
		22		73		49
The Islamic militant group, known as ISIS	59		48		53	
The Islamic militant group in Iraq and Syria, known as ISIS		93		79		83
Russia's power and influence	35		65		50	
Growing authoritarianism in Russia		50		40		42
<i>Majority support 2019</i>						
Cyber-attacks from other countries	72		76		74	
Iran's nuclear program	65		50		57	
		79		52		62
China's power and influence	58		52		54	
China's emergence as a world power		62		44		49
North Korea's Nuclear Program	52		54		53	
		70		57		59

Source Pew Research Center (2015, 2019)

partisan division widening (a 51 point difference in 2015 became a 57 point difference in 2019). The shift in attitudes about Russia was the most notable change between the two polls and seems to reflect partisan reactions to the Trump Doctrine. While Republicans marginally saw Russia as a slightly greater threat than Democrats in 2015, attitudes had flipped and widened in the 2019 poll. Although question wording differences make a strict trend reading problematic (though see the same dynamic in the Chicago Council poll discussed next), two-thirds of Democrats saw “Russian power and influence” as a major threat while only one-third of Republicans agreed. Those familiar with Cold War party positions where Republican partisans were generally thought of as more critical of Russian/Soviet intentions will likely find this result surprising. These attitudes would seem to derive from what is perceived to be Trump’s more friendly approach to Russia and Democratic concerns about Russian meddling in the 2016 election. Finally, small partisan gaps emerged over ISIS, where members of both parties exhibited a strong drop in concern from 2015, likely in response to ISIS battlefield losses. Partisan differences

in 2015 over China disappeared in 2019, with majorities of both parties expressing concern (with Democrats tilting toward the Trump position). At least part of the apparent movement in attitudes about China from 2015 to 2019 likely derives from changes in question wording (China as a “world power” versus “China’s power and influence”). (A different 2019 survey that asked a question similar to the 2015 question [see Table 7.4] found continued partisan division regarding China). Partisan differences existed over the threat from the Israeli–Palestinian conflict in 2015, but the question was not repeated in 2019. Partisan consensus continued across the two polls on nuclear threats from North Korea and Iran. Both parties expressed strong concern over cyber-attacks. In all, while some baseline agreements exist, the 2019 findings highlight the partisan reaction to Trump’s foreign policies especially in regard to how the two parties viewed the threat from Russia and possibly on China.

Turning to the 2015 and 2019 Chicago Council polls on threats, a more evolving pattern exists in 2019 with growing division more apparent

Table 7.4 Foreign policy threats: partisan division

<i>% critical threat</i>	<i>Republican</i>	<i>Democrat</i>	<i>Total</i>
<i>Majority support</i>			
Cyber-attacks on U.S. Computer Networks	74	77	77
International Terrorism	76	67	69
North Korea’s Nuclear Program	67	62	61
Iran’s nuclear program	70	52	57
<i>Partisan division, Democrats support</i>			
Climate change	23	78	54
Foreign interference in American elections	37	69	53
Political polarization in the United States	43	51	49
The possibility of a new global arms race	43	55	48
The rise of authoritarianism around the world	30	52	42
<i>Partisan division, Republicans support</i>			
Large number of immigrants and refugees coming into the United States	78	19	43
The development of China as a world power	54	36	42
<i>Minority support</i>			
The military power of Russia	44	50	43
Political instability in the Middle East	45	38	38
Economic inequality in the world	14	42	29

Source Chicago Council on Global Affairs (2019)

(Chicago Council on Global Affairs 2015, 2019). As will be noted, some of this likely has to do with poll questions chosen to assess potential divisions. A long-standing question from the Chicago Council survey asks respondents to assess “possible threats to the vital interest of the United States in the next 10 years” and indicate whether each is a critical threat, important but not critical, or not an important threat at all. The 2015 survey listed 19 potential threats and only 3 threats found partisan division (% critical threat Democrat/Republican): Islamic fundamentalism (48/66); large numbers of immigrants and refugees coming into the United States (29/63); and climate change (58/17). As with the Pew surveys, no partisan division existed on the top seven problems: violent extremists carrying out a major terrorist attack in the United States (70/80); international terrorism (68/75); cyber-attacks on US computer networks (71/68); rise of violent extremist groups in Iraq and Syria (61/67); the possibility of unfriendly countries becoming nuclear powers (56/67); Iran’s nuclear program (56/67); and North Korea’s nuclear program (53/58). All of these issues received majority support overall from the entire sample.

The 2019 survey reflected the same core agreement on the primary threats, a widening of preexisting divisions, and a broader range of division (likely in part to the types of questions asked) (see Table 7.4). As with previous surveys, a strong core of support existed on the most supported issues including the threat from cyber-attacks, international terrorism, North Korea’s nuclear program, and Iran’s nuclear program. All of these items received bipartisan and majoritarian support in 2015.

Beyond this core, partisan divisions emerge. Democrats strongly viewed climate change as a threat while Republicans opposed, with the partisan gap growing from 41 points in 2015 to 55 points in 2019. Democrats also identified several threats that likely draw directly from Trump’s foreign policies such as foreign interference in American elections, political polarization, a new global arms race, and the rise of authoritarianism in the world. Among these, most notable is the wide partisan gap between Democrats and Republicans of 32 points regarding foreign interference. As for Republicans, their top ranked threat was large numbers of immigrants entering the United States with a gap that had widened (59 points) since 2015 (34 points). A majority of Republicans also saw China as a threat. Given Trump’s emphasis on both of these issues, it is not a surprise to see Republican support and Democrat opposition.

To be sure, across all these issues there are important caveats to be noted. First, across many of these issues, there might be partisan gaps that this chapter underemphasizes given the focus on partisan divisions (for example, economic inequality in the world as a threat is seen as critical by 14% of Republicans and 42% of Democrats). The point of this review is not to probe all the nuances of partisan gaps, but to consider partisan divisions. Second, each of these polls is commonly reported (as here) comparing and contrasting the highest rating (e.g., percentage critical threat). Not viewing an issue as a critical threat does not mean that the individual sees the issue as “no threat.” That said, this approach is common because it reveals differing priorities between the parties. Further examination into specific policy means and the specific policies of the Trump Doctrine will point to areas of continued division but also surprising consensus on some potentially divisive issues.

Public opinion in the Trump era reflects an intriguing dichotomy. A bipartisan consensus exists on the main threats to the United States, which existed before Trump came into office and has continued since (international terrorism, the spread of nuclear weapons including programs in North Korea and Iran, cyber-attacks, protecting American jobs). As will be discussed in later sections, partisan divisions on these issues emerge not around these topics as goals or threats, but *how* the goals should be pursued and threats dealt with. The Trump Doctrine, by taking a particular approach to these issues, creates partisan divides over the policies to address these issues (Toosi 2019). This process more closely mirrors the partisan domestic politics at the same time slightly obscuring the underlying consensus. In addition, there is strong disagreement on several salient issues that also closely emerge from the Trump Doctrine including illegal immigration, military power, multilateralism, climate change, and Russia in American foreign policy.

FOREIGN POLICY MEANS

The public’s response to the unilateralist aspects of the Trump Doctrine to achieve American goals and respond to threats emerges from a partisan framework where Democrats are more inclined to favor multilateralism and Republicans are more inclined to go it alone (Chicago Council on Global Affairs 2015). That said, both Republicans and Democrats appear to support alliances and the actions needed to sustain them. Republicans,

though, appear more skeptical than Democrats about multilateral institutions. The Trump Doctrine is a general unilateralist orientation that would seem to be pushing against underlying public inclinations to work with other nations. At the same time, on specific policies, as we've seen with other issues, Republicans seem more inclined to support the Trump administration's more unilateralist policies.

In general, Democrats are more inclined to favor "improving relations with allies," "improving America's reputation with the world," and "strengthening the United Nations" than Republicans (see Tables 7.2 and 7.3). The two questions on improving relations would appear to be selected in order to assess reactions to the Trump Doctrine that some might suggest had worsened both the US reputation and allied relations. The question on strengthening the United Nations reflects Republican skepticism of that multilateral institution. Further evidence comes from another question regarding working within the United Nations that puts the value of acting within the United Nations against the value of getting what the United States wants. Democrats overwhelming agreed (82% in favor) and Republicans opposed (40% in favor) that "when dealing with international problems, the United States should be more willing to make decisions within the United Nations even if this means that the United States will sometimes have to go along with a policy that is not its first choice." This reaction does not seem to have changed much since Trump's election, since 74% of Democrats and 45% of Republicans supported the view in 2014 (Chicago Council on Global Affairs 2015). A central aspect of the Trump Doctrine is to ask other countries to rely more on themselves and Republicans (see Table 7.1) support this burden sharing shift to a much greater degree than Democrats. This broad inclination of priorities seems to align with partisan assessments of the Trump Doctrine.

The 2019 Chicago Council survey (Chicago Council on Global Affairs 2019) asked a new question assessing how well different broad policies "make the United States more safe, less safe" or no difference. Three questions bear directly on multilateralism and the Trump administration. First, partisan agreement exists regarding the effectiveness of "U.S. alliances with other countries" with 77% of Democrats and 75% of Republicans believing that they made the United States more safe (74% overall). Second, "maintaining US military superiority" was supported by both Democrats (61%) and Republicans (87%) (69% overall). While a partisan gap exists on this issue, partisan division does not. Third, both parties

(50% Democrats, 61% Republicans, 51% overall) supported “stationing US troops in allied countries.” Finally, clear differences exist on the effectiveness of multilateral institutions with Democrats more supportive (66%) than Republicans (44%) that “participating in international organizations” made the United States more safe (54% overall). These questions represent four of the five approaches that the majority found beneficial for safety. The one other question receiving majority support (56% overall) was support for “promoting democracy and human rights around the world” (Democrats 66%, Republicans 49%).

Both parties favor alliances, building American power, and deploying American power to support those alliances. In addition, bipartisan consensus exists regarding the use of force to support American allies. Across a range of specific scenarios (North Korea attacking Japan, North Korea invading South Korea, “Russia invading a NATO ally like Estonia, Latvia, or Lithuania”) and general scenarios (an unnamed ally invaded, a country seizing the territory of an American ally) majorities of both parties support the use of American forces (Chicago Council on Global Affairs 2018). Both parties seem to be united behind keeping and maintaining commitments to American allies.

This inclination was on display regarding a specific alliance (the North Atlantic Treaty Organization—NATO) and a specific international agreement (the Paris Climate Accords). Solid majorities supported NATO as central to American interests. In response to the question of whether NATO is “still essential to our country’s security” or “no longer essential,” 86% of Democrats and 62% of Republicans agreed (73% overall) while minorities saw NATO as no longer essential (10% of Democrats, 34% of Republicans, and 24% overall) (Chicago Council on Global Affairs 2019). Asked to put more resources into NATO, a bipartisan view emerged again. When asked whether the United States should “increase our commitment to NATO,” keep it “what it is now,” decrease, or withdrawal from the treaty, 60% of Democrats and 64% of Republicans favored keeping the commitment the same (61% overall). Secondly, a smaller percentage of Democrats (30%) favored increasing the commitment, while a smaller percentage of Republicans (19%) favored decreasing the commitment (Chicago Council on Global Affairs 2018). Partisan agreement appeared supporting the status quo with significant minorities tilting to increasing the commitment in the case of Democrats or less commitment for Republicans.

A question regarding the Paris Agreement on greenhouse gas emissions combined two aspects that Republicans find suspect in multilateral agreements and climate change. The question asked whether the United States should participate in “the Paris Agreement that calls for countries to collectively reduce their emissions of greenhouse gases.” As expected, 86% of Democrats supported involvement while 43% of Republicans agreed (68% overall) (Chicago Council on Global Affairs 2018).

Unlike the other areas of public opinion discussed in relation to the Trump Doctrine, American attitudes about the means of foreign policy seem not to have changed and do not strictly align with the Trump Doctrine perspective. Americans of both parties appear to support continued reliance on existing alliances and actions to support American allies. While Republicans favor greater financial support from allies to pursue these objectives, their attitudes toward the importance of traditional allies have not changed as a result of the Trump Doctrine. In addition, Republicans have long been and remain skeptical of international organizations as an effective means of pursuing American interests, while Democrats are more supportive. Again, this has not changed as a result of the Trump Doctrine. And, for the most part, the attitudes of both parties cut against the foundational view of the Trump Doctrine to pull back from overseas commitments. As for the question of “how” to best pursue American interests, a bipartisan consensus exists within American public opinion at odds with the Trump Doctrine in support of engagement with alliances. On international agreements, partisan division continued with Democrats opposing and Republicans supporting the Trump Doctrine’s suspicion of international agreements at least in relation to the Paris Climate Accords.

THE TRUMP DOCTRINE AND SPECIFIC FOREIGN POLICIES

In this final section, an examination of several specific foreign policy attitudes suggests that public divisions over the goals and threats in foreign policy extend to the specific policies to engage these issues. Considering policies specifically toward China, Russia, and Iran highlights how the Trump Doctrine’s application to these countries split public opinion in predictable partisan ways. An examination of two core issues of the Trump Doctrine, trade and immigration, reveals a similar pattern.

To begin with, a clear division exists between the parties on whether the United States is more or less “respected by other countries” compared

to the past. While 40% of Republicans in 2019 believe the United States is more respected than in the past (up from 11% before Trump took office in 2016) and 29% say it is less respected (down from 70% before Trump took office), Democrats have trended in the opposite direction with “more respected” dropping from 16 to 4% and “less respected” jumping from 58 to 82% from 2016 to 2019. Overall public attitudes remained fairly steady over the time, with “more respected” moving from 14% in 2016 to 20% in 2019 and “less respected” declining from 61% in 2016 to 57% in 2019. The movement then seems to be more partisan in nature with Republicans and Democrats switching positions as the Republicans saw the transition from Obama to Trump as increasing respect and the Democrats seeing respect declining (Pew Research Center 2019).

Turning to specific issues, somewhat mixed partisan differences appear regarding how to deal with problems. While 57% (65% of Republicans and 50% of Democrats) saw Iran’s nuclear program as a threat, wide divisions existed on how to deal with it. Republicans favored taking a “firm stand,” with 68% agreeing (25% wished to “avoid a military conflict with Iran”) while 71% of Democrats wanted to “avoid a military conflict with Iran” (23% favored a “firm stand”) (the overall public supported avoiding a military conflict compared to a firm stand by a 49–44% margin) (Pew Research Center 2019). Regarding the actual nuclear deal with Iran, while a partisan gap existed, majorities of both Republicans (52%) and Democrats (82%) favored participating in the deal. Still, opposition was more apparent among Republicans (43%) than Democrats (16%). While there is a somewhat large partisan gap, it does not rise to political division (Chicago Council on Global Affairs 2018). Also, when the question is posed more narrowly, these divisions disappear. There is strong partisan agreement in favor of the use of US troops “to stop Iran from obtaining nuclear weapons” with 62% of Democrats and 77% of Republicans (65% overall) favoring the action (the second highest hypothetical use of force response) (Chicago Council on Global Affairs 2018). These snapshots of attitudes about Iran that show significant partisan gaps, but not enormous partisan divisions, continue in other areas.

The Trump Doctrine and Russia

Perhaps the area that has seen some of the largest shift in attitudes is views about Russia. Most importantly, on the question of threats, a partisan

division has appeared between the parties. Before Trump became president, across a series of questions regarding Russia, significant partisan differences did not exist. In April 2016, 46% of Republicans and 37% of Democrats saw “tensions with Russia” as a major threat to the “well-being of the United States.” While these results show a partisan gap, Republicans viewed Russia more skeptically than Democrats. By 2019, for the first time in recent years, a wide partisan gap emerged with, surprisingly in historical terms since Republicans tended to be more negative of Russia than Democrats during the Cold War, two-thirds of Democrats viewed (65%) “Russia’s power and influence as a major threat to the well-being of the United States” while only 35% of Republicans agreed. This partisan division only emerged after Trump’s election. On a second question asking whether respondents viewed Russia as an adversary, serious problem or not a problem, differences were less dramatic. At the same time, the trend in attitudes mirrors the other poll, with Republicans leaning toward seeing less of a threat from Russia. In 2016, differences between partisans on this question were small on whether Russia was an adversary (27% of Republicans, 20% of Democrats), a serious problem (41% of Republicans, 47% of Democrats), or not a problem (29% of Republicans and Democrats alike). By 2019, small gaps on these questions had emerged, regarding Russia as an adversary (20% of Republicans, 34% of Democrats), a serious problem (41% of Republicans, 49% of Democrats), and not a problem (38% of Republicans, 14% of Democrats) (Pew Research Center 2019). The largest shift came with increasing concern by Democrats and somewhat declining concern by Republicans. In combination with the earlier discussions regarding Russia, these responses portray rising concern by Democrats and declining concern by Republicans. Like other issues, these responses would seem to track with the Trump administration policy which has downplayed concerns with Russia. At least part of this result could probably be explained by differing assessments of Russian interference in American elections with Democrats emphasizing it and the Trump administration downplaying it.

The Trump Doctrine and China

As with Iran and Russia, attitudes toward China have partisan valences and align with the Trump Doctrine approach of getting tougher on China. Partisan differences on the threat from China have grown during

the Trump presidency with a likely explanation the Trump administration's policy of confrontation. Between 1990 and 2018, Republican and Democratic opinions largely tracked each other on China. More recently, in 2014, only small differences existed between the percentage of Republicans (46%) and Democrats (38%) seeing a critical threat from "the development of China as a world power" (38% overall). In 2017 and 2018, few differences emerged on the same questions with Republicans at 41 and 42% respectively, Democrats at 37 and 40% respectively, and 39% overall in both years. However, as the economic confrontation with China deepened, clear partisan divisions emerged in 2019 with 54% of Republicans seeing China as a critical threat while the percentage of Democrats actually declined to 36% (42% overall). This partisan shift is similar to what is seen in other areas reported in this chapter (Chicago Council on Global Affairs 2019).

These recent differences extend to policy preferences although Republicans have favored stronger actions than Democrats for some time. In 2011, 51% of Republicans and 32% of Democrats wanted to "get tougher" on China regarding economic issues (40% overall). In 2019, Republican attitudes stayed steady (54%) while Democratic attitudes declined (19%) likely in response to negative assessments of the Trump administration's imposition of tariffs on China (35% overall) (Pew Research Center 2019). Smaller gaps existed on the adversary question discussed regarding Russia, with members of both parties seeing China as more of a threat with Republicans slightly more supportive. More Republicans saw China as an adversary (30% of Republicans, 16% of Democrats, 23% overall) while more Democrats saw China as a serious problem (47% of Republicans, 56% of Democrats, 50% overall). Roughly equal numbers saw China as not a problem (22% of Republicans, 24% of Democrats, 24% overall) (Pew Research Center 2019). As with Russia and Iran, as the Trump administration continues, partisan differences are emerging in reaction to policies that the administration is pursuing.

The Trump Doctrine and Trade

Turning to substantive issues rather than views on countries, attitudes on trade find Republicans and Democrats agreeing with each other against the Trump Doctrine in general terms, but dividing more on policy specifics. Attitudes about free trade partly tracked the partisan division trend but have snapped back to the historical baseline. In response to

the question of whether “free trade agreements between the United States and other countries have been a good thing for the United States,” 65% overall said “good thing” and 22% said “bad thing.” A majority of Democrats have consistently viewed free trade in positive terms, with support rising to a post-2009 peak (73% up from 53%) in 2019. Democrats viewing it as a “bad thing” declined from 34% in 2009 to 15% in 2019 (Pew Research Center 2019). On the eve of the 2016 election, 56% of Democrats viewed trade positively, compared to 34% who viewed it as a bad thing (Stokes 2016). The slight rise in favorable Democratic attitudes could derive from a counter-reaction to the Trump Doctrine’s view that the United States has been taken advantage of by free trade and support for tariffs.

On the Republican side, partisans viewed trade favorably in 2015, with 68% seeing it as good (Pew Research Center 2015). As Trump campaigned against traditional views of free trade, Republican support for trade as a “good thing” dropped precipitously to 38% and a majority viewed it as a “bad thing” (53%) (Stokes 2016). Entering the 2016 election and for a little over a year after, partisan differences on free trade saw majorities of Republicans viewing free trade as a bad thing and majorities of Democrats seeing it as a good thing, which reflects the common pattern discussed in this chapter regarding partisan splits on the main components of the Trump Doctrine. But, as the trade war with China deepened in 2018 and 2019, Republican attitudes returned to the pre-Trump baseline. By 2019, 59% of Republicans viewed free trade agreements as a “good thing” (29% bad thing) which restored the bipartisan public consensus on the issue (Pew Research Center 2019). The effects of Trump’s policy cuing might be reversed in the face of material economic disruptions such as those to agricultural exports (Hoagland 2019). This reversal in opinion potentially suggests both the power of partisan opinion leadership in driving Republican attitudes down and its limitations as Republican attitudes returned to baseline in the face of the negative consequences of the trade war.

Some evidence in support of this view lies in specific questions about the effect of trade and support for tariffs. Both Republicans and Democrats believe that international trade is good for both the US economy and American companies with Democrats somewhat more supportive than Republicans. In 2016, 68% of Democrats and 51% of Republicans (59% overall) thought “international trade” was good for the US economy. By 2019, support had gone up across all segments,

with 90% of Democrats and 88% of Republicans (88% overall) viewing it positively. Regarding American companies, the 2019 reading with 88% of Democrats and 82% of Republicans (85% overall) reflected a rise from 2016 when 65% of Democrats and 50% of Republicans (57% overall) supported the view.

The reaction to the Trump Doctrine's approach seems to have increased support for international trade somewhat while continuing the trend of small partisan gaps, but not partisan divisions (Chicago Council on Global Affairs 2016, 2019). Digging deeper into policy, the expected partisan pattern emerges on tariff policy. In 2019, 67% of Republicans thought the "increased tariffs between the United States and its trading partners" have been "good for the United States" (26% bad) while only 12% of Democrats agreed (82% bad; overall 37% good and 56% bad) (Pew Research Center 2019). This pattern on trade comports with attitude shifts on other issues where attitudes changed based on partisan identity.

The Trump Doctrine and Immigration

An almost opposite pattern exists on immigration, where more partisan agreement (or at least lack of partisan division) exists on policy specifics even though differences exist on generalities. Historically, partisan agreement existed on whether a "large number of immigrants and refugees coming into the United States" constituted a "critical threat" from 1998 through 2002 with about 60% agreeing (Republicans at 58% in 2002, Democrats 62%, and 60% overall) (Chicago Council on Global Affairs 2019). Beginning in 2004, Republican attitudes held steady through 2018 (between 55% and 67% saying "critical threat") before an upward shift in 2019 to 78%. This timing of opinion change would suggest that the Trump Doctrine emphasis on immigration is more of a response to preexisting attitudes (which might have shifted due to changes in immigration patterns) than a cause of attitudinal change. While Democratic attitudes have shifted since 2002, they appear largely unaffected by the Trump Doctrine. Beginning in 2004, a steadily declining percentage of Democrats viewed immigration as a critical threat, with 49% in 2004 dropping to 27% in 2016 and declining further to 19% in 2019. Democratic opinion responses to the Trump Doctrine on immigration appear to be small in large part because attitudes had already shifted before Trump's emergence (Chicago Council on Global Affairs 2019).

At least part of this differing response to immigration appears to lie in perceptions that immigration presents a threat to American identity. A majority of Republicans (57%) endorsed the idea that “if America is too open to people from all over the world, we risk losing our identity as a nation” (11% of Democrats agreed; 33% overall). This compares with 37% of Republicans who endorsed the view that “America’s openness to people from all over the world is essential to who we are as a nation” (86% of Democrats and 62% overall). Compared to 2017 when the question was first asked, Republicans shifted from evenly divided (48% “losing identity” to 47% “essential to who we are”) to the majority seeing it as a threat, while Democratic attitudes remained largely unchanged (84% essential to 14% losing our identity) (Pew Research Center 2019).

More evidence of the effect of the Trump Doctrine seems to appear when examining attitudes about the underlying effectiveness of particular policies. Partisan divisions emerge concerning the policies that Trump has emphasized while bipartisan consensus exists on policies that have not been emphasized. When asked about the effectiveness of specific policies for “dealing with the issue of illegal immigration,” partisan gaps exist, but not partisan divisions, on creating a conditional pathway to citizenship (88% of Democrats, 76% of Republicans, 81% overall, find it very or somewhat effective); increasing border security (55% of Democrats, 93% of Republicans, and 70% overall); fining businesses that hire illegal immigrants (54% of Democrats, 83% of Republicans, and 65% overall); and separating immigrant children from their parents (10% of Democrats, 40% of Republicans, and 23% overall). The partisan dynamics seen on other issues in this chapter appear regarding border security (38% partisan gap) and child separation (30% partisan gap).

At the same time, while these partisan gaps exist, a majoritarian agreement remains on these policies. The one issue where majoritarian disagreement exists is regarding increasing the number of arrests and deportations, where 83% of Republicans find the policy somewhat or very effective and only 29% of Democrats concur (52% overall) (Chicago Council on Global Affairs 2019). In sum, while the underlying partisan gaps about immigration appear to predate the Trump Doctrine, attitudes toward the particular immigration policies of the Trump Doctrine seem to respond in the same manner as seen elsewhere in this chapter, with divisions emerging around highlighted policies.

CONCLUSION—THE END OF FOREIGN POLICY EXCEPTIONALISM

This chapter suggests that the public's reaction to the Trump Doctrine reflects somewhat of a culmination of previous trends. While partisanship has always been one of the largest factors accounting for public attitudes toward foreign policy (Holsti 2004), the degree of partisan differences as well as recent shifts in public attitudes suggests that the drivers of opinion on foreign policy are becoming more like those of domestic policy. As with domestic policy, political leaders largely focus a partisan lens on foreign policy. As the most prominent voice, it would be expected that President Trump would potentially have the largest influence. Across a number of foreign policy issues and with only a few exceptions, the public's reactions to the elements of the Trump Doctrine reflect this reaction to Trump's positions. While the Trump Doctrine did not cause these trends, the choices of which issues to highlight (such as immigration) likely exacerbated it.

While it is too soon to evaluate how the 2020 coronavirus pandemic affected foreign policy attitudes, a brief speculation is in order. Partisans will likely react to the coronavirus's foreign policy aspects consistent with their overall views. Democrats will likely interpret the pandemic as supporting their inclinations for greater international cooperation to respond to and combat infectious disease while Republicans will view the pandemic as supporting their view for greater limitations on the flows of people across borders and the work of international organizations (such as the World Health Organization). In the end, the main influence of the pandemic will likely be to reinforce preexisting foreign policy attitudes than change them.

A number of structural and attitudinal changes that have accelerated since the early 2000s fundamentally altered how public opinion interacts with foreign policy (Foyle 2017). Political elites, especially the president (Druckman and Jacobs 2015), appear to be more responsive to narrower sets of interests as they have adapted to both the media environment and the potential uses of modern polling mechanisms. President Trump's use of Twitter to communicate and his emphasis on potentially divisive foreign policy issues enhanced this effect. It has long been recognized that political incentives exist for governing elites to frame issues in a way to gain the most partisan advantage (Schattschneider 1960). Elites are

incentivized to draw the “lines of cleavage” in a manner that is advantageous to them politically. Most often, these lines of cleavage have been drawn regarding domestic issues (Buchler and Kopko 2016). Now, even if the broad “top of the pyramid” foreign policy issues reflect a general consensus, politicians seem to be turning to foreign policy to emphasize the aspects of disagreement on more specific aspects of foreign policy issues in a way that advantages them politically. In short, the lines of cleavage are now being drawn in foreign policy. Given this approach’s political advantages, this tactic by political elites will likely continue and mask underlying factors that more unite than divide the American public.

Two things appear to be occurring with public opinion. First, broad inclinations regarding foreign policy appear not to have changed in a dramatic manner. These areas of agreement appear not to receive as much attention as those of disagreement. Second, on the highlighted aspects of the Trump Doctrine, such as immigration and Russia, attitudes seem to have become more partisan. As political leaders have become more polarized in their policy positions, research suggests that the public increasingly responds more to partisan cuing than substantively grounded information (Berinsky 2009; Druckman et al. 2013). With the exception of foreign policy means and trade policy, the opinions examined in this chapter seem to be responding to partisan cuing.

The public’s reaction to the Trump Doctrine raises the question as to whether the domestic politics of foreign policy are undermining the broader internationalist foundations of the US-led post-World War II liberal international order. The long-running Chicago Council on Global Affairs poll series cited here extensively concludes that broader internationalist trends remain even though partisan differences exist. At the same time, the America First attitude, disinclination to engage with international organizations, and economic tariffs might seem to imply a loosening of the foreign policy consensus. It is certainly apparent that attitudes break in highly polarized ways if political elites highlight issues such as immigration, climate change, and building American military strength. At the same time, broad swaths of bipartisan consensus exist on a number of issues that the public places at the highest priority, including protecting American jobs, preventing the spread of weapons of mass destruction, protecting against cyber-attacks, and dealing with Iranian and North Korean nuclear programs.

There is also broad agreement in how to deal with these problems such as relying on alliance partners, staying engaged in the world, and

pursuing international trade. The Trump Doctrine, by emphasizing areas of partisan disagreement, perhaps creates too strong of an impression of the nature of divisions within American public opinion. Still, with the hyper-partisan nature of elite politics which tends to focus on issues that more divide than unite the public, continued divisions on the most discussed issues seem likely to remain.

Whether politics stops at the water's edge or is merely the continuation of domestic politics "with its hat on" hinges on the choices of political elites. If they continue to emphasize issues that divide and the divisive aspects of issues where there is agreement, the appearance of partisan division in foreign policy generally will continue. Or, if they choose to focus on areas of bipartisan agreement, a broader consensus is possible. Most fundamentally, Americans agree across political parties about the main foreign policy goals, priorities, and threats. In a way, this observation suggests that the critical choice lies more with political elites than the public. And, in a real sense, this recognition undercuts the notion of foreign policy exceptionalism and hints that foreign policy has become much more like domestic policy for better or for worse.

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PART III

Allies, Adversaries, and Rivals: The Trump
Doctrine in the World Arena



The Trump and Putin Doctrines: Evolving Great Power Tensions Between the United States and Russia

Jeremy W. Lamoreaux

THE ROLE OF DOCTRINES

As outlined earlier in this volume (Renshon 2020), “doctrines” serve the primary purpose of alerting allies and enemies alike to a leader’s desired outcomes, usually specific to certain geographical areas or geopolitical circumstances. Such was the case with the Monroe and Truman Doctrines, aimed at European meddling in the western hemisphere during the nineteenth century, and the US approach to the Soviet Union during the Cold War. In contrast, however, both Donald Trump and Vladimir Putin not only focus on specific geographical regions or certain circumstances in their respective doctrines, but also publicly espouse broader doctrines with the potential to alter the entire international system.

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At present, the international system is largely structured along liberal international lines put into place after World War II by the United States and its allies. Its primary elements are international organizations that attempt to develop and apply worldwide rules of internationally acceptable behavior such as diplomacy, cooperation, and liberal economic exchange. Since the end of World War II, the United States has been viewed as the leader of this international liberal order. Following the collapse of the Soviet Union, the United States was the dominant global actor, using its moment as the global hegemon to strengthen this order. However, with the rise of China, a revanchist Russia, and ideological fissures within the West, the international order is increasingly challenged, spurring three questions about the Trump and Putin Doctrines and the international system. First, according to Trump and Putin, how ought the international order be structured? Second, how are Trump and Putin challenging the international order? And third, how are they challenging each other? The chapter addresses all three questions through a comparative analysis of both doctrines.

TRUMP DOCTRINE

The Trump Doctrine is well discussed in the first four chapters in this volume. Most particularly, Chapter 1, by Stanley Renshon, provides a thorough presentation and discussion on the Trump Doctrine. Here is a brief review of the six elements that comprise Trump Doctrine:

1. *America First*: not precluding positive interactions with other countries or international organizations, but only to the extent that such interactions benefit “America first.”
2. *American National Identity*: international interactions are most valued if their focus is on what America stands for, its core values and shared identity.
3. *Highly Selective Involvement*: emphasis on issues and areas that are important to US national identity, as opposed to seemingly open-ended, constantly unidirectional commitments to other states or international organizations.
4. *Comprehensive American Strength, Resilience and Resolve*: being prepared for any circumstance by being able to rely on its *self* and the *entire* gamut of tools and resources in pursuit of maintaining US interests and values.
5. *Maximum Pressure/Hyper-focused*: staying hyper-focused on the desired goals which leads to...

6. *Maximum Flexibility*: achieving those goals by successfully maneuvering around roadblocks, setbacks, opposition.

One final note on analyzing either Doctrine: as outlined by Suedfeld, Morrison, and Kuznar in Chapter 2, it is ineffective and inaccurate to analyze Trump's or Putin's Doctrine with speech alone. As is the case with most leaders, Trump's and Putin's speeches do not wholly reflect their actual policy behavior and an analysis of either Doctrine requires a much more nuanced and detailed methodology focused on policies.

THE PUTIN DOCTRINE

How does the Trump Doctrine compare with Putin's¹ Doctrine vis-à-vis the international system? At their most basic, there is very little that separates the two Doctrines. So alike are they in basics that the same six elements that comprise the Trump Doctrine also provide a workable roadmap for the Putin Doctrine. However, the details are quite different and significant.

1. *Russia First*

There, initially, appears to be very little difference between the two Doctrines on this element other than geographical focus. This is not surprising, considering political leaders of most states are (or ought to be) concerned first, and foremost, with their own state. Indeed, both Trump and Putin are viewed as tolerating the existing international liberal order *only* to the extent that it benefits their respective states (Galeotti 2019; Carafano 2020; Nau 2020). When the international system stops benefitting their states, Trump and Putin are disinclined toward it. However, as discussed below, their respective disinclinations are substantially different.

Furthermore, the very concept of "Russia First" is challenged by a body of literature which suggests that Putin's first concern is not Russia, but Putin and his cronies. According to this perspective, Putin and his

¹ Putin is not Russia, any more than Trump is America. Therefore, Putin's Doctrine should not be misinterpreted as reflecting the desires, interests, or values of the Russian people as a whole. Rather, Putin Doctrine is a set of policy outlooks *specific* to Putin and his associates.

cronies (corrupt oligarchs, crime lords, societal influencers, and even religious leaders) all exploit the Russian state at the expense of the public (Taylor 2018; Galeotti 2018; Fried et al. 2018; Arbatova 2019; Gouré 2019). Consequently, this chapter's analysis of the Putin Doctrine will also consider this claim.²

2. *Russian National Identity*

In both cases, America/Russia First is based on maintaining national interests rooted in core values and identity. Both Doctrines even reflect similar core values such as religiosity, a sense of destiny, a focus on ordinary working people, and an indifference/distain for multiculturalism or internationalism/globalism (Arbatova 2019; Löffmann 2019; Renshon 2020). However, though the role of these values is frequently a point of debate in the discussion on American national identity, these values are largely unchallenged and even *essential* to Putin's version of Russian national identity. Particularly, two of these values are paramount for understanding the rest of the Putin Doctrine: the religious nature of Russia's identity, and the sense of destiny.

The first value, and most important for Putin and his doctrine, is the religious nature of Russian national identity. The Russian state has a strong historical connection with the Russian Orthodox Church (ROC). This is still true today and Putin uses the formal ties between church and state to lend legitimacy to his domestic and international decision-making (Lamoreaux and Flake 2018; Kelly 2018). According to Patriarch Kirill, the current head of the ROC, Putin was chosen by God to lead Russia at this time (Coyer 2015: 6–10). And, if God has chosen someone, who can stand against that person? Furthermore, if God has chosen a person, it stands to reason that God has also chosen that person's policies.

In practice this means that anyone who claims Orthodoxy as part of their own identity can be viewed as heretical if opposed to Putin and his policy approaches. And while Putin's policies are not universally accepted by religious folk, he still commands considerable support among those identifying as Orthodox (Soroka 2016: 8; Petro 2018: 227) which comprises the majority of Russians.

²A friend once suggested that Putin, as a former member of the KGB and the broader Soviet bureaucracy, has come by his dishonesty honestly. Also, to be fair, similar arguments about corruption and self-enrichment have been made about Trump.

Note that this broad religious support for Putin (whether real or socially fabricated [Soroka 2016: 8]), is quite different to the relationship Trump has with religion and the public in two respects. The first is an institutional difference. Whereas the US Constitution's first amendment forbids an official relationship between church and state, the ROC is absolutely treated preferentially by the Russian government, a relationship further strengthened in Russia's 2020 constitutional amendments. The second is a societal difference. Where both supporters and detractors of Trump claim a religious nature to their views, this is much less evident among Russians vis-à-vis Putin (Soroka 2016). Consequently, though religion is used to stoke nationalism in both states, religiosity strengthens Putin's version of Russian National Identity while, for Trump, it is used both to strengthen his support base *and* his political opposition, potentially weakening Trump's foreign policy objectives and their application.

The second key value in understanding the Putin Doctrine, and growing out of the religious nature of Russia's national identity, is the idea that Russia is destined to play a major role in the world. This stems, in part, from the identity bequeathed on Russia (and, specifically Putin's administration) as protectors of Christian values in the face of anti-Christian Western values (Lamoreaux and Mabe 2019). It also stems, though, from Russia's past as a global great power. Institutional memory dies hard, and one of Putin's key foreign policy objectives is to guide Russia back to its "rightful" place as a global great power. Worryingly for the United States, some believe this can only happen as US and Western dominance is weakened in the international order (Borshchevskaya 2019; Marsh 2019). To accomplish these goals, Putin's Doctrine must include specific plans for recapturing Russia's former glory, and for undercutting US power and influence globally, which leads to the next element.

3. Highly Selective Involvement

The Trump and Putin Doctrine's share two general commonalities regarding this element as well. First, both decide global involvement on whether it will benefit the national interest and bolster national values and identity. Second, both are wary of entanglement in international institutions, especially those in which their voice is limited. For example,

Trump rails against NATO, but in actual deed supports it by strengthening the US military and by coercing/convincing other NATO members to increase their own military spending and improve their own military capabilities (Carafano 2020; Nau 2020).

In Putin's case, however, bolstering Russia's national interest, values and identity generally results in opposition to, and attempts to limit the influence of, the US. This is seen in relations vis-a-vis NATO, engagement in the Middle East, and a turn toward Asia. For Putin, NATO is not only a cause of frustration, it is a clear embodiment of the Western threat to Russia in three ways. First, Putin sees NATO's troop build-up in the Baltic States and Poland as a direct military threat on Russia's border. Second, Putin sees NATO as evidence of Western deceit (talk of NATO/Russia cooperation that rarely materializes, or talk of protecting Western values that, in part, resulted in the 2008 economic collapse). Third, and somewhat contradictory to the first, Putin sees NATO's increased emphasis on cybersecurity and terrorism as evidence that Russia is insufficiently strong to even deserve NATO's full attention. In other words, it reminds Putin that Russia is not where it deserves to be among global great powers (Tsygankov 2018: 106). Consequently, NATO is one area of selective involvement in international institutions for both Putin and Trump, though for contradictory, reasons.

Highly selective involvement, and particularly the focus on limiting the United States globally, also explains Russia's involvement in Syria. Historically, the Russian Empire and the Soviet Union wielded considerable influence in the Middle East. That influence diminished significantly with the collapse of the Soviet Union. Russia's recent foray into Syria can be seen as an attempt to recover and increase Russia's global influence. However, Russia's involvement in Syria is not simply a gambit to increase Russia's global reach. It also serves to limit US/Western influence globally. Ideologically this is achieved because Putin was able to establish a presence in Syria and maintain it where the United States could not and where President Obama said Russia would fail (Blank 2019a). Additionally, it has allowed the Kremlin to strengthen an A2/AD (anti access/area denial) shield across much of the Mediterranean and Middle East. This limits US influence both directly and through formal allies in the region, such as Israel, Turkey, and Saudi Arabia (Blank 2019a: 412–414).

Russia's foray into Syria also strengthens Putin's own position within Russia. Many within the West argue that Putin's position as the president of Russia includes being the country's head kleptocrat. In other words,

his position of power allows him and his cronies to enrich themselves at the expense of the state and the citizens. Maintaining that position depends not only on religious nationalism and ROC support, but also on geopolitical nationalism created by regaining great power status and by projecting the West as an existential threat to Russia. Not surprisingly, the Kremlin-controlled media play an integral role in bolstering images of Russia under attack from the West, and of Russia regaining its great power status (Free Russia Foundation 2019a). In short, Putin is alleged to use his opposition to NATO and his foray into Syria to:

- Distract the public from elite corruption, as Putin and his network gets rich at the expense of the public. It keeps the public focused, instead, on the achievements of “Russia” (Free Russia Foundation 2019b; Gouré 2019: 62–63; Huntsman 2019).
- Justify increased military spending, and more central control of the military when no real threat exists (Blank 2019a: 6; Gouré 2019: 68).
- Justify its military activity (hot and cold) in the shared-neighborhood (Chekov et al. 2019; Schneider 2019: 312–314). This includes the annexation of Crimea; Kremlin-backed separatists in eastern Ukraine; frozen conflicts in Georgia, Armenia/Azerbaijan, and Moldova; constant saber-rattling (both in speech and in practice) against northern Europe and the Baltic States; Russian involvement in Syria. All of these (regardless of whether they produce any calculable results) provide the Russian public with the impression that Russia is again expanding to its former glory and countering imminent Western threats to Russia’s national interest.
- Justify hybrid warfare against the West in the form of election meddling, the distribution of misinformation, funding Western political parties and corporations, exacerbating political and social cleavages across the West, assassinations, and using Western legal and financial institutions to protect kleptocrats within Russia, all of which illustrate Russia’s global reach (Free Russia Foundation 2019a, b).

Putin’s selective involvement is not limited to NATO and Syria. Russia also has ties with China and the states of Central Asia. In those cases, as with Syria, the rationale is to strengthen Russia’s claim to great power status, and to limit the United States and Western global influence. This

is especially the case with China, a relationship in which Russia may well end up playing second-fiddle but which would still limit US global influence (Arbatova 2019; Gould-Davies 2020). However, the very fact that interaction with China and Central Asia is somewhat limited (Arbatova 2019: 21; Gould-Davies 2020: 18) seems to lend further credence to the argument that Putin's emphasis is less on limiting US/Western influence and more on strengthening his own position in power by keeping the public focused on imaginary threats and great power competition.

One final thought regarding Putin's selective engagement, and particularly the claim of self-enrichment through foreign policy: the twin arguments that Putin benefits immensely from his position, and that Russians, in general, are ignorant or tolerant of his corruption largely because of messaging from the Kremlin-controlled media, are both well documented as outlined above. However, what is also evident is Putin's continued personal popularity within Russia. As of August, 2020, Putin's popularity has never dropped below 59% since 2000 (Levada Center 2020). If nothing else, Putin and his policies are helping build a strong sense of nationalism, and providing a sense of purpose in Russia (Muraviev 2020). Consequently, despite ample evidence of corruption and a well-oiled and misleading propaganda machine, it is difficult to argue that Putin's Doctrine is wholly bad for Russia and its people, especially considering the extent to which a strong sense of purpose are important to Russian national identity.

4. Comprehensive Russian Strength, Resilience, and Resolve

According to the Trump Doctrine, strength is what helps countries survive and thrive; adhering to liberal international group consensus does not necessarily pass that basic test. A comprehensive, all-inclusive, strength is what compels other countries to take the United States seriously. Indeed, causing other states, allies and enemies, to regard the United States with a modicum of fear or apprehension is viewed as positive for the Trump Doctrine. Consequently, the United States' all-inclusive projection of strength must include economic, military, and even societal elements.

The US economy is the world's largest. American military might is enormous and the country's military spending is unrivaled globally. Although the American position as the leader of the free world with

Trump as president is questioned by many, including some allies, the United States is the putative leader of the group of countries projecting liberal norms and values in the international system.

However, this does not mean that Russian strength, resilience, and resolve do not cause concern within the United States and the West. Indeed, in at least two realms the West has much cause for concern from the “comprehensive strength” aspect of Putin’s Doctrine. The first realm, discussed above, is Putin’s control of Russia’s population through religious support, media manipulation, his vast public support, and foreign policy objectives that obfuscate domestic problems in favor of a message of international strength. As long as these trends continue, public support will be a strength for Putin and his Doctrine.

The second, however, is perhaps more concerning to the United States, and even the broader West. This is Putin’s ability and inclination to use a total-war (hybrid warfare) approach to even the most limited conflict (Binnendijk and Gompert 2019: 114–115). This could include conventional forces, nuclear forces, economic manipulation, information warfare (misinformation), saber-rattling, and even the cooptation of sub-state or non-state actors such as guerrilla, criminal, and terrorist organizations (Chekov et al. 2019). Whereas the United States and most Western states have historically been more circumspect in their approach to different kinds of conflicts and different types of opponents, Russia’s most recent doctrine views every conflict (whether hot or not) as war, and does not exclude any response (Chekov et al. 2019; Binnendijk and Gompert 2019; Schneider 2019). For example, if NATO or the United States were to increase conventional force capacity in Poland or the Baltic States, even without making any sort of offensive, Putin could consider threatening, or even using, a nuclear (escalate to de-escalate) strike in response (Binnendijk and Gompert 2019: 115). By adopting such a strategy vis-à-vis any threat, it allows Russia to project strength in ways not previously considered.

Most concerning of all is that Putin already views Russia as at war with the United States (Blank 2019b: 6–7; Chekov et al. 2019: 30, 40). This does not mean that the United States has launched a traditional military offensive against Russia as, in fact, they have not. However, Putin’s military doctrine views any and all conflict as war. Consequently, any time an opponent opposes Russian national interests, it is seen as an act of war. This means that US opposition to Russian aims in the Middle East, Ukraine, and Eastern Europe, even without the direct use of force, are

viewed as part of “total war.” Consequently, they can be countered by any means. As such, the United States risks ending up in a real war it does not want, from a policy it did not adopt, because of Putin’s current defense and security doctrines (Binnendijk and Gompert 2019). Does this mean that Putin will start a hot war with the United States? Not necessarily. Such moves always prove costly. Indeed, as many analysts argue, a strong US policy vis-à-vis Russian military activity, clearly outlining explicit, strong responses to any threats, could well prevent any potential military activity between the United States and Russia (as outlined below: for a full analysis see Blank 2019c).

5. *Maximum pressure/Hyper-focused*, and 6. *Maximum Flexibility*

Putin’s public focus on renewing Russia’s great power status, on projecting the United States and the West as threats to Russia’s identity and survival, and his willingness to use any and all tools to accomplish his goals (as presented in the previous two elements), define both elements 5 (*Maximum Pressure/Hyper-Focused*) and 6: (*Maximum Flexibility*) within his Doctrine.

A UNITED STATES RESPONSE

Unfortunately, according to some experts, Trump still has no functional, comprehensive strategy vis-à-vis Putin and Russia (Blank 2019a: 402; Alcaro 2019; Glaser et al. 2019). What does Trump want, and importantly, how does he intend to get it? Broadly speaking, Trump would like the Kremlin to stop meddling in the internal affairs of the West, to stop threatening allies, especially in Eastern Europe, and to stop threatening US interests globally (Blank 2019b). In short, Trump would like Russia to decide to play nice.

To his credit, and despite his alleged deference to Putin and no clearly laid out strategy vis-à-vis Putin, Trump does have something of a broad containment strategy vis-a-vis Russia, four elements of which are discussed here. First, as mentioned above, he has increased US involvement in NATO, specifically in the Baltic States and Poland . Second, his rhetoric about possibly withdrawing from NATO, and his constant public complaints about allies, have spurred more military spending within

NATO member-states (Gvosdev 2019). It has also encouraged European states to take more ownership of their own security vis-à-vis Russia (though, the extent to which a united Europe will actually take ownership of its own strategic position, is an ongoing question [Noël 2019: 94]). Third, Trump has kept up dialogue with Putin, a practice that, though not guaranteeing any success, is a far better alternative to no dialogue (Kubiak et al. 2019).

Fourth, Trump has expanded US sanctions against Russia, and against specific individuals within Putin's elite circles (Gould-Davies 2020: 12–13). Sanctions are nothing new, as President Obama implemented sanctions immediately following Russia's annexation of Crimea. Are the sanctions effective in stemming Putin's foreign policy objectives? The answer is rather complicated.

Economically, Russia is suffering from the sanctions as their economic growth has slowed, GDP has shrunk, and targeted individuals are certainly feeling the pinch (Fried et al. 2018). Furthermore, the fact that Putin is talking about sanctions and consistently asking Trump and European leaders to lift the sanctions indicate that they are, at the very least, troublesome (Galeotti 2019). However, at a deeper level they haven't changed Putin's overall Doctrine (Giusti 2019: 226–227; Gould-Davies 2020). One could also ask whether Putin is even serious about getting sanctions lifted as Russia continues its influence campaign in Western Europe, including election meddling, political favor buying, and successful and failed assassinations (Free Russia Foundation 2019b).

What further steps can the United States take to counter Putin's Doctrine? Consider the following suggestions (Blank 2019b). First, Trump needs to create a clearer set of outcomes he expects from Putin. These need to include, at the very least, a clear dial-down of military adventurism in Europe, the willingness to discuss nuclear doctrines and treaties, and the creation of some sort of formal process for continued dialogue. Second, Trump needs to continue pressure with more, individually focused, sanctions. Some US and Western sanctions are broad enough that they have little effect on Russia's economy, or Putin personally. However, target sanctions, such as those adopted by Trump in 2018, are working and should be expanded to include more individuals in Putin's network (Fried et al. 2018; Free Russia Foundation 2019b; Gould-Davies 2020). Third, the United States should attach clear anti-corruption and transparency expectations to sanction, offering to remove such sanctions if Putin's network becomes more transparent in their finances (Fried et al.

2018). Fourth, the United States should continue to include European allies in implementing those sanctions. Sanctions solely from the United States will be considerably less influential than sanctions from Europe as well.

Fifth, recognizing that Putin is willing to use force to achieve his Doctrinal outcomes, and further recognizing that wherever it happens Putin's ultimate enemy will always be the United States (Chekov et al. 2019: 40), Trump needs to adopt a clear military response to any Russian offensive. It needs to send a clear message that the United States is ready and willing to respond forcefully to any forays against allies. This should include:

- Increasing our technological superiority over Russia's military (Blankenship and Denison 2019: 45)
- sending a clear message that we *will* retaliate against any Russian aggression (Gouré 2019: 98), including the commitment to retaliate with nuclear weapons if Russia uses nuclear weapons (Binnendijk and Gompert 2019: 120–121)
- strengthening conventional forces in Europe, with European support, to dissuade Putin from attempting something similar to what he did in Ukraine (Gouré 2019: 92)
- eliminating national debt so we can spend more on the military while also taking care of social issues at home (Blankenship and Denison 2019: 48–50) which requires healing the partisan gaps that currently undermine bipartisan decision making (Lamoreaux 2019). This latter element is unlikely to be realized in the short term because of the economic consequences of the global COVID-19 pandemic, but is important to keep in mind as a future requirement.

CONCLUSION

This chapter started with three questions: first, according to Trump and Putin, how ought the international order be structured? Second, how are Trump and Putin challenging the international order? And, third, how are they challenging each other? As this chapter illustrates, the answer to the first question is relatively simple and straightforward. According to both Trump and Putin, the international order ought to be restructured to benefit their respective states. Both perceive a challenge to the system as

beneficial, though there is obviously no consensus on what its new shape ought to be.

Which leads us to the second and third questions: how are Trump and Putin challenging the international order and each other? The answer to these questions is also quite simple: Trump challenges the international order by challenging existing alliances, reaching out to perceived enemies such as Putin, and using a myriad of foreign policy tools to accomplish his goals. As for Putin, he continues to focus on challenging US global dominance however, whenever, and wherever possible, using all the possible tools at his disposal.

To that end, and as a matter of national security, it is vital that Trump adopt a specific, clear approach vis-à-vis Putin that includes clear economic and military consequences in response to potential violations of US national interest. Considering Putin's willingness to do whatever it takes in pursuit of his interests, regardless of the potentially detrimental consequences for the United States and the West, the more specific and forceful the strategy, the better.

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The End of the Affair: U.S.–China Relations Under Trump

Michael Beckley

Trump's China policy includes a large military buildup, the most aggressive use of tariffs since World War II, the tightest investment and immigration restrictions since the Cold War, and the most expensive piece of soft power legislation in at least a decade. Previous administrations flirted with some of these policies, but Trump is the first president in nearly 50 years to wage full-spectrum competition with China.

How did we get here? One explanation is that Trump simply put his long-held beliefs into practice. American presidents wield immense power over the nation's foreign policy, and rigorous research shows that leaders usually stay true to their core convictions once in office (Saunders 2018). Since the 1980s, Trump has been in favor of U.S. military strength and against trade deficits. Now those beliefs are key components of his China policy.

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Yet, it would be a mistake to view Trump as the sole architect of the current U.S. China policy. Tensions between the United States and China have been growing since the end of the Cold War, albeit in fits and starts, and took a turn for the worst after the 2008 financial crisis. Trump has put his unique imprint on U.S.–China relations—a Hillary Clinton administration probably would not have framed U.S.–China competition in civilizational terms or so eagerly embraced the rhetoric of rivalry, the rampant use of tariffs, or historically high levels of military spending—but U.S. China policy would have become more competitive regardless of who won the 2016 U.S. presidential election and will remain so years after Trump leaves office.

ELEMENTS OF TRUMP’S CHINA POLICY

Trump has altered U.S. China policy in two major ways. First, he has made competition with China the focal point of U.S. foreign policy. Previous administrations worked hard to manage U.S.–China relations, of course, but treated this task as one of many priorities. Trump, by contrast, has sharpened America’s focus on China by jettisoning some U.S. foreign policy goals, such as expanding multilateral trade, promoting democracy and human rights, and limiting climate change; withdrawing U.S. forces from conflicts in the Middle East; and trying to compel European allies to assume more of the burden of checking Russia. Some observers characterize these moves as isolationist (Brooks 2019), but they are more properly seen as realist: the Trump administration has identified China’s rise as the main threat to U.S. security, prosperity, and power and has concentrated greater U.S. attention and resources on containing that threat. This grand strategic shift—doing less elsewhere while doing more against China—began under the Obama administration, but has become pronounced under Trump.

Second, whereas previous administrations treated China as a “strategic partner,” the Trump administration has dropped any pretense of partnership and explicitly labeled China a rival. The 2017 National Security Strategy and the 2018 National Defense Strategy characterize China as a “revisionist power” and a “strategic competitor” that uses “predatory” tactics to trample on U.S. interests and undermine the international order. To underscore this characterization, Vice President Mike Pence gave a speech in October 2018 that amounted to the most scathing indictment of Chinese behavior by a senior U.S. official in nearly five decades. He

denounced China’s “whole of government” assault on U.S. interests; catalogued China’s aggressive moves, including its “Made in China 2025” plan for technological dominance, its “debt diplomacy” through the Belt and Road Initiative, its militarization of the South China Sea, and its suppression of the Tibetans and Uighurs; and outlined the main elements of an integrated, cross-government American response that included four main elements—military modernization, tariffs, investment restrictions, and investment abroad. I discuss each in more detail below.

Military Modernizations

The first element of the Trump administration’s China policy is a massive military buildup designed to restore U.S. “overmatch,” which basically means the ability to annihilate Chinese forces at low cost to the United States, much as the U.S. military decimated Iraqi forces during the first Gulf War.

Previous administrations also sought to preserve U.S. military superiority over China, but generally tried to do more with less by developing advanced technologies to compensate for America’s eroding margin of superiority in quantitative metrics, like naval tonnage. The George W. Bush and Barack Obama administrations, for example, initiated plans for what has come to be called Third Offset, which aimed to use artificial intelligence, lasers, space systems, hypervelocity projectiles, and cyber capabilities, to counter China’s growing naval, air, and missile forces.

The Trump administration, by contrast, is doing more with more, investing not only in qualitative improvements in U.S. military technology, but also in a major expansion in the size of the military itself, with special emphasis on the Navy’s surface fleet and a new “space force” that will be a sixth independent branch of the military.

To fund this expansion, the Trump administration increased U.S. defense spending by nearly 20% during its first two years in office and requested \$750 billion for defense in 2020, which would be the largest U.S. defense budget since World War II except for a few years during the height of the Iraq War.

China is clearly the main target of this defense budget hike. On his first day in office in January 2019, the administration’s Acting Secretary of Defense, Patrick Shanahan, defined the Pentagon’s priorities as “China, China, China” and submitted a defense budget proposal to Congress that would fund capabilities geared for great power war, including \$58 billion

for advanced strike aircraft; \$35 billion for new warships (the largest ship-building request in more than two decades); \$14 billion for space systems; \$10 billion for cyberwarfare capabilities; \$4.6 billion for artificial intelligence (AI) and autonomous systems; and \$2.6 billion for hypersonic weapons.

The Trump administration also expanded the U.S. military presence in Asia. In its first two years, the administration conducted roughly 300 exercises with Asian partners and a dozen freedom of navigation operations in Chinese-claimed waters; clarified that the U.S. defense pact with the Philippines covers Philippine forces in the South China Sea, not just the Philippine homeland; and approved a major arms sales package to Taiwan and sent high-level officials to meet with the Taiwanese government.

In sum, for the first time since the Cold War, the United States has embarked on a major military expansion focused on balancing a great power adversary.

Tariffs

As of the summer of 2019, the Trump administration has imposed tariffs on \$250 billion worth of Chinese products and threatened tariffs on \$325 billion more as punishment for China's alleged unfair trade practices. China has retaliated by slapping tariffs on US\$110 billion worth of American goods.

The Trump administration's goal is to use tariffs to compel China to address a long list of American grievances, including the chronic U.S. trade deficit, Chinese theft of U.S. intellectual property, subsidies to Chinese state-owned enterprises, and restrictions on U.S. access to China's market. The Trump administration is not the first to use trade policy to pressure China on these issues, but previous administrations mainly relied on multilateral measures, such as filing cases against China in the World Trade Organization (WTO) and signing free trade pacts with China's major trading partners. The Trump administration, by contrast, has imposed unilateral tariffs on China and U.S. allies alike; kneecapped the WTO by holding up the appointment of judges to the Organization's appellate court; and withdrawn the United States from the Trans-Pacific Partnership, which would have included most of the countries around the Pacific.

To justify its vigorous use of tariffs, the Trump administration has invoked Section 301 of the Trade Act of 1974 (the same provision the

Reagan administration used against Japan in the 1980s), which allows the president to retaliate against unfair foreign trade practices, as judged by U.S. trade officials rather than by WTO judges. The administration also has invoked a statute that allows the president to impose tariffs if he determines that they are necessary to protect national security.

Economists have shown that the U.S.–China trade war has cost the average American household more than \$1000 per year at higher prices (Amiti et al. 2019). But the president and his main advisors view the trade war in geopolitical terms and believe it puts the United States in a win-win situation: either China concedes to U.S. demands and abandons the policies that have powered its economic rise, or the United States maintains severe economic penalties that cripple the Chinese economy. Either way, China is weakened.

Investment Restrictions

For the past decade, China has engaged in the most extensive corporate espionage campaign in history, pilfering technology that, according to the U.S. Trade Representative, has cost the United States between \$225 billion and \$600 billion annually. In response, the Trump administration has erected a tech iron curtain of investment and visa restrictions. In 2018, the Committee on Foreign Investment in the United States (CFIUS) was empowered to nix investments in any high-technology industry if Chinese money or personnel were involved; as a result, Chinese investment in the United States plunged by 95% that year. Whereas Chinese students used to receive 5-year visas to study in the United States, many now receive 1-year visas, if they can get them at all, and face an onerous renewal process that can last for months.

In seeking to preserve U.S. technological leadership, the Trump administration has placed special emphasis on the telecommunications industry. In May 2019, President Trump signed an executive order banning U.S. companies from using information and communications technology from anyone considered a national security threat. The move was widely viewed as an attempt to blacklist Huawei, the world's largest telecoms equipment manufacturer and second-biggest smartphone producer, which has been accused by U.S. congressional committees, the Federal Bureau of Investigation, and the National Security Agency of selling and installing products with “back doors” that allow Chinese

government hackers to steal U.S. technology, spy on U.S. officials, and prepare strategic cyberattacks on U.S. infrastructure.

The Trump administration's ban, which came just a few months after Canadian authorities arrested Huawei's chief financial officer at the request of the U.S. Justice Department, makes it nearly impossible for U.S. companies—or any foreign firm that works closely with U.S. companies—to do business with any part of Huawei or 70 of its affiliates. Trump suspended this ban in June 2019, but many U.S. firms had already cut ties with Huawei. For example, Google reduced the Android services it provides to Huawei, chipmakers Intel and Qualcomm pledged not to supply Huawei with components, and AT&T backed out of a deal to sell Huawei smartphones in the United States.

The Trump administration's investment and visa restrictions are the most extensive economic constraints the United States has imposed on China since the two countries normalized relations forty years ago. In the years ahead, the Trump administration's economic restrictions on China could become even more severe. The wording of President Trump's executive order is broad enough to ensnare any Chinese technology firm, from e-commerce giants, such as Alibaba, to hardware manufacturers like Lenovo; and Trump has openly considered an outright ban on Chinese students studying in America.

Investment Abroad

Many observers believe China's Belt and Road Initiative (BRI), which aims to invest \$1 trillion in dozens of countries, spreads China's soft power tentacles across Eurasia and threatens U.S. influence in the Indo-Pacific. To counter China's economic statecraft, President Trump signed the Better Utilization of Investment Leading to Development (BUILD) Act, a bipartisan bill establishing the International Development Finance Corporation (IDFC), an American institution armed with a \$60 billion annual budget (more than twice as large as the budget of the institution it is replacing, the U.S. Overseas Private Investment Corporation) and a writ to extend loans, make equity investments, offer technical assistance, and provide grants to low and lower middle-income countries. The sums involved are paltry by Chinese standards, but they represent the largest U.S. soft power outlay in at least a decade, and the administration claims that IDFC loans will spur significant private sector investment in

Indo-Pacific countries, thereby preventing countries in the region from becoming dependent on Chinese cash.

ORIGINS OF TRUMP’S CHINA POLICY

Trump is the first president in nearly fifty years to embrace competition with China and enact a broad package of policies designed to degrade Chinese power. The president’s personal convictions no doubt explain some of the more extreme aspects of this hardline shift. For example, Trump’s personal admiration for the military probably contributed to his administration’s historic hike in defense spending—Trump attended the New York Military Academy in high school, has long advocated a strong military, and said that he is “making up” for not serving in the Vietnam War by lavishing funds on the military now. Similarly, Trump has favored the aggressive use of tariffs against America’s economic competitors since the 1980s, when he attracted significant publicity as a potential presidential candidate by calling for a 15–20% tax on Japanese imports (Miller 2018). Most important, Trump’s bigoted beliefs on race, which have been documented extensively, seem to have encouraged some top administration officials, advisors, and prominent members of the Republican Party to portray the U.S.–China rivalry as a clash of incompatible civilizations and China as a unique threat because it is “not Caucasian” (Musgrave 2019; Rogin 2019).

Yet, the origins of America’s more competitive China policy predate the Trump administration. In other words, Trump’s China policy builds on long-term trends in U.S. policy, and while Trump’s policy has unique and extreme elements, the core of the policy—the emphasis on degrading the power of a potential superpower rival—has been coalescing for years.

The U.S.–China partnership was forged in the Cold War when both countries faced a common enemy in the Soviet Union (Mann 1999). The end of the Cold War in 1989 left the United States standing as the world’s sole superpower and China as its most likely long-term challenger. The U.S.–China relationship has been ripe for rivalry ever since, and U.S. China policy might have hardened earlier but for two fleeting circumstances: first, in the 1990s, China was weak, and democracy and capitalism were on the march globally, so U.S. policymakers reasonably believed they could engage China without seriously jeopardizing U.S. security or the liberal international order; second, in the 2000s, the United States became fixated on counterterrorism and bogged down in wars in the

Middle East, and thus devoted less attention and resources to balancing China than it might have had the 9/11 terrorist attacks not taken place.

The 2008 financial crisis, however, brought the latent U.S.–China rivalry to the fore by heightening U.S. fears of decline and Chinese fears of domestic turmoil. Each side subsequently took steps to make itself more secure that antagonized the other: China cracked down on dissent at home and aggressively expanded abroad to secure markets and resources for its faltering economy; and the United States responded to China’s moves by expanding its military presence and defense partnerships in Asia and negotiating an economic bloc in the region that would have excluded China. Trump has heightened U.S.–China competition, but his aggressive approach constitutes an acceleration of a preexisting trend, not a sharp break.

The Cold War

Trump’s strategy may seem like a jarring aberration when compared to the previous five decades of U.S. China policy, but less so when one considers that America’s original strategy toward the People’s Republic of China (PRC), maintained throughout the 1950s and 1960s, was a “policy of pressure” designed to subvert the Chinese Communist Party’s rule and rupture China’s relationship with the Soviet Union (Chang 1990). China’s intervention in the Korean War in October 1950 convinced U.S. policymakers that the PRC was a Soviet proxy—“a colonial Russian government, a Slavic Manchukuo ... driven by foreign masters,” in Dean Rusk’s words—and that the two communist powers were bent on world conquest (quoted in Snyder 1991: 273). China’s government, under Mao Zedong, fed these fears by repeatedly attacking Taiwanese military outposts, backing communist insurgencies in Southeast Asia, acquiring nuclear weapons, and disseminating anti-American propaganda. In response, U.S. administrations, from Eisenhower to Johnson, went “beyond containment” and essentially tried to dismantle the PRC as a great power (George and Smoke 1974: 269).

Nixon abandoned this hostile policy in 1971, and the United States and China became “tacit allies” during the 1970s and 1980s. But U.S.–China rapprochement was driven by cold geopolitical logic rather than warm affection or common values (Pomfret 2016). American leaders believed they needed Chinese cooperation to counter the growing military threat from the Soviet Union and convinced themselves that China’s

lack of political and economic openness did not affect U.S. interests, was not as bad as it seemed, or would be remedied through steady engagement with the West.

These rationales came crashing down in 1989: in June, the Chinese government sent its military into the streets of Beijing to crush pro-democracy protests, killing hundreds or perhaps thousands of people in the process; and in November, crowds of East Germans tore down the Berlin Wall, and the Soviet Union called off the Cold War. Thus, in a six-month period, the geopolitical rationale for the U.S.–China partnership disappeared, and stark conflicts of interest and values between the two countries were laid bare. American attitudes toward China flipped—at the start of 1989, 72% of Americans had a favorable impression of China; by the end of the year, only 31% did—and debates about U.S. China policy became more polarized (Pomfret 2016: 514). The U.S.–China partnership has been on thin ice ever since.

The 1990s

Despite the tumultuous events of 1989, the George H. W. Bush and Clinton administrations engaged China diplomatically and economically, because China seemed like more of a money-making opportunity for U.S. businesses than a threat to U.S. security (Mann 1999). Throughout the 1990s, China's economy accounted for less than 3% of world GDP and its military budget was 10–20 times smaller than America's. On the other hand, China had 1.3 billion people, a growing economy, a long coastline in the heart of East Asia, and an authoritarian regime that was willing and able to crush dissent and trash the environment to make way for big business. As a potential consumer market and low-wage production platform, therefore, China was simply too good to pass up, and American multinational companies and Wall Street financiers pressed the H. W. Bush and Clinton administrations to integrate China into U.S. supply chains and financial networks (Pomfret 2016: 496–498).

George H. W. Bush made the first, crucial decision in this process by refusing to isolate China after Tiananmen, as many members of Congress and the U.S. media were urging him to do. Although he banned military sales and exchanges and froze high-level contacts with Beijing immediately after the Massacre, he secretly sent his National Security Advisor, Brent Scowcroft, to Beijing a few weeks later to reassure Deng Xiaoping that the United States still wanted to do business with China. After

the media criticized these contacts, H. W. Bush started publicly making the case for “comprehensive engagement” with Beijing, claiming that sustained U.S.–China ties would restrain Japanese remilitarization and keep China from selling arms to America’s adversaries. These convoluted strategic justifications fell flat among American voters, but H. W. Bush succeeded in preserving the U.S.–China partnership.

As a presidential candidate in 1992, Clinton criticized H. W. Bush for coddling the “butchers of Beijing.” Once in office, however, Clinton expanded on Bush’s engagement policy. Although Clinton initially catered to his Democratic base by signing an executive order in 1993 that linked China’s trade benefits to tangible progress on human rights, he revoked this order the following year and then lobbied Congress to grant China permanent normal trade relations, thereby ending the annual Congressional vote on whether to extend China’s trade privileges in the United States. As a result, U.S.–China economic ties flourished.

Despite this boom in commerce, however, geopolitical competition bubbled just under the surface during both the Bush and Clinton administrations. In February 1992, just a few months after the U.S. Navy declared it would pull out of Subic Naval Base in the Philippines, China’s legislature passed a bill and released a map that seemingly asserted Chinese sovereignty over most of the South China Sea. Chinese analysts called the law “China’s Monroe Doctrine.” The next month, China bought 24 advanced SU-27 warplanes from Russia. The number of planes was small, given the size of China’s air force, but the purchase showed China’s determination to develop a modern military that could project power beyond its borders—and Russia’s willingness to help China achieve that goal.

In September 1992, in the heat of the presidential campaign, and with his China policy under attack, President Bush announced that the United States would sell Taiwan F-16 warplanes. From the perspective of China’s leaders, this sale was the most provocative action taken by an American president since the Nixon era: the F-16s significantly modernized Taiwan’s air force; and the sale clearly violated the spirit, if not the specific language, of the 1982 Shanghai Communiqué in which the United States had declared its intention to reduce arms sales to Taiwan. Most important, the United States had made plain that, despite all the talk of engagement, it had no intention of allowing China to conquer Taiwan.

Tensions over Taiwan boiled over in May 1995, when Clinton granted a visa to Taiwan’s President, Lee Teng-Hui, so that he could attend his

graduate school reunion at Cornell University. From Beijing's perspective, Clinton's decision to allow Taiwan's leader to make an official visit to the United States violated America's commitment to the one-China policy and was especially provocative, because President Lee had started referring to Taiwan as an independent entity the year before.

To signal its displeasure, and to try to undermine Lee's 1996 reelection campaign, China initiated a series of large-scale military exercises in 1995 that culminated in March 1996 with the firing of missiles (apparently with the warheads removed) that landed within Taiwan's territorial waters just 30 miles from two of Taiwan's largest ports. Clinton, who also was facing reelection in 1996, deployed one aircraft carrier battle group to the waters east of Taiwan and sailed another through the Taiwan Strait. China halted its exercises, and U.S. and Chinese diplomats privately reassured each other that they did not intend to escalate the crisis further. Both sides, however, had shown they might be willing to fight over Taiwan, and China soon launched a major military modernization campaign focused on developing the ability to sink American aircraft carriers.

Mutual hostility and strategic distrust persisted throughout the 1990s, even as U.S.–China trade and investment expanded. In the United States, a loose collection of congresspeople, think tank fellows, conservative journalists, Pentagon officials, labor union representatives, environmentalists, human rights activists, lobbyists for Taiwan, former intelligence officers, and academics coalesced to oppose U.S.–China engagement. William Triplett, a Republican Senate aide, dubbed the group the Blue Team, which is the term China uses for the enemy in war games.

The grievances espoused by this motley American crew were the same as many of those expressed by the Trump administration today: China is preparing for war with America, hollowing out the U.S. economy, wrecking the environment, repressing its people, and undermining the liberal international order—all while the United States is asleep at the switch.

These voices grew louder over the course of the 1990s as China's economy and military budget expanded, and by 2000, the Republican nominee for President, George W. Bush, was calling China a "strategic competitor" and promising to take a tougher line against Beijing once in office (Baum 2001). When Bush became president, the stage appeared to be set for a hard turn in U.S. China policy.

The War on Terror

During his first eight months in office, Bush seemed to be living up to his campaign rhetoric on China (Pomfret 2016). In February 2001, he announced that the United States would sponsor a United Nations resolution condemning China's human rights record. Later that month, Bush authorized an airstrike on Chinese-installed fiber-optic cables in Iraq. In April, Bush refused to apologize to China after a Chinese fighter jet harassed and collided with a U.S. Navy spy plane in international airspace off the southern Chinese coast, and the Chinese jet crashed, killing the pilot. Later that month, the Pentagon announced a \$4 billion arms sales package to Taiwan that included eight diesel submarines and four destroyers, and Bush pledged in a media interview that the United States would do "whatever it took" to defend Taiwan from a Chinese attack. In May, the Pentagon partially suspended U.S. military exchanges with China, and the State Department issued a transit visa for Taiwan's President, Chen Shui-bian, allowing him to meet with U.S. officials. On May 23, while Chen was schmoozing with U.S. lawmakers in New York, Bush met with the Dalai Lama in the White House. Although Bush balanced some of these moves with conciliatory gestures, many observers believed his administration was abandoning the prevailing policy of engagement and taking a tougher line with China.¹

But then 9/11 happened. Suddenly, the war on terror became the lodestar of U.S. foreign policy, and the United States needed China's help: first, to vote in favor of UN Security Council resolutions authorizing the use of force against Afghanistan; and second, and more important, to refrain from stirring up trouble in Asia while the U.S. military was waging war in the greater Middle East.

Against this backdrop, the Bush administration stopped calling China a strategic competitor and started sketching out a new role for China as a "responsible stakeholder" in the international system. The basic idea was to give China a seat at the table in the world's major international institutions and hope that Beijing would help prop up the American-led order. To further this aim, the Bush administration launched the

¹ For example, to secure the release of the crew of the EP-3E, Bush had his ambassador to China write a letter saying the United States was sorry that the Chinese pilot had died and that the U.S. plane had entered China's airspace without permission; and in an interview just hours after his "whatever it takes" comment about Taiwan, Bush reaffirmed America's commitment to the one-China policy.

Strategic Economic Dialogue in 2006, which became a series of biannual negotiations in which U.S. cabinet secretaries met with their Chinese counterparts to hash out agreements on trade, finance, energy, air travel, tourism, the environment, and “long-term strategic challenges.”

To placate Beijing, Bush repeatedly warned Taiwan not to alter the cross-strait status quo and became the first U.S. president to criticize a Taiwanese leader in front of a senior Communist official: at a 2003 meeting in the Oval Office with China’s Premier, Wen Jiabao, Bush openly sided against Taiwan’s President, Chen Shui-bian, who wanted to hold a referendum calling for China to renounce the use of force against Taiwan and withdraw missiles aimed at the island. Bush also stopped publicly criticizing China for its human rights abuses and lack of democracy. Although he frequently gave speeches promoting his “freedom agenda” in which he would name and shame the world’s leading authoritarian governments, he always left China off the list.

Even as the Bush administration engaged China, however, it quietly balanced against it militarily and economically (Silove 2016). In 2004, the Pentagon developed plans for a military buildup in the Pacific that called for the creation of a Global Strike Task Force on Guam comprised of six bombers, three Global Hawk surveillance craft, four KC-135 refueling tankers, and regular rotations of F-22 fighter aircraft; upgrades to Guam’s harbors so that 60% of the U.S. attack submarine fleet could be assigned to the Pacific; the deployment of additional Stryker Brigade Combat Teams with C-17 airlifters in Hawaii and Alaska; the basing of an additional aircraft carrier in San Diego; and the rotation of U.S. forces around new operating sites in Asia to train regional militaries in peacetime and mass firepower in wartime. In 2005, Bush began trade negotiations that would eventually lead to the Trans-Pacific Partnership, a trade agreement that linked twelve countries around the Pacific, but excluded China, which constituted 40% of the world economy and 25% of world trade.

In sum, the Bush administration engaged China but also developed plans for balancing against it. This balancing strategy, which called for a robust U.S. military presence in Asia backed by a network of capable allies and partners and a regional trade bloc that excluded China, laid the groundwork for the Obama administration’s “pivot” to Asia.

The 2008 Financial Crisis

The global financial crisis, which rocked markets worldwide in 2008 and plunged the U.S. economy into its worst recession since the Great Depression, inflamed the U.S.–China rivalry by stoking U.S. fears of decline and Chinese fears of internal turmoil.

As American banks collapsed and U.S. unemployment surged, feelings of malaise swept over the United States. Books with titles such as *When China Rules the World*, *Becoming China's Bitch*, and *Death by China* became bestsellers; the U.S. National Intelligence Council released reports advising the president to prepare the country for the rise of China and the reemergence of multipolarity; and opinion polls showed that most Americans believed that China was rapidly overtaking the United States as the world's dominant power (Beckley 2018). These fears exacerbated preexisting anxieties about China's emergence as a trade powerhouse after it joined the WTO in 2001, an event that one major study suggests cost the United States 2.4 million jobs as multinational corporations shifted labor-intensive production activities to China (Autor et al. 2016). For geopolitical and economic reasons, therefore, the pain Americans felt during the financial crisis quickly turned into anger at China.

China emerged from the financial crisis cocky abroad but insecure at home—a toxic combination that produced a more assertive Chinese foreign policy. On the one hand, the crisis convinced many Chinese that the era of U.S. dominance was winding down and that China could start flexing its muscles; after all, the crisis had begun in the America and had seemingly hit the U.S. economy hardest (Friedberg 2015). On the other hand, the crisis worried Chinese leaders about the sustainability of their country's economic growth model, which relied heavily on foreign markets, which were closing, and relentless domestic investment. Although China's economy grew 10% in 2009 and 2010, all of that growth came from massive stimulus spending rather than improvements in productivity (Beckley 2018: chapter 3). Worse, subsequent rounds of stimulus failed to sustain rapid growth: in 2009, China started rolling out an Obama-sized credit package every five months on average, yet economic growth rates fell 50% over the next ten years, productivity growth turned negative (meaning China's economy was producing less and less output for every unit of input), and debt quadrupled. For the first time in a generation, therefore, China was suffering secular economic stagnation.

This gloomy economic picture put China's Communist Party in a bind. The Party could not allow a sustained downturn, because its legitimacy rested heavily on economic performance, but it also could not implement Western-style economic reforms—for example, by cutting subsidies to inefficient state-owned monopolies; strengthening private property protections; or opening up markets to foreign competition—without disrupting the crony capitalist networks that sustained the Party's grip on power (Pei 2016).

Thus, to boost growth while maintaining domestic order, the Chinese government decided to crack down on internal dissent, erect protectionist barriers, and engage in mercantilist expansion abroad. Between 2008 and 2012, the Chinese government doubled its internal security spending; jailed hundreds of journalists and human-rights lawyers; installed Party cells in every major organization and company; banned public discussion of Chinese Communist Party corruption and Western values (e.g., press freedom, judicial independence, civil society); employed millions of internet censors; and imposed martial law in Xinjiang and Tibet (Greitens 2017; Minzner 2018; Shirk 2018). China also erected trade and investment barriers, tripled subsidies to state-owned firms, and engaged in rampant economic espionage (Lardy 2019). Finally, and most vexing to the United States, China expanded abroad, doubling outbound investment from 2008 to 2012, to secure markets and resources for Chinese firms (Rolland 2017). To protect these investments, China also went out militarily, doubling its procurement of long-range naval ships; tripling its foreign port calls; quintupling its patrols in major sea lanes in Asia; and increasing its use of coercive maritime actions sevenfold (Chubb 2016).

In sum, China became more repressive at home and aggressive abroad after the 2008 financial crisis, and powerful interests in the United States took notice and began calling for a tougher U.S. China policy. China's naval aggression provoked the U.S. military, which was already planning to redeploy forces to Asia as the wars in Iraq and Afghanistan wound down. At the same time, China's economic protectionism and mercantilist expansion alarmed the U.S. business community, which worried that China was distorting international markets and carving out exclusive economic spheres across Eurasia. Finally, the dramatic rise in Chinese domestic repression extinguished hope in the United States that continued engagement would eventually liberalize China.

The Obama administration had come to office intending to cooperate with China on dozens of issues.² By 2010, however, the administration had become exasperated by China's assertive behavior and started pushing back (Pomfret 2016). That year, the United States tightened security relations with Japan and South Korea; authorized arms sales to Vietnam; resumed military relations with Indonesia; convinced Singapore to build docks for an American aircraft carrier battle group; rotated U.S. marines to Australia; persuaded New Zealand to allow U.S. Navy ships back into its ports after a 30-year hiatus; negotiated the return of the U.S. Navy and Air Force to the Philippines, which had unceremoniously booted U.S. forces out of its territory in the early 1990s; and declared that freedom of navigation in the South China Sea was a U.S. national interest and that the Senkaku islands, which Japan administers but China claims, were covered by the U.S.–Japan alliance; and negotiated the Trans-Pacific Partnership, which, as noted earlier, linked the major nations around the Pacific but excluded China.

In 2011, Secretary of State Hillary Clinton published an essay in *Foreign Policy* magazine titled “America’s Pacific Century” in which she called for a strategic “pivot” to the Asia-Pacific. The term stuck, and pundits declared that the United States had pivoted to Asia to counter China’s rise. The Obama administration still engaged China in some areas, most notably by trying to negotiate a Bilateral Investment Treaty that would have opened both countries’ markets to each other’s businesses, but it also sought to craft military alliances and an economic bloc designed to contain China’s rise.

This fact was not lost on China’s leaders, and they reacted by doubling down on repression, protectionism, and mercantilist expansion. Since 2012, China has erected massive gulags in Xinjiang, chipped away at Hong Kong’s democratic rule, pioneered a “social credit score” system that uses facial recognition technology to monitor citizens’ behavior

²For example, in 2009, Obama postponed a meeting with the Dalai Lama to avoid antagonizing China before a summit with Chinese president Hu Jintao; Obama’s administration expanded the U.S.–China Strategic Economic Dialogue to encompass virtually every issue in U.S.–China relations; his Secretary of State, Hillary Clinton, visited Beijing during her first foreign trip and signaled that the Obama administration would not let human rights concerns interfere with U.S.–China economic and security relations; and in the first China-related speech from the administration, Clinton’s Deputy, James Steinberg, called for “strategic reassurance” from both countries and declared that the United States would welcome China’s arrival “as a prosperous and successful power.”

and determine their access to essential services, banned foreign NGOs that threaten Chinese unity or security; and spent billions of dollars on an “antidemocratic toolkit” of NGOs, media outlets, think tanks, hackers, and bribes to reverse the international spread of democracy, destroy America’s image abroad, and subvert American political institutions (Shirk 2018; Greitens 2017; Minzner 2018). China also doubled subsidies (again) to state-owned enterprises and ramped up regulations and trade and investment barriers on foreign firms (Lardy 2019).

Finally, China reclaimed land and militarized seven features in the South China Sea; doubled procurement of long-range naval ships; doubled port calls abroad; engaged in militarized disputes with Japan, Vietnam, and the United States; used boycotts and travel bans to punish U.S. allies, including South Korea and the Philippines, for further aligning with the United States; and poached some of Taiwan’s few remaining diplomatic partners. From an American perspective, these Chinese moves were especially alarming, because most were carried out under Xi Jinping, who has set himself up to rule China as a dictator for life (Economy 2018).

By the 2016 U.S. Presidential Election, a bipartisan consensus had emerged that China was a hostile power and would remain so indefinitely. Even much of the U.S. business and academic communities—long the main advocates of U.S.–China engagement—were fed up and willing to try punitive actions against Beijing. The United States, therefore, was primed for competition with China when Trump became president.

CONCLUSION

Trump’s China policy contains several extreme elements that may bear the president’s unique imprint—a historic hike in military spending, rampant use of unilateral tariffs, a tendency to frame U.S.–China rivalry in civilizational terms—but the core of the strategy is domestically popular, builds on long-standing trends in U.S. foreign policy, and looks like a textbook realist strategy to weaken a potential superpower rival. Trump’s approach, therefore, marks a turning point in U.S.–China relations, but not an anomaly. Momentum for a competitive shift in U.S. China policy has been building since the end of the Cold War and gained broad public support nearly a decade before Trump was elected. Another president might have chosen different methods to confront China or different words to describe the U.S.–China rivalry, but many elements of Trump’s

China policy receive solid bipartisan backing—an astounding achievement in an era of deep political polarization. The broad support and long lineage of Trump’s China policy suggest it will outlive his presidency. If that occurs, U.S.–China competition will become a fixture of world politics for years, perhaps even for a generation.

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Beyond Hyperbole: The Meaning of the Trump–Kim Dialogue

Lawrence A. Kuznar

The language used by leaders, whether carefully crafted or extemporaneous, whether truthful or deceitful, can reveal something about their worldviews, values, intentions, and relationships. Such revelations attain an especially heightened relevance when considering the discursive interaction between Donald J. Trump (first as candidate and especially as President of the United States) and Chairman Kim Jong-un of North Korea. Both leaders share a reputation for mercurial rhetoric and action, both hold the key to nuclear arsenals, and both contest over a crucial region involving some of the world's militarily and economically most powerful nations (China, Japan, South Korea, and Russia). If a Trump doctrine exists, how is it manifest and what is its relevance to the relations between these two leaders, and what impact might it have on issues of critical importance such as denuclearizing the Korean peninsula?

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Insights derived from analysis of their discourse and actions can shed light on each leader's foreign policies and on those policies' future trajectories. An understanding of how their relationship has evolved allows an assessment of how strategic shifts, and at times tactical provocations or blunders, have impacted advances or setbacks in the attempt to denuclearize the Korean Peninsula. A thorough assessment should also consider the impact of the different cultural worldviews of these leaders and its impact on their relationship. The analysis of worldview strikes to the heart of this volume's central question, "What is the Trump Doctrine?" and how, if such a doctrine exists, has it affected relations between the leaders and their countries now. Such an assessment can inform foreign policy by highlighting what public actions and words worked and which did not, and how this relates to deterrence theory and diplomacy. This chapter will provide empirically based insights on each of these issues through quantitative discourse analysis. It proceeds as follows. First, the theoretical approach is described, followed by a brief overview of the methodology. Then, each leader's views of the other as expressed in public statements is assessed, followed by an analysis of what their dialogue reveals about their relationship and President Trump's style of negotiation, their significance for relations between the leaders and conflict in the region, and relevance to issues in international relations such as deterrence and diplomacy.

THEORY, METHOD, AND DATA

The theoretical basis of and methodological approach used in this analysis has been described in Chapter 2. In short, it draws on qualitative traditions aimed at revealing the political meaning of discourse (Fairclough 2001; van Dijk 2005), systematic methods of content analysis (Guest et al. 2012), conversation analysis (Maynard 2006), and anthropological methods for systematically capturing the influence of culture and worldview through language (Bernard and Ryan 2010). It has been applied in numerous national security contexts from counterterrorism (Fenstermacher and Kuznar 2016; Kuznar 2017) to international relations (Fenstermacher et al. 2012; Kuznar and Aviles 2018). The approach renders quantitative assessments of a leader's discourse that can be used to reveal patterns and test hypotheses and is supplemented by qualitative analysis of the meaning of these patterns.

The Leaders' Statements

Two corpora were obtained for Donald Trump. One, described in Chapter 3, consisted of official statements he made and interviews he granted either as a presidential candidate or as President, obtained from the University of California, Santa Barbara Presidency Project.¹ In order to gain further insight into President Trump's public statements about North Korea and Kim Jong-un, all of his tweets concerning North Korea or Kim Jong-un since President Trump's inauguration were obtained from the Trump Twitter Archive.² This provided 102 Presidential tweets from @realDonaldTrump, 95 of which specifically addressed interactions or messages between North Korea, the United States, President Trump and Chairman Kim. In addition, Trump's approved prescription for how to conduct negotiations, as published in his 1987 book *Trump: Art of the Deal*, is tested against how he has dealt with the North Korean situation.

The corpus of public speeches for Chairman Kim Jong-un since he assumed leadership of the North Korean government (2012 to present) was gathered from the official North Korean government website³ and was based on its English translations. His 2019 New Year's speech was drawn from an English translation from the National Committee on North Korea (NCNK),⁴ a Washington-based non-governmental organization that promotes understanding between the United States and North Korea and that publishes much of his public statements. Finally, joint statements and letters between Chairman Kim and President Trump were obtained from White House official posts or images in President Trump's tweets. This provided a corpus of 47 speeches that spanned Chairman Kim's rule with a combined total of 169,956 words coded into 237 codes in the Kim Jong-un codebook developed in our research.

For both leaders, the coded segments from official statements provided the raw data for much of this analysis and were normalized as densities by dividing the number of times a theme was mentioned by the number of words in a document. Donald Trump's tweets were coded as positive or negative, which given his penchant for exaggerated and dramatic speech,

¹<https://www.presidency.ucsb.edu/people/president/donald-j-trump>.

²<http://www.trumptwitterarchive.com>.

³http://www.korea-dpr.com/e_library.html.

⁴<https://www.ncnk.org/resources/publications?category=34>.

was easily done and provided an independent source of information for testing hypotheses that emerged from the investigation.

All Communicative Acts

Language is not the only manner in which people communicate. Actions, whether physical or social, communicate as well. In order to provide a full examination of the interactions between the United States and North Korea, a timeline of military actions (military and missile tests, flyovers) and administrative actions (governmental or UN resolutions, meetings between officials), was compiled from the Arms Control Association website⁵ and cross-checked with news and government reports. This, collated with significant communications and tweets (many of which were also captured by the Arms Control Association), provided a database of 81 interactions that were coded for those that were positive (meetings, positive statements, cooperative actions) and negative (refusals, negative statements, threats, military actions). The combination of official speeches, interviews (containing more extemporaneous remarks), tweets (short communication bursts often seemingly extemporaneous), and actual or planned physical actions (diplomatic and military) is intended to provide the broadest context in which the interactions of these leaders can be empirically analyzed and interpreted.

PRESIDENT DONALD J. TRUMP'S VIEW OF NORTH KOREA AND CHAIRMAN KIM JONG-UN

President Trump mentions Kim Jong-un and North Korea rather prominently in his official public speeches compared to other polities and political leaders. China and North Korea are the only countries other than the United States whose mean densities are greater than a standard deviation from the mean of all polities in Trump's discourse. Furthermore, Kim Jong-un is the most prominently mentioned foreign leader by Donald Trump, followed by Chinese President Xi Jinping; Russian President Vladimir Putin is a distant third (Fig. 10.1). These data indicate that Russia is much less a concern for Trump and that he is primarily

⁵<https://www.armscontrol.org/factsheets/dprkchron>.

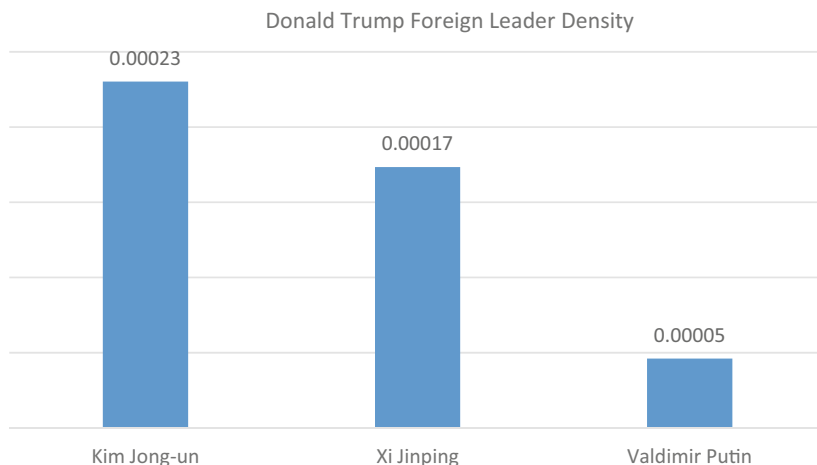


Fig. 10.1 Density with which Donald Trump refers to foreign leaders

focused on China and North Korea. His very frequent references to Kim Jong-un reflect events since especially September 2017, when President Trump and Chairman Kim began their verbal sparring match and the following media attention they both received in the lead-up to the summits. The President's frequent discussion of China and Xi Jinping are primarily related to his economic negotiations and complaints about China's economic practices.

President Trump only mentions Kim Jong-un twice in official public speeches before 2018, although he tweeted extensively about him prior to then, referring to him in negative and dismissive ways by calling him a "madman" (tweet September 22, 2017), "Little Rocket Man" (tweet September 23, 2017 and other occasions), and implying that Kim is "short and fat" (tweet November 11, 2017).

President Trump's discourse regarding Kim Jong-un shifts dramatically in early 2018, referring to Kim Jong-un frequently and in positive and cooperative terms and praising their personal relationship.

You don't have anymore nuclear testing. In fact, they're closing up a lot of their sites. You don't have rockets going up. You don't have missiles going up. And you have people. I like Kim. He likes me. (President

Trump, Remarks at a “Make America Great Again” Rally in Wheeling, WV, September 21, 2018)

Kim Jong Un has been, really, somebody that I’ve gotten to know very well and respect, and hopefully—and I really believe that—over a period of time, a lot of tremendous things will happen. (President Trump, Remarks Prior to a Meeting With South Korean President Moon Jae-in, April 11, 2019)

These comments reflect a new, personal and warm regard for Kim Jong-un, a view that has been maintained into August 2019 (see below).

CHAIRMAN KIM JONG-UN’S VIEW OF THE UNITED STATES AND PRESIDENT DONALD TRUMP

A striking aspect of Kim Jong-un’s discourse compared to other world leaders is his almost total lack of mention of other polities and political figures, a characteristic he shares with his father, Kim Jong-il. Beginning with Kim Jong-il’s rule, the perspective of the North Korean leadership shifted from consideration of world geopolitics and how it impacted North Korean interests to an entirely insular and almost complete consideration only with the United States and the Korean peninsula (Kuznar 2019). Kim Jong-un’s worldview, like his father’s, appears geographically limited to his own backyard and the perceived looming specter of an aggressive United States. Similarly, Kim Jong-un only mentions four other leaders in his official public speeches (Fig. 10.2). His father and grandfather are by far the most prominent, and this is a function of his appeals to their legacy and ideological views as the foundation of the Democratic People’s Republic of Korea (DPRK). Chinese President Xi Jinping is only mentioned twice, both times in a March 28, 2018 speech in which he praised the Chinese leader and North Korea’s and China’s shared history. Figure 10.2 provides a graphical comparison of the relative density with which Kim Jong-un refers to other leaders. His predecessors dominate, President Xi has hardly any presence in Kim’s discourse, leaving President Trump as the only foreign leader Chairman Kim really mentions at all, reinforcing the importance the United States and President Trump appear to have in Chairman Kim Jong-un’s worldview. All but one of Kim’s statements about President Trump date to two missives in September 2017 during which time Kim and Trump were engaged in

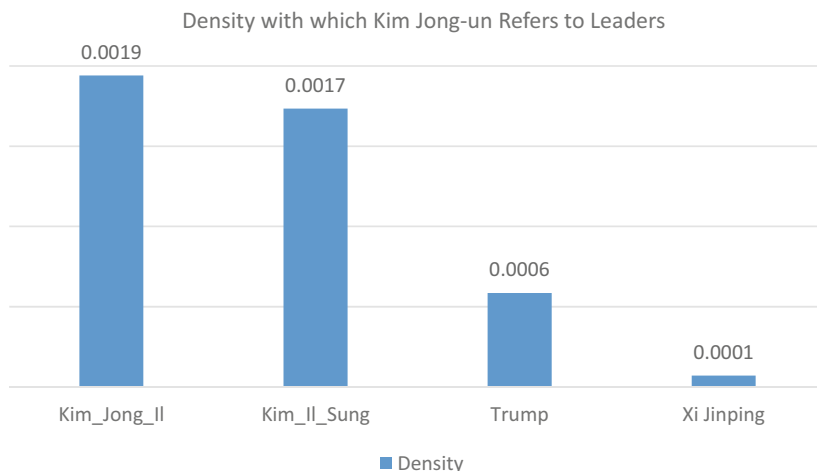


Fig. 10.2 Comparison of Kim Jong-un's mentioned foreign leaders

a rhetorical sparring match sparked by President Trump's address to the U.N. General Assembly and are extremely negative, dismissive and filled with pejoratives. For example, Kim says of Trump,

He is unfit to hold the prerogative of supreme command of the military forces of a country, and he is surely a rogue and a gangster fond of playing with fire, rather than a politician.... Action is the best option in treating the dotard who, hard of hearing, is uttering only what he wants to say. (Chairman Kim Jong-un statement, September 21, 2017)

However, nearly two years later and after meeting President Trump in two summits, Chairman Kim's tone is decidedly different, cooperative, and positive.

However, as President Trump continuously observes, personal relations between he and I are not hostile like the relationship between the two countries, and we still maintain good relations, and if we want, we can send and receive letters asking for each other's regards any time. (Chairman Kim Jong-un speech, On Socialist Construction and the Internal and External Policies of the Government of the Republic at the Current Stage, April 12, 2019)

This turnabout, based on analysis of official speeches, stands as a hypothesis to be tested and will be examined in more detail in the following analysis of the dialogic relationship between the leaders.

ANALYSIS OF THE TRUMP–KIM DIALOGUE

Analysis of President Trump's and Chairman Kim's messaging to one another and to one another's governments will provide an assessment of the dynamics of their relationship as two state leaders.

First, examining the full history of 81 interactions (actions and rhetoric), the timeline yielded 35 interactions overall for President Trump and the U.S. government and 51 for Chairman Kim and the North Korean government. Excluding actions and resolutions, the timeline yields 18 communications for both President Trump and Chairman Kim. Each incident was coded as either positive or negative. Given the nature of the interactions (nuclear and missile tests, return of tortured and dying American Otto Warmbier, resolutions against North Korea versus cessation of tests, summits, handshakes, return of healthy American detainees, return of lost American remains) and the hyperbolic rhetoric of both leaders, there was virtually no ambiguity; these leaders and their governments interact in either clearly adversarial and therefore negative or conciliatory and therefore positive ways.

These data allow a test of the seeming thaw in relations and rapprochement since early 2018 proposed in Table 10.1. Considering all incidents, there is a dramatic shift from overwhelmingly negative (100% negative for Trump, 96% negative for Kim Jong-un) to strongly positive interactions (81% positive for Trump, 68% positive for Kim Jong-un). Similarly, considering only their communications, there is a dramatic shift from overwhelmingly negative (100% negative for Trump, 83% negative for Kim Jong-un) to overwhelmingly positive (73% positive for Trump and 83% positive for Kim Jong-un). All of these differences are highly statistically significant. In both action and word, a genuine rapprochement appears to have occurred after January 4, 2018. These leaders either have engaged in strictly negative, hyperbolic attacks upon one another verbally or gushing praise of one another, there has been no in-between. Their actions have been more mixed, but also follow a pattern of initial hostility, and abrupt reversal (see Fig. 10.3 and discussion below). Furthermore,

Table 10.1 Positive/negative interactions between Trump and Kim

<i>Period</i>		<i>All incidents</i>			<i>Discourse</i>		
		<i>Trump</i>	<i>KJU</i>	<i>Trump/Kim comparison</i>	<i>Trump</i>	<i>KJU</i>	<i>Trump/Kim comparison</i>
All	n	35	52	$z = 0.935$	18	18	$z = 1.002$
	Percent positive	48.6	38.5	$p = 0.350$	44.4	61.1	$p = 0.317$
Pre January 4 2018	n	14	24	$z = 0.774$	7	6	$z = 1.124$
	Percent positive	0.0	4.2	$p = 0.439$	0.0	16.7	$p = 0.261$
Post January 4 2018	n	21	28	$z = 1.027$	11	12	$z = 0.616$
	Percent Positive	81.0	67.9	$p = 0.304$	72.7	83.3	$p = 0.538$
Pre/post January 4 comparison		$z = 4.694$	$z = 4.706$		$z = 3.027$	$z = 2.735$	
		$p = 3E-06$	$p = 3E-06$		$p = 0.0025$	$p = 0.006$	

there are no statistically significant differences between the leaders' positive or negative interactions within these periods, indicating that their conversation tracks each other at the same discursive and behavioral level.

President Trump's Twitter Discourse

Examination of President Trump's 95 tweets concerning North Korea and/or Kim Jong-un reflects this pattern of extremely hostile messaging that abruptly and almost completely turns positive after January 2018. All of his 37 tweets prior to January 2018 are decidedly negative and contain some of his most demeaning pejoratives, including "madman," "Little Rocket Man," and "short and fat," and threatening devastating military action. For instance, on August 9, 2017, President Trump re-tweeted his statement that North Korea would be met with "fire and fury." Additionally, he noted the negative act of North Korea's returning American student Otto Warmbier in a vegetative state on June 13, 2017 after Otto's having been tortured. Otto died six days after his return to the United States. This negative messaging continues up to an abrupt and nearly complete reversal in tone. For instance, on January 2, 2018, President Trump tweeted the threat, "I too have a Nuclear Button, but it is a much bigger & more powerful one than his, and my Button works!". Then,

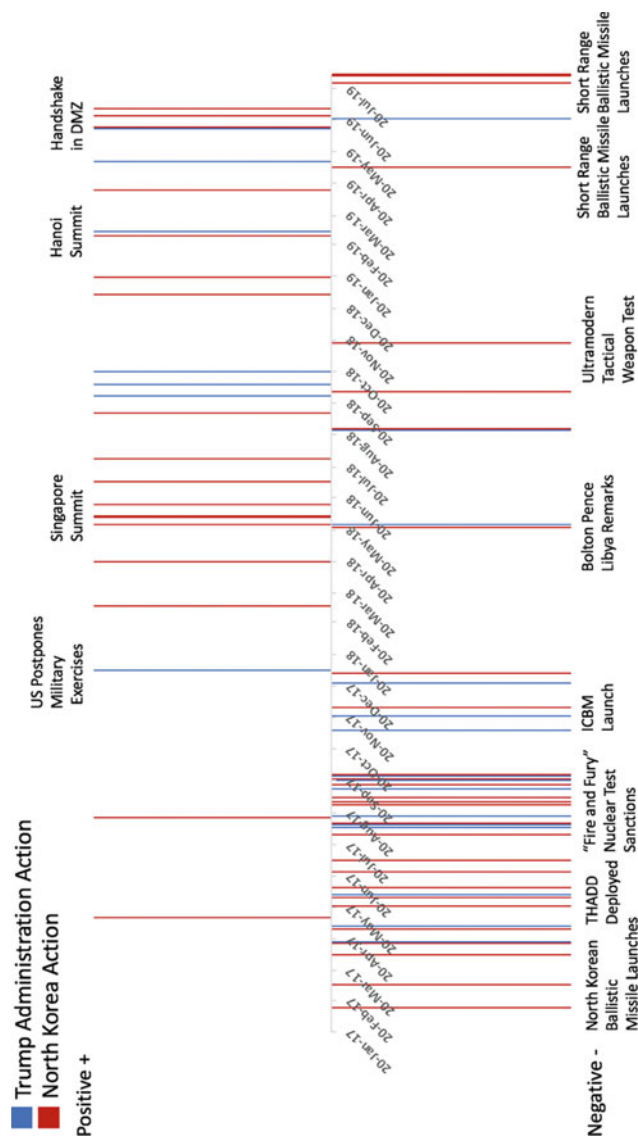


Fig. 10.3 Timeline of positive and negative interactions between the U.S. and North Korea 2017–August 2019, key events noted

in stark contrast to President Trump's 61 tweets after January 2018, all but two (97%) are positive. The President goes from insulting and threatening Kim Jong-un to complimenting and thanking him, and praising the future potential of North Korea.

[President Trump Tweet - Jun 13, 2018 04:56:57 AM] Just landed - a long trip, but everybody can now feel much safer than the day I took office. There is no longer a Nuclear Threat from North Korea. Meeting with Kim Jong Un was an interesting and very positive experience. North Korea has great potential for the future!

Many of President Trump's tweets refer to the growing, positive, and close relationship the two leaders have.

[President Trump Tweet - Sep 6, 2018 05:58:41 AM] Kim Jong Un of North Korea proclaims "unwavering faith in President Trump." Thank you to Chairman Kim. We will get it done together!

[President Trump Tweet - Feb 8, 2019 07:50:38 PM] North Korea, under the leadership of Kim Jong Un, will become a great Economic Powerhouse. He may surprise some but he won't surprise me, because I have gotten to know him & fully understand how capable he is. North Korea will become a different kind of Rocket - an Economic one!

As noted, North Korea has engaged in some provocative actions by launching short-range ballistic missiles. President Trump's tweets have down-played their adversarial nature. The President even engaged in shared name-calling of his political rivals with the Chairman.

[President Trump Tweet - May 25, 2019 08:32:08 PM] North Korea fired off some small weapons, which disturbed some of my people, and others, but not me. I have confidence that Chairman Kim will keep his promise to me, & also smiled when he called Swampman Joe Biden a low IQ individual, & worse. Perhaps that's sending me a signal?

President Trump went on to use the social media platform Twitter to invite Chairman Kim to meet and shake hands in the DMZ, an offer that was accepted culminating on June 30, 2019, when both leaders stepped across the DMZ and onto North Korean soil together. Closer examination of the sequencing of this rapprochement, using both actions

and communications, provides further insight into the dynamics of their relationship.

The Dialogue Between Trump and Kim

In order to assess how the rapprochement occurred and how responsive each leader is to the other's overtures, the actual sequence of events and communications was examined (Fig. 10.3). The initially antagonistic nature of actions and messages is not surprising since President Trump inherited a 70-year adversarial relationship with North Korea, although he increased the antagonistic rhetoric of his predecessors. This antagonism continued through Kim Jong-un's 2018 New Year's speech in which the Chairman declared his ability to stand up to the United States and pledged to mass produce nuclear weapons.

However, on January 4, 2018, President Trump and South Korea's President Moon Jae-in postponed joint military exercises until after the Winter Olympics, reportedly in an effort to decrease potential tensions around the games. Joint U.S.—South Korean military exercises have always been a sore spot for North Korean leaders. The postponement was the first non-adversarial gesture made toward North Korea by the Trump administration and seems to mark a turning point since soon afterward, positive messages and actions became the norm between the United States and North Korea, and especially between President Trump and Chairman Kim. This was followed by meetings between North and South Korean officials and the visit to the presidential house in Seoul and the Olympic games in February of Kim Jong-un's sister, Kim Yo-jong.

A number of diplomatic initiatives followed, including a summit between Chairman Kim and President Moon, a meeting between U.S. Secretary of State Mike Pompeo and the Chairman, and culminating in the May 9 release of three Americans who had been detained by North Korea. Relations soured in mid-May due to U.S. National Security Advisor John Bolton's remarks comparing denuclearization in North Korea to that of Libya. Nonetheless, North Korea signaled its good intentions by demolishing the entrance to its underground nuclear testing site, Punggye-ri, in a televised media event on May 24. However, on that same day, President Trump received an angry letter from North Korean Vice Foreign Minister Cho Son hui following further remarks by Vice President Pence regarding the North Korea—Libya analogy, leading the President to call off the planned summit between him and Chairman

Kim. The dust-up over the Libya analogy may represent a miscalculation or error by the Trump administration or individuals within it, since it represents a rare reversal of positive messaging between the countries and their leaders in the post-January 4, 2018 period. Nonetheless, meetings between the North and South Koreans and U.S. diplomats continued, and on June 12, President Trump and Chairman Kim held a summit in Singapore.

Clearly, much communication occurred during the summit that is not accessible. One element of strategic communication that has intrigued observers is a four and a half minute video produced by the White House that President Trump showed Chairman Kim and his officials. The video was in Korean, and titled, “What If?”⁶ It laid out an argument that if Chairman Kim would pursue negotiations with President Trump, a history of war and conflict could be left behind for one of destined greatness, peace and prosperity. The video was replete with religious iconography and themes often used in North Korean state Juche philosophy (Armstrong 2005; Cumings 1983; Oh and Hassig 2000), as well as images sacred to the Kim family such as Mt. Paektu, North Korea’s legendary origin, and the Chollima horse, an ancient symbol of prosperity. A comparison of the density of themes in the video and those stressed in the Kim Jong-un corpus demonstrated a strikingly high positive correlation (Spearman’s $\rho = 0.429$, $p = 0.014$) of positive themes seemingly valued by Kim Jong-un (Kuznar 2019). Whatever the impact of that notable piece of strategic communication, the summit resulted in a joint statement between President Trump and Chairman Kim, pledging to pursue negotiations for denuclearizing the Korean peninsula and peaceful relations.

A possibly unintended dust-up occurred on August 24, 2018, when President Trump canceled Secretary of State Mike Pompeo’s trip to Pyongyang allegedly after Pompeo received a hostile letter from the Vice Chairman of the North Korea Workers’ Party. However, this possible gaffe appears to have been overcome quickly. On September 9, Kim Jong-un hosted a military parade that conspicuously omitted any display of ballistic missiles, possibly a gesture of goodwill toward the United States.

⁶<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=A838gS8nwas>.

North Korean gestures of goodwill begin to fray late in 2018. On November 15, North Korea tested, under the watchful eye of Kim Jong-un, an “ultramodern tactical weapon.” While this did not apparently violate any agreements, the test was a threat to South Korea, perhaps signaling North Korean impatience with U.S. demands. In Kim Jong-un’s 2019 New Year’s speech, he pledged to meet President Trump and not to make nuclear weapons. However, on May 4 and 9, North Korea launched short-range ballistic missiles. President Trump dismissed them as a serious threat on May 10. On May 11 and 12, the leaders exchanged positive letters. However, on June 21, the Trump administration extended sanctions against North Korea. Nonetheless, on June 28, President Trump extended an invitation to meet Chairman Kim in the DMZ, and on June 30, President Trump and Chairman Kim walked across the border together. Nearly a month went by with no significant activity, and July 25 and 31 and August 2 and 16, North Korea launched short-range ballistic missiles.

This timeline permits an analysis of the conversation these two leaders have had through their words and actions. Before assessing this conversation, it is useful to inquire whether or not President Trump has been formulaically using an old playbook. If so, it would add an element of predictability to his negotiating style and may help to place the timeline of communications into broader context.

THE ART OF THE DEAL?

In 1987, the book *The Art of the Deal* launched Donald Trump as a well-known American guru of negotiation. Despite Tony Schwartz’s regrets and admission that he was the book’s ghost-writer (Mayer 2016), it stands as Trump’s approved prescription for how to negotiate successfully. President Trump’s negotiations with Chairman Kim are a test of whether or not Donald Trump is following his own advice. In Chapter 2 he prescribes eleven “elements of the deal” (Trump 1987). These are presented in Table 10.2 and each is assessed in light of the President’s communications and actions detailed above.

Think Big. Certainly, pursuing negotiations with North Korea to completely denuclearize its arsenal using unprecedented tactics should qualify as thinking big.

Table 10.2 Donald Trump’s elements of the deal and their relation to U.S./North Korean relations

<i>Element of the deal</i>	<i>Quote</i>	<i>Presence/absence in North Korea interactions</i>
Think Big	p. 32 I like thinking big. I always have. To me it’s very simple; if you’re going to be thinking anyway, you might as well think big	Very present
Protect the Downside	p. 33 I always go into the deal anticipating the worst. If you plan for the worst—if you can live with the worst—the good will always take care of itself	Unclear
Maximize Your Options	p. 34 I also protect myself by being flexible. I never get too attached to one deal or one approach	Ambiguous
Know Your Market	pp. 34–35 I like to think I have that instinct. That’s why I don’t hire a lot of number-crunchers, and I don’t trust fancy marketing surveys. I do my own surveys and draw my own conclusions. I have learned much more from conducting my own random surveys than I could ever have learned from the greatest consulting firms	Very present

(continued)

Table 10.2 (continued)

<i>Element of the deal</i>	<i>Quote</i>	<i>Presence/absence in North Korea interactions</i>
Use Your Leverage	p. 35 The worst thing you can possibly do in a deal is seem desperate to make it. That makes the other guy smell blood, and then you're dead. The best thing you can do is deal from strength, and leverage is the biggest strength you can have. Leverage is having something the other guy wants. Or better yet, needs. Or best of all, simply can't do without	Present
Enhance Your Location	p. 36 First of all, you don't necessarily need the best location. What you need is the best deal. Just as you can create leverage, you can enhance a location, through promotion and through psychology	Very present
Get the Word Out	p. 37 One thing I've learned about the press is that they're always hungry for a good story, and the more sensational the better....The point is that if you are a little different, or a little outrageous, or if you do things that are bold or controversial, the press is going to write about you	Very present

<i>Element of the deal</i>	<i>Quote</i>	<i>Presence/absence in North Korea interactions</i>
Fight Back	p. 38 Much as it pays to emphasize the positive, there are times when the only choice is confrontation.... when people treat me badly or unfairly or try to take advantage of me, my general attitude, all my life, has been to fight back very hard	Ambiguous
Deliver the Goods	p. 38 You can't con people, at least not for long. You can create excitement, you can do wonderful promotion and get all kinds of press, and you can throw in a little hyperbole. But if you don't deliver the goods, people will eventually catch on	Absent
Contain the Costs	p. 39 I believe in spending what you have to. But I also believe in not spending more than you should	Unclear
Have Fun	p. 40 Anything can change, without warning, and that's why I try not to take any of what's happened too seriously...The real excitement is playing the game	Present

Protect the Downside. What President Trump considers the downside to U.S./North Korea relations is not entirely clear. He has unambiguously stated that North Korea cannot possess a nuclear capability of striking the United States. However, they apparently have developed such a capability and so far have not given it up and it is not clear how he is protecting this downside.

Maximize Your Options. If the Trump administration began with a strategy of confronting North Korean aggression and switched to a diplomatic strategy, then this would be evidence of flexibility in options. However, the President's continued positive messaging and silence in the face of recent tests seems to run counter to a flexible approach.

Know Your Market. President Trump's apparently frequent dismissal of the intelligence community and his "go it alone" style is very consistent with his trust that he instinctually understands Kim Jong-un and that through his personal relationship, he will negotiate successfully.

Use Your Leverage. President Trump's threats to use U.S. military might be contrasted with offers of future economic prosperity for North Korea indicate that he feels that these are his primary leverage points and he has voiced them unambiguously.

Enhance Your Location. President Trump's frequent appeals to his friendship with Kim Jong-un, and the "What If?" video's use of culturally and psychologically appealing imagery appear to be ways that the President is enhancing his bargaining position.

Get the Word Out. President Trump has very frequently used tweets, interviews and official statements to signal to Kim Jong-un and the world, his threats and offers.

Fight Back. It is ambiguous as to whether President Trump has fought back consistently. He certainly came out swinging verbally in response to North Korean missile tests in 2017, however he has been silent or even conciliatory in response to recent tests.

Deliver the Goods. Despite the fact that President Trump declared success after the Hanoi summit, there has been to date, no successful negotiation to denuclearize; North Korea retains the capability it had before and has begun provocative short-range ballistic missile tests.

Contain the Costs. Exactly what President Trump thinks he is spending and getting is not clear.

Have Fun. To the extent that playing the game is a self-declared positive end in itself for him, it is clear that he is playing out an unprecedented

negotiation with tremendous drama and on the world stage. The game appears on.

Most of President Trump's "elements of the deal" appear to be in play. Six elements (think big, know your market, use your leverage, enhance your location, get the word out, have fun) appear to be present, four are ambiguous or unclear (protect the downside, maximize your options, fight back, contain the costs), and only one (deliver the goods) is so far absent. As relations between President Trump and Chairman Kim play out, it will be interesting to see if Trump returns to a consistent use of maximize your options and fight back. If he does, then a final assessment would be that President Trump runs a playbook generated by Businessman Trump 30-plus years earlier, providing insight into how he is likely to enact a Trump Doctrine. Of course, whether or not he delivers the goods on North Korea will await future developments.

DISCUSSION

The sequence of interactions between these leaders may allow some inferences about each leader's strategies and what may lead to successful negotiations in contentious international affairs such as denuclearization. Nuclear negotiations with North Korea are bound to be long, difficult, and contentious since policy experts and government analysts have pretty much concluded that North Korea has been determined to obtain a nuclear capability and will not likely give up what it has developed to deter regime change imposed by the United States (Brands et al. 2017; Defense Intelligence Agency 2018). Since neither President Trump nor Chairman Kim has explicitly spelled out any strategic, operational and tactical plans, it is important not to presume knowledge of their strategies and realize that all we can do is infer what those strategies might be from their words and actions, which are essentially artifacts of human behavior (Kuznar 2009).

North Korea's ballistic missile launches that followed President Trump's inauguration may have been antagonistic tests of the new President. The U.S. response was similarly confrontational, seemingly reflecting Trumps "fight back" principle of negotiation, and resulted in the deployment of the THAAD ballistic defense missile system and the imposition of numerous sanctions. Wars of words and further North Korean missile tests indicate that up to the beginning of 2018, both

leaders may have been pursuing a classic strategy of deterrence by threatening what the adversary valued (Bunn 2007; Kuznar 2007; Schaub 2009; Zagare 2004), in both cases ineffectively. The U.S./South Korean decision to postpone military exercises until after the February Olympics appears to have had the effect of extending an olive branch to North Korea, eventually culminating in a summit between President Trump and Chairman Kim. It appears that President Trump may have shifted his strategy to one of positive diplomatic engagement with North Korea, emphasizing personal relationship-building, providing Kim Jong-un a degree of legitimacy on the world stage, and even appealing to his worldview and presumed desires for an independent and prosperous North Korea. This turnabout could be evidence of maximizing his options by not being vested in any one strategy. President Trump emphasized all of these points publicly in the “What If?” video and in his tweets and public statements. The “What If?” video may have been particularly effective because it contained actual imagery and content remarkably similar to Kim Jong-un’s own discourse, and it also provided an opportunity to cut through the noise of messaging surrounding the summit with a very clear and poignant signal that could not be ignored.⁷ As such, it “got the message out” in a way that demonstrated that Trump “knew his market.” Positive engagement has nonetheless been accompanied by punishments in line with traditional deterrence theory in the form of the Trump administration strategy of “maximum pressure” economic sanctions. What emerges from this pattern is a carrot and stick policy of positive diplomatic engagement and economic pressure. The results of this inferred strategy have been mixed. While unprecedented diplomatic events have occurred, providing the possibility of progress in deescalating tensions on the Korean peninsula and removing a nuclear threat from the United States, the United States and its allies and even adversaries have largely maintained maximum pressure economic sanctions, which have frustrated the North Koreans perhaps causing them to test short-range ballistic missiles as a signal of non-cooperation.

The issue of North Korea’s nuclear program and the denuclearization of the Korean peninsula is clearly still evolving. Recent North Korean tests could indicate that a mixed strategy of positive engagement and tough economic sanctions is falling apart or may be a temporary setback. What

⁷I am indebted to Stanley Renshon for this insight.

can be inferred is that attempts to compel North Korea through sanctions and verbal threats to abandon its nuclear weapons program failed and that diplomatic successes, no matter how limited, were achieved once cooperation was signaled and appeals for cooperation, couched in terms consistent with Kim Jong-un's worldview, were made. It appears that diplomacy could only proceed once positive signals through actions and words were added to sanctions. However, North Korea has retained the nuclear capability it has developed, and has resumed missile testing, while continuing to suffer stiff economic sanctions. This may be a continuation of historical North Korean brinksmanship or a mirror-image of Trump's own hard bargaining *modus operandi*. Either way, these leaders appear locked in a dynamic adversarial/amicable cycle upon which the fate of millions rests.

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The Trump Doctrine in the Middle East

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In Washington today, two different paradigms of the Middle East are vying for supremacy. They are the Obama and Trump paradigms. Although partisan politics are a significant part of the contest, polarization over the Middle East has been increasing for some time now, at least since the attacks of September 11, 2001. To understand the specifically Trumpian aspects of our situation, it helps, first, to review the history of this polarization.

Calling the alternative to Trump's view "the Obama paradigm" (Renshon 2010; see also Singh 2016) is no mere rhetorical convenience. The Obama foreign policy elite has continued to act as a kind of shadow foreign policy team. This is more in keeping with politics as conducted in parliamentary systems than as usually conducted in the United States. Traditionally, when a new president takes over, the old team melts away. However, with Trump as president, the former Obama officials have organized themselves effectively as a counterweight and they continue to have influence on legislation and the press—especially with respect to the Middle East.

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Thus John Kerry, the former secretary of state, travelled to Europe after Trump decided to leave the Joint Comprehensive Plan of Action (JCPOA), as the Iranian nuclear deal is also known. He counselled the Europeans to keep it alive. Around the same time he also met with Javad Zarif, the foreign minister of Iran, and strongly advised Iran to stay in the deal. Kerry's plan, basically, is to preserve the JCPOA until 2020 when, if Trump is defeated by a Democrat, the United States can return to the Obama-era relations with Iran. The former Obama team is working in Washington in a variety of ways to preserve not just the nuclear deal itself but the broader policy architecture that made the deal possible.

So, even though we now have Donald Trump and his foreign policy, there is still an ongoing fight between the Obama paradigm on the Middle East and the Trump paradigm, which is a modification of the general Republican view of the Middle East. In order to gain a sense of the specific differences between the two, it is instructive to go back in time to 2008, when Barack Obama was first running for president. The views that he brought into the White House owed much to the foreign policy elite's critique of George W. Bush. That critique was encapsulated in the work of the Iraq Study Group, also known as the Baker-Hamilton Report. That was a congressionally mandated report about how to fix American policy in Iraq. The war was going badly, and Congress demanded that a blue-ribbon panel study the problem and propose recommendations to fix it.

The study had five major conclusions: (1) The Bush administration should pull the troops from Iraq. (2) It should increase the number of troops in Afghanistan. (3) It should reach out to Damascus. (4) It should reach out to Tehran, and (5) It should work hard for an Arab–Israeli peace. This was in fact the blueprint for the Obama foreign policy in the Middle East. Those are the key ideas that Obama brought into the White House, and they informed his foreign policy in the area throughout his two terms as president.

Obama famously said, in an interview with David Remnick (2014; see also Remnick 2016) editor of *The New Yorker*, that every president gets a paragraph in the history books. As a result and that it is very important, when you are making policy as president, to know keep in mind what your paragraph says. President Obama, wrote his paragraph on the Middle East before he entered the Oval Office, and the main theme was unmistakable: Barack Obama ended the disastrous war that George W. Bush had started.

In 2008, when Obama was the presumptive nominee for the Democratic Party, had a consequential conversation General David Petraeus, the military commander on the ground. Obama told Petraeus, clearly, directly, and unequivocally, that if he became president he would withdraw the troops from Iraq. When Petraeus protested that the Iranians would then fill the vacuum, Obama was unmoved.

When he took office, he was as good as his word. By 2010, Obama had made the key decisions, and he was, by all appearances, remained comfortable with the Iranians filling the vacuum. In keeping with the spirit of the Baker-Hamilton Report, he had a very specific understanding of Iran, one that was common among the foreign policy elite. In his and their view, Iran is a defensive power. It is weak. It is a *status quo* power, worried about holding on to what it has. It is pragmatic, and, importantly, shares very significant interests with the United States—such as, for example, stabilizing Iraq. The United States should have, it was thought, no problem with the Iranian agenda, because Washington wanted stability in Iraq. It wanted to insure that oil flowed steadily at reasonable prices, and of course it needed to ensure that Iraq did not safe haven for terrorism.

Didn't Iran have identical interests? After all, would Iran ever want to see a destabilized country right on its border? The United States, therefore, should be able to come to a deal with Iran on the future of Iraq. Even if Iran wanted to stabilize Iraq in a way that was slightly more advantageous to Iranian interests than to American interests, the United States could still live with that outcome.

That was Obama's view, and the view of many of his advisors. They believed, moreover, that Iraq was by no means the only issue on which the United States and Iran had compatible outlooks. Importantly, Iran also shared with the United States an interest in defeating Sunni radicalism—Al Qaeda and then, later, ISIS.

This fact is of crucial importance, because, in the aftermath of the 9/11 attacks, many in the United States and certainly in the foreign policy elite came to see the defeat of radical Sunni organizations as the number-one American priority. In the absence of a clear understanding of what US strategy should be, counterterrorism often trumps every other consideration. The counterterrorism mindset, when taken to an extreme, ignores geostrategic competition among rival powers. It assumes that the United States ought to be able to find an accommodation with the Iranians and

the Russians to defeat the radical Sunni organizations. We all want the same thing, the defeat of the terrorists, don't we?

Indeed, a major defect with George W. Bush's foreign policy, as Obama and his advisors saw it, was that it ignored the shared interests with powers like Russia, Iran, and Syria. As a result, it created too many enemies in the Middle East. Bush drew a bright red line and said, you are either with us or against us in fighting terrorism, and he put the Iranians and the Syrians solidly on the enemy side of the line, but not only them. He then added to the mix his so-called "Democracy Agenda," once again placing the autocratic Russians on the other side of the red line.

Obama, by contrast, said, in effect, "No, we don't have to be so categorical about this divide between friend and foe." Powers like Russia, Iran, and Syria are undeniably nasty actors, but nevertheless we do share important interests with them. If we define our interests more narrowly, as in defeating Sunni terrorism and stabilizing the Middle East, we can find common ground to work them. Such thinking did emerge the recommendations of the Baker-Hamilton Report. It called for pulling the troops out of Iraq, because the war was a mistake from the start, and it called for reaching out to the Iranians and the Syrians, because they could help stabilize Iraq.

Obama also saw in this approach a path that would allow the United States to retreat from the Middle East a way to avoid further involvement in unwinnable wars. His grand strategic goal was to retrench and, in order to do so, come to a compromise with the Russians, Iranians, and Syrians about stabilizing the region. However, even if all of these assumptions were correct, this approach still faced one major obstacle, namely, the Iranian nuclear program. The American public, much of the American foreign policy elite, and key allies of the United States, especially in the Middle East, believed that the Iranian nuclear program was a very serious threat to international peace and security. If Obama were to pick up and leave Iraq and then start cooperating with the Iranians, while doing nothing about their nuclear program, he would have opened himself to severe political attack. Obama could not reach an accommodation with the Iranians without first finding a way to sideline the conflict over the nuclear program.

That was the strategic calculation that turned the nuclear negotiations with Iran into the centerpiece of the Obama strategy in the Middle East. Obama very cleverly sold the nuclear deal to the American people as a narrow arms control agreement, one that had no role in a wider regional

strategy. When critics claimed that he was actually trying to create a concert system in the Middle East in which the United States would work with the Iranians, the Obama team would say, “Are you crazy? We’re not trying to do anything like that. We’re simply pursuing an arms control agreement that makes sense in its own terms.”

However, Obama’s dream was indeed to work with Iran to stabilize the region. Not only did he seek to park the nuclear dispute to one side, but he also hoped that the nuclear deal would create a new model for working with the Iranians more broadly. The deal would prove to Tehran that the United States did not regard relations with it as a zero-sum game. It would demonstrate that Americans did not regard Iran as an enemy, as they sought to explore the possibility of reaching mutually beneficial arrangements on other issues based on a commonality of interest. American leniency toward Iran would engender goodwill in Tehran and thereby generate new opportunities to establish other mutually beneficial accommodations in the future.

While Obama and his officials denied that they saw the nuclear deal as part of a larger rapprochement with Iran, their European partners were less restrained. They repeatedly said that developing warmer relations with Iran was the goal of the joint American-European strategy. The Germans, especially, marched in lockstep with President Obama on this issue and hid none of their hopes for a thaw in relations between the West and Tehran.

However, the actions of the Obama administration also belied its words. Consider, for example, two other steps the Obama team took while negotiating the nuclear deal. First, it turned a blind eye to the Iranian and Russian intervention in Syria and to all the killing which that intervention generated. As a result, there has been over half a million killed in Syria and some 12 million displaced. Most of those are dead or displaced because of the actions of the Iranian, Russian, and Syrian coalition. However, the Obama administration did nothing to deter the coalition. Why? If it had mounted serious opposition, it would have alienated the Iranians and the Russians and risked upsetting the JCPOA negotiations. Without a nuclear deal, the United States would remain mired in the region, and Obama’s paragraph in the history books would be quite different than he wanted.

Secondly, the moment the Obama administration completed the JCPOA, the president and his team brought the Iranians formally into

the Syrian negotiations. Clearly, they saw Iran as a partner for stabilizing not just Iraq, but Syria too.

The Trump paradigm differed dramatically. While Trump's style is highly idiosyncratic, most of his views on the Middle East are mainstream Republican views. Republicans rejected Obama's policies toward Iran with horror—especially JCPOA. The Obama administration, they felt, had revealed to the Iranians that it was desperate to make a deal, even if it meant accepting onerous Iranian terms.

There were, from the Republican point of view, four major problems with the JCPOA. First, the restrictions the JCPOA placed on the Iranian nuclear program were temporary. Some lasted longer than others, but the meaningful ones lasted for only a decade, which is not a long time in the life of a nuclear program. These temporary conditions did nothing to convince the Saudis or the Israelis that Iran had dispensed with its ambitions to obtain a nuclear weapon.

Second, the JCPOA provides for inadequate inspections of nuclear sites. Third, it lessened the restrictions in international law on Iran's ballistic missile program. At the last stage of the negotiation, recognizing that the Obama administration was desperate to get a deal, the Iranians demanded that the UN prohibition against their ballistic missiles program must be watered down. As a result, the Security Council stopped demanding that Iran put an end to ballistic missile program and instead began exhorting it to do so. Legally, the difference between a Security Council command and an exhortation is significant.

Third, the JCPOA agreement did not address Iranian imperialism throughout the Middle East. Iran has been building up militias across the region—in Iraq, in Syria, in Yemen, all on the model of Hezbollah in Lebanon. In fact, Iran was using Hezbollah to transmit its know-how to these proxies on the ground. The Obama administration ignored this spread of Iranian influence in the hopes of courting Iran and turning it into a partner for stability.

The Iranians exploited Obama's solicitude by expanding their influence. Thus, for example, while the nuclear deal was being negotiated, Iran deepened its intervention in Yemen. Tehran was eager to pocket all the gains it could while America was not working to contain it, but it also hoped to prove to the world that the restrictions it had accepted on the nuclear program were not a sign that it was capitulating to America.

When President Trump came into office, he intended to restore deterrence to America's Iran policy. He pledged to counter the Iranians on the

ground and, most importantly, to rectify the deficiencies of the nuclear deal. However, before elaborating further on these goals, it's important to note that Trump, for all that he rejects Obama's approach, does share one important quality in common with him. Like Obama, Trump hopes that his paragraph in the history books will say that he kept the Middle East at arm's length. He, too, does not want to be held responsible for another major US military intervention.

At the same time, however, Trump remains strongly committed to containing Iran. He does not, however, want to use American ground forces to do the job. Trump, during the 2016 campaign, had a very simple message to the American people: he promised to do more with less. He would do much more than Barack Obama, who had appeased enemies, with much less expenditure in blood and treasure than George W. Bush, who, Trump thought, had pursued ill-advised policies like promoting democracy in a region that was ill-suited to it.

"More for less" made a great election slogan, but how could one possibly translate it into policy? The answer, in a word, was allies. If the United States is, in contrast to Obama, going to contain enemies, but, in contrast to George W. Bush, it is not going to use its own military to do the job, then it must find others to help. When Donald Trump entered the Oval Office, therefore, the first thing he did was make a trip to Saudi Arabia and Israel, and, at the same time, he began an effort to improve relations with Turkey.

Israel, Saudi Arabia, and Turkey are the most significant allies the United States has in the region. They are really the only ones, with the partial exception of Egypt, Jordan, and the UAE, who are capable of projecting power beyond their borders. However, it is very hard for these three powers to work together as members of a coalition because they do not get along with one another. In addition, they have mismatched capabilities. Yet, both the Israelis and the Saudis do regard the rise of Iran as an existential threat, and that commonality increases the potential for cooperation between the two.

The Turks, for their part, have a more complex and nuanced relationship with Iran. They are not as hostile to it as the Saudis and the Israelis. However if Trump could manage to arrest the drift of Turkey away from the West, he could then at least benefit from its sphere of influence. The Turks are not opponents of Iran, but wherever Turkish influence is dominant, Iranian influence is weak—and that is a useful thing for the United States if the main goal of its policy is to contain Iran.

So, we now have basically two different visions debating Middle Eastern policy. The Obama vision looks at the Middle East as a roundtable, with the United States as chairman of the board. In the Obama White House, they stopped using the words “allies” and “enemies” when talking about Middle Eastern states. Instead they talked about “problem sets” and “stakeholders.” So there was, for example, a Syria problem set that they examined by asking, “Well now, who are the stakeholders in Syria?” In that framework, Iran and Russia were stakeholders, so the job for the United States was to get them around the table and propose solutions that all might find advantageous. That was the way to keep the worst pathologies of the region at bay.

By contrast, Trump views the Middle East as a rectangular table. On one side are America’s traditional allies: Turkey, Israel, Saudi Arabia, the United Arab Emirates, Egypt, Jordan, to name just some of them. On the other side are the Iranians, Syrians, Hezbollah, and all the other Iranian militias. The goal of the United States in that vision is twofold. First, Trump wants to elevate the allies of the United States over the Iranian alliance on the other side of the table; and two, he wants to mediate between the allies on the American side, because they do not get along with each other very well.

Trump’s strategic concept is sound, but its execution on the ground has not been perfect. The United States is countering Iran, primarily, by placing extraordinary sanctions on its economy. The Arab world, however, is not vigorously opposing Iranian influence. The cause of this problem lies in that area of overlap between the Obama and Trump perspectives. Trump, like Obama, is reluctant to deploy the American military, so his ability to counter the Iranians directly is limited to what the allies are willing and able to do. What that means, in practical terms, is that the Israelis are the only ones successfully challenging the Iranians on the ground—in Syria, where they are very active in carrying out air attacks on Iranian positions.

The Obama administration objected to the Israeli military strikes against Iranian targets, and it took actions behind the scenes to make its objections known to the Israelis while at the same time avoiding a public disagreement with Jerusalem. The Trump administration, by contrast, is openly supportive and this difference has a deterrent effect on the Russians.

However, it is still the Israelis who are bearing the brunt of the load and therefore assuming considerable risk. The raids sometimes generate

friction with the Russians, who are in a military alliance in Syria with the Iranians. In the division of labor between them, the Iranians provide the troops on the ground and the Russians provide the air cover. Thus, when the Israelis strike the Iranians, they are at times embarrassing Putin.

Nevertheless, the Israelis are in regular and direct negotiations with the Russian leader, and relations are surprisingly cordial. The Israeli prime minister, Benjamin Netanyahu, is nevertheless relieved to have the United States support his policies, so that when Putin looks at him he sees not just Israeli power, but also American power too. The Israelis would be even happier if the United States was acting on the ground in Syria in a significant way, against Iran, but that is not going to happen.

The Saudis and Emiratis had been acting against the Iranians on the ground—in Yemen. The Americans, however, have an ambivalent attitude about that war. They are not as supportive of the Saudis against the Houthis in Yemen as they are of the Israelis against Iran in Syria. This ambivalence is problematic. It has led the Emiratis, for example, to soften their support for the war, thus risking that a Hezbollah-like organization in Yemen will rise up and permanently threaten Riyadh with missiles and rockets, and permanently threaten Red Sea shipping. The Houthis have already fired on Riyadh and on American and Saudi ships in the Red Sea, so this risk is hardly hypothetical.

The Houthis may be the ones pushing the buttons when the rockets are fired, but they are certainly acting under the tutelage of the Iranians. Trump, so far, has chosen not to emphasize this point too loudly, because it raises the question as to what he intends to do about it—and he, like Obama, is not sure he wants to do much of anything.

He faces an analogous problem in Iraq. When Trump took office, he accepted the Obama strategy for defeating ISIS. That strategy, as noted earlier, was predicated on the notion that Iran can be, if not an ally or partner, at least a power with a common interest in defeating ISIS. So, the United States turned a blind eye to the rise of the Popular Mobilization Units (PMUs) in Iraq—militias that, to one degree or another, are allies of Iran.

The PMUs played a role in defeating ISIS in Mosul—with the United States attacking from the air while the Iranian-backed forces worked from the ground. The United States became, to state the point directly, the air force of Iran. Again, the Obama and Trump administrations did not admit to this fact, at times perhaps not even to themselves, because the behavior contradicted key aspects of both administrations' self-understanding.

Now that ISIS is defeated, that contradiction has lessened, but it still exists—and it is generating some incongruous situations. For example, as the Israelis have been striking the Iranians in Syria and with some success, Iran has transferred capabilities—rockets and missiles, primarily—to Iraq, where they are posing a threat to Israel. The Israelis, however, must refrain from striking them, because American forces are still present in Iraq. An Israeli attack would cause America problems with its Iraqi allies, who also happen to be friends with the Iranians. While Trump has gone far to eliminate this kind of strategic disfunction, there are nevertheless a number of areas where American policy inadvertently shelters actors whom we have otherwise defined as enemies.

Trump's Iran strategy is strongest in the economic arena. In May 2018, he renounced the JCPOA and re-imposed oil and banking sanctions, and by all indications, they are severely hurting the Iranian regime. However, there is no sign these steps result in the ruling regime being toppled or "crying uncle" between now and 2020. Consequently, this general picture won't drastically between now and the presidential election in November 2020. The contradictions will remain contradictions. The pressure that the United States is putting on the Iranians, militarily and economically, will also remain in place. Not until after the election will the Trump administration consider significant modifications to its existing strategy, if any. If Democratic candidate wins, then he or she will likely take us back to the Obama paradigm.

That observation brings us to the last area of difference between the Obama and Trump paradigms, namely, the Arab–Israeli conflict. The key issue on which the two different paradigms clash is Iran. However they also have radically divergent understandings of the Arab–Israel conflict and, especially, the Israeli–Palestinian conflict. These are easily summarized. The Obama paradigm holds that the Israeli–Palestinian conflict is very strategically significant. It views the major impediment for improving relations between the Israelis and the Palestinians to be Israeli intransigence, especially with respect to settlements on the West Bank.

The Obama team, and, more generally, the Progressive wing of the Democratic party, focus attention on Israeli settlements and on depicting the Netanyahu government in Israel as an unacceptable partner for the United States. This critique is not only a policy statement, but also a way of undermining, of delegitimizing, one of the most influential actors when it comes to convincing the United States to that Iran is a threat—the Israeli prime minister.

Benjamin Netanyahu is extremely influential in the United States. Americans—at both the elite and the popular levels—listen to him. He has a unique status among foreign leaders in America, and his view on Iran runs directly counter to the Obama view. So, the Democratic attacks on him are not just about settlements; they are also about Iran. If the Obama team can transform Netanyahu into an unacceptable partner for the United States, then it will have gone a long way toward delegitimizing the Trump view of Iran.

The same is true with respect to Mohammad bin Salman (MBS), the crown prince of Saudi Arabia. There is no doubt that MBS has an unsavoury side, but there is also a campaign afoot in Washington to make sure that we never forget that fact—and to present it as proof that he, too, is an unacceptable partner to the United States. Those who are stoking this campaign are keenly aware that he is telling the world that Iran is a problem. They seek, therefore, to silence his voice. None among them are keener to do so than the former Obama officials, who still hope to base American strategy on reconciliation with Iran.

The Trump view of the Arab–Israeli conflict is almost a mirror image of the Obama view. The Israeli–Palestinian conflict, from its perspective, is much less significant than the Democrats think. If the United States were to broker a peace agreement tomorrow between Mahmoud Abbas and Netanyahu, it would not significantly change the position of the United States in the Middle East at all. The day after a peace agreement, the basic balance of power in the region and the challenges that the United States faces would be the exactly the same. Nothing would change.

To be sure, a peace agreement would have a notable significance for Israel, the Palestinians, Jordan, and Egypt. The Israeli–Palestinian conflict is actually a regional problem in the Eastern Mediterranean. It has a powerful political valence in domestic American politics—for all kinds of cultural, religious, and historical reasons—but its true strategic significance is limited.

The Obama and Trump visions of the Middle East are unbridgable. Is the Israeli–Palestinian conflict a strategic priority or not? Is Iran a defensive and *status quo* power or is it an aggressive, hegemonic power? Americans can and will argue about these questions. However, in the end they will be answered at the ballot box rather than by rational policy argument.

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Trump, Israel, and the Shifting Pattern of Support for a Traditional Ally

Amnon Cavari

On August 15, 2019, President Trump tweeted about his objection to a planned official trip to Israel of two members of Congress, Representatives Ilhan Omar (D-MN) and Rashida Tlaib (R-MI).

It would show great weakness if Israel allowed Rep. Omar and Rep. Tlaib to visit. They hate Israel & all Jewish people, & there is nothing that can be said or done to change their minds. Minnesota and Michigan will have a hard time putting them back in office. They are a disgrace! (@realDonaldTrump, August 15, 2019)

In response to the pressure from the Trump administration, and in contrast to an earlier decision, the Israeli government barred the two representatives from entering Israel. The Israeli Government justified its actions by relying on a controversial law that prohibits the entry into Israel

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of those who call for, and work to impose, boycotts on Israel.¹ Israel's decision was strongly condemned by leading Democrats—for example, the House Majority Leader, Steny Hoyer, released a statement calling the decision “outrageous” (Hoyer, August 15, 2019), and former Vice President and presidential contender Joe Biden tweeted that “[n]o democracy should deny entry to visitors based on the content of their ideas—even ideas they strongly object to” (@JoeBiden, August 15, 2019). This partisan feud, however, fueled President Trump's critique of the Democratic Party's position on Israel asking “[w]here has the Democratic Party gone? Where have they gone where they are defending these two people over the state of Israel?” (Trump, August 20, 2019). In public statements and on Twitter he equated the Democratic Party with hate for Israel.

Representatives Omar and Tlaib are the face of the Democrat Party, and they HATE Israel! (@realDonaldTrump, August 15, 2019)

Worried about the consequences of this incident, Mr. Reuven Rivlin, the President of Israel, a largely ceremonial position, called House Speaker, Ms. Nancy Pelosi (D-CA) on August 21, 2019, to say that “[w]e must keep the State of Israel above political disputes and make every effort to ensure that support for Israel does not become a political issue” (Tibon 2019).

This incident illustrates the state of the current divide over Israel in American politics. What was commonly viewed as a matter of political consensus that is above the political fray, has, in recent years aligned with other partisan conflicts and has taken a partisan dimension among political elites and the public (Cavari 2013; Rynhold 2015). The partisan divide over Israel precedes President Trump, yet the heated rhetoric and the partisan response to Trump's policies in the region suggest that the divide may have escalated during the Trump administration. What has been the role of President Trump in increasing the partisan divide over Israel?

In this chapter, I discuss trends in elite and mass divide over Israel, assess the rhetoric of President Trump toward Israel and the public response to this rhetoric, and examine three of Trump's strong, unconventional pro-Israeli policies: Recognizing Jerusalem as the Capital of

¹ Entry to Israel Law, 1952. Article 2(d). Amendment 27 (March 6, 2017).

Israel, recognizing Israel's sovereignty over the Golan Heights, and withdrawing the United States from the Iran Nuclear Deal. I argue that President Trump exploits his pro-Israel policies for partisan, political gains, and that this intensifies the party divide on this issue to what may be an irreversible trend. The consequences of this divide may be dire to the special relationship between the two countries, a relationship that, in the words of President Rivlin during his conversation with Speaker Pelosi, "is a link between peoples, which relies on historical ties, deep and strong friendships and shared values that are not dependent on the relationship with one particular party."

FROM BIPARTISAN SUPPORT TO A POLITICAL DIVIDE

The special relationship, one of the most solid and stable bilateral relationships in modern global affairs, is supported overwhelmingly by American political leadership and the American public. Following a rocky start in the first two decades after independence, American leaders from the late 1960s until today have demonstrated a strong support for Israel—in securing military and economic aid; in intervening during military conflicts; in supporting Israel's interests on the international stage; and in binational relations during peace negotiations (Inbar 2009). Israel has become such a salient foreign issue in American politics that it is regularly mentioned in presidential elections and is a standard issue in party platforms (Cavari and Freedman 2017).² While in office, presidents routinely discuss issues relating to Israel in their speeches and repeatedly vow to maintain its security as well as the close relationship between the United States and Israel. Additionally, Members of Congress refer to Israel in their campaigns and often demonstrate their support for Israel in legislative actions and public statements (Cavari and Nyer 2014).

² Cavari and Freedman (2017) show that the issue has been mentioned and discussed in presidential debate in every presidential election since 1976, and every Democratic and Republican party platform since the 93rd Congress (1973) has included a section mentioning the special relationship between Israel and the United States and a promise to continue American support of Israel.

For a long time, this interest and support has defied partisan differences. From Johnson to Trump, every president reiterated his commitment to the binational relationship and the safety of the State of Israel and has backed it with diplomatic and economic support. Members of Congress reached across the aisle to co-sponsor bills and resolutions that demonstrated support for Israel and unanimously voted into law bills that side with Israel (Garnham 1977; Feuerwerger 1979; Trice 1977). Among the American public, attitudes about Israel have long been an exception in American public opinion about foreign affairs. Americans are relatively interested in and tuned to news about Israel (Yarchi et al. 2017), opinionated about Israel (Cavari and Freedman 2019), have a favorable view of Israel (Cavari 2012), and have been overwhelmingly supportive of Israel in the various dimensions of the Middle East conflict between Israel and Arab countries or between Israel and the Palestinians (Cavari 2012).

This bipartisan support, however, is changing. A series of studies show that congressional action on Israel has become more partisan and that the issue is increasingly owned by, or associated with Republicans in Congress (Oldmixon et al. 2005; Rosenson et al. 2009; Cavari and Nyer 2014). Research on election campaign shows that the Israeli–Palestinian conflict is increasingly debated in presidential elections and in some congressional races, again taking a much more dominant role among Republican candidates (Cavari and Freedman 2017). Studies of US news demonstrate that this divide, and Republican ownership of the issue, is emphasized and intensified in news coverage of the Arab–Israeli conflict. Starting in the early 2000s, articles reporting on Israel mention Republicans three times more often than Democrats, and views that party leaders present in the media are diametrically different—Republicans providing a clear view of support for Israel, whereas Democrats combine support for Israel with attention to the Palestinian cause (Cavari and Freedman 2019).

Studies of mass public opinion show a parallel change in public opinion (Cavari 2013; Cavari and Freedman 2020; Rynhold 2015). Figure 12.1 illustrates this change from 1982 forward using a survey question that is consistently asked by numerous pollsters and directly touches the core of the Israeli–Palestinian conflict: “Which side in the Arab-Israeli conflict do you sympathize with more—Israel or Arabs/Palestinians?” (with the identity of the adversary changing over time and between surveys) (data based on 88 surveys from various pollsters). For the purpose of illustrating the strength of support for Israel, the figure contrasts sympathies with

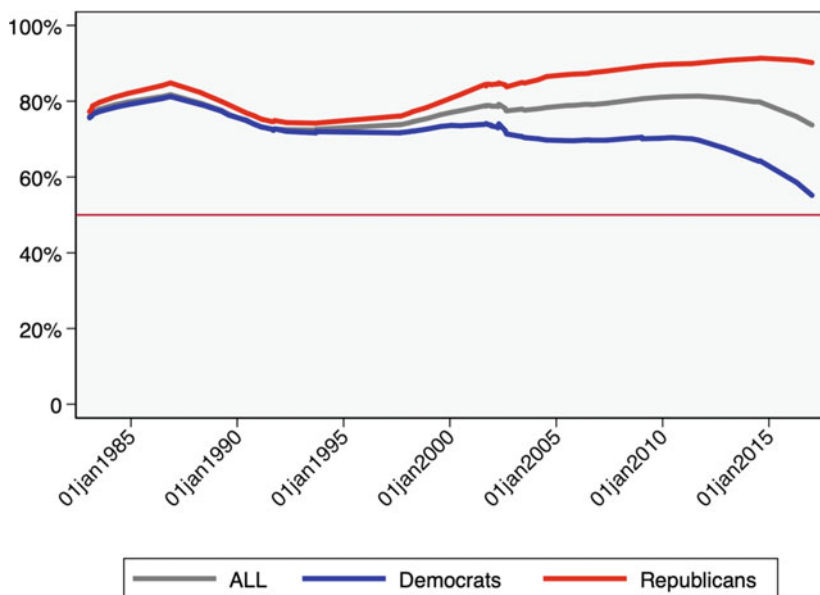


Fig. 12.1 Sympathies in the Arab-Israeli conflict, by party

Israel and with Arabs/Palestinians (all other voluntary responses—both, neither, DK, no opinion or refuse—are coded as item non-response).³

Throughout the entire period, both partisan groups sympathized more with Israel than with the Palestinians/Arabs. Until the late 1990s, the overall support had been comparable across partisan groups. Starting in the late 1990s, partisan differences significantly increased, at the beginning climbing among Republicans, and, more recently, declining among Democrats. Today, about 90% of Republicans sympathize with Israel compared to only 50% of Democrats—a gap of 40 percentage points.

³The survey results reported here were obtained from searches of the iPOLL Databank and other resources provided by the Roper Center for Public Opinion Research. For detailed information about the data included in this figure, see Cavari and Freedman (2020).

Partisan differences concerning sympathies for Palestinians/Arabs (not shown here) are much lower and have picked up only more recently (to about 20%), with a rapid decline among Republicans and a gradual increase among Democrats. Similar trends are found for other survey items such as overall favorability of Israel, support for US aid to Israel and views of Israel as an ally (Cavari and Freedman 2020).

The partisan conflict was strengthened by the public conflict between President Barack Obama and the Israeli government, and, especially, Prime Minister Binyamin Netanyahu. The two leaders entered office at about the same time (January and March 2009, respectively). From the beginning of their administrations, President Obama and Prime Minister Netanyahu did not get along well personally and politically (MacAskill 2011). The two leaders have very different worldviews, and those worldviews manifested themselves in some of the most dominant policies of both administrations—from the Israeli–Palestinian Conflict and the peace process, to the Arab Spring, and the Iran Nuclear Deal (Freedman 2017). At the climax of this conflict was the open clash between the two administrations over the Iran Nuclear Deal, which engaged each country in the internal politics of the other.

The conflict between the two leaders, their personal animosity, and the public perception of Obama’s hostility toward Israel are reflected in public support for Obama on this issue. Throughout most of his two terms in office, President Obama had negative ratings in handling the relationship with Israel or the Israeli–Palestinian Conflict. By the end of this second term, more than 50% of Americans disapproved of the President’s handling of the relations with Israel⁴ and of the situation between Israel and the Palestinians.⁵ The lack of confidence in the president’s handling

⁴ABC News/Washington Post. ABC News/Washington Post Poll, March 2015. Survey Question: “Do you approve or disapprove of the way (Barack) Obama is handling US relations with Israel?” ABC News/Washington Post. Cornell University, Ithaca, NY: Roper Center for Public Opinion Research, iPOLL.

⁵Quinnipiac University Polling Institute. Quinnipiac University Poll, April 2015. Survey Question: “Do you approve or disapprove of the way Barack Obama is handling...the situation between Israel and the Palestinians?” Quinnipiac University Polling Institute. Cornell University, Ithaca, NY: Roper Center for Public Opinion Research, iPOLL.

of the issue was strongest among Republicans (83%), but was shared by one in four Democrats.

During the 2016 presidential elections, several Republican candidates equated this public image of Obama with the Democratic position on Israel and utilized it to differentiate themselves from Democrats on foreign policy (Cavari and Freedman 2017). This is well summarized in remarks Donald Trump made on foreign policy in April 27, 2016 (Trump 2016).

Israel, our great friend and the one true democracy in the Middle East has been snubbed and criticized by an administration that lacks moral clarity. Just a few days ago, Vice President Biden again criticized Israel, a force for justice and peace, for acting as an impatient peace area in the region. President Obama has not been a friend to Israel. He has treated Iran with tender love and care and made it a great power. Iran has, indeed, become a great, great power in just a very short period of time, because of what we've done. All of the expense and all at the expense of Israel, our allies in the region and very importantly, the United States itself.

Donald Trump vowed to change the US priorities and strengthen the relationship of his administration with Israel and its government. In December 2016, just before entering office, the president-elect responded to UN Security Council Resolution 2334, which states that Israel's settlement activities constitute a "flagrant violation" of international law. The United States did not veto the resolution and it passed in a 14-0 vote. In response, the president-elect tweeted the following:

We cannot continue to let Israel be treated with such total disdain and disrespect. They used to have a great friend in the U.S., but not anymore. The beginning of the end was the horrible Iran deal, and now this (U.N.)! Stay strong Israel, January 20th is fast approaching! (@realDonaldTrump, December 28, 2016)

Within less than a month in office, the President invited Prime Minister Netanyahu to the White House, the fifth foreign leader to visit President Trump (following the UK, Jordan, Japan, and Canada). Three months later, in May 2017, on his first foreign trip, President Trump visited Israel and prayed at the Western Wall in the old city of Jerusalem, the first president to ever visit the place, which is largely perceived by the international community as occupied territory (Hirsch 2005; Breger and

Hammer 2018). The President reiterated the importance of his actions, what it signals to the future of United States–Israel relationship, and separated himself from previous administrations (Trump 2017).

On my first trip overseas as President, I have come to this sacred and ancient land to reaffirm the unbreakable bond between the United States and the State of Israel.

America's security partnership with Israel is stronger than ever. Under my administration, you see the difference—big, big beautiful difference.

The views in Israel were highly supportive of President Trump. A survey conducted by the American Public Opinion toward Israel (APOI) center in May 2017 during the President's visit to Israel shows that 63% of Israelis believed that relations between Israel and the United States have deteriorated in recent years. Fifty-one percent blamed President Obama for this change (and 28% equally blamed Obama and Prime Minister Netanyahu). Almost all Israelis believed that President Trump will strengthen the relationship between the two countries, and a majority said they believed the Republican Party is more committed to Israel.⁶

President Trump has followed on his promises to demonstrate his strong support for Israel. The president recognized Jerusalem as the capital of Israel and moved the US Embassy to Jerusalem, recognized Israeli sovereignty over the Golan Heights, withdrew from the Iran Nuclear Deal, took unilateral supportive actions in the UN, and has repeatedly emphasized US commitment to the security and prosperity of Israel.

President Trump made Israel a salient issue in his public appeals. In his oral remarks and use of new media, the president repeatedly mentions Israel—referring to his pro-Israeli policies, to his admiration of the country, and to his strong friendship with the prime minister of Israel, Mr. Binyamin Netanyahu. Yet, in much of his rhetoric, the President utilizes the divide to justify his foreign policies, especially those related to the region such as the Iran nuclear deal or the fight against ISIS, and to exploit the issue for political gains by criticizing Democrats and acquiring ownership of this issue. This serves him in fulfilling commitments of his

⁶Survey conducted on May 24–25, 2017 by the American Public Opinion toward Israel (APOI) Center using the Midgam online panel. Sample of 823 who are a politically representative sample of Israeli Jews.

political base, mainly evangelical Christians, and pressuring Jewish voters to critique and abandon their political alignment with the Democratic Party.⁷ In doing so, he further strengthens the trend of partisan divide.

Since his inauguration (until August 2019), President Trump mentioned Israel in 142 of his oral remarks. In these speeches, the President emphasizes his strong commitment to the special relationship between Israel and the United States, the security of Israel and the need to fight Israel's adversaries, his pro-Israeli actions, his close friendship with Prime Minister Netanyahu, his admiration of the country and its people, and connects these to his overarching agenda of making (and keeping) America great. Here is Trump in a "Keep America Great" rally in New Hampshire on August 15, 2019:

To protect America's security, I withdrew the United States from the horrible one-sided Iran nuclear deal. I recognized Israel's true capital and opened the American embassy in Jerusalem. And just three months ago, we also recognized the Golan Heights as being a part of and protected by Israel. For years you watched as your politicians apologized for America. Now you have a President who is standing up for America and we are standing up for the people of New Hampshire.

President Trump also seizes on rifts within the Democratic Party to distance the Republican Party from the Democratic Party on Israel, pitting himself and the party as pro-Israel and the Democratic Party as anti-Israel. This is exemplified well in Trump's reaction to the debate over remarks made by Representative Ilhan Omar (D-MN) about the influence of AIPAC on American policy, remarks that suggested dual loyalty of American Jews and were widely viewed as anti-Semitic. In an effort to tamp down the uproar over these comments, Democrats in the House proposed a resolution that condemned anti-Semitic rhetoric. Yet, in response to pressures within the Democratic Party, the resolution broadened its scope to condemn "anti-Semitism, Islamophobia, racism and other forms of bigotry." President Trump took political advantage of this internal rift. In an exchange with reporters on March 8, 2019,

⁷The clear majority of Jewish Americans identify with or lean toward the Democratic Party, and there is no evidence that this has changed significantly during the Trump administration so far (Newport 2019).

following a vote in Congress, the President stated that Democrats are anti-Jewish and anti-Israel:

I thought yesterday's vote by the House was disgraceful, because it's become—the Democrats have become an anti-Israel party. They've become an anti-Jewish party. And I thought that vote was a disgrace, and so does everybody else, if you get an honest answer. If you get an honest answer from politicians, they thought it was a disgrace. The Democrats have become an anti-Israel party. They've become an anti-Jewish party, and that's too bad.

We can see similar use of the issue in Trump's tweets, a tool the president uses often, especially to aggrandize his achievements and lambast his rivals (Nai et al. 2019). Since his inauguration (until August 2019), President Trump tweeted 54 tweets mentioning Israel (of a total of 9191 tweets posted by the president during this period). Figure 12.2 summarizes the tweets by main topic, demonstrating how Trump uses this issue as a political, partisan tool.

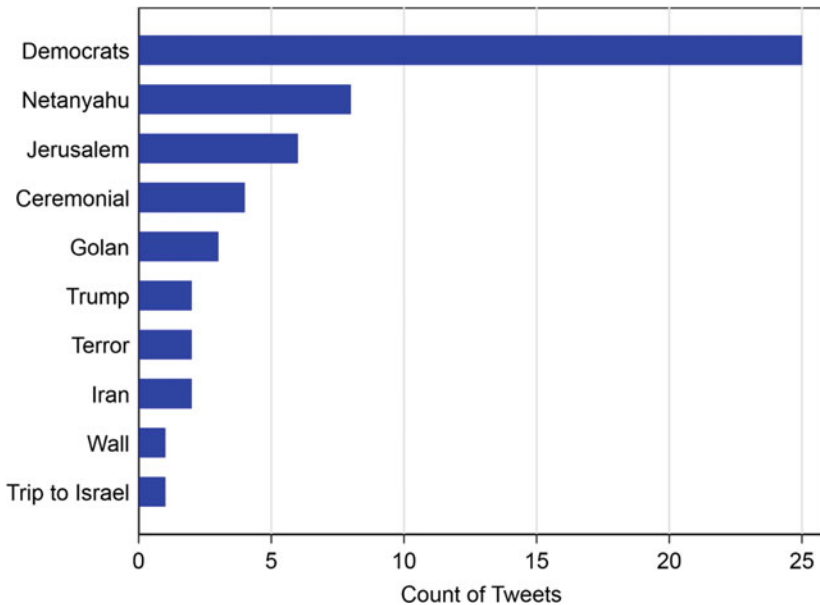


Fig. 12.2 Summary of Trump's Israel related tweets, by topic

Nearly half (25) of the tweets focused on Democrats and their lack of support for Israel. One example for such a tweet is one in which the President tweeted a quote from a Jewish model, Elizabeth Pipko:

Jewish people are leaving the democratic party. We saw a lot of anti Israel policies start under the Obama administration, and it got worse & worse. There is anti-Semitism in the Democratic Party. They don't care about Israel or the Jewish people. (@realDonaldTrump, March 12, 2019)

Other tweets are about the strong relationship with Prime Minister Netanyahu (8) or his commitment to Israel's security (2). Only a few of the tweets are about policy: Recognizing Jerusalem as the capital of Israel and moving the US Embassy to Jerusalem (6), recognizing Israel sovereignty in the Golan Heights (3), or about Israel's adversaries and threats such as Iran (2), and terrorist organizations (2).

Americans responded to his actions with relative support. Figure 12.3 plots the public assessment of Trump's actions toward Israel based on

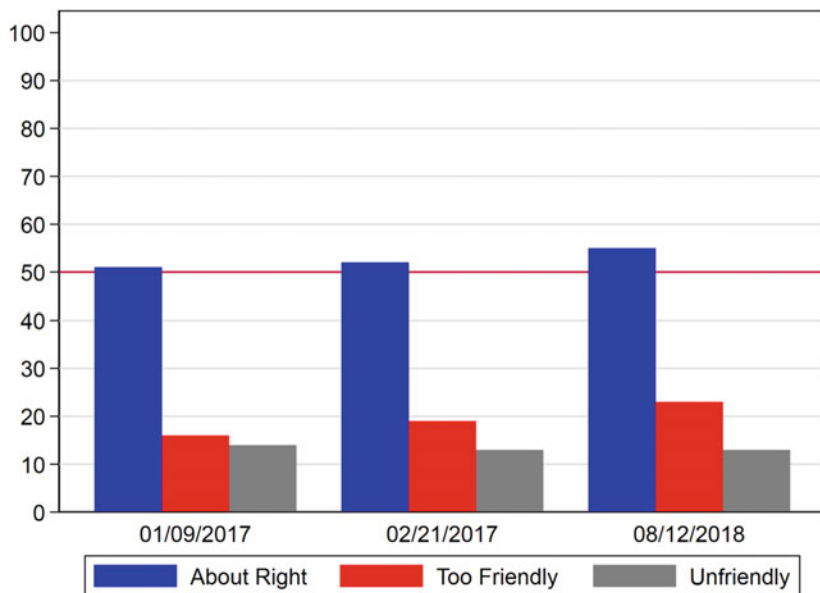


Fig. 12.3 Public assessment of Trump's attitudes toward Israel

three surveys during his first two years in office. The survey asks Americans whether they believe President Trump has too friendly of an attitude toward Israel, too unfriendly of an attitude toward Israel, or has about the right attitude toward Israel. Since his inauguration, a majority of Americans believed that his attitudes toward Israel are about right—increasing from 51 to 55%. An increasing share of Americans believes that Trump is too friendly—rising from 16 to 23%. While an analysis of the 2018 survey reveals that most of the critique comes from Democrats (34%) compared to Republicans (11%), the fact that the President maintains a favorable rating on this issue demonstrates that his actions resonate well among a majority of Americans.⁸

In the rest of the chapter, I discuss three major policies of the Trump administration that are either directly about Israel—recognizing Jerusalem as the Capital of Israel and Israel’s sovereignty over the Golan Heights—or strongly influenced by and have an effect on Israel—withdrawal from the Iran Nuclear Agreement. For each, I assess the domestic—a.k.a political—and international causes and consequences of the policy. I conclude with an assessment of the effect of Trump’s term in office on the nature of the political debate over Israel in the United States and the future of United States–Israel relations.

POLICY TOWARD ISRAEL

In a speech announcing his candidacy for the Republican Presidential nomination in 2020, President Trump mentioned his policies toward Israel as his major foreign policy accomplishments (Trump 2019a).

We’ve repaired America’s friendship with our cherished ally, the State of Israel, and ... we recognized the true capital of Israel and opened the American embassy in Jerusalem. And we recognized Israeli sovereignty over the Golan Heights. And I withdrew the United States from the disastrous, just a disaster, a disaster, the disastrous Iran nuclear deal, and imposed the toughest-ever sanctions on the world’s number one state sponsor of terrorism. We’re charting a path to stability and peace in the Middle East, because great nations do not want to fight endless wars. They’ve been

⁸ Surveys collected from the Roper iPoll Archive. The two 2017 surveys were conducted by Quinnipiac University Polling Institute, on January 5–9, and February 16–21, 2017. The 2018 survey was conducted by SSRS for the Cable News Network (CNN) on August 9–12, 2018. All three surveys are of a representative sample of national adults.

going on forever. Starting to remove a lot of troops. We're finally putting America first.

There is no doubt that President Trump sees himself as a strong supporter of Israel. In a tweet from August 21, 2019, President Trump thanked the conservative talk show host Wayne Allyn Root for his remarks about him:

President Trump is the greatest President for Jews and for Israel in the history of the world, not just America, he is the best President for Israel in the history of the world ... and the Jewish people in Israel love him ... like he's the King of Israel. They love him like he is the second coming of God. (@realDonaldTrump, August 21, 2019)

His appeal was not only to his conservative Christian base, but also to the largely Democratic Jewish constituency. President Trump was surprised, however, to see a lack of support among Jewish voters. In a controversial comment on August 21, 2019, President Trump said that "... any Jewish people that vote for a Democrat, ... shows either a total lack of knowledge or great disloyalty." In response to an accusation that the comment was racist, raising the double-loyalty claim against American Jews, the President doubled down on his comment and said that he believes that "[I]f you vote for a Democrat, you're being disloyal to Jewish people and you're being very disloyal to Israel."

Below are three of Trump's signature policies, which he repeatedly uses to demonstrate his ardent support for Israel, and which were hailed by the Israeli government and vocal supporters of Israel in the United States. All three policies were met with a strong opposition in the international community and have drawn partisan responses in the United States among elites and the mass public.

Jerusalem, Capital of Israel

On December 6, 2017, President Trump announced that the United States recognizes Jerusalem as the capital of Israel and would move the US Embassy from Tel Aviv to Jerusalem in the following year. With this announcement, Trump fulfilled a major campaign promise he made in a speech to the American Israel Public Affairs Committee (AIPAC) on March 21, 2016.

The decision enforces the Jerusalem Embassy Act of 1995 that recognized Jerusalem as the capital of Israel and called for moving the US Embassy. The decision is also consistent with a promise each president from Clinton to Obama made on the campaign trail. Yet, once elected, all presidents since 1995 have signed a waiver every six months delaying the move. President Trump signed the waiver in June 2017, and, for the last time, in December 2017 when he announced that he recognizes Jerusalem as the capital and would move the US Embassy within the following six months' period. As promised, the US Embassy in Jerusalem was dedicated in May 2018, in a ceremony coinciding with the festivities of the 70th anniversary of the establishment of Israel. President Trump's actions fall short of adopting a third statement of the Jerusalem Embassy Act of 1995 recognizing that Jerusalem should remain an undivided city.

Members of Trump's cabinet and advisers were divided on the issue. On the one hand, Steve Bannon, advisor to the President, and David Friedman, the US Ambassador to Israel, advocated for recognizing Jerusalem as Israel's capital. On the other hand, Trump's national security team, including Secretary of State, Rex Tillerson, and National Security Advisor, H. R. McMaster, opposed such a proposal, asserting that it would result in international backlash and hurt US troops and diplomats serving in the Middle East (Da Vinha [2019](#)).

In his decision, President Trump was affected by a strong lobby of Christian Evangelicals who pressured the president to follow on his campaign promise. Christian evangelical leaders lobbied the president in person and, reportedly, some 135,000 members of Christians United for Israel, the evangelical Zionist lobby, sent emails to the White House urging the president to move the US embassy (Spector [2019](#)). There is no doubt that a major factor in President Trump's decision was to stand by his campaign promise. Attesting to this is the repeated mentioning of this decision during the 2018 midterm elections. The president mentioned the decision to recognize Jerusalem and move the U.S. embassy to Jerusalem in 29 speeches and proclamations, including in 12 "Make America Great Again" rallies held in the days and weeks leading up to the 2018 midterm elections. President Trump was also delivering on a promise he made to Sheldon Adelson, one of his most important donors during the 2016 campaign.

In his action on such a symbolic issue, Trump also hoped that his decision would carry political gains among Jewish voters and donors. The President was surprised when he realized that the decision was not as well

received by the Jewish community as he assumed. A survey conducted by the American Jewish Committee (AJC) in April and May of 2018 reveals that American Jews were divided over the issue with 46% supporting the decision and 47% opposing it, whereas Israeli Jews overwhelmingly supported the decision.⁹ In June 2018, a month after the dedication of the new embassy in Jerusalem, President Trump said in an interview that he “gets more calls of thank you from evangelicals...than from Jewish people...which is incredible.”

Nevertheless, Trump’s decision and policy was not only driven by domestic political calculations. It is also consistent with the President’s geopolitical strategy that is focused on projecting America’s power in the region by aligning with its allies and encouraging them to act forcefully against common enemies (Mead 2018). Similar to other foreign issues, President Trump acts unilaterally on existing conflicts, defying conventional approaches and stirring the parties out of inactivity.

The decision was met with strong opposition from the international community. The United Nations General Assembly (UNGA) overwhelmingly adopted a symbolic resolution condemning Trump’s recognition of Jerusalem and called all countries to refrain from establishing embassies in Jerusalem. One hundred and twenty-eight countries voted in favor, 35 abstained, and nine voted against, including the United States and Israel. This came about after an attempt to pass a similar resolution in the UN Security Council in which 14 out of 15 members voted in favor, but the United States, a permanent member, vetoed this resolution (UN 2017). In response to the condemnation among the international community, the US Ambassador to the United Nations, Nikki Haley, defended President Trump’s decision, including Trump’s intention to move the US Embassy to Jerusalem, and described the UN as being a hostile place for Israel. Furthermore, Haley declared that “this vote will make a difference on how Americans look at the UN and on how we look at countries who disrespect us in the UN. And this vote will be remembered” (cited from US Mission to the UN 2017). The international community also did not follow the US lead and did not relocate their

⁹AJC’s 2018 Survey of American Jewish Opinion, conducted by the research company SSRS, is based on telephone interviews carried out April 18–May 10 with a national sample of 1001 Jews over age 18. AJC’s 2018 Survey of Israeli Jewish Opinion, conducted by Geocartography, is based on telephone interviews carried out in May with a national sample of 1000 Jews over age 18.

embassies to Jerusalem. To date, the only two countries that have relocated their embassies to Jerusalem are the United States and Guatemala, and the latter is reconsidering the decision.

The decision was received very differently by Israel and the Palestinians. In Israel, President Trump's decision to recognize Jerusalem was met by the strong support of Israeli political elite and the Jewish public. The majority of members of Israel's parliament, the Knesset, including members of the government and opposition such as Yitzhak Herzog, then a left-of-center opposition leader, lauded President Trump's decision (Ynetnews 2017). Prime Minister Binyamin Netanyahu declared that Trump's speech was "an important step towards peace, for there is no peace that doesn't include Jerusalem as the capital of the State of Israel" (cited in BBC 2017).

Palestinians condemned the move. Hundreds of Palestinians in Gaza demonstrated against the decision and burned Israeli and American flags. President Mahmoud Abbas of the Palestinian Authority declared that recognizing Jerusalem as Israel's capital meant that the United States was "abdicating its role as a peace mediator" (cited in BBC 2017). On May 14, 2018, during the inauguration of the new Embassy in Jerusalem thousands of Palestinians in the Gaza Strip protested and marched on the border with Israel. Over fifty Palestinians were killed in this violent confrontation. On September 28, 2018, the Palestinian Authority brought a case against the United States in the International Court of Justice (ICJ), claiming that it violated the Vienna Convention on Diplomatic Relations, a legally binding convention governing diplomatic relations between countries (ICJ 2018).

In the United States, elite and mass Americans have divided over the issue. Members of Congress, from both parties, lauded Trump's decision. For example, the Chairman of the Senate Foreign Relations Committee, Bob Corker, and the Speaker of the House, Paul Ryan, proclaimed that it was a decision long overdue. Democrats like the House Minority Whip, Steny Hoyer and the ranking member of the House Foreign Relations Committee, Elliot Engel voiced strong support for Trump's decision. Several members of Congress followed up on their support with resolutions that reinstate their commitment to recognizing Jerusalem as the capital of Israel and that reject the United Nations criticism of Trump's actions. A resolution, sponsored by Senate Majority Leader, Senator Mitch McConnell (R-KY), that reaffirms that the permanent status of Jerusalem remains a matter to be decided between the parties

through final status negotiations toward a two-state solution, enjoyed bipartisan support—was cosponsored by several members of both parties (32 Republicans, 13 Democrats), made it for a full vote in the US Senate and passed with a large bipartisan support (90 Yea, 10 Nay, evenly divided between Republicans and Democrats).

The American public was strongly divided over this decision, however. In December 2017, after President Trump recognized Jerusalem as the Capital of Israel, a CNN poll reveals a divided public: 44% approved the decision compared to 45% who disapproved (11% said they did not have an opinion). Only a third of Americans (36%) was ready to move the US Embassy to Jerusalem, compared to 49% who opposed the move.

This divide is highly correlated with party affiliation. Most Republicans (77%) expressed their support for Trump's decision to recognize Jerusalem as the capital and 65% supported moving the US Embassy to Jerusalem. In contrast, 68% of Democrats opposed recognizing Jerusalem as the capital of Israel and 69% opposed relocating the embassy to Jerusalem. Much of this divide then can be attributed to partisan approval of the president's actions—Republican are predisposed to support the President's decision, whereas Democrats are predisposed to oppose it.

Israeli Sovereignty Over the Golan Heights

On March 25, 2019, President Trump signed the “Proclamation on Recognizing the Golan Heights as Part of the State of Israel,” leading the United States becoming the first State to recognize the Golan Heights as a part of Israel. Israel captured the enclave in the 1967 War from Syria and has controlled it ever since. Israel argues that it captured the Golan Heights in a defensive war and emphasizes that the region is of strategic importance to it (Lieblich 2019). The international community never supported this claim, seeing the Golan Heights as an occupied territory. Following the 1967 War, the U.N. Security Council (UNSC) passed Resolution 242 which called for the withdrawal of Israeli armed forces from territories occupied in the recent conflict. This resolution, accepted formally or implicitly by every party in the region, including Israel, was the basis for every negotiation in the Arab–Israeli conflict and was affirmed by the parties in the peace treaty between Israel and Egypt and between Israel and Jordan. Israel's actions, however, showed only limited acceptance of its commitment to withdraw from the Golan Heights (or parts of it). In 1981, Israel effectively annexed the territory when the

Knesset enacted the “Golan Heights Law” in which it applied Israeli “law, jurisdiction and administration” to the region (Knesset 1981). In response, the UNSC adopted Resolution 497 which referred to Israel’s decision as “null and void and without international legal effect,” which all members voted in favor of, including the United States (UN 1981).

Every US administration from Johnson through Obama viewed the Golan Heights as an occupied territory that would be dealt with when Israel and Syria enter into a peace treaty. From Johnson to Obama, various administrations attempted to broker talks between Israel and Syria in an effort to achieve a peace deal in exchange for the return of the Golan Heights. Several Israeli leaders, including Yitzhak Rabin and Ehud Barak, attempted to reach such a deal, and were willing to negotiate over partial or full withdrawal from the Golan Heights (Quandt 2005; Ross 2004). Some sources also suggest that Prime Minister Netanyahu was willing to negotiate with President Assad on a peace agreement that included a full Israeli withdrawal from the Golan Heights (Shiffer, October 12, 2012). None of these attempts succeeded, and the Civil War in Syria from 2011 halted any renewed attempt.

In recent years, Israeli governments found the civil war in Syria as an opportunity to ensure that the Golan Heights remains under Israeli control. In 2015, Prime Minister Netanyahu raised the issue with President Obama, but met with little support. In 2016, Prime Minister Netanyahu promised that the region would remain under Israel control “forever,” a declaration that was immediately rejected by the Obama administration. With President Trump’s entry into the White House, Netanyahu began launching efforts to convince the new president to recognize Israel’s sovereignty over the Golan Heights (Baker 2017). In November 2018, the United States voted for the first time against a UNGA Resolution condemning Israel’s control of the Golan Heights that has been passed annually. In the past, the United States had abstained on similar resolutions. The justification for this shift was outlined in a tweet from the US Mission to the UN’s Twitter account, which stipulated that the resolution was biased against Israel and that the vote itself was “useless” (US Mission to the UN 2018). Another change in the United States’s approach was noticeable in the US State Department’s Human Rights Report of March 2019 which described the Golan Heights as “Israeli-controlled,” unlike in previous reports where it had always referred to the territory as “Israeli-occupied.” In late 2018 and early 2019, in the lead-up to Trump’s decision, Republican Senators and

Representatives introduced resolutions to the Senate (S.Res 732; S.567) and the House (H.R.1372) calling on the United States to recognize Israel's sovereignty over the Golan Heights. In early March 2019, during a visit to the Golan Heights with Netanyahu, Republican Senator Lindsey Graham declared that he would lobby Trump and his administration to recognize Israel's sovereignty over the Golan Heights.

On March 21, 2019, a week after the change in the State Department's report, President Trump tweeted that "[a]fter 52 years it is time for the United States to fully recognize Israel's Sovereignty over the Golan Heights, which is of critical strategic and security importance to the State of Israel and Regional Stability!" (@realDonaldTrump, March 21, 2019). President Trump's tweet occurred several days before Prime Minister Netanyahu's visit to the White House and two weeks before the April 9, 2019 election in Israel. Netanyahu directly responded via Twitter to Trump's tweet announcing the new policy and thanked the President for the shift in foreign policy. On March 25, 2019, Trump with Netanyahu by his side at the White House, signed the proclamation that made US recognition of the Golan Heights official (Holland and Mason 2019).

The international community's reaction to President Trump's recognition of Israel's sovereignty over the Golan Heights was similar to their reaction to the decision to recognize Jerusalem as Israel's capital in 2017. Trump's proclamation was condemned by the Arab League, Turkey, and Syria (Holland and Mason 2019), and was opposed by all (14) remaining members of the UN Security Council.

In explaining his action, Mr. Trump revealed very little information about his decision, only saying that it was a snap decision during a discussion with his top Middle East peace advisers, including the US ambassador to Israel, David Friedman, and son-in-law Jared Kushner (Rampton 2019). The decision adds to Trump's attempt to build support among his base of pro-Israel evangelicals and American Jews. Republican leaders with strong connections to Israel such as Senators Ted Cruz and Lindsay Graham have called for US recognition of Israel sovereignty in the Golan Heights, and have promoted that agenda through Congress. The decision also resonates well with the evangelical agenda of support for and strengthening Israel against its adversaries. The Christian United for Israel lobbied for passing the legislation, and its founder and chairman, Pastor John Hagee, issued a statement after President Trump commented about his intention to recognize Israeli sovereignty over the Golan Heights

saying that: “We are very grateful to the President for having the courage to express that position and look forward to the US formally recognizing Israeli sovereignty over the Golan Heights.” But, unlike the recognition of Jerusalem, President Trump’s action on the Golan Heights does not follow a concentrated effort from any constituency in the United States. The lack of a strong lobby in support for the decision and the clear objection of the international community suggests that the decision was indeed a response to a request of Prime Minister Netanyahu before the elections in Israel and Trump’s inclination to take bold unexpected decisions.

The reaction of Americans varied, and, once again, was highly partisan. The bills in the Senate (S.567) and House (H.R.1372) that called for a policy change to officially recognize Israeli sovereignty in the Golan Heights were sponsored and co-sponsored by strict party line—57 Representatives and 24 Senators, all Republicans. The bills state that “it is unrealistic to expect that the outcome of a peace agreement between Israel and Syria will be an Israeli withdrawal from the Golan Heights.” And, Israeli sovereignty is a US national security interest: “it is in the United States national security interest to ensure that Israel retains control of the Golan Heights, [and that] the Syrian regime of Bashar al-Assad faces diplomatic and geopolitical consequences for its killing of civilians, the ethnic cleansing of Arab Sunnis, and the use of weapons of mass destruction.” Neither bill ever came to a vote.

Democrats were mostly silent on the issue. Though not voicing an opposition to the annexation, Democratic Presidential candidate, Pete Buttigieg, described the proclamation (two weeks before elections in Israel) as interfering in Israeli domestic politics (Allen and Swan 2019).

Response among the Jewish community in the United States was mostly supportive. A survey by the American Jewish Committee (AJC) in April 2019 reveals that only half of American Jews (50%) supported Trump’s decision. This is mirrored in views of Jewish organizations. Though initially voicing unrest with the unilateral decision by the Trump Administration, AIPAC soon voiced its support in a tweet on March 25, 2019:

We thank @realDonaldTrump for taking the historic step of officially recognizing Israeli sovereignty over the Golan. This important action sends a

powerful message that America stands with Israel as it faces critical security challenges on its northern border.

Jewish organization affiliated with more liberal views have questioned the decision and its motives. In response to the decision, J Street acknowledged that “at the present moment, maintaining control of the Golan Heights is of strategic and security importance to the state of Israel — particularly given the ongoing violence and instability in Syria.” Yet, “[u]ltimately, the final status of the territory will have to be determined by a negotiated agreement. Until then, premature US recognition of Israeli sovereignty over the Golan is a needlessly provocative move that violates international law and does not enhance Israeli security. It’s clear that this cynical move by Trump is not about the long-term interests of the US or Israel, but rather about handing yet another political gift to Prime Minister Netanyahu in the hopes of boosting his chances for re-election next month. Once again, this administration is playing dangerous partisan games with US foreign policy and the US-Israel relationship.”

Shortly after the announcement of Trump’s decision, the Israeli government approved the establishment of a new community in the Golan Heights that would be named “Trump Heights.” On June 16, 2019, three months after Trump’s decision, a ceremony in which the sign of the new community went up was held in which David Friedman, the US Ambassador to Israel under President Trump attended, among others. Ambassador Friedman emphasized that President Trump was the first sitting president that Israel had dedicated a village to since President Truman in 1949 (Keinon 2019). On June 16, in a retweet of Ambassador Friedman’s post about the new unveiling of the sign, Trump added “[t]hank you PM @Netanyahu and the State of Israel for this great honor!”

Iran Nuclear Deal

On July 14, 2015, the P5+1 (the five permanent members of the Security Council—the United States, UK, China, France, and Russia—plus Germany) and the Islamic Republic of Iran signed the Joint Comprehensive Plan of Action (JCPOA), also known as the “Iran Nuclear Deal.” As part of the deal, Iran was required to, among other things, decrease by 98% its stockpile of low-enriched uranium for 15 years and refrain from building new uranium enrichment facilities for 15 years in exchange for

the lifting of international and domestic sanctions against Iran (Nephew 2018). Israel was skeptical of the approach undertaken to tackle Iran's nuclear program diplomatic negotiations between the P5+1 and Iran. Unlike the Obama administration which was unwilling to endorse a military approach, Israel preferred "a more muscular military approach, urging that Iran's enrichment infrastructure be threatened militarily to elicit a change in Iranian behavior" (Rajiv 2016: 54).

Throughout the negotiations, Prime Minister Netanyahu was very critical of the process the P5+1 chose to take, including in speeches to the UN General Assembly. Several months before the signing of the JCPOA, Netanyahu was invited by the Speaker of the House, John Boehner, to give a speech to Congress, without the White House's knowledge or support (Rajiv 2016). In this speech, Netanyahu criticized the P5+1 and asserted that they should first require Iran to change its regional behavior and only then reward Iran. The invitation revealed the depth of the partisan divide over Israel. President Obama, Vice President Biden, the Secretary of State, as well as several Democrat Representatives and Senators skipped the speech and did not meet with Netanyahu when he visited Washington.

A majority of Americans did not feel comfortable with Israeli interference in US decision-making. Sixty-three percent of Americans thought that congressional leaders should not have invited Netanyahu to address the joint session of Congress without notifying the president. This, however, was strongly partisan: Eighty-four percent of Democrats thought the invitation was wrong, whereas only 38% of Republicans thought the same.¹⁰ While attitudes toward the invitation were also a function of broader attitudes about the nuclear deal with Iran, the fact that Israel was an instrument in this struggle attests to the fact that the parties were willing to break from the bipartisan tradition of support for Israel.

During Donald Trump's presidential campaign, the Republican nominee repeatedly lambasted the JCPOA. On June 16, 2015, in his speech announcing his candidacy for the presidency, Trump stipulated that if Obama were to sign the JCPOA, Israel's existence would not last very long and declared it to be a "disaster." Additionally, in his speech to

¹⁰ CNN/ORC Poll Conducted by Opinion Research Corporation, field dates: February 12–15, 2015. Provided by Roper Center for Public Opinion Research.

AIPAC in 2016, Trump announced that “[m]y number one priority is to dismantle the disastrous deal with Iran.”

Shortly after entering the White House, Trump espoused similar rhetoric about the nuclear deal to that of the campaign and imposed new sanctions on Iran, justifying this based on a ballistic missile test Iran had conducted and due to allegations of Iran supporting terrorism in the Middle East (Da Vinha 2019). In his first meeting with Prime Minister Netanyahu as president in February 2017, Trump described the JCPOA as “one of the worst deals I’ve ever seen.” Despite Trump’s known opposition to the deal, in April and July 2017, he reluctantly certified the deal to Congress and acknowledged that Iran was complying with the provisions of the accord.

Trump’s advisors were split on the issue of the JCPOA and whether to remain or to decertify and withdraw from it. On the one hand, Trump’s national security team, including Secretary Tillerson, Advisor H. R. McMaster, and Secretary James Mattis believed that notwithstanding the JCPOA’s flaws, it offered the United States stability and that the deal should not be linked to Iran’s aggressive ventures in the Middle East. On the other hand, several close advisors, including then CIA Director, Mike Pompeo, Ambassador Nikki Haley, and Steve Bannon, and other leading Republicans such as Senator Tom Cotton and former UN Ambassador, John Bolton, vehemently opposed the deal and argued for decertifying it. In September 2017, in a speech to the UNGA, President Trump indicated that he would be decertifying the deal, and on October 13, 2017, despite objections from his national security team, Trump decided to decertify the JCPOA, claiming that Iran was not abiding by the spirit of the accord (Da Vinha 2019).

Notwithstanding the change in policy in the United States toward the JCPOA, the other members of the P5+1 were in favor of the deal and opposed decertifying it. The Trump administration attempted to renegotiate the JCPOA, but the other countries party to the deal expressed their commitment to it. Further, in March 2018, the White House underwent a turnover in its national security team. First, Secretary Tillerson was fired according to Trump, due to differences in opinion on the JCPOA, and was replaced with the more like-minded Mike Pompeo. Following this, H. R. McMaster stepped down and was replaced by John Bolton (Lantis 2019). On April 30, 2018, less than two weeks before the Trump administration had to decide whether to remain or withdraw from the deal, Prime Minister Netanyahu gave a presentation that was an attempt

to convince the public and Trump that they should walk away from the JCPOA. In his presentation, Netanyahu displayed over 55,000 pages of documents related to Iran's nuclear program that Israeli spies had stolen from a warehouse in Tehran, Iran. Netanyahu declared that "Iran lied!" and that "the Iran deal, the nuclear deal, is based on lies. It's based on Iranian lies and Iranian deception" (Israel MFA 2018a). In response to the presentation, President Trump stated that it had proven "that I have been 100% right" (Ynetnews 2018).

On May 8, 2018, President Trump announced that the United States is unilaterally withdrawing from the JCPOA and reinstating sanctions on Iran. In this speech, Trump referred to Netanyahu's news conference the week beforehand, saying "[I]ast week, Israel published intelligence documents long concealed by Iran, conclusively showing the Iranian regime and its history of pursuing nuclear weapons" (White House 2018). Prime Minister Netanyahu expressed his full support for Trump's decision to unilaterally withdraw from the JCPOA, and thanked the president for his leadership, his commitment to prevent Iran from getting nuclear weapons, and for confronting Iran's "terrorist regime" (Israel MFA 2018b). President Trump publicly justified his decision to withdraw from JCPOA because it endangers the world, and, especially, Israel (Trump 2018):

But we can't allow a deal to hurt the world. That's a deal to hurt the world; that's not a deal for the United States. That's a deal to hurt the world and, certainly, Israel. You saw Benjamin Netanyahu get up yesterday and talk so favorably about what we did.

Since the United States withdrew from the JCPOA, it has launched a "maximum pressure" campaign against Iran, involving the full reimplementation of sanctions on Iran in November 2018, including sanctions that target Iran's oil sector. Trump has repeatedly highlighted his decision to pull the United States out of the deal, thus fulfilling a major campaign promise. In his 2019 State of the Union address, Trump emphasized that the JCPOA was "disastrous," and that his administration was responsible for the "toughest sanctions" ever imposed on any country. Trump has also brought up this decision in campaign rallies, including in numerous "Make America Great Again" rallies Trump launched in the weeks leading up to the 2018 midterm elections, often connecting between JCPOA and Israel.

Prime Minister Netanyahu has repeatedly praised President Trump and his administration as the United States has increased sanctions on Iran. For example, in a tweet on July 11, 2019, Netanyahu wrote “I thanked President Trump for his intention to increase sanctions against Iran.” Netanyahu has not only expressed his approval for the United States’ sanctions, but he has also encouraged the United States to increase sanctions even more. On July 23, 2019, in a press conference with US Energy Secretary Rick Perry, while acknowledging that the sanctions on Iran were working, Netanyahu noted that the sanctions needed to continue and “[i]f I had to say what are the three things that we have to do in the face of Iranian aggression, it is pressure, pressure and more pressure to force Iran to abandon its nuclear and regional ambitions” (Israel MFA 2019).

* * *

The three policies demonstrate the features of Trump’s support for Israel. Trump fulfills his campaign promises and delivers on his commitments to his political base, which public opinion data show are overwhelmingly supportive of Israel. The fact that Democrats question his unilateral actions allows Trump to highlight his actions and criticize Democrats on an issue that still enjoys an uneven pro-Israeli bias among Americans. This is illustrated well in his press conference remarks in August 21, 2019 (Trump 2019b):

So I have been responsible for a lot of great things for Israel. One of them was moving the Embassy to Jerusalem, making Jerusalem the capital of Israel. One of them was the Golan Heights. One of them, frankly, is Iran.

No President has ever done anywhere close to what I’ve done, between Golan Heights, Jerusalem, Iran—and other things.

No President has done what I’ve done.

...

In my opinion, the Democrats have gone very far away from Israel. I cannot understand how they can do that. They don’t want to fund Israel. They want to take away foreign aid to Israel. They want to do a lot of bad things to Israel.

Beyond the partisan divide, Trump is able to use the Israeli–Palestinian conflict to demonstrate his foreign policy approach—one that is aligned with US allies and encourages them to act forcefully against common enemies, and is willing to stir the pot and challenge existing,

perhaps stagnant and dated, conventional approaches to world conflicts. Finally, Trump finds strong alliance with Israel's leader, Prime Minister Netanyahu, and is willing to act in a way that would benefit his friend politically.

CONCLUSION

On December 26, 2018, the Israeli Knesset voted to dissolve itself and called for election. This started one of the longest political stalemates in Israeli history, with several rounds of elections, each generating no viable coalition. Hovering above each election was Prime Minister Netanyahu's possible indictments for corruption. On his side, Mr. Netanyahu tried to frame the election as a choice between a seasoned politician with strong ties to world leaders, against an amateur candidate heading a conglomerate party with no clear ideology (Benny Gantz and the Blue and White Party). One of the dominant issues Mr. Netanyahu emphasized in each election round was the strong relationship he has with President Trump, and how this relationship advances Israel's interests. President Trump responded to these claims by demonstrating his support for Netanyahu and by providing policy gains for Netanyahu to claim credit for.

During the first campaign (April 2019), Mr. Netanyahu emphasized his close relationship with President Trump, advertised pictures of them together stating that he, Netanyahu, is on a different, better league of statesmen from all other party leaders, and that he alone can work with world leaders and protect Israeli interests. President Trump commented about Netanyahu saying that "he's done a great job as Prime Minister. He's tough, he's smart, he's strong" (Trump, February 28, 2019). Furthermore, as discussed above, just two weeks before the election, President Trump announced that the United States would recognize Israel's sovereignty over the Golan Heights and invited the Prime Minister to join him when he signed the Presidential Proclamation (March 25, 2019), thus giving Mr. Netanyahu a campaign photo op and a strong policy gain on an issue that is relatively consensual in Israel.

The election resulted in a political stalemate with the two large parties at dead heat. After failing to form a coalition, Israel went to another round of election in September 17, 2019. Once again, Netanyahu emphasized his close rapport with President Trump and sought support from the President. During the week before elections, Prime Minister Netanyahu announced that if elected he will annex the Jordan Valley, in effect all but

eliminating any chance for a two-state solution. UN Secretary-General Antonio Guterres said the move would constitute a serious violation of international law. Despite Netanyahu's claim that his announcement was coordinated with the Trump Administration, it received no official support (but no clear objection either). Three days before the elections, President Trump publicly expressed support for moving forward with discussions on a US–Israel mutual defense treaty. Mr. Netanyahu framed it as a great achievement, but Israeli leaders, and especially the military and security establishments, are extremely critical of such a treaty (*Globes*, April 1, 2019).

The second election results did not solve the political stalemate either. Mr. Netanyahu failed again to form a coalition, but neither did Benny Gantz, the leader of the largest party (Blue and White). Israel, therefore, once again went to a general election—third time in one year.

Throughout the coalition debates and after the Knesset's dissolved and a new election was called, Mr. Netanyahu continuously appealed to the Israeli public that he alone is fit to meet the challenges that awaits Israel. Once again, Netanyahu repeatedly emphasized his close ties with President Trump, the important bilateral treaty between the countries, and his ability to secure American support for annexing parts of the disputed territories of the West Bank/Judea and Samaria—recognizing sovereignty over the Jordan Valley and the legality of Israeli settlements. This view received strong support from the Trump administration. On November 18, 2019, Secretary of State Mike Pompeo announced that the Trump administration had determined that Israel's West Bank settlements do not violate international law. In doing so, the Trump administration reversed one of the last actions of the Obama administration in which it abstained from a UN vote that called settlements “a flagrant violation under international law,” thereby allowing it to pass. The president fulfilled his promise from December 2016 where he promised that under his administration such resolutions would not pass. Secretary Pompeo rejected any claim that the decision, and its timing, was connected to the political stalemate in Israel.

The statement received strong condemnation from the international community. The EU's foreign policy chief at the time, Federica Mogherini issued a statement reiterating that the union's position “remains unchanged: all settlement activity is illegal under international law and it erodes the viability of the two-state solution and the prospects

for a lasting peace” (EU, November 18, 2019). The UN Special Coordinator for the Middle East Peace Process, Nickolay Mladenov said that regardless of any national policy declarations, Israeli settlement activities are still viewed as “a flagrant violation under international law” (UN, November 20, 2019). In a careful statement, the International Criminal Court’s chief prosecutor, Fatou Bensouda, stipulated that she is concerned about the potential move (*Jerusalem Post*, December 5, 2019).

While Israeli leaders across partisan lines hailed Pompeo’s statement, in the United States, Democrats in Congress disavowed the move, making it into another partisan debate. A group of 106 Democrats signed a letter to Pompeo decrying the administration’s decision to reverse US policy on the legality of Israeli settlement. On December 6, 2019, the Democratic-controlled House of Representatives passed a resolution (H.Res 326) that expresses its continuing support for a two-state solution in the Israeli–Palestinian conflict and warns against any Israeli annexation of territory in the occupied West Bank. The resolution passed largely along partisan lines (266 supported the resolution, all but five are Democrats; and 188 opposed, including four Democrats).

Finally, in what may be the most dramatic move yet, on January 28, 2020, during Trump’s impeachment trial in the Senate and Israeli Knesset proceedings about Netanyahu’s immunity from prosecution on corruption charges, President Trump unveiled his long-in-the-making plan to solve the Israeli–Palestinian conflict—the “Deal of the Century”—in a White House ceremony with Prime Minister Netanyahu at his side and with no Palestinian present.¹¹ Perhaps the most important aspects of the plan are its recognition of Palestinian statehood in 70% of the territories and Israel’s sovereignty over the remaining 30%, including all existing settlements. Though the plan provides some important gains for the Palestinians, its terms by and large favor Israel’s long-standing positions. Palestinians angrily rejected the plan. Most Arab countries muted their response, neither endorsing nor rejecting it.¹²

¹¹ President Trump also met privately with Benny Gantz in the White House and presented to him the plan, which he too endorsed.

¹² Moving forward with the plan, Prime Minister announced that he will immediately pass a government resolution to annex territory identified by the plan as Israeli territory.

Democrats responded with a strong critique of the plan itself and for omitting the Palestinians from the process. Joe Biden, the former vice president and leading 2020 Democratic presidential candidate, said that “a peace plan requires two sides to come together. This is a political stunt that could spark unilateral moves to annex territory and set back peace even more.” A group of 12 Democratic senators, including three leading presidential candidates, Senators Warren, Sanders, and Klubuchar, sent a letter to Mr. Trump expressing their concern with the plan, writing that “previous presidents of both parties successfully maintained the respect of both Israelis and the Palestinians for the United States’ role in difficult negotiations.” And that “this latest White House effort is not a legitimate attempt to advance peace.” It is “a recipe for renewed division and conflict in the region.” Once again, Trump’s actions concerning Israel were met with a partisan battle (*Jerusalem Post*, January 30, 2020).

US actions during the electoral stalemate in Israel add to the discussion in this chapter to illustrate that Israel is currently a partisan, political issue in US elections, in presidential rhetoric and congressional action. In turn, the public is divided along party lines over the Israeli–Palestinian conflict as it is on other issues concerning foreign and domestic affairs. The party conflict has extended to Israel much like it did on other issues (Layman and Carsey 2002).

Neither President Trump nor Prime Minister Netanyahu began the process of polarization over Israel, but they may have intensified it to a level that will be difficult to draw back from. Both have used the relationship between them as a political tool. President Trump used speeches and information from Netanyahu to justify his foreign and domestic policies and to criticize Democratic positions. Prime Minister Netanyahu used his relationship with Trump and his ability to maneuver through Congress with the help of Republicans to demonstrate his influence on Washington and to solidify his own domestic standing.

The Democratic Party is rapidly changing, becoming younger, more diverse, and increasingly critical of the party’s old commitments. Congressional representatives Rashida Talib and Ilhan Omar may not represent the Democratic Party but they touch a nerve of young Democrats

The Trump administration announced that he does not approve such unilateral move before the upcoming election (March 2, 2020) and without proper planning. In doing that, the Administration limited Netanyahu’s opportunity to capitalize on the plan for political gains.

who question US policy in the Middle East and the special relationship between Israel and the United States. Survey data show that young Democrats are the least supportive of Israel, and the more strongly one identifies as a Democrat, the weaker his or her support for Israel (Cavari and Freedman 2020).

Trump administration's strong policies have been met with somewhat of a counterresponse from Democrats, especially some presidential candidates, to the point where Democrats are divided. This is especially true when it comes to the idea of cutting aid to Israel, with some strongly supporting such a policy if Israel were to annex the West Bank—Senators Bernie Sanders and Elizabeth Warren—while others have lambasted such an idea and called it “bizarre”—former Vice President, Joe Biden (*Washington Post*, December 8, 2019).

The debate over Israel does not determine elections in the United States and will not draw fierce political battles. Yet, what used to be an easy one-sided political issue, is now a two-sided issue that has strong constituencies on both sides: Pro-Israeli evangelicals aligned with the Republican Party taking the lead on one side, and young non-religious and minority groups, aligned with the Democratic Party, who question Israel and the US policy in the region taking the lead on the other. In his actions, in his rhetoric, in his use of new media, President Trump frames the debate over Israel as a partisan divide. Prime Minister Netanyahu contributes to the polarization by siding with Trump and Republicans and publicly disavowing Democrats.

Time would tell how this would turn out. Like Netanyahu, who is facing three indictments for corruption charges, the United States is entering a heated presidential election in 2020. The results of these political processes can shuffle the partisan cards on both sides. This can translate into policy change under different administrations, which can eventually lead to a deterioration of United States–Israel relations.

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PART IV

The Trump Doctrine in Comparative
and Historical Perspective



The Trump, Bush, and Obama Doctrines: A Comparative Analysis

Robert S. Singh

Since 1776, the United States has episodically issued declaratory statements of power and purpose to the wider world. The principles informing US strategy have been articulated anew, first and foremost by presidents confronting nascent threats. Part prescription, part rationalization, these strategic scripts have navigated a path between fidelity to founding values and adaptation to an evolving international system: the application of guiding ideals to enduring interests in new conditions. The growth of American power has endowed these statements with substantive meaning and symbolic authority, such that presidential transitions are invariably accompanied by a search to identify and appraise the new administration's foreign policy "doctrine."

That quest is easily dismissed as a vogue for modish catchphrases (for example, Drezner [2011] affirmed the need for doctrines but latterly mocked their formula as an adjective plus noun, with an optional

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“neo” prefix for added sophistication [2016]). Doctrines offer unreliable guides to action, arising early or late in an administration (the “Clinton Doctrine” appeared in 1999). Moreover, they display no reliable relationship to success. Some presidents disassociated with doctrine proved statesmanlike custodians of US power (FDR, George H. W. Bush). Others with eponymous doctrines proved less impressive (Carter). But, as Latin American nations can attest of the Monroe Doctrine, these “meta-statements” of strategy deserve to be taken seriously.

Presidential doctrines matter. As expositions of principles, doctrines establish the interpretations that shape grand strategy. As declarations of intent, they signal to external audiences US resolve. As galvanizing visions, they alert a vast bureaucracy to the policies requiring execution. But their interpretation, implementation, and ultimate success are not solely under presidential control. Doctrines chart a direction that no president can guarantee securing, especially if the international system is in flux and the doctrine is itself controversial. Some define and outlive their authors; others are mere historical curiosities. A note of caution is therefore doubly warranted.

First, presidential doctrines offer no granular guides to substantive policies. Declaring comprehensive approaches invariably begs the question of their intellectual coherence. “Doctrines” are inexact terms of art rather than science. Moreover, their kinship to “doctrinaire”—imposing a doctrine without regard to practical considerations—renders them suspect in the eyes of practitioners, for whom pragmatism is the essence of effective statecraft in an amoral and anarchic international order.

Second, whether doctrines represent divergent frameworks—in design or execution—is debatable. Some scholars maintain that relative continuity characterizes US foreign policy, the discontinuities more a matter of style and emphasis than elemental breaks. America’s material interests remain constant and policy instruments limited, shaping an “a la carte multilateralism” (Lynch and Singh 2008: 43). Others discern pendulums, where periods of “maximalism” or overextension are followed by retrenchment (Sestanovich 2014). Politically, as MacDonald (2018) noted, impulses for change (presidential character, staff turnover, establishing a new “brand”) encounter countervailing forces of inertia (enduring national interests, risk aversion, bureaucratic politics, Congress, lobbies, and public opinion). As a result:

... every presidential election is something of a crossroads for American grand strategy. Every president comes in determined to put his stamp on the strategy and to shift it in one direction or another. And there have been shifts, some quite consequential, over the past 25 years. But the continuity across administrations has always been greater than any occupant of the Oval Office would want to admit, and the reasons are easy to explain. Regardless of campaign rhetoric, once responsible for actual policies, presidents have been “mugged by reality” and obliged to do more of what came before than they intended. (Feaver 2016)

No greater test confronts this thesis than the clash between the irresistible force of Donald Trump’s “America First” nationalism and the immovable object of the internationalist Washington establishment. But this chapter argues that, for all his disruption, important parallels connect the foreign policy doctrines of Trump, George W. Bush, and Barack Obama.

In form, these doctrines originated in a nexus of geo-politics, key events, and partisan imperatives. Their design exhibited a distinct view of America’s position within the global order and its conflictual or consensual character. Their interpretation was the subject of strong disagreement and implementation was heavily contingent on external influences and domestic politics.

In content, these doctrines offer contrasting interpretations of the prevailing international order and the US role therein. The fractured intellectual consensus following the Cold War’s end not only comprises rival realist, nationalist, and liberal approaches but also juxtaposes elite insiders against insurgents challenging “the Blob” (Rhodes 2018) and the “Washington playbook” (Goldberg 2016). At its core, this strategic debate contests narrow versus expansive conceptions of the US interest, the drivers of state behavior, the efficacy of military power, the role of values, and the utility of a rules-based integrative order in muting great power competition. But it also implicates rival conceptions of national identity, between an imperial America that remakes the world, a cosmopolitan America remade by the world, and a national America secure in its geographical location and domestic political culture (Huntington 2004).

A state’s position in the global order shapes its strategic parameters. Structure is influential but not determinative in leaders’ risk–reward calculus. America’s abiding dilemma remains that, “The United States, together with its allies, can either take up the burden of truly acting on its

own internationalist rhetoric, or it can keep the costs and risks of foreign policy to a minimum. It cannot do both” (Dueck 2006: 171). Rather than wholly divergent responses, it is possible instead to treat Bush as thesis (assuming the costly burden of an imperial America), Obama as antithesis (limiting burdens and minimizing costs to forge a cosmopolitan America), and Trump as synthesis (giving up “globalism,” preserving primacy, limiting costs but accepting risks to remain a national America). Whereas Bush’s strategy occurred from a unipolar primacy, his successors’ stewardship commenced from premises of relative decline and increasing imperatives for restraint. Obama accepted that power was ebbing from the West and diffusing while insisting US leadership was “indispensable.” Trump’s restraint rejected the constraints on US sovereignty required by multilateralism and the costs of a global policeman role. In design and application, Trump has departed the ideational moorings of traditional statecraft to embrace a nationalism more unapologetic in its dedication to prioritizing domestic American interests as he discerns them.

DOCTRINES AND THE EVOLVING INTERNATIONAL SYSTEM

As Michaels (2011: 468) noted, “presidential doctrines defy simple definition, even if they are a recognized phenomenon in political discourse.” Dumbrell (2002: 45) termed them a “codification of grand strategy” comprising a “statement of general principle, embodied in an explicit warning.” A set of first principles that establish ultimate ends, priorities, and tasks, to forewarn others, doctrines are deliberate attempts to elaborate strategy, identifiable through presidential speeches and key administration documents.

More contingent is their status as strategic blueprints or interludes. The Monroe and Truman doctrines proved outliers as enduring templates that outlived their namesakes. Although Secretary of State John Kerry declared Monroe’s demise in 2013, six years later John Bolton—Trump’s third national security adviser—reasserted it was “alive and well” (Filkins 2019: 45) on Venezuela, warning, “This is our hemisphere. It’s not where the Russians ought to be interfering” (Gibbs 2019). The Truman Doctrine established containment to shape Cold War strategy and sustain a stable bipolarity. By contrast, post-Cold War doctrines have been crafted absent consensus on global order. Some maintained that behind closed doors “the elites who make national security policy speak mostly the language of power, not that of principle, and the US acts in the international

system according to the dictates of realist logic” (Mearsheimer 2001: 25)—only to then spend two decades charting America’s ill-conceived pursuit of “liberal hegemony” (Mearsheimer 2018). Others defend the record as “pretty successful” (Brands 2018a: 1–24). Equally, while some herald multipolarity and claim “America’s unipolar moment has passed as quickly as it appeared at the end of the cold war” (Stephens 2019), others depict a system that remains essentially unipolar (Beckley 2018; Brooks and Wohlforth 2016).

Doctrines are necessarily hybrids: strategic gambles on the shifting parameters of global order yet conservative devices to preserve what is valuable. If their necessity for such a powerful state seems well-established, their utility is nonetheless debatable. Congress, through the Goldwater-Nicholas Department of Defense Reorganization Act (1986), mandates publication of a “National Security Strategy of the United States” detailing “the worldwide interests, goals, and objectives of the United States that are vital to the national security of the United States” and the “uses of the political, economic, military, and other elements of the national power of the United States to protect or promote the interests and achieve the goals and objectives.” Although not synonymous with doctrine, the NSS is its pre-eminent formal expression. In theory, it translates US interests into priorities and policies. In practice, many claim NSS documents are not strategies as traditionally understood. Walt (2009), for example, contended that the NSS often “conforms to an idealized view of what the policy process should be” and does not guide policy. Others defend the NSS on process grounds as developing an “internal consensus” among disparate government agencies (Snider 1995: 5–6). The three most recent examples offer a basis for confirming doctrines more as compasses than road maps, charting broad directions, not detailed paths.

THE BUSH DOCTRINE

Prior to 2017, the Bush Doctrine was the most controversial expression of American grand strategy. Amid extensive and mostly negative academic commentary, perhaps only four aspects are agreed upon: it originated in the crisis event of the terrorist attacks of September 11, 2001; it elevated foreign policy to pre-eminent importance and changed Bush’s approach; it established the Middle East as a priority region; and its flawed implementation failed to achieve the sweeping ambition of its design.

Given form and substance in several speeches—the State of the Union and West Point in 2002, and Second Inaugural—and, especially, the NSS of 2002 (and 2006), the Doctrine established the inter-linked precepts underpinning assertive internationalism. Bush accepted the realist premise that global order is a function of the balance of power. But he also sought to reframe that balance in a direction favorable to democracies by encouraging reform and regime change. In the terminology of Nau (2013), Bush was a conservative internationalist, sharing with liberal internationalists a “commitment to spread freedom abroad and move beyond the balance of power to a world of democracies” (25) but departing in his embrace of the balance of power over international institutions as the means to that end. But marrying Wilsonian ideals to realist means, the “performance never lived up to the promises” (Brands 2014: 188). Its Jacksonian elements—especially in the first term—nonetheless anticipated the later, more emphatically nationalist, Trump.

Origins

The Economist (2000) identified a “Bush Doctrine” prior even to the administration taking office, claiming that it would pursue a “more stand offish, unilateral” rather than “isolationist” approach. Bush campaigned in 2000 as a domestic policy president, opposing Clinton-Gore “nation-building” (a euphemism for over-use of the US military for humanitarian interventionism in Somalia, Bosnia, Haiti, and Kosovo), rejecting soft-headed multilateralism, emphasizing great power relations, and favoring continued containment of Iraq, Iran, and North Korea. As Burns (2019: 152) noted, “Restraint and realism seemed to be the dominant guideposts, just as they were for Bush 41.”

9/11 transformed the priority accorded foreign policy and its content. From a premise of relative retrenchment and a narrower definition of the national interest, the public square instead became dominated by questions of how far and fast to lean forward in what the NSS 2002 termed a “distinctly American internationalism that reflects the union of our values and our national interests.” Like the Eisenhower and Carter Doctrines, the Bush Doctrine was a direct response to immediate threats. But its global rather than regional focus, ideological as well as military dimension, and generational time frame more resembled the Truman Doctrine, whose genesis informed the thinking of key NSS architects Condoleezza Rice and Philip Zelikow. Its central construct of a “war on terror” to

curtail the capacity of terrorists to attack the United States—especially with weapons of mass destruction—aimed to defeat terrorism of “global reach,” a definition offered four times in the NSS 2002 and reiterated in the NSS 2006.

The Bush Doctrine’s genesis relied on contingent factors beyond 9/11: the structural unipolarity that undergirded US strength at the beginning of the 2000s; and the hawkish nationalists, primacists, and neo-conservatives in the Republican coalition. Without the former, the capacity to wage a global project of assertive internationalism would have been impossible. Without the latter, the willingness to undertake a preventive war in Iraq would have been far weaker. Bush’s approach exhibited a “vindicationist” rather than “exemplarist” version of American nationalism (McCartney 2004) that embraced democratic peace theory and held as feasible reshaping the global order in a more liberalizing, modernizing image, with the Middle East its focus.¹ Moreover, the NSS 2002 minimized the salience of great power competition, claiming that “America is now threatened less by conquering states than we are by failing ones.”

Status and Scope

Although it held out the prospect of a more cooperative future, the Bush Doctrine’s view of international order was essentially conflictual, albeit that this was less centered on great power rivalry than a clash between democratic and authoritarian regimes. Bush entered the White House with America enjoying unprecedented “peace and prosperity.” 9/11 shattered the sense of a nation at the apex of its power in a stable unipolar order. The Doctrine therefore arose in a unique context, where there was minimal sense of a United States in “decline” but maximal sense of vulnerability and, as a result, a revived sense of American nationalism. The assertion that the United States was targeted for its values, not its foreign policies, was vividly expressed in the NSS 2002 goal, to promote “a balance of power that favors freedom.” This concise but controversial formula married the traditional realist inclinations of Bush’s so-called “Vulcans”—unsentimental about international institutions—with a newly

¹“Exemplarism” is the “desire to stand apart from the world and serve merely as a model of social and political possibility” while “vindicationism is the impulse to change the world to make it look and act more like the United States” (McCartney 2004: 401).

found appreciation of liberal ideals: the internal character of regimes shapes their external behavior. That understanding reached its apogee in the second inaugural (2005), with Bush's Kennedy-esque declaration that: "It is the policy of the US to seek and support the growth of democratic movements and institutions in every nation and culture, with the ultimate goal of ending tyranny in our world." Unlike Bush 41, Bush 43 was never accused of a deficit of vision.

Analysts differed on the precise number and weighting to be accorded the key doctrinal principles. Some accounts highlighted four aspects: preventive (or pre-emptive) war; confronting the nexus of weapons of mass destruction and catastrophic terrorism; "regime change" for "rogue" or outlier states; and democracy promotion (Singh 2006). To Renshon and Suedfeld (2007), five themes underscored the Bush approach: American pre-eminence; assertive realism; equivocal alliances; selective multilateralism; and democratic transformation. Ironically, it was the military dimension that excited most concern and that ultimately had greatest longevity. Although global in scope, the Doctrine's practical application was focused on the Middle East.

Substance and Interpretation

9/11 accelerated certain pre-existing Bush tendencies, particularly the willingness to accept unilateralism as the price of leadership. What altered was the insertion of an ostentatiously idealistic strain to the interests-based power politics. Bush's approach was widely decried by academics as unsustainable (Jervis 2005) and attracted scathing criticism from realists (who regarded it as too ambitious and idealistic) and liberal internationalists (who disdained its militarism and interventionism). The protracted exchanges continue with Iraq as the fulcrum as to which IR school is most culpable in the invasion. But, while some viewed Bush as a foreign policy "revolution" (Daalder and Lindsay 2003), as Dueck (2010: 293) noted, "The right wing of the Republican Party has never been particularly attracted to what IR scholars call 'realism.' On the contrary, the constant touchstone for GOP conservatives has been an intense American nationalism that is in many ways quite idealistic."

Some scholars offered relatively empathetic interpretations (Renshon 2010; Kaufman 2007; Lynch and Singh 2008). Their defense argued—*inter alia*—that the discontinuity with prior traditions was more limited than often allowed, the elevation of the preventive war option was a

supplement rather than a replacement to deterrence, and support for “stable” authoritarian regimes was precisely what had generated anti-American political violence. Much of the critique of unilateralism also failed to address the question of how much an American president can allow US security to be outsourced to, and vetoed by, the UN Security Council, among others. Upholding and adhering to international law sounds uplifting in the abstract but the role of enforcement falls to powers willing and able to exercise coercive threats—and if allies fail to support such enforcement, or if Washington itself declines to do so (as Obama so demurred after chemical weapons attacks by the Assad regime on its own citizens in 2013), then respect for international law is itself likely to erode.

In retrospect, some criticisms—that the Bush Doctrine rendered America “alone” (Halper and Clarke 2004) or “unbound” (Daalder and Lindsay 2003)—have aged less well, especially in the context of a Trump presidency that has faced even sharper criticisms of strategic loneliness. As Harris (2018–2019: 628–629) notes, while both Bush and Trump shared an inclination to work around multilateral institutions if national security was at stake, the former genuinely believed in US leadership, alliances, values, and the importance of regime type to external conduct, no matter how ineffective international institutions or laws might prove. Precisely these convictions attracted the ire of many classical and neo-realists for whom Bush’s muscular Wilsonianism was the apogee of misguided liberalism.

At the same time, glib invocation of the term “neo-conservative” as a pejorative to describe Bush obscured more than it revealed. The administration’s unilateral, sovereigntist, and primacist preferences were products of a conservative nationalism that pre-dated 9/11 and that, to skeptics, called into question the idealistic elements in neo-conservatism itself. Yet critics could not have it both ways, charging that US support for democracy was a cynical sham while ignoring the immense blood and treasure expended on leaving behind democracies rather than “friendly” dictatorships in Kabul and Baghdad.

Implementation and Results

The Doctrine’s intellectual coherence was widely recognized but its implementation had few defenders. Supporters cited substantive accomplishments: homeland security; the Proliferation Security Initiative, the

abandonment by Libya of its WMD programs, Syria's withdrawal from Lebanon, widespread counter-terrorism cooperation and important trade deals with South Korea and Colombia. The opening to India was perhaps the most important achievement of an administration not feted for its diplomatic finesse. But even those exploring "the case for Bush revisionism" conceded its limits (Brands and Feaver 2017).

In execution, if not necessarily design, the balance of the ledger was negative. Expansive and expensive, Bush left office with America's "soft power" in tatters amid a general sense of a bold but failed grand strategy. As Brands (2014: 181) notes, not only did festering problems remain—from nascent nuclear threats in Iran and North Korea to climate change, the Israel-Palestinian conflict and China—but "there was a widespread sense—both at home and abroad—that the United States was in decline and that American hegemony was not what it had only recently been." By an excessive focus on terrorism, Bush "distorted, rather than rationalized, the use of American power" (182) and undermined the primacy he strove to sustain. The US retained far more economic, diplomatic, military and ideological influence than any other state in 2009, but US power had eroded relative to other powers, further and faster than a more careful husbanding of resources might have ensured.

Although Bush's team was experienced and tested, implementation was almost the opposite of the accomplished team that managed the Cold War's end under Bush 41. Policymaking was riven by endemic internal conflict, most notably between Cheney and Rumsfeld, on one side, and the less hawkish Colin Powell (whose own eponymous doctrine was foolishly rejected in advance of the Iraq war). Rice's arbiter role as NSA was not one that, in Bush's first term, she discharged well. Not only did these divisions hamper war planning—with Rumsfeld dismissive of military requests for far more troops—and hinder "nation-building" but they also generated intra- and inter-party tensions over the broader "war on terror" strategy and tactics, from enemy detainees' detention at Guantanamo Bay, extraordinary rendition, use of enhanced interrogation techniques, and prisoner abuse at Abu Ghraib.

What unified most critics was the relative failure of the Iraq War and occupation. As Dueck (2010: 2) noted, if the "neoconservative hijack" thesis about Bush "overstates the policy impact of public intellectuals, as well as the philosophical break between Bush and earlier Republicans," the "tactical errors" explanation of Iraq underestimated the gravity of early errors. Although the "surge" and Sunni awakening from 2007

together helped to stabilize Iraq by the end of Bush's two terms, the Iraq and Afghanistan interventions demonstrated the limits even to powerful states. Keeping ends and means aligned, eschewing rosy assumptions, reconciling multiple goals, factoring in unintended consequences and unexpected obstacles all proved beyond the administration's competence, whatever the abstract coherence of the Bush Doctrine.

Many scholars were therefore adamant that its key precepts would be abandoned after Bush. That, in retrospect, was premature. No administration would abandon the right to pre-emptive or preventive war, a reality that became vividly apparent when Trump declared to the UN General Assembly in 2017 that the United States would, if necessary, "totally destroy" North Korea (White House 2017b). Similarly, much criticism of the "war on terror" disputed the legitimacy of a military rather than law enforcement, intelligence-led approach and challenged its global sustainability. Yet if subsequently the tactics evolved and rhetoric altered to omit mention of a "war," the strategic premise informing US counter-terrorism remained constant across post-2001 administrations: to eliminate threats before they could strike the homeland by denying terrorist groups a physical haven.

The United States Institute for Peace (2019) issued a report that argued that the immense US counter-terrorism effort, while necessary, had proven insufficient and, in costs, ineffective. The analysis concluded that since 9/11, the response had taken 10,000 American lives, injured 50,000 others, and cost \$5.9 trillion. "Unsustainable" and ineffective, with ISIS's global network larger than al-Qaeda ever managed, such assessments echoed earlier critiques that, as Leffler (2004: 28) put it, "Only when ends are reconciled with means can moral clarity and military power add up to a winning strategy."

But counter-terrorism was more than a Pyrrhic success. Although its centrality perhaps crowded out the necessary attention that China's rise and Russia's revanchist ambitions merited, neither its relative success in protecting the homeland nor its generational character were invalidated. China's ascent—the result of explosive economic growth—was not within Washington's power to halt, even if Beijing's intellectual property theft, cyber-espionage, currency manipulation, and more were matters better confronted earlier than two decades later. Nor—as Bush's successors would discover—was Putin's ambition for Moscow a matter that greater accommodation could easily pacify. Moreover, criticism of militarism and opportunity costs seemed misplaced: if the extensive US imprint was

generating terrorists, their success at striking the homeland was minimal in a way few on 9/11 could have safely anticipated. Assumptions that Washington could—absent Iraq—have brought peace to Israel and the Palestinians, reintegrated Iran and North Korea into the community of nations, and reversed global warming were proved false by subsequent administrations. No matter how much “soft power” was squandered—from necessity more than choice—Bush’s successors would refine but retain the reorganized national security apparatus and legal architecture.

Perhaps the most telling repudiation of the Bush Doctrine was delivered by the president himself. Beyond Iraq, if a signal failure shaped subsequent domestic and geo-politics, it was democracy promotion. In policy terms, the substantive push largely ended with Hamas’ coming to power in Gaza in 2006. By then, most Bush officials’ enthusiasm for regime change was exhausted. When pressed by Israel to directly attack a North Korean-built nuclear facility in Syria, Bush demurred. After its former UN Ambassador described the easing of North Korean sanctions as a sign of “total intellectual collapse” the president declared, “I don’t consider John Bolton credible” (Filkins 2019: 37). The reluctant conclusion that, for all their faults, “friendly” authoritarian regimes offered more reliable partners than failed states or regimes mired in civil war was one that Bush’s successors would share with varying degrees of ambivalence and enthusiasm. Because critics focused on the first term rather than its entirety, Bush’s departure did not represent the end of a revolutionary period in US foreign relations. What was abandoned with greatest alacrity thereafter was neither the military nor the primacist dimensions but assertive ambitions for democratic transformation.

THE OBAMA DOCTRINE

Like his predecessor, Obama used a series of landmark addresses to outline his doctrine, at Cairo, Prague, Oslo (accepting the Nobel Prize for Peace) and West Point in December 2009. The 44th president’s worldview was a complex, ambiguous matter (Bentley and Holland 2017). Where even critics agreed a Bush Doctrine existed, the Obama Doctrine proved more elusive, lacking a dominant theme of hegemony, engagement, restraint, neo-conservatism, neorealism, or liberal institutionalism. For some, the doctrine meant “leading from behind” (Lizza 2011), “engagement” (Singh 2012, 2016) or selectively confronting or concealing coercion against enemies (Sanger 2013). For others, Obama pursued an “implicit

grand strategy” of “overarching American retrenchment and accommodation internationally, in large part to allow the president to focus on securing liberal policy legacies at home” (Dueck 2015: 2). To most, the Obama Doctrine did not put others on notice so much as offer reassurance about a more benign United States whose idealism assumed a less militarist cast as he managed its decline. But to leftist critics who welcomed humility in place of hubris, the president nonetheless ensured that “hegemony is still a useful description of America’s place in the world” (Walzer 2018: 85).

Origins

Obama, uniquely among US presidents, entered office inheriting two wars and the (then) worst economic threat since the 1930s. But, unlike its predecessor, the Obama Doctrine was not a response to an immediate security threat. The dominant influences were the Iraq occupation and Great Recession, mandating that the president, as he declared at West Point, would not set goals “that go beyond our responsibility, our means or our interests” and that the United States should “live within its means.” Globalization had enabled other powers to rise but complicated management of international order. Even if strategic goals remained unaltered, new tactics were necessary and more circumspect leadership incumbent on a “frugal superpower.” To repent its Bush-era sins and detoxify America’s image, Washington would embrace engagement—“the active participation of the United States in relationships beyond our borders,” as the NSS 2010 put it. The president explained: “The doctrine is: We will engage, but we preserve all our capabilities” (Friedman 2015). Obama’s approach rejected vindicationism for exemplarism, marrying liberal internationalism, exceptionalism and moral suasion to a Jeffersonian restraint and prudential stress on the limits of power.

Partisan imperatives pulled Obama back where they had pushed Bush into assertion. Obama’s “retrenchment” strategy “aimed at scaling back commitments and reducing costs” as strong partisan incentives prioritized domestic needs (Trubowitz 2011: 145–148). To invoke Nau (2013) again, Obama was a liberal internationalist whose instinctive liberalism was tempered by recognition of a balance of power less favorable than his predecessor had inherited. Or, as Obama averred, “The American

people are idealists ... but their leaders have to be realistic and hard-headed” (Rhodes 2018: 78). In 2007, Obama told the Chicago Council on Global Affairs he would reject a “foreign policy based on a flawed ideology” arguing, “We must neither retreat from the world nor try to bully it into submission – we must lead the world, by deed and example” and asserting that “the position of ‘leader of the free world’ [remained] open” (Zeleny 2007). He would repeat that same assertion about Trump after the November 2016 election result.

Status and Scope

Obama was not naïve about the existence of conflictual forces, but his worldview was premised on a fundamentally cooperative vision of international politics. This rejected civilizational clashes and great power competition as archaic concepts increasingly irrelevant in a system of international institutions, law, and multilateral action to address hard and soft security challenges that all states and peoples shared. Although Obama did not subscribe publicly to the premise of US decline, the periodic but palpable sense of limits was one he shared. Similarly, while he affirmed his belief in American exceptionalism, his response suggested that its underlying material—if not ideational—foundations were increasingly fragile. By winding down Bush’s overly militarized approach, Obama sought to render 911 a phone number rather than a date of infamy once again. A macro policy of engagement eschewing micromanaged interventions could facilitate “mutual respect” abroad and “nation-building at home” (one-quarter of the NSS 2010 addressed domestic, not international, concerns).

The president believed the United States under Bush had acted against its basic values around the world. Separating core and peripheral interests was vital to restoring balance to policy and esteem for US leadership. “Strategic patience”—faith that structural trends were shaping international geo-politics in America’s image and to her benefit—recommended staying on the right side of the arc of history to forcing its liberalizing pace and direction. Obama thus rejected assertive realism as too expensive and ineffective; accepted that alliances, however equivocal, remained integral, not incidental, to US power projection; embraced a less selective multilateralism to restore soft power and share burdens; and relegated democratic transformation to the realm of exhortation and case-by-case support. Emblematic of a tendency to treat aspiration as reality, where

the NSS 2002 cast great powers as on the same side opposing terror, the NSS 2010 made almost no mention of great power competition, instead embracing a global transformation based on convergence and collective action addressing shared challenges.

Substance and Interpretation

Obama retained the national security structure that he inherited from Bush. The apparatus that progressives castigated—from rendition to electronic eavesdropping—largely remained in place. The 44th president was clear in identifying continuing threats from Islamist terrorism. As Harris (2018–2019) notes, while Obama’s “instincts” were to eschew transformative foreign policies for domestic renewal, he found it “expedient” to increase drone strikes and the US presence in Afghanistan (while setting a date for withdrawal), join France and the UK to pursue regime change in Libya, reverse his withdrawal of US troops from Iraq to confront ISIS, arm anti-Assad forces in Syria, and reassure East Asian allies to hedge against Beijing. To that extent, although Obama’s rhetoric minimized the militarized dimensions of primacy, he was a “security-seeking internationalist” like his predecessors (2018–2019: 617). As one Obama critic conceded:

Obama, despite campaigning on a hyperbolic critique of Bush’s foreign policy, and despite taking great pains to talk about his policies in a different way, ended up largely continuing Bush’s second term approach to the global war on terror, continuing Bush’s Asia strategy (albeit rebranding it as the “pivot”), continuing Bush’s emphasis on development aid, especially in sub-Saharan Africa, continuing Bush’s approach to action-oriented multilateralism, and so on. (Feaver 2016)

Unsurprisingly, Obama had many more academic defenders than either his predecessor or successor. Among them, Drezner (2011: 58) saw Obama asserting “influence and ideals across the globe when challenged by other countries, reassuring allies and signalling resolve to rivals.” Rose (2015: 7) defended retrenchment as preserving the liberal international system: “The administration has not abandoned traditional US grand strategy; it has tried to rescue it from his predecessor’s mismanagement. Obama is prepared to save the core of the liberal order – but to do so, he is willing to sacrifice the periphery, both functional and regional.”

Supporters rejected charges of naivety, indecision, and excess caution, claiming that Obama was content to “bend history” (Indyk et al. 2012) and play the “long game” (Chollet 2016).

Others were less sanguine. Dueck (2015) argued that if retrenchment was to preserve the US global position and improve relations with hitherto hostile rivals, it had not only failed but created power vacuums filled by other state and non-state actors. Others echoed the critique that Obama ultimately weakened the United States (Kaufman 2016) and adhered “to a ‘post-American’ conception of world order – one in which American primacy is steadily but inexorably ebbing, with the US President’s task being not to stem and reverse, but rather to gracefully manage, that obvious and inevitable decline” (Singh 2012: 4). The infelicitous but apt characterization of “leading from behind” encapsulated an approach that emboldened US adversaries to greater risk tolerance. As Kissinger noted:

Since [the Administration] believes as well that the global trends are moving in a direction favorable to our values, the overwhelming strategic obligation of the United States becomes to avoid getting in the way of the inevitable ... [But] his vision of the arc of history produces a ... passive policy ... [He prides] himself most on the things he prevented from happening ... Another view of statesmanship might focus to a greater extent on shaping history rather than avoiding getting it its way. (Goldberg 2016)

To some, Obama’s approach endangered US primacy. As Löffmann (2019: 108) put it, the “simultaneous but contradictory” influence of rival ideas of hegemony (or “deep engagement”) and restraint (“offshore balancing”) yielded a peculiar hybrid of “hegemonic restraint”:

This hybridity and multidimensionality of the Obama Doctrine, which linked the more limited use of American military power and America’s enduring status as the world’s “indispensable nation,” at the same time produced sustained criticisms among both realist and liberal foreign policy experts that attacked Obama’s strategic incoherence. Obama, then, lacked an adequate and consistent grand strategy to either maintain American world leadership or finally depart from the misguided path of primacy; he neither leaned forward nor did he finally pull back.

Implementation and Results

Although Obama's "team of rivals" worked more successfully together than had Bush's (a low bar), tensions between different generations, and between realists and liberal internationalists, contributed to the dissonance that admirers saw as pragmatism and detractors as incoherence. Indyk et al. (2012: 30–31) assessed that, "Obama has been a progressive where possible but a pragmatist when necessary ... Judged by the standard of protecting American interests, Obama's foreign policy so far has worked out quite well; judged by the standard of fulfilling his vision of a new global order, it remains very much a work in progress." Nonetheless, Obama claimed important policy changes: the recovery of international respect for the United States; the "end" of two unpopular wars; diplomatic openings to Myanmar, Cuba, and Iran, the latter cemented by the landmark nuclear deal (the Joint Comprehensive Plan of Action of 2015); effective counter-terrorism; the Paris climate accords of 2015; the New START 2010 arms control treaty with Russia; stable relations with China; and reconfiguring US power to a new era beyond the "unipolar moment."

Less charitably, Mandelbaum (2016: 369) emphasised continuity:

Like Clinton and Bush, Obama aspired to make the world a better place for Americans and others. As his instrument for doing so, however, he relied not on the use of American military force but rather on the force of his own personality, which, he believed upon entering office, could improve relations between the United States and other countries. This strategy proved less costly than the policies of his two immediate predecessors but no more successful.

Jarvis and Lister (2017: 212–214) noted broad agreement that a gap existed between the administration's ambitious goals and incremental approach. Obama employed the rhetoric of indispensability to defend the liberal order, pursued cooperative engagement with former enemies—Iran, Cuba—and favored military restraint in Syria, Ukraine, and elsewhere (Libya and the Islamic State threat proved partial exceptions). Such a path set him apart from conservative primacists and those liberal internationalists—not least Hillary Clinton—who believed in unipolar stability, military primacy, and global security.

Obama summarized this approach as "don't do stupid shit" (Goldberg 2016), a "do no harm" conviction that underreach was preferable

to overreach. But as a theoretical construct it proved difficult to articulate as a coherent philosophy. The collapse of state authority across much of the Arab Middle East left unanswered the question of US intervention and the relative merit and urgency of encouraging democratization, liberalization, and modernization. All that was clear was that the region's geo-politics inhibited an Asia-centric strategy and dragged Washington back into the maelstrom. Some viewed the failure to intervene in Syria as a "geopolitical Chernobyl" as costly as the Bush intervention in Iraq, the former's humanitarian tragedy contributing to destabilization in Europe. In place of Bush's conviction that "The best hope for peace in our world is the expansion of freedom in all the world," former NATO Secretary-General, Anders Fogh Rasmussen, identified "one of the key weaknesses" in Obama's administration as a marked "inclination toward moral and cultural relativism" (2016: 211). That helped to restore "soft power" from the trough in which Bush left it. But how far global popularity translates into substantive influence, or geo-political capital, remained unclear.

Obama acted as a transitional rather than transformative figure. Cognisant of an increasingly decentered global order, reconfiguring the US role and accepting lesser influence—fewer resources, limited ambitions, more restricted deployments of military power—he nonetheless sought to reaffirm the capacity of Washington to adapt to a new form of diminished primacy in a world evolving inexorably toward an era of institutionalized collaboration, enhanced multilateralism, and a multi-partner rather than multipolar system. But his support for the goals of the US-led order was matched to a disinclination toward the risks and costs of geo-political management. Obama placed faith in the maturation of humanity and advance of international law, cast doubt on the reputational importance of US credibility (Harvey and Milton 2016), and dismissed Russian and Chinese revisionism as aberrant "19th century behavior" (as John Kerry termed it) rather than representative of great power rivalry in the twenty-first century. The effort to postpone a post-American order ironically hastened its arrival while further fracturing the domestic consensus underpinning US strategy, ultimately leading to the reversal of Obama's main foreign policy achievements. Few more vivid contrasts could have succeeded "no drama" Obama than Trump's perpetual "un-Obama" show. Yet their shared doubts about traditional statecraft offered a (dysfunctional) family resemblance.

THE TRUMP DOCTRINE

Trump's foreign policy was set out in several 2017 addresses from his Inauguration through Saudi Arabia, Poland, and the UN. While, unlike his predecessors, no immediate crisis animated the approach, urgency accompanied the promise of change. Most noteworthy was the emphatic repudiation of internationalism and the premises that expansive engagement and multiple alliances assist US security and prosperity.

Identifying a Doctrine proved problematic. Peter Baker (2017) even echoed descriptions of Obama: "To the extent that a Trump Doctrine is emerging, it seems to be this: don't get roped in by doctrine." But no Obama official would have ventured the concise summary of a senior Trump White House staffer: "The Trump Doctrine is 'We're America, Bitch.' That's the Trump Doctrine" (Goldberg 2018). As Goldberg noted:

Many of Donald Trump's critics find it difficult to ascribe to a president they consider to be both subliterate and historically insensate a foreign-policy doctrine that approaches coherence. A Trump Doctrine would require evidence of Trump Thought, and proof of such thinking, the argument goes, is scant. This view is informed in part by feelings of condescension, but it is not meritless ... Unlike Obama, Trump possesses no ability to explain anything resembling a foreign-policy philosophy. But this does not mean that he is without ideas.

Those ideas confirmed Trump as no internationalist. His commitment to spread freedom abroad as the optimal safeguard for US security is minimal. But nor is he an isolationist seeking to withdraw from the world. Rather, he wishes to engage exclusively on American terms. Trump professes "militant nationalism": more exemplarist than vindicationist, with selective alliances under US control paying their fair share, using force to punish enemies but not for "good governance." This approach is less alien to conservative thinking than redolent of a hawkish, intense nationalism "comfortable with the use of force by the United States in world affairs, committed to building strong national defences, determined to maintain a free hand for the United States internationally, and relatively unyielding toward potential foreign adversaries" (Dueck 2010: 2). Moreover, while Trump spoke anything but softly while carrying a big stick,

he exhibited a faith in carrots: an openness to negotiation with adversaries (Kim-Jong Un, the Taliban, even Iran)—the art of the international deal—that defied easy caricatures of ideological dogmatism.

Origins

Trump won the Republican Party nomination and general election partly through a heretical foreign affairs stance, opposed by the donor class and Washington establishment. Although its style drew their critical ire, Trump's insurgency chimed with realists—for whom primacy was the permissive structural condition for “liberal hegemony” but whose agency relied on “a dysfunctional caste of privileged insiders who are frequently disdainful of alternative perspectives and insulated both professionally and personally from the consequences of the policies they promote” (Walt 2018: 95). Trump's belief that the architecture of institutions, treaties, and alliances no longer advantaged Americans had deep roots. In contrast to Obama, Schweller (2018: 22) claimed that, “For decades, American citizens, in stark contrast to their leaders, have been more realist than liberal in their foreign policy orientation. There is now sufficient compulsion in the US' external environment to demand a more narrowly self-interested foreign policy.” In 1994, for example, 80% of Republicans and 76% of Democrats agreed that other nations “often take unfair advantage of the US.” Only in 2018 did a partisan gulf arise, when 28% of Democrats but 80% of Republicans concurred (Pew 2018).

Trump's North Star had long been clear: the United States must secure material benefits commensurate to its global role through increased burden-sharing by allies and renegotiated trade deals (Laderman and Simms 2017). A narrowly defined national interest relegates human rights and democracy promotion to second-order concerns that apply to adversaries (Cuba, Venezuela, Iran), not “frenemies” (Saudi Arabia, Egypt). Regime change is unworthy of American blood or treasure but punitive actions that might encourage the overthrow of others is selectively feasible (Iran and Venezuela, not North Korea).

Status and Scope

Trump's doctrine is global but based on a fundamentally conflictual view of international order that encompasses allies as well and adversaries. In this, cooperation is possible from overlapping interests rather than shared

ideals. The great power rivalry epitomized by China's resurgence also has an unmistakeable civilizational dimension. Unlike Bush, Trump begins from a premise of US decline shared with Obama, but one authored as much by mistaken US policies as structural shifts. Adamant about avoiding quagmires, Trump is unusual—arguably, unique—in delinking American nationalism and exceptionalism.

Crafted through lengthy interagency consultations lead by H. R. McMaster and Nadia Schadlow, the NSS released on December 18, 2017 (White House 2017a) was organized around four “pillars” to: protect the American people; promote American prosperity; promote security; and promote American influence abroad. To these ends, it retained thematic priorities from prior administrations: combating threats from weapons of mass destruction, promoting US global leadership, and advancing prosperity. It differed in emphasizing homeland security and economic growth, asserting the United States would no longer “impose [its] values on others” (p. 37) but defend its sovereignty “without apology” (p. 4) and vowing to compete more effectively in a security environment with adversaries blurring the distinction between war and peace (p. 28). The NSS also warned of enforcement actions against nations violating rules of “fair and free market principles” (p. 19).

Ten themes were prominent: a competitive global environment exists; the United States has every right to pursue its interests in this context; revived competitiveness is the basis for US power; rebalanced alliances should include increased burden-sharing and commercial reciprocity; border control and homeland security are essential; the United States has energy dominance; adversaries, including rogue states and major competitors, require pushback; great power rivalry can co-exist with regional stability and cooperation; rebuilding the military is imperative; and jihadist terrorists require elimination (Dueck 2018). Solid but unexceptional, McMaster defined Trumpism as “pragmatic realism”: “The consensus view has been that engagement overseas is an unmitigated good, regardless of the circumstances ... But there are problems that are maybe both intractable and of marginal interest to the American people, that do not justify investments of blood and treasure” (Landler 2017).

Such a view was especially applicable to the Middle East. While rejecting its predecessors (“neither aspirations for democratic transformation nor disengagement” worked), Trump's goals were similar: “The US seeks a Middle East that is not a safe haven or breeding ground for jihadist terrorists, nor dominated by any power hostile to the US

[namely Iran], and that contributes to a stable global energy market.” When Trump declared in Riyadh that he was not “here to lecture” the Saudis on human rights, he echoed Obama’s rejection of the Bush “freedom agenda.” But in organizing strategy around revived great power competition, this embraced a different Huntington script: unlike Bush, the dominant civilizational clash was with China.

Like Obama’s NSS (2010), considerable space made explicit the economic foundation of geo-political strength: homeland security, economic growth, and national security are more fundamentally inter-related than prior administrations believed. The NSS attempted to parse “America First” in ways that reassured while not refuting the president. The “principled” qualification to “realism” affirmed that, “We recognize the invaluable advantages that our strong relationships with allies and partners deliver” and “Our America First foreign policy celebrates America’s influence in the world as a positive force that can help set the conditions for peace and prosperity and for developing successful societies.” Such affirmations were notable only because Trump’s rhetoric was otherwise so unconventional. But the NSS 2017 was the most pessimistic iteration since the NSS 2002, reviving a deeply conflictual conception of geo-politics from its Obama era recession, albeit in diplomatic prose more nuanced than the president’s more unembellished discourse.

Substance and Interpretation

To some, the Trump Doctrine offered an unexpectedly coherent strategy (Douthart 2019), its NSS “well within the bipartisan mainstream of American foreign policy” (Feaver 2017). Mead (2017) saw foreign policy returning “back to earth” by abandoning a “gassy globalism” in which US leadership on every international issue was unsustainable. Schweller (2018: 143) concurred with the clear-eyed corrective remedy: “With the American era nearing an end, Washington must pursue a new grand strategy to deal with the new situation. Trump’s brand of realism offers just such a strategy.” A defense by Michael Anton (2019) unintentionally echoed the Obama era theme of “hybridity”:

the fact that Trump is not a neoconservative or a paleoconservative, neither a traditional realist nor a liberal internationalist, has caused endless confusion. The same goes for the fact that he has no inborn inclination to isolationism or interventionism, and he is not simply a dove or a hawk.

His foreign policy doesn't easily fit into any of these categories, though it draws from all of them.

More critical appraisals assumed two forms. One simply denied that any logic existed. Alterman termed Trump "instinctual and not rational," (DeYoung 2017), Wolf (2017) depicted him as "status-driven" (Wolf 2017) and Cohen (2017) claimed the administration had "no national security strategy. It has outbursts." Larison (2019) echoed "insider" accounts:

There is a hodgepodge of competing influences and factions in the Trump administration and depending on which ones happen to be ascendant on certain issues the capricious president will go this way or that without any pretense of consistency or overall strategy. The policy either ends up as a complete giveaway to the ideologues that obsess over a particular issue (e.g., almost anything related to Israel or Iran), or it becomes a confusing back-and-forth between opposing positions. So-called "principled realism" is as unprincipled as the president and as divorced from reality as the reality television character.

Others discerned but decried a strategic purpose. Trump heralded strategic insolvency, "after credibility" (Yarhi-Milo 2018). Brands and Edel (2019: 115–116) lamented Trump's lack of a "tragic sensibility" that the United States and world had "avoided disaster and made such astounding gains over the past seven decades substantially because of the burdens that Washington has carried, and that America has prospered enormously by helping other nations to prosper." For Daalder and Lindsay (2018), Trump had "abdicated" leadership, leaving a vacuum. Zakaria (2019) saw a Cheney-esque worldview—"aggressive, unilateral and militant"—while, rather differently, Cheney himself castigated Vice-President Pence that "we have an administration that looks a lot more like Barack Obama than Ronald Reagan" (Costa and Parker 2019). One sober academic analysis even claimed that Trump had "expunged the American from American foreign policy" (Barnett 2018: 12).

Implementation and Results

Analyzing the Trump Doctrine is triply complex: first, Trump is uninhibited by inconsistency; second, like its predecessors, the NSS 2017 described challenges without specifying required resources or identifying

which of 117 tasks were priorities; and third, the doctrine remains a work in halting progress.

For its first eighteen months, the presidency offered a melodramatic variation on the perennial theme of dysfunctional executives, with Trump caught between the rock of his convictions and a hard place of his own administration. Rather than excessive centralization (Nixon, Obama) or decentralization (Reagan, Bush 43), a novel predicament saw its principals arrayed against the president. This was a matter not merely of policy disagreements—a given in every administration—but internecine conflicts and a barely hidden disparagement of the chief executive. But, as Trump grew more confident in the job and tailored senior staff accordingly, the more unilateral, nationalist, and sovereigntist impulses became increasingly prominent even as chaotic internal friction persisted on matters from withdrawing US forces from Syria and Afghanistan to nuclear diplomacy with North Korea (Filkins 2019).

The result has been a strategy caught between impulses to withdraw from the world and project US power. Trump's Inaugural insisted, "We do not seek to impose our way of life on anyone." This rejection of nation-building saw a consistent follow-through, though Trump reluctantly sustained an Afghanistan "mini-surge," explaining that "decisions are much different when you sit behind the desk in the Oval Office" (White House 2017a). But it did not preclude seeking to shape choices from exerting "maximum pressure" on Iran and Venezuela—albeit eschewing military intervention for an Obama-style emphasis on geo-economics and coercive sanctions (tactics that previously pressured Tehran into negotiations). This avoids the excesses of maximalism while approximating more than minimalism. But it invites inescapable tension: "get-tough" policies that appeal to Trump's "brand" risk—by accident if not design—the military adventurism he strongly opposes.

Judged by rhetoric, Trump is a disruptive force seemingly engaged upon a very public Socratic argument with his own foreign policy principals. Judged by substantive metrics—budget allocations, overseas bases, military deployments, aid levels, executive agreements—he has authored "less of a revolution than many feared" (MacDonald 2018: 404). The United States withdrew from the Trans-Pacific Partnership, Paris climate accords, Iran nuclear deal, and UNESCO, ended the opening to Cuba, imposed a travel ban on seven Muslim-majority states, moved the US Embassy to Jerusalem, and accorded the Pentagon greater autonomy. But rather than transforming the transatlantic into a transactional alliance,

Trump recommitted to NATO and other alliances, approved (albeit under congressional pressure) more aggressive actions against Russia than Obama, kept engaged in the Middle East and adopted a pragmatically aggressive approach to trade (re)negotiations.

The tensions in Trumpism remain unresolved. The NSS charged prior administrations with “strategic complacency” (p. 27) about “revisionist powers” China and Russia seeking to “shape a world antithetical to our interests and values.” US leaders had assumed “engagement with rivals and their inclusion in international institutions and global commerce would turn them into benign actors and trustworthy partners. For the most part, this premise turned out to be false.” But while the administration pursued a long-overdue course correction toward China’s Market-Leninism, Trump seemed keener to enlist Moscow against Beijing than confront its revisionism:

When an Administration’s actions and rhetoric do not align, there is no clear, coherent policy. The 2017 National Security Strategy may portray Putin’s Russia as a great power competitor, but the President himself does not seem to agree, at least with the notion that Putin is a competitor. From his absolution of Russia for its interference in the 2016 election to his embarrassing performance in Helsinki during his meeting with Putin in July, Trump is on a different page from the rest of his Administration when it comes to Russia and Putin. (Kramer 2019)

Unpredictability has strategic uses against opponents—though it failed to achieve North Korean denuclearization—but its value in reassuring allies is limited. The NSS commended alliances but Trump’s speech launching it denounced “immensely wealthy” allies who were “delinquent in ... payment while we guarantee their safety.” The NSS stated that the United States favors democracies over unfree states but Trump clashed more with democratic than undemocratic leaders. To many, the text was implausible as a description of or template for policies. Friends and foes anticipating Trump’s moves would still need to follow his tweets and Fox News.

The result has been that while the architecture of the international system has been strongly shaken, and damage inflicted to its façade, the pillars remain intact. The United States has looked, but not jumped, over a strategic precipice. America’s “soft power” has again declined precipitously, albeit without allies departing from under its security umbrella

or deterring foreign direct investment. For those hoping for an end to “empire,” Trump offered limited change. For those seeking a narrower definition of the national interest, as Dueck (2019) noted, the clearest comparison is the foreign policy maven, Nixon. Limited retrenchment, bolstering America’s position, emphasizing power balances, the “Madman Theory,” and winding down stalemated wars ultimately provided the substance to a strategy that disavowed agendas of idealist transformation.

US STATECRAFT, DOCTRINES, AND DISORDER

For all their flawed design and faulty execution, presidential doctrines remain necessary but insufficient for effective US statecraft in ways inapplicable to Belgium or Bhutan. Five features are especially noteworthy.

First, each recent presidency was initially intent on a more modest global imprint. For Bush, Clinton era liberal interventionism—“foreign policy as social work”—was counterproductive to US interests. For Obama, the overextension of the Bush years compelled retrenchment. For Trump, the failures of the 2000s and 2010s subjected US interests to a wrong-headed accommodation to allies and adversaries. But each, over time, used force (or the threat thereof) against state and non-state actors. This ebb and flow reflected and reinforced the broader pattern of US foreign relations in which national ambition and risk tolerance yield consequential variations in policy but true dislocations in the United States encounter with the world typically require some external shock.

Second, if “leadership” entails strategy (setting an agenda) and tactics (bringing others on board), then none of the post-2001 presidents could boast universal success. Bush and Obama acknowledged problems of interdependence but adhered to optimistic assumptions too long as the globalization of production segued into a globalization of consumption. Similarly, retrenchment predated Trump. Neither Obama nor Trump’s expressions of restraint satisfied “offshore balancers” insistent on dismantling US military bases and withdrawing personnel. But in castigating NATO allies for insufficient defense spending, Trump echoed what national security experts had expressed for decades. In desiring better relations with Moscow, he repeated the “reset” refrain of four predecessors (Stent 2015). In recrafting US relations on a more transactional basis, he inelegantly articulated what prior presidents often embellished with greater subtlety. Administrations build on what preceded them. Trump accelerated pre-existing trends toward a reconfigured US role.

Third, the “military redoubt” in US politics precludes:

an American recession from the world stage. For while Trump looks certain to implement a brand of overseas activism much different from that of his predecessors, his is a form of internationalism nonetheless – pugilistic, militaristic, unilateralist, often disjointed, and at times decidedly illiberal, but still focused on the broad-based exercise of U.S. power and influence abroad. (Harris 2018–2019: 613)

As a “militant nationalist,” Trump’s disagreement with Bush and Obama is not primacy but its application for *liberal* ends. Strategic pillars that the United States needs to exert influence with rather than over others, and the spread of democracies mutes power disparities among nations, form no part of his sensibility. Kagan was correct that “What we liberals call progress has been made possible by the protection afforded liberalism within the geographical and geopolitical space created by American power” (Kagan 2018: 9). But Trump’s transactionalism is about deals, not ideals, his commitment to preserve the space, not the liberalism. Collective security, unlike true love, is conditional.

While all three presidents endorsed military primacy, however, they presided over the erosion of its qualitative and quantitative edge. In material terms, defense spending fell from \$759 billion in 2010 to \$596 billion in 2015, from 4.7 to 3.3% of GDP. Trump’s budgets increased spending but not on a scale commensurate with global commitments. The *National Defense Strategy* (2018) codified Obama’s 2012 abandonment of the post-Cold War strategy that the US military must be able to win two major regional conflicts nearly simultaneously. Arguing that Trump’s “America First” approach is better conceived as “Military First” (Harris 2018–2019) overstates the militarism and relative weight of America’s warfare and welfare states.

Fourth, these doctrines’ shifting emphases reflected partisan bases divided not over whether but how Washington should lead. Gallup found 75% of Americans in 2018 believed the United States has “a special responsibility to be the leading nation in world affairs,” up from 66% in 2010. The surge was driven by Democrats, whose concurrence increased from 61% in 2010 to 81% in 2018 (Norman 2018). But a major study (Halpin et al. 2019) confirmed the tribal divisions. “Trump nationalists” who prioritize military spending, counter-terrorism, domestic renewal, and no global policing accounted for 33% of voters. “Global activists”

favoring international institutions and multilateral cooperation to tackle climate change, disease, and poverty comprised 28%. “Traditional internationalists”—pro-trade and alliances, democracy promotion and the use of force—constituted 18%. The “foreign policy disengaged” made up 21%. The partisan skew was clear: 61% of Republicans were nationalists and 7% globalists; 48% of Democrats were activists and 10% nationalists. This confirmed the pronounced “disconnect” between ordinary Americans and elite mavens (Page and Bouton 2006) and the chimera of a bipartisan foreign policy—with the key exceptions of China and NATO (where a bill affirming support for the alliance passed by a 357-22 vote in the House of Representatives in January 2019).

Fifth, if Bacevich is correct that, “A successful statesman enhances the wealth, power, and influence of the state; the unsuccessful statesman depletes those assets” (quoted in Zakaria 2012) the recent record is unimpressive. As Brands (2014: 189) noted, “there is a long road between the articulation of a grand strategy and the successful implementation of that strategy.” Presidents rarely discharge all three requirements for effective governance-policy, communication, and implementation: “The modern presidency is not impossible, but it does require a reorientation of the presidency itself – toward the complex and boring business of government and away from the preoccupation with communicating” (Kamarck 2016: 15).

An analogous case applies to doctrines. Analysis concentrates on the “message” to foreign adversaries rather than guidance to federal bureaucrats. While understandable, this may be misplaced. If one thread links these disparate doctrines, beyond the fact that US policy is “the imperfect creation of imperfect individuals” (Brands and Edel 2019: 94), it is the lack of fidelity that policies evince vis-à-vis official pronouncements. As Iraq, Libya, Syria, and Afghanistan suggest, due doctrinal diligence requires dedicated execution. Even containment was “just shy of winging it” and “It is rationalizing to say, well after the fact, that a grand strategy was even being imagined” (Leebaert 2018: 102).

A reordering might focus more on implementation. One analysis (Breton et al. 2017) concluded that, “Due to department parochialism, lack of equipment and network interoperability, and a lack of institutionalized coordination, the current national security enterprise is insufficient to address the complexities of the nation’s global interests.” Despite frequently lacking requisite expertise, the Pentagon often assumes responsibilities beyond its mandate, from economic reconstruction to training

foreign police forces. Insufficient interagency coordination and integration mechanisms lead to wasted resources, conflicting messages, and duplicated efforts. Budgeting is unsuited to achieving national security objectives, failing to match strategy to resources, while the absence of an overarching legal authority inhibits the impetus for agencies to collaborate productively. Effective implementation cannot withstand such endemic friction.

CONCLUSION

Post-Cold War strategists regularly sought to explain the sources of rivals' conduct and win the "Kennan sweepstakes" of a compelling, concise summary of US statecraft. Not for them the advice of German chancellor Helmut Schmidt, who claimed that if anyone came to him with a vision, he recommended a physician. But "a decent respect to the opinions of mankind" has long directed strategists to inform the world of US intentions and discover strategic alchemy.

Neophytes in an era of immense change, in their different ways Trump, Bush, and Obama all mismanaged risk and mismatched means and ends. Loffmann (2019: 113) argues that Obama's critics failed to appreciate the "complexity, nuance, and multidimensionality" of global politics. Reich and Dombrowski (2018) similarly contend that no single grand strategy is feasible in the "post-post-cold war era." Obama and Trump parsed elements of isolationism, primacy, leadership, and restraint, tailored to specific problems, that defied easy categorization. None fully adhered to pre-written scripts. But preserving strategic solvency in an era of democratized technology, great power competition, and more numerous rivals with greater capabilities requires either reduced commitments, greater risks, or increased capabilities:

Underpinnings of a strategy must have as few contradictions as possible. All the entities engaged need to be coordinated and aware of the others' necessities. Moving higher, a grand strategy entails unifying long-term ends with the most broad-based means. In a constitutional country, it involves conciliating and encouraging those who form the currents of national opinion and energy. Significantly, it takes time and knowledge to formulate a grand strategy, or at least it takes being aware of the many steps under way. (Leebaert 2018: 101)

As his unpopularity on leaving office in 1953 attested—during a partisan but not polarized era—even Truman’s eponymous doctrine looked much better later.

According to Kissinger (2014: 236), “the conviction that American principles are universal has introduced a challenging element into the international system because it implies that governments not practicing them are less than fully legitimate ... their relations with the world’s strongest power must have some latent adversarial element to them.” That conviction has increasingly met an echo in the “civilizational state” that claims to represent more than a nation or territory but an exceptional civilization with unique cultural values and political institutions (Coker 2019). In China and Russia, the ascent of civilizational states is challenging the balance of power, reconfiguring geo-politics toward cultural exceptionalism, and reaffirming conflictual models of international order. In Europe, civilizational parties and social movements have capitalized on widespread discontent with politics-as-usual to major political effect as well.

Post-Cold War US strategy has ultimately yielded one emphatic conclusion: the optimal formula for peace—democracy, open markets, and liberalism—is one that Washington cannot impose (Mandelbaum 2019). Neither imperial nor cosmopolitan conceptions of America offered a viable path. Desch (2007–2008: 42) claimed that, because “Liberalism vacillates between isolationism when it cannot change the world and messianism when it can,” realism provides a better foreign policy, “based on the principle that (America) can pursue its national interests without having either to remake the rest of the world in its image or retreat from the international system entirely.” Trump’s embrace of a national America is an imperfect vessel to make the implausible possible: in a global order bending toward cultural exceptionalism, the United States may emerge an “unexceptional superpower” (Brands 2018b) and abandon efforts to export the self-evident truths it holds universal.

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American Nationalism and the Future of the Trump Doctrine

Colin Dueck

The rise of populist nationalism on the right is one of the most striking trends of our time. Critics on both sides of the Atlantic fear that we are witnessing a return to the 1930s, including the resurgence of fascism, authoritarian forms of governance, and possibly catastrophic wars. In relation to the Trump administration's foreign policy, these same critics contend the United States is now deliberately undermining what they call the rules-based liberal international order. Yet in relation to the United States, observers have misunderstood both the nature of American nationalism—past and present—and the foreign policy of the Trump administration. Conservative American nationalism is arguably the oldest US foreign policy tradition in existence, and is neither fascistic nor undemocratic. On the contrary, it is meant to preserve the very right of American citizens to self-government. Nor is a conservative US nationalism historically incompatible with American engagement overseas,

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including the promotion and defense of democracy. However, accumulated US foreign policy frustrations of the twenty-first century—military, political, and economic—have led to the resurgence of a distinct form of American nationalism on the right, emphasizing the need for allied burden-sharing, US sovereignty, and the promotion of material American interests. And because this resurgence is based upon domestic and international factors much larger than Donald Trump, it is probably not about to disappear simply when and because the president leaves the scene.

AMERICAN NATIONALISM

Nationalism is a form of collective identity with both cultural and political aspects. Academics tend to emphasize the way in which it is imagined, invented, or subject to manipulation. They also tend to emphasize the grave dangers of nationalism. And of course, there are certain versions of nationalism that really are exceptionally violent, aggressive, and authoritarian, based upon the image of a single ethnic group as racially superior and imperial by right. The memory of the 1930s and the wartime struggle against fascists has informed all reflection on nationalism ever since.

Yet the mainstream Western tradition, going back to the ancient world, includes a civic conception of nationalism that is far more benign (Gat 2012; Greenfeld 1992; Hazony 2018; Kohn 2005; Viroli 1997). In this civic conception, nationalism is essentially patriotism, or love of country, based upon an affectionate identification with a particular place, a particular way of life, and a particular set of lawful institutions that sustain the common liberty. For civic nationalists, the enemy is not ethnic contamination, but rather domestic tyranny, corruption, and any foreign adversary who threatens the republic. In the early modern era, European philosophers in this civic tradition argued that the world was best governed by independent nation-states, precisely in order to protect the freedoms of both countries and individuals. The belief was that every nation had its own traditions worth preserving—and that only within the context of a sovereign nation-state could individual citizens experiment with versions of republican or constitutional rule. This belief eventually had immense impact worldwide, helping to reorder the international system along lines of national sovereignty and self-determination. And whatever the limitations of the nation-state, in terms of allowing for democratic forms of popular self-government, no superior form of political organization has yet been found.

American nationalism, properly understood, is a form of civic nationalism. To be sure, as a matter of historical record, the original American colonies were founded by English Protestant settlers, and this specific cultural and religious heritage was the context for US founding principles. Over the years, some US nationalists have defined their identity mainly in religious or ethnic terms. This has long encouraged tensions between an ethnic definition of the American nation and a civic one (Huntington 2004: 37–62, 362–366). Yet in their declaration of independence, the American revolutionaries said that “all men are created equal,” and they said so deliberately. In other words, they justified their rebellion in part by claiming natural rights based upon universal truths, and these claims were informed by beliefs well described as classically liberal (Hartz 1955: 4–11; Huntington 1981, chapter 2; Kirk 2003; Lipset 1997: 31–52). There has consequently been within the United States, from the very beginning, a kind of “American creed,” civic religion, or national identity with classical liberal elements, including the rule of law, individual freedom, majority rule, equality of right, enterprise, progress, and limited government. As nineteenth-century Marxists such as Frederick Engels noted, that classical liberal creed made it very difficult to promote socialism within the United States (Marx and Engels 1942: 449, 467, 501). This is what Engels meant by American exceptionalism, and he found it exceptionally frustrating.

In terms of its worldwide implications, the leaders of the American Revolution hoped that it would encourage the spread of republican forms of government, and the creation of a new international system, characterized by peaceful commercial exchange, individual liberty, the rule of law, and human progress (Bukovansky 2010, chapter 4; Gilbert 1961: 16–17, 130–136; Hunt 1987: 17–18; McDougall 1997: 36–75; Wood 2002: 106–108). They rejected the eighteenth-century European state system as corrupt, militaristic, warlike, and autocratic. Of course, the question was inevitably how to interact with states still a part of that Old World system. To varying degrees, the Founders and succeeding generations embraced America’s westward continental expansion, to create what Thomas Jefferson described as an “empire of liberty.” They also embraced commercial opportunities overseas. In this sense, US economic and territorial expansion beyond existing boundaries long predated America’s later rise to global power. Simultaneously however, these very same early statesmen cherished the preservation of US national sovereignty, and for that matter held to a policy of disengagement from European alliances, a policy best laid out formally by George Washington in his 1796

Farewell Address when he said that “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” (Washington 1796). This emphasis on avoiding what Jefferson called “entangling alliances” became a key component of US foreign policy throughout the nineteenth century. Early American statesmen saw no contradiction between expanding the sphere of republican governments, and preserving US national sovereignty (Rabkin 2006).

The tension between liberty and union, and the exact meaning of American national identity, were brought into sharp relief by the question of whether newly acquired western territories would be open to slavery. The Republican Party was founded on the understanding that slavery be confined to the South. More broadly, Republicans shared an ideology that emphasized social harmony and order, mercantilism, economic growth, free labor, and American nationalism (Gerring 1998, chapter 3). Abraham Lincoln ran and won on this platform in 1860, triggering the secession of Southern states from the Union. The resulting Civil War opened up the possibility of renewed European intervention in the Americas, and to some extent such interventions actually happened. France took advantage of America’s wartime disunity to intervene in Mexico—a spectacle that very much worried Lincoln. Skillful Union diplomacy helped stave off more direct European aid to the Confederacy, and in truth the British had little interest in going to war with the United States. The war itself resolved some central questions: slavery would be abolished. In effect, the American creed was redefined to include a fuller application of declared US founding principles to African Americans. As Lincoln noted in his second inaugural address, neither the North nor the South had initially sought this outcome (Lincoln 1865). Yet the war revealed a new American nation in other ways as well (Gallagher 2012; McPherson 1992; Nevins 1959–1971). Under Lincoln’s leadership, the Union was revealed as a newly coherent, organized nation-state, heavily armed, capable of fielding extensive and successful battle-hardened armies with broad popular support. In this sense the Civil War resolved not only the issue of slavery, and the issue of union, but also the issue of which great power or assortment of powers would be dominant on the North American continent—an issue of evident concern to Lincoln. With the North’s victory in 1865, any possibility of a balance of power on that continent was removed. Paradoxically, this eventually led to somewhat

improved relations with the British Empire, since London had to recognize the resulting power imbalance within North America as well (Bourne 1967).

In 1898, American nationalism was expressed in yet another form. President McKinley had not previously possessed any notion of going to war with Spain. But when the USS *Maine* exploded in the harbor of Havana that February, many Americans concluded that Spain was the culprit, and demanded US military action to liberate Cuban rebels from Spanish rule. McKinley oversaw and channeled this determination effectively, leading a war effort that ended in US military victories over Spanish forces located in Cuba, Puerto Rico, and the Philippines. On the question of what to do with these newly seized territories, most Americans were happy to see US influence extended over Cuba and Puerto Rico in the Caribbean. The case of the Philippines was more controversial. This was far more of a stretch geographically, and to determined anti-imperialists such as Mark Twain and William Graham Sumner, the whole exercise seemed an abandonment of US foreign policy and constitutional traditions. In this sense, Sumner described the war's outcome ironically as the "conquest of the United States by Spain" (Bannister 1992, chapter 24). Anti-imperialists often argued that the Filipinos were racially inferior, and therefore unfit to be brought into an American system of rule (Love 2004). But a new wave of US nationalists, led by figures like Theodore Roosevelt, argued that the acquisition of the Philippines was indicative of America's new international role; necessary to secure access to the vast China market, while staving off Japanese or European advances in the region; potentially beneficial to the Filipinos themselves, under an enlightened rule; and the logical extension of previous US expansion westward across the North American continent. In the end, McKinley was convinced by these arguments, and so assumed US control over the Philippines under a peace treaty with Spain (Hamilton 2006; Kinzer 2017; May 1968; Offner 1992). Most Americans quickly tired of the momentary enthusiastic outburst for war and empire, and the Philippines was left as something of a strategic liability for the United States, practically indefensible if attacked—a weak spot in the US posture with long-term consequences. Nevertheless, the Spanish–American War had indeed revealed the United States as a potential global power with some impressive military capabilities and the ability to project them across oceans. No new multilateral commitments were made.

Taken as a whole, the United States entered the twentieth century with a foreign policy posture characterized by the aggressive promotion of US trade and investment overseas; an intense belief in American exceptionalism; a small standing army; a growing blue-water navy; effective hegemony on the North American continent; an increasingly preponderant role within the Caribbean; declared special interests in China, the Philippines, and Latin America; and a strict detachment from European wars and alliances. For the most part, politically influential Americans in both major parties still revered George Washington's Farewell Address, John Quincy Adams' Monroe Doctrine, John Hay's Open Door, and saw no need to radically overhaul these organizing principles—or any contradiction between them. The strict protection of US national sovereignty was viewed as compatible with both the promotion of republican forms of government overseas and the promotion of US strategic and economic interests. These were some of the central tenets of a broadly held American nationalism in relation to the country's foreign policy as the United States entered the twentieth century.

LIBERAL INTERNATIONALISM

As it turned out, US foreign policy in the twentieth century was powerfully influenced by liberal internationalist practices and assumptions. These developed in three main waves. The first was under President Woodrow Wilson, during and immediately after World War One. The second was during the 1940s, under Presidents Franklin Roosevelt and Harry Truman. The third wave began to emerge in the reaction to America's intervention in Vietnam, and reached fruition in the 1990s after the end of the Cold War.

President Wilson entered the White House in 1913 determined to pursue domestic progressive reforms, with no interest whatsoever in taking part in European conflicts. But after several years of trying to avoid deepening US intervention across the Atlantic, in the wake of German submarine attacks against American shipping, Wilson finally led the United States into war. He explained and conceived of this decision in terms of America's ability not only to help defeat Germany militarily but to lead in the creation of a transformed global order characterized by democratic governments, national self-determination, collective security, open trading arrangements, freedom of the seas, multilateral organization,

the peaceful settlement of disputes, and general disarmament (Ambrosius 1987; Cooper 2001; Knock 1992; Link 1979; Ninkovich 2001, chapter 2; Schwabe 1985, chapter 4; Smith 2012, chapter 4). A new League of Nations was to be the capstone of this new US-led order, containing at its heart what Wilson envisioned as a “virtual guarantee of territorial integrity and political independence” for every member state (Wilson 2016: 113). Wilson’s great innovation was not simply to argue that American liberal values needed to be vindicated by force on the European continent, though this was dramatic enough in itself. Nor was it simply to tie his League project to the achievement of progressive reforms inside the United States, though he did that as well. His innovation was also to say that only through binding, universal, and formal multilateral commitments on the part of the United States could progressive liberal values be vindicated—worldwide. In the end, the US Senate refused to pass the Versailles Treaty by the required two-thirds vote. But Wilson had laid down a marker, ideologically, that would not disappear. In fact, the Wilsonian vision would become an animating force in American foreign policy, both politically and internationally, over the course of the next hundred years.

A generation after Wilson, Presidents FDR, Truman, and many of their leading foreign policy advisers possessed an instinctive geopolitical sensibility and an explicit understanding that totalitarian powers could not be permitted to dominate the landmass of Eurasia (Leffler 1993: 12–24, 499–504; Sloan 1988: 109–119, 125–144). Both presidents also said and understood that the American experiment in constitutionalism at home might not survive a world dominated by dictatorships. Both made sure to follow national security strategies that did not create an authoritarian garrison state within the United States (Friedberg 2000). Both presidents pursued multilateral solutions where possible, but had no qualms about unilateral action when necessary—as it often was. Nor did the Democratic presidents of the 1940s entirely reject the American nationalism of preceding generations. On the contrary, in certain ways they built upon it (Fousek 2000: 2, 7–15; Smith 2012, chapters 5 and 6). When formulating their international agenda, FDR and Truman shared the traditional national belief in American exceptionalism, and a special mission for the United States. Truman in particular had a straightforward, border-state Jacksonian sensibility that he incorporated into his bold foreign policy approach (Hamby 1995: 313, 421–422, 637–639; Spalding 2006: 2–8, 223–231). In practical terms, neither president ruled out regime change

as one possible solution to severe international security dilemmas, either in relation to the Axis powers, or after 1946—ward the Soviet Communist bloc (Mitrovich 2009, chapters 1 and 2). Democracy promotion was a key aspect of their policies. But they also tried to be prudent about how best to pursue such long-term possibilities. Sometimes, prudence ultimately dictated the forcible defeat and occupation of intransigent forces, such as Nazi Germany. Sometimes it recommended containment, rather than direct military rollback. The long-term hope for a more benign world order remained the same. Clearly, in the process FDR and Truman abandoned Thomas Jefferson's ancient warning against entangling alliances. But in a way their purpose was to help encourage internationally what Jefferson himself favored. Namely: an empire of liberty.

During the late twentieth and very early twenty-first century US liberal internationalism was intellectually revised through the development of new scholarly schools of thought. Beginning in the 1970s, and in keeping with post-Vietnam liberal internationalist thinking, authors such as Robert Keohane and Joseph Nye argued that the rise of non-state actors, non-traditional issues, and transnational ties under conditions of economic interdependence had led to a world in which the use of force would be less relevant. A chief imperative would henceforth be to manage this complex interdependence through the agenda-setting power of international institutions (Keohane and Nye 2011). Keohane expanded on this line of thought in the 1980s by laying out in greater detail the argument that multilateral regimes and institutions might allow for the persistence of international cooperation even after the decline of American hegemony. Nation-states would be able, he argued, to pursue their own self-interest—along with global public goods—at less cost, with better information, and with more predictability, by acting through multilateral regimes and institutions (Keohane 2005).

The liberal optimism of the post-Cold War moment was best captured by Francis Fukuyama, who described a long-term trend wherein every ideological-political alternative to liberal democratic capitalism had been defeated or exhausted (Fukuyama 1992). Liberal internationalist scholars within the United States emphasized new possibilities for collective security, global governance, peacekeeping, humanitarian action, democracy promotion, assertive multilateralism, cuts in US defense spending, international economic development efforts, and a strengthened United Nations. The European Union was frequently held up as an example of where the nature of international politics could, should, and likely

would be headed. John Ruggie suggested that a multilateral foreign policy approach, grounded in a cosmopolitan US domestic identity, was the one way to secure American engagement overseas and overcome the traditional logic of balance of power (Ruggie 1998). John Ikenberry argued that by restraining and binding itself through multilateral practices, making its power more acceptable and less fearful to others, the United States could help to promote and maintain a cooperative and liberal world order (Ikenberry 1998/1999). And in response to the George W. Bush presidency, Joseph Nye added the concept of “soft power” to the internationalist lexicon. Specifically, Nye argued that by working through multilateral institutions, setting a good example domestically, worrying less about US sovereignty, and avoiding unilateral actions unless absolutely necessary, the United States could avert international counterbalancing coalitions and better promote its own influence overseas (Nye 2003, 2005). Altogether, liberal internationalist scholars in the post-Cold War era placed great emphasis on the need for the United States to act multilaterally. Moreover this emphasis had some practical implications, as it was taken up by leading policymakers in both the Clinton and Obama administrations. Secretary of State Hillary Clinton spoke for most liberal internationalists when she emphasized in a 2009 address to the Council on Foreign Relations the prioritized need to help solve common global problems through institutionalized multilateral cooperation on the part of the United States (Clinton 2009). The fact that this position was long since viewed by that time as simply common sense only indicated its conceptual predominance. In essence, liberal internationalists argued that the very nature of world politics had progressed, changed, or evolved in a liberal direction.

CONSERVATIVE REACTIONS

Conservative Republicans, for their part, had grave concerns about Wilson’s foreign policy vision from the very beginning, along with its domestic implications. But they disagreed over how far exactly to correct or resist it. Three main GOP foreign policy options or groupings were already visible during the great debates surrounding Wilson’s policies in response to World War One:

1. *Non-intervention*. Republicans like Senator Robert LaFollette (R-WI) argued for peace, disarmament, non-intervention, and strict disengagement in response to the First World War.
2. *Hawkish or hardline unilateralism*. Republicans like Senator William Borah (R-ID) argued for robust national defenses, and firm responses to any intrusion on the nation's honor, while attempting to remain apart from Old World hostilities or alliances.
3. *Conservative internationalism*. Republicans like Senator Henry Cabot Lodge (R-MA) argued for vigorous responses to German aggression, and postwar alliance with France and Great Britain, without making any sweeping commitments to worldwide collective security.

In a way, all three groups tried to preserve key elements of what they viewed as the American nationalist tradition. And the interaction between these three factions or schools of thought has determined the history of Republican foreign policy approaches, whether in or out of office.

As of 1918–1919, the most common foreign policy view among Republican senators was that of Lodge, in favor of a Western alliance. But the final outcome of the League debate was essentially a victory for GOP unilateralists and non-interventionists like Borah and LaFollette. That victory informed Republican foreign policy approaches throughout the 1920s, and into the opening years of World War Two. Then conservatives again divided, with one side arguing for US aid to Great Britain against Nazi Germany, and the other side opposing it. The Japanese attack on Pearl Harbor settled that debate in favor of the GOP's conservative internationalists.

The rise of the Soviet Union after World War Two only reinforced the new predominance of conservative internationalists within the GOP. Strict non-interventionists were marginalized. But in reality, hardline unilateralists had to be dragged kicking and screaming into a set of postwar US commitments overseas, and the only thing that ensured their support was a fierce anti-Communism. No subsequent Republican president was able to entirely ignore the continued force of hardline nationalism at the grassroots level, and most achieved political and policy success precisely by incorporating aspects of it into their overall approach. The specific manner in which they did so varied considerably from one president to the next. Those who failed to strike effective balances on this score—such

as Senator Barry Goldwater (R-AZ)—tended to lose elections, whatever their other virtues.

In the immediate aftermath of the Cold War, the most common Republican feeling with regard to the party's foreign policy record was one of satisfaction. But already in the 1990s, non-interventionists resurfaced, led by Pat Buchanan on the one hand and libertarian Ron Paul on the other. Though they seemed marginal at the time, over the long run Buchanan in particular was prophetic. President George W. Bush managed to rally most hardline GOP nationalists to his policy of a war on terror, combined with the 2003 invasion of Iraq, and a freedom agenda for the Middle East. But frustrations in Iraq raised some obvious criticisms, and once Bush left office the GOP again splintered into its most basic divisions.

Tea Party foreign policy preferences during the Obama era were commonly mischaracterized as "isolationist." It would be more accurate to say they were hardline nationalist. Multiple polls found Tea Party members to be more supportive of US military commitments abroad than the average American. At the same time, Tea Party supporters really were unenthusiastic about humanitarian intervention, the United Nations, foreign aid, and any cessions of US national sovereignty (Rathbun 2013). Foreign policy was simply not their primary concern. On balance, Republicans remained relatively hawkish on national security issues during the Obama era, and more likely to support increased defense spending than either Democrats or independents. Overwhelming majorities of Republicans supported drone strikes against suspected terrorists, and preemptive strikes against Iran if necessary to prevent that country from building nuclear weapons (Ballhaus 2013; Jones 2013; Mason 2012). So the overall shift in the GOP foreign policy mood during the Obama era—while certainly less interested in any Middle Eastern "freedom agenda"—was not toward a dovish posture, but rather a hard-edged conservative nationalism.

THE TRUMP PHENOMENON

For most Americans prior to the summer of 2015, Donald Trump was best known as a celebrity billionaire, real estate developer, and reality TV star. He had changed parties back and forth more than once, and was not especially conservative. Given that his comments on specific foreign policy issues over the years had sometimes been disconnected or ambiguous, it

was easy for the press to dismiss to him as having no overall worldview at all. But in fact, Trump's public statements during a period of roughly thirty years revealed, if not a full elaborated ideology, then at least a broad perspective with a certain amount of continuity. And that perspective was one of populist American nationalism.

Essentially, dating back to the 1980s, Trump's argument was that US-allied trading partners had taken advantage of American security guarantees and lopsided commercial arrangements to promote their own economic interests while free-riding off the United States. Other countries had not only "ripped off" America economically, but lost respect for it in the process—or as Trump liked to say: "they're laughing at us." With regard to US military interventions overseas, Trump tended to support such interventions when they went well—including in Iraq—and abandon them when they went badly. He had no objection to high levels of American defense spending *per se*, describing himself as "very hawkish," and regularly called for a strong US military. But he did object to an overall pattern of armed US interventions overseas that seemed to him endlessly frustrating, inconclusive, and financially unrewarding from an American point of view: "we don't win anymore," "defending wealthy nations for nothing," "we can't be the policeman for the world." He placed special blame on US political leadership and the Washington DC policy elite for failing to pursue American economic interests overseas aggressively and intelligently. For the most part, up until 2015 Trump's comments on US foreign policy were framed as complaints, rather than specific policy recommendations. Still, the particular pattern of his complaints revealed a populist-nationalist foreign policy worldview with some distinct consistency to it (Haines 2017; Laderman and Simms 2017; Wolf 2017; Wright 2016). As he put it as early as 1987, with reference to key US allies: "Why are these nations not paying the United States for the human lives and billions of dollars we are losing to protect their interests? Let America's economy grow unencumbered by the cost of defending those who can easily afford to pay us for the defense of their freedom" (Trump 1987).

During the 2016 presidential primaries, Donald Trump rearranged and broke down expected political patterns by locating and emphasizing new sources of division within the Republican Party—including on foreign policy. He campaigned as neither a staunch evangelical conservative, nor an establishment-friendly pragmatist. Instead he ran as a furiously populist and anti-establishment nationalist. In doing so, Trump initially alienated many college-educated Republicans, most conservative opinion

leaders, and virtually the entire GOP establishment. Due to intense doubts surrounding Trump's character and unorthodox policy stands, his opening campaign was highly controversial and polarizing inside the Republican Party. The extraordinary nature of his candidacy drove up voter turnout in the Republican primaries, both for and against him. Over 17 million people cast their votes for candidates other than the eventual nominee—an unprecedented number in a GOP primary. But Trump's platform and candidacy turned out to have surprising reach toward a range of Republican primary voters across the usual ideological and regional intraparty divisions, and of course his opponents were divided. Exit polls from multiple primaries revealed that Trump's supporters saw him as a strong, independent-minded and practical businessman, capable of bringing needed change to Washington. For these particular voters, Trump's brash, combative style, his war on political correctness, his outsider status, and his scathing attacks on the elites of both parties were all assets—not liabilities (Ceaser and Busch 2017).

Trump ran equally well in Northeastern and Deep South primaries, and among GOP moderates along with conservatives. Indeed on multiple domestic policy issues, such as entitlement reform, the minimum wage, and Planned Parenthood, he took early positions that were moderate to liberal. This was partly why many staunch Republicans fought Trump so bitterly in the primaries: he really had no prior connection to the American conservative movement, nor to its preferred policy positions on numerous issues. Yet Trump's populist persona and issue positioning turned out to be appealing to one major, numerous constituency: working-class Republicans, and those without a college education. Among this core constituency, Trump did very well throughout the Republican primary season, across regional and ideological lines. He also polled particularly well with older white men. In the end, Trump won on average about 40% of the popular vote until his last opponent dropped out. This was enough for him to win most of the contested party primaries and caucuses outside of the Great Plains (Rapaport and Stone 2017).

The New York businessman's unusual stance on numerous international and transnational issues was certainly divisive, even inside the GOP, but at the same time important to his nomination. Several of his most attention-getting proposals, considered unworkable by policy experts from both major parties, were in fact overwhelmingly popular with Republican primary voters. These included for example his notion of a temporary ban on all Muslim immigrants into the United States, as

well as a full-blown security wall on America's southern border paid for by Mexico (Holyk 2016). While establishment internationalists tended to favor immigration reform, by 2015 over 60% of Republican voters had come to view mass immigration into the United States as a "critical threat" (Chicago 2015). Trump tapped into this sentiment and encouraged it by suggesting the possibility of identifying and deporting some eleven million illegal immigrants living in the United States. Trump's protectionist stance on numerous international trade agreements, past and present, was also highly unusual for a winning GOP candidate. But since roughly half of the Republican voters shared vaguely protectionist views on international trade, as of 2015, Trump's position held considerable populist appeal (McCarthy 2015).

Trump won over many of the GOP's non-interventionist voters with full-throated critiques of the 2003 Iraq invasion, denunciations of "nation-building," and repeated declarations that multiple US interventions within the Muslim world had produced nothing of benefit to the United States. Yet he did not really run against forceful measures with regard to counterterrorism. On the contrary, he called for the most brutal measures against jihadist terrorists—up to and including torture—and a more aggressive campaign against ISIS along with increases in US defense spending. Trump's hawkish language against jihadist terrorism was crucial to his nomination. He won precisely by *not* being a thoroughgoing anti-interventionist on national security issues. The majority of Republican voters, including hardline unilateralists, did not and do not hold strictly non-interventionist views with regard to ISIS and Al Qaeda.

Altogether, the image offered by Trump was of a kind of Fortress America, separated from transnational dangers of all kinds by a series of walls—tariff walls against foreign exports, security walls against Muslim terrorists, literal walls against Hispanic immigrants, and with the sense that somehow all these dangers might be inter-related under the rubric of the "the false song of globalism" (Trump 2016). For long-standing and hardline nationalists like Pat Buchanan, this was music to their ears—vindication, after decades in the wilderness (Cillizza 2016). And even for many GOP voters less strict than Buchanan, yet feeling displaced by long-term trends toward cultural and economic globalization, the promise of the country's security, separation, and reassertion of control sounded both plausible and compelling. In the end, Trump carved out unique niche appeal in the 2016 Republican primaries by combining a colorful celebrity personality with working-class appeal, a fiercely

anti-establishment persona, unapologetic American nationalism, hardline stands against both terrorism and illegal immigration, protectionism on trade, media-savvy, and a withering critique of past military interventions by presidents from both parties. The combination was highly unorthodox, controversial, and divisive, but it was enough to win the nomination.

Foreign policy played into the 2016 general election campaign against Democratic nominee Hillary Clinton, not always in ways favorable to Trump. Indeed in the final November results, voters gave Clinton a double-digit advantage as the candidate better able to handle foreign policy. But a number of other issues closely related played to Trump's advantage, and of course in the end the election was not primarily about foreign policy at all. Exit polls from election night revealed that voters gave Trump a clear advantage over Clinton on the issues of terrorism, trade, and immigration. There was also a common feeling by 2016 that Obama's second-term handling of US national security had been a little weak, and in particular, that the war against ISIS was not going well—both issues that favored Trump. So while foreign policy strictly speaking tended to favor Clinton in the end, the perception of transnational challenges to the United States—including terrorism, Islamist radicalism, illegal immigration, and globalization—tended to favor Trump (Sabato 2017).

THE TRUMP DOCTRINE

So much for how Trump's nationalist stance contained surprising political appeal. How has it played out in practice, with respect to the foreign policy of his administration?

Insofar as there is a Trump doctrine in US foreign policy, it might be described as an attempt to squeeze out what the president views as relative gains for the United States through the applied escalation and de-escalation of American leverage (Anton 2019; Baker 2017; Bender 2018; Brands 2018; Douthat 2019; Friedman 2018; Glick 2018; Goldberg 2018; Haines 2017; Hanson 2018; Herman 2017; Ikenberry 2017; Kaletsky 2018; Kazianis 2018; Kroenig 2017; Laderman and Simms 2017; Macaes 2018; McDougall, 2017; Mead 2018; Nau 2017; Owens 2017; Posen 2018; Popescu 2018; Rachman 2018; Schake 2018; Schweller 2018; Sestanovich 2017; Wright 2016). Trump typically believes in making threats at each point of escalation in order to ensure that target audiences—including foreign governments—understand he

may be willing to go even further than they are. Sometimes he escalates tensions in sudden, unpredictable ways. He can also de-escalate very rapidly and unexpectedly. Indeed the president makes it clear in almost every case that he's ultimately looking for a negotiated settlement, but one he finds satisfactory, and that he's willing to walk away from the bargaining table if it isn't.

For Trump, then, the purpose of escalation is most often to de-escalate on favorable terms. To describe his approach as "zero-sum" is not strictly accurate. On the contrary, he regularly refers to the possibility of mutual benefit between the United States and other countries. But he is attuned to the relative gains to be had from these various negotiations—or at least what he thinks of as gains—and insists that America's material interests be pushed more aggressively within those same diplomatic frameworks. Moreover he does not instinctively insulate economic issues from security concerns, nor US allies from adversaries. All are subject to the application of leverage up and down the ladder.

The actual foreign policy practice of the Trump administration therefore appears to involve a sort of pressure campaign, on multiple fronts. These fronts can be pictured as follows:

1. Pressuring adversaries over security issues.
2. Pressuring adversaries over commercial issues.
3. Pressuring allies over security issues.
4. Pressuring allies over commercial issues.

Some key advantages and disadvantages of these various pressure campaigns can be summarized briefly.

1. *Pressuring adversaries over security issues.*

On the first front, the administration pressures Iran and North Korea via sanctions and deterrence, asserts American naval patrols around waters claimed by China, strengthens the US military presence along NATO's eastern border, conducts efforts against the Taliban, and forcefully rolls back ISIS. At the same time, President Trump makes clear his willingness to sit down and negotiate with any of these competitors, apart of course from ISIS.

These efforts to counteract and impose costs upon numerous authoritarian adversaries are justified, and have already produced some positive results. Of course, any foreign policy approach carries risks, and so does this one. One risk commonly noted, and a valid concern, is that of accidental military escalation with a peacetime competitor. But an equally valid concern is the risk of premature de-escalation involving excessive American concessions.

Take the case of North Korea. The 2018 Singapore summit brought a reduction in warlike tensions, a reduction welcome to most Americans. At the same time, in order to succeed, the US-led “maximum pressure” campaign against Pyongyang should be maintained without any lopsided American compromise on key issues. Otherwise, what was its purpose in the first place? All things considered, the main challenge on this front is to build up negotiating leverage without veering into accidental warfare—and to hold out the promise of diplomacy without offering one-sided accommodations. The same might be said with regard to US–Russia policy, especially after President Trump’s 2018 press conference alongside Vladimir Putin in Helsinki. Fortunately, the administration’s policies on the ground are for the most part tougher toward Russia than were President Obama’s.

2. Pressuring adversaries over commercial issues.

On the second front, the main target is China’s foreign economic practices. Here, the president levies tariffs against Chinese goods, referencing discriminatory practices under Section 301 of the 1974 Trade Act, and threatening additional tariffs while holding out hopes for resolution.

Trump deserves credit for drawing attention to a longtime pattern of Chinese abuses against the United States and its allies. These abuses include intellectual property theft, state-sponsored cybercrime, forced technology transfer, and industrial espionage on a massive scale. A forceful US response is long overdue. Punitive tariffs are an admittedly blunt tool in America’s toolkit against predatory Chinese practices. The United States also has multiple other economic tools to use, if it chooses to use them—and it should. The goal should be to extract concessions on the above practices, rather than fixating on the trade deficit per se. A lengthy Sino-American trade dispute of course carries economic costs and

risks for both sides. But these risks are worth taking if they force significant policy changes from Beijing. In fact one possible danger is that the administration might concede too easily in exchange for superficial Chinese concessions on the US trade deficit. Again, the risks of premature de-escalation are worth considering.

3. Pressuring allies over security issues.

On the third front, Trump presses allies to bolster their own armed forces. Given the existing range and balance of allied capabilities, this effort centers especially on Europe.

NATO is arguably the most successful peacetime alliance in history. In terms of pressuring US allies to spend more on their own defenses, the central request, however roughly expressed, is not unreasonable. In fact numerous allies agree with the basic direction, and are taking steps to adjust. This was in evidence again at the 2018 NATO summit, where members agreed to keep bolstering common military capabilities. Some of course find this American request to be mostly unwelcome, obnoxious, or unrealistic, given their own domestic politics. Germany, in particular, prefers focusing on reiterations of rules-based order, while simultaneously buying natural gas from Moscow and relying on American troops for protection. Trump isn't actually wrong about that (Fly 2018). Liberal internationalists respond, in effect, that the United States must adopt German political preferences. But why US foreign policy should be based upon the Merkel government's particular conception of international security is not exactly obvious. In any case, with the current administration, that specific danger is absent.

As always with Donald Trump, there is a great deal to critique and debate on specifics. But assuming the administration looks to counter US adversaries, then all three of the above pressure fronts are basically justified. It is the fourth front—trade wars with US allies—that has been most problematic, in part because it complicates the other three.

4. Pressuring allies over commercial issues.

On the fourth front, the president has levied tariffs against US allies—notably Canada, Mexico, and the European Union—on the grounds of

national security, referencing Section 232 of the 1962 Trade Act. Again, he offers to negotiate, but on his own terms.

To be clear: Neither the United States nor its democratic trading partners are entirely innocent of selective commercial protectionism. Some of the specific American complaints regarding allied tariffs are well-founded. Still, lengthy US trade disputes with democratic allies carry all of the economic costs of a trade dispute with China, but with no possible strategic benefit. China is a great power rival, an authoritarian force, and a longtime practitioner of deeply predatory commercial practices. In terms of this unique combination, it is unlike any other US trading partner, and most Americans know it. Trade wars with US allies, on the other hand, cost all sides economically, while rendering strategic cooperation on other matters less likely. The United States should therefore de-escalate these commercial disputes with its allies, and focus on forming a common front with them against Beijing. To its credit, the Trump administration appeared to move in this direction during the second half of 2018, signing a renegotiated NAFTA along with a trade truce in relation to the European Union.

In any case, one major revelation of the Trump presidency worth noting is that the president's major foreign policy priorities are *directional*. In other words he believes that existing international military and commercial arrangements have been disproportionately costly for the United States, and must be reoriented or renegotiated in the opposite direction. This is not the same as seeking a complete dismantling of America's post-World War Two commitments, and the distinction is crucial. There is no conclusive evidence from either his words or actions as president that Trump is utterly fixed upon dismantling rules-based liberal international order, any more than on upholding it. It is simply not his primary reference point one way or the other. Rather, he looks to pull existing arrangements in the direction of what he views as material US interests, and is open to either renegotiating or abandoning those arrangements case by case. Drawing on his experience in real estate, he lays out attention-getting positions, sometimes extreme ones, and then states his readiness to negotiate. Needless to say, this process unnerves his negotiating partners overseas, his domestic critics, and even some of his own staff, who rarely know Trump's final reservation point in any given situation. He himself may not know. The president reserves the right to decide, case by case. But the implication of all this is that many or perhaps even most aspects of America's forward presence may very well survive his

tenure, and in certain cases be reinforced. In effect, Trump is undertaking a kind of reassessment of America's global commitment portfolio, and its outcome is not predetermined.

THE FUTURE OF THE TRUMP DOCTRINE

Having examined the past and present, what might be the future of the Trump doctrine, and more broadly of Republican foreign policy?

It seems clear that most GOP voters will in all likelihood continue to support President Trump and his foreign policy efforts for as long as he is in office. This in turn will continue to influence congressional Republican responses. In every single administration, including this one, the most important person in shaping foreign policy is the president. For all of these reasons, both American and Republican foreign policy during the Trump administration will continue to be primarily determined by the president, though not necessarily in ways he initially expected.

A more interesting question may be the future of conservative Republican foreign policy approaches, after Trump. And here, there are now a wide range of possibilities. Just to sketch three of them, very briefly.

First, conservatives could embrace a foreign policy of strict non-intervention, slashing military spending, dismantling US alliances and bases overseas, and ending any concept of a war on terror once and for all.

Second, conservatives could double down on Donald Trump's most distinctive early 2015–2016 campaign suggestions, for example by raising tariffs comprehensively, deporting unprecedented numbers of illegal immigrants, banning all Muslims from entry into the United States, allowing key Asian allies such as South Korea and Japan to acquire nuclear weapons, and pronouncing NATO obsolete.

Third, conservatives could move to revive key priorities of George W. Bush, including multilateral free trade agreements, pro-immigration reforms, regime change, preventive military action against rogue states, and additional large-scale pro-democracy US military interventions in the Muslim world.

In the abstract all three are possible, and given the surprises of recent years, it would be unwise to rule anything out. Still, even to list those three possibilities is to immediately notice the massive domestic political, economic, and international obstacles to the strict implementation of any one of them. A more likely outcome, as even Donald Trump has

discovered, is that future Republican leaders will have to strike balances between more purist versions of non-intervention, hardline unilateralism, and conservative internationalism. Coalition-building will be inevitable. But the specific way in which this is done—in terms of character, style, and substance—will be up to future presidents, just as it is now and has been in the past. Contingent events will no doubt provide new, currently unexpected opportunities for one or more faction. For conservatives of all varieties, the possibilities on foreign policy are now wide open.

One issue area of particular significance will be the long-term direction of Republican foreign policy preferences on trade. The GOP was once the party of high tariffs, from Lincoln to Hoover. Then, under leaders like President Eisenhower, it eventually shifted in a pro-free trade direction. This shift was caused by changes in international incentives, dominant ideas, coalitional interests, and political leadership. Numerous scholars have argued that changes in a political party's underlying economic interests can have a powerful impact on its orientation toward free trade. Pro-trade forces remain powerful inside the Republican Party, not only among business interests, but more broadly with the managerial or white-collar wing of the party. Among congressional Republicans, these interests are well represented. But as the party has increasingly drawn its base of support from white working-class populist voters, especially in the nation's Rust Belt, an internal constituency now exists for more protectionist policies that was not previously recognized. Moreover the fierce sense of nationalism at the heart of the GOP can be turned either for or against free trade, if Republican presidents so choose. Donald Trump sensed this, and through his campaign catalyzed a dramatic alteration on the issue. Since the base of the Democratic Party—including labor unions, progressives, and environmentalists—are no friendlier toward new multi-lateral free trade agreements than is Donald Trump, it is entirely possible that the two major party presidential nominees will compete in 2020 to see who can be most protectionist.

In relation to China at least, there really is a case for US retaliatory measures, but they need to be conceived of and implemented in a way that is targeted, coordinated, and sensible. In relation to allied US trade partners, the case against free trade is much weaker. Yet the politics of this issue have plainly shifted. One distinct possibility is that the Republican Party has now begun a long-term realignment in a far more protectionist direction, catalyzed by underlying changes in international incentives, coalitional interests, and presidential leadership. This would amount to

a reversal of Eisenhower's achievement. Another possibility is that while Trump has tapped into working-class concerns about globalization and free trade, having heard these concerns, future conservative leaders will try to strike responsible balances on trade policy without dismantling all the advantages of relatively open trading arrangements with US allies. Prudent Republicans should develop new ways of tackling trade policy that recognize existing frustrations and divisions; push back against China more effectively; and preserve the benefits of international trade for the United States. As with every other aspect of American foreign policy, factoring in domestic politics, there is more than one possibility here.

Trump has shattered existing orthodoxies and opened up a previously latent debate over US foreign policy fundamentals. He and his supporters have made some valid criticisms of the elite liberal internationalist consensus, from a nationalist point of view. Establishmentarians in both parties will have to come to grips with this. The 2016 election result should have been a wakeup call, if one was needed, that Wilsonian assumptions are not as persuasive as they used to be. It was also a surprising indicator that a populist-conservative coalition can in fact win a national election. Trump himself has never really offered an entirely coherent agenda. He is among the least philosophical or ideological of presidents; indeed he never really claimed to be a conservative. But he is an instinctive American populist, and he did tap into and speak for a latent, specific, and current form of conservative, American, and Republican nationalism that is very real. Moreover it has deep roots in this country's history, and because it is bigger than Donald Trump, it will probably outlast him. Whether in one form or another, US nationalism is here to stay.

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