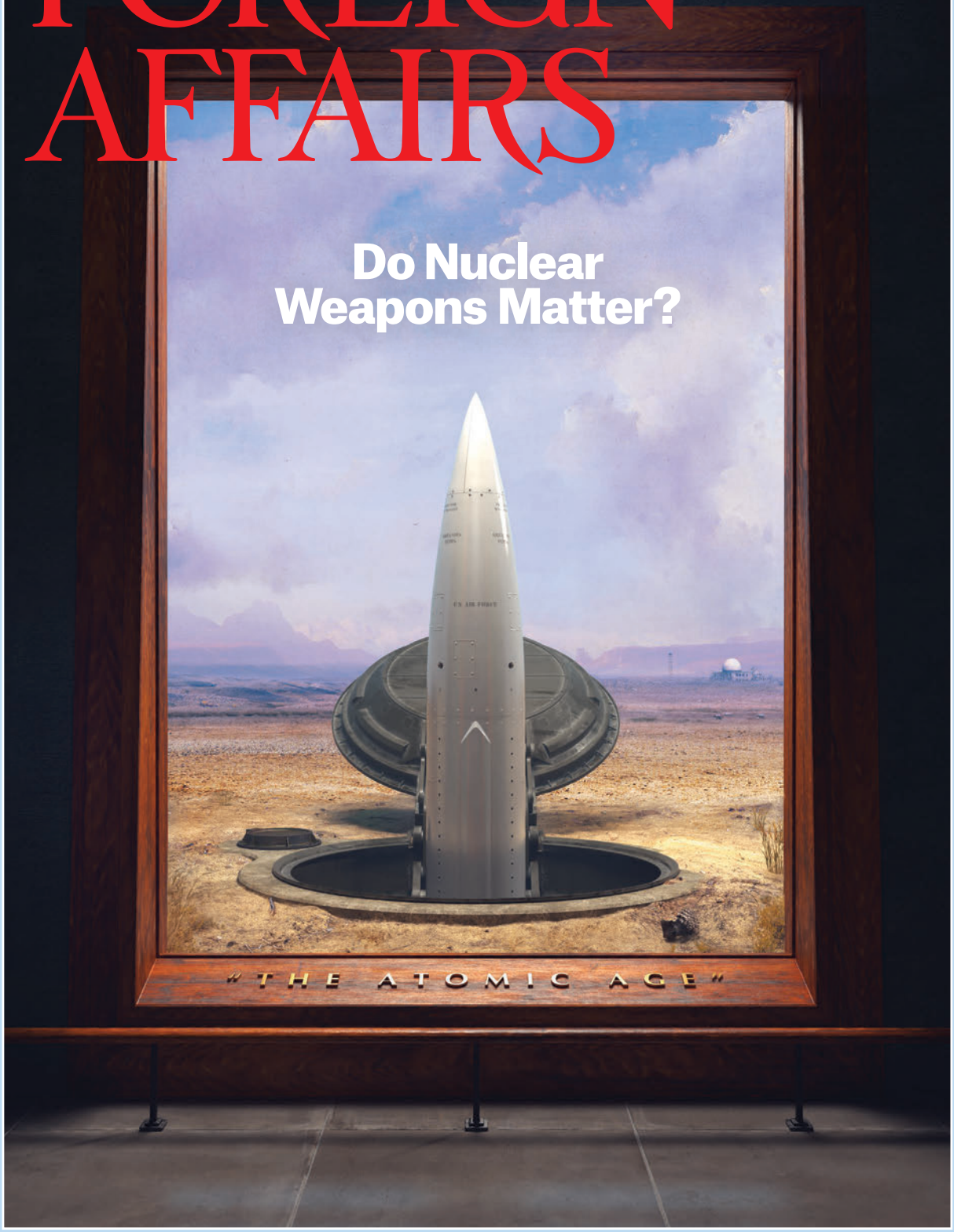
FOREIGN AFFAIRS
NOVEMBER/DECEMBER 2018 • VOLUME 97 • NUMBER 6 • DO NUCLEAR WEAPONS MATTER?

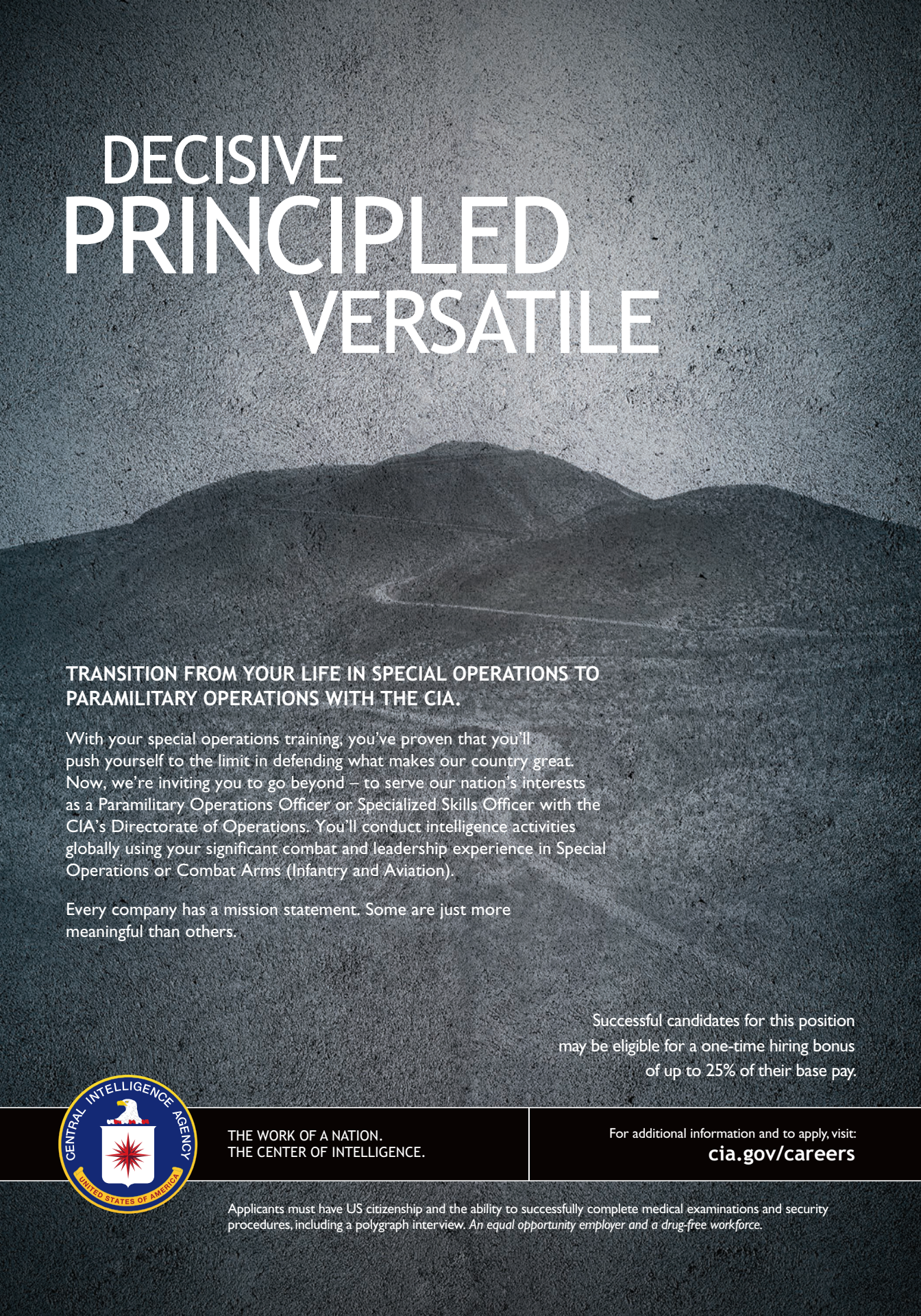
MIKE POMPEO: HOW TO CONFRONT IRAN

FOREIGN AFFAIRS

NOVEMBER/DECEMBER 2018

Do Nuclear Weapons Matter?





TRANSITION FROM YOUR LIFE IN SPECIAL OPERATIONS TO PARAMILITARY OPERATIONS WITH THE CIA.

With your special operations training, you've proven that you'll push yourself to the limit in defending what makes our country great. Now, we're inviting you to go beyond – to serve our nation's interests as a Paramilitary Operations Officer or Specialized Skills Officer with the CIA's Directorate of Operations. You'll conduct intelligence activities globally using your significant combat and leadership experience in Special Operations or Combat Arms (Infantry and Aviation).

Every company has a mission statement. Some are just more meaningful than others.

Successful candidates for this position may be eligible for a one-time hiring bonus of up to 25% of their base pay.

THE WORK OF A NATION.
THE CENTER OF INTELLIGENCE.

For additional information and to apply, visit:
cia.gov/careers

Applicants must have US citizenship and the ability to successfully complete medical examinations and security procedures, including a polygraph interview. *An equal opportunity employer and a drug-free workforce.*

FOREIGN AFFAIRS

Volume 97, Number 6

DO NUCLEAR WEAPONS MATTER?

COVER: CONCEPT BY DELCAN & CO.; PHOTO ILLUSTRATION BY JUSTIN METZ

November/December 2018

SMALLER.
FASTER.
STRONGER.

Meet the all new SimpliSafe.
It's smaller, faster, stronger than ever.
Engineered with a single focus: to protect.
With sensors so small they're practically invisible.
Designed to disappear into your home
And blanket it with protection.
More than easy to use—downright delightful.
All at prices that are fair and honest.
It's home security. Done right.

"The best home security system"

WIRECUTTER
APRIL 2018

"...SimpliSafe belongs at the top of your list..."

CNET EDITORS' CHOICE
3/28/18

"A seamless system"

PCMAG EDITORS' CHOICE
4/2/18

SimpliSafe™

Get SimpliSafe's exclusive holiday offer
at **SimpliSafe.com/affairs**

ESSAYS

ON FOREIGNAFFAIRS.COM

- **H. R. McMaster** on John McCain and the meaning of courage.
- **Andrei Kolesnikov** on Putin's plummeting approval ratings.
- **Amanda Sloat** on how to save U.S.-Turkish relations.

Master of Science in Public Policy & Management (MSPPM)

With an MSPPM degree from Heinz College, students develop skills necessary to solve the societal challenges we face today.

Some students choose the data analytics pathway, while others apply to spend their second year in Washington, D.C., as Heinz Policy Fellows, getting work experience that often leads to full-time job offers upon graduation.

Whatever your path, a degree from Heinz College will ensure you're prepared to solve complex policy problems, wherever they exist, from local to global.

For more information, visit **https://www.heinz.cmu.edu**

Carnegie Mellon University
Heinz College
INFORMATION SYSTEMS • PUBLIC POLICY • MANAGEMENT

THE INTERSECTION OF PEOPLE+POLICY +TECHNOLOGY

REVIEWS & RESPONSES

"Foreign Affairs . . . *will tolerate wide differences of opinion. Its articles will not represent any consensus of beliefs. What is demanded of them is that they shall be competent and well informed, representing honest opinions seriously held and convincingly expressed. . . . It does not accept responsibility for the views in any articles, signed or unsigned, which appear in its pages. What it does accept is the responsibility for giving them a chance to appear.*"

Archibald Cary Coolidge, Founding Editor
Volume 1, Number 1 • September 1922

FOREIGN AFFAIRS

November/December 2018 · Volume 97, Number 6

Published by the Council on Foreign Relations

SUBSCRIPTION SERVICES:
ForeignAffairs.com/services
TELEPHONE:
800-829-5539 U.S./Canada
813-910-3608 All other countries
EMAIL: service@ForeignAffairs.customersvc.com
MAIL: P.O. Box 60001, Tampa, FL, 33662-0001

Foreign Affairs
58 E. 68th Street, New York, NY 10065
ADVERTISING: Call Edward Walsh at 212-434-9527 or visit www.foreignaffairs.com/advertising
WEB SITE: ForeignAffairs.com
NEWSLETTER: ForeignAffairs.com/newsletters
FACEBOOK: Facebook.com/ForeignAffairs

Foreign Affairs is a member of the Alliance for Audited Media and the Association of Magazine Media.
GST Number 127686483RT
Canada Post Customer #4015177 Publication #40035310

CONTRIBUTORS

MICHAEL POMPEO, a former U.S. Army officer and four-term Republican congressional representative from Kansas, served as director of the CIA from 2017 to 2018. In that role, he set up back-channel talks with the North Korean regime in advance of the June 2018 summit in Singapore. After the dismissal of U.S. Secretary of State Rex Tillerson, Pompeo was sworn in as secretary of state in April 2018. In "Confronting Iran" (page 60), Pompeo lays out the Trump administration's strategy toward the Islamic Republic after Washington's recent withdrawal from the Iran nuclear deal.

MARWAN MUASHER has held a number of influential posts in the Jordanian government. In 1995, he was appointed Jordan's first ambassador to Israel and worked extensively on negotiations for a two-state solution to the Israeli-Palestinian conflict. He went on to become ambassador to the United States, foreign minister, and deputy prime minister. Now, he is at the Carnegie Endowment for International Peace. In "The Next Arab Uprising" (page 113), Muasher warns that the Middle East is in for more chaos unless its rulers remake social contracts from the bottom up.

As secretary of health and human services during the Obama administration, **SYLVIA MATHEWS BURWELL** oversaw the implementation of the Affordable Care Act and led her department's response to the Ebola and Zika outbreaks. Before that, she served as director of the Office of Management and Budget and held leadership positions at the Bill and Melinda Gates Foundation and the Walmart Foundation. In "Generation Stress" (page 150), Burwell, now president of American University, describes the growing mental health crisis among American youth and what can be done to fix it.

Born in southwestern Louisiana, **DARREN WALKER** worked at a law firm and at an investment bank before entering the nonprofit world. Now, he heads the Ford Foundation, one of the world's largest philanthropies, with $600 million a year in grants in the United States and abroad. In "Old Money, New Order" (page 158), he lays out the unique challenge facing philanthropies today: when it comes to promoting human rights, governance, and global equality, they have more work to do than ever before, yet they can no longer count on support from Washington.

DO NUCLEAR WEAPONS MATTER?

It is obvious that nuclear weapons are incredibly important. Vast sums are spent on them, concerns about their spread—most recently, to North Korea and Iran—dominate headlines, and they could blow up the world in a flash.

And yet. They haven't been used since World War II. They are purchased, deployed, and discussed on separate tracks from the rest of the foreign policy agenda, and they are largely ignored by nonspecialists, with little apparent consequence.

In fact, nearly three-quarters of a century into the atomic age, it is sobering to consider how little we really know. Do nuclear weapons truly matter, and if so, how and why? Should we worry about them more or less? As the "whiz kids" working under U.S. Secretary of Defense Robert McNamara famously asked, how much is enough?

John Mueller kicks off this issue's lead package bluntly. For generations, the world has supposedly been on the brink of one nuclear catastrophe or another: "bolts from the blue, accidental wars, lost arms races, proliferation spirals, nuclear terrorism." He notes: "The common feature among all these disasters is that none of them has ever materialized. Either we are the luckiest people in history or the risks have been overstated." The policies adopted to ward off those hypothetical disasters, meanwhile, have had terrible consequences. You do the math.

Such complacency is dangerous, counters Nina Tannenwald. Worst-case scenarios may not have materialized, but there have been enough near misses to demonstrate the risks, so why continue to play Russian roulette? U.S. President Barack Obama tried to jump-start a disarmament movement in Prague in 2009, but his efforts were blocked, so the threats remain.

Elbridge Colby agrees about the dangerous complacency, but for the opposite reason. The real risks come from a weakened United States without the capabilities or the will to maintain deterrence in the twenty-first century. Only a modernized U.S. arsenal and an updated American strategy can continue to preserve global peace.

The actual challenge is narrower, says Scott Sagan: what to do when personalist dictatorships, such as North Korea, get the bomb. Careful handling and creative policymaking might contain the situation, but Washington is not providing either.

Caitlin Talmadge's warning is downright scary: the United States and China could slip into a nuclear war because of careless strategizing. Better communication would help, but the real challenge is unlocking the escalatory gears inside current war plans.

Olga Oliker, finally, reports that Russia is modernizing its arsenal, but not its basic strategy. Moscow believes that any major war with the United States could result in a massive U.S. nuclear attack, so it wants a powerful retaliatory capacity of its own, to deter an American nuclear first strike.

Let's hope the risks are as low as Mueller thinks—or that we stay lucky.

—Gideon Rose, Editor

Nearly three-quarters of a century into the atomic age, it is sobering to consider how little we really know about it.

CONCEPT BY DELCAN & CO.; PHOTO ILLUSTRATION BY JUSTIN METZ

Nuclear Weapons Don't Matter

But Nuclear Hysteria Does

John Mueller

"The unleashed power of the atom," Albert Einstein wrote in 1946, "has changed everything save our modes of thinking, and we thus drift toward unparalleled catastrophe." Winston Churchill noted in 1955, however, that nuclear deterrence might produce stability instead and predicted that "safety will be the sturdy child of terror, and survival the twin brother of annihilation." Einstein's view became the touchstone of the modern peace movement. Churchill's view evolved into mainstream Western nuclear strategy and doctrine. Both argued that the nuclear revolution had fundamentally transformed international politics. Both were wrong.

Since the 1940s, nuclear weapons have greatly affected defense budgets, political and military posturing, and academic theory. Beyond that, however, their practical significance has been vastly exaggerated by both critics and supporters. Nuclear weapons were not necessary to deter a third world war. They have proved useless militarily; in fact, their primary use has been to stoke the national ego or to posture against real or imagined threats. Few states have or want them, and they seem to be out of reach for terrorists. Their impact on international affairs has been minor compared with the sums and words expended on them.

The costs resulting from the nuclear weapons obsession have been huge. To hold its own in a snarling contest with the Soviet Union during the Cold War, the United States spent $5–$10 trillion maintaining a vast nuclear arsenal—resources that could have been used more productively on almost anything else. To head off the imagined dangers that would result from nuclear proliferation, Washington and its allies have imposed devastating economic sanctions on countries such as Iraq and North Korea, and even launched a war of aggression—sorry, "preemption"—that killed more people than did the nuclear bombs dropped on Hiroshima and Nagasaki.

The time has long since come to acknowledge that the thinkers of the early nuclear age were mistaken in believing that the world had been made anew. In retrospect, they overestimated the importance of the nuclear revolution and the delicacy of the balance of terror. This spurred generations of officials to worry more about nuclear matters than they should have and to distort foreign and security policies in unfortunate ways. Today's policymakers don't have to repeat the same mistakes, and everybody would be better off if they didn't.

THE ATOMIC OBSESSION

Over the decades, the atomic obsession has taken various forms, focusing on an endless array of worst-case scenarios: bolts from the blue, accidental wars, lost arms races, proliferation spirals, nuclear terrorism. The common feature among

JOHN MUELLER is Adjunct Professor of Political Science and Woody Hayes Senior Research Scientist at Ohio State University and a Senior Fellow at the Cato Institute. He is the author of *Atomic Obsession: Nuclear Alarmism From Hiroshima to al-Qaeda.*

On the warpath: U.S. Secretary of State Colin Powell making the case for invading Iraq, 2003

RAY STUBBLEBINE / REUTERS

all these disasters is that none of them has ever materialized. Either we are the luckiest people in history or the risks have been overstated.

The cartoonist and inventor Rube Goldberg received a Pulitzer Prize for a 1947 cartoon showing a huge atomic bomb teetering on a cliff between "world control" and "world destruction." In 1950, the historian John Lewis Gaddis has noted, no U.S. official could imagine "that there would be no World War" or that the superpowers, "soon to have tens of thousands of thermonuclear weapons pointed at one another, would agree tacitly never to use any of them." And in 1951, the great philosopher Bertrand Russell put the matter simply:

> Before the end of the present century, unless something quite unforeseeable occurs, one of three possibilities will have been realized. These three are:—
>
> 1. The end of human life, perhaps of all life on our planet.
>
> 2. A reversion to barbarism after a catastrophic diminution of the population of the globe.
>
> 3. A unification of the world under a single government, possessing a monopoly of all the major weapons of war.

The novelist and scientist C. P. Snow proclaimed it a "certainty" in 1960 that several nuclear weapons would go off within ten years, and the strategist Herman Kahn declared it "most unlikely" that the world could live with an uncontrolled arms race for decades. In 1979, the dean of realism, Hans Morgenthau, proclaimed the world to be moving "ineluctably" toward a strategic nuclear war and assured us that nothing could be done to prevent it.

A 1982 essay by the author Jonathan Schell asserted that the stakes were nothing less than the fate of the earth and concluded that soon "we will make our choice." Schell continued: "Either

we will sink into the final coma and end it all or, as I trust and believe, we will awaken to the truth of our peril . . . and rise up to cleanse the earth of nuclear weapons." In the spirit of the times, the following year, a chart-topping pop song traced the dangers of accidental nuclear war, and the year after, Brown University students passed a referendum demanding that the university health service stockpile suicide pills for immediate dispensation to survivors in the event of a nuclear attack.

Disasters were certainly possible, and a healthy appreciation of the dangers nuclear weapons posed eventually led to the development and spread of best practices in strategy and safety. But prudence in controlling tail-end risks sometimes evolved into near hysteria. Nuclear exchanges were assumed to be easy to start, hard to stop, and certain to end up destroying life on earth.

Nuclear proliferation has been a perennial source of fear. During the 1960 U.S. presidential campaign, John F. Kennedy predicted that there might be "ten, 15, or 20" countries with a nuclear capability by the next election, and similar declarations continue. And since 9/11, nuclear terrorism has been the nightmare of choice.

Ever since the dropping of the bomb, in short, Armageddon and apocalypse have been thought to be looming just over the horizon. Such fears and anxieties were understandable, especially at first. But they haven't been borne out by the lived record of the nuclear era.

WHAT ABOUT THAT LONG PEACE?

Fine, one might concede. In retrospect, perhaps the risks were exaggerated. But at least there is a retrospect—which there might not have been without nuclear weapons, since they staved off a third world war, right?

Actually, no. Nuclear strategy—a theoretical and nonexperimental enterprise—has been built on a grand counterfactual: the notion that without the prospect of nuclear devastation hanging over its head, the postwar world would have collapsed into a major conflict yet again. But this turns out to be just a story, and less history than fable.

The nuclear-deterrence-saved-the-world theory is predicated on the notion that policymakers after 1945 were so stupid, incompetent, or reckless that, but for visions of mushroom clouds, they would have plunged the great powers back into war. But the catastrophic destruction they experienced in their recent war (one they had tried to avoid) proved more than enough to teach that lesson on its own, and there is little reason to believe that nuclear weapons were needed as reinforcement.

Moreover, the Soviet Union never seriously considered any sort of direct military aggression against the United States or Western Europe. After examining the documentation extensively, the historian Vojtech Mastny concluded that the strategy of nuclear deterrence was "irrelevant to deterring a major war that the enemy did not wish to launch in the first place." He added: "All Warsaw Pact scenarios presumed a war started by NATO." In 1987, George Kennan, the architect of containment himself, had agreed, writing in these pages, "I have never believed that [Soviet leaders] have seen it as in their interests to overrun Western Europe militarily, or that they would have launched an attack on that

region generally even if the so-called nuclear deterrent had not existed."

Moscow's global game plan stressed revolutionary upheaval and subversion from within, not Hitlerian conquest. Given Russia's calamitous experience with two world wars, a third was the last thing Soviet policymakers wanted, so nuclear deterrence was largely irrelevant to postwar stability. Nor has anyone ever come up with a compelling or even plausible rationale for using such weapons in conflicts short of total war—because there simply aren't many targets that can't be attacked as effectively with conventional weapons.

Nuclear weapons have also proved useless in conventional or guerrilla warfare, lousy at compellence (think Saddam Hussein refusing to leave Kuwait), and not very good at deterrence (think the Yom Kippur War or Argentina's seizure of the Falklands). There are circumstances in which such weapons would come in handy—say, in dealing with a super-aggressive, risk-acceptant fanatic leading a major country. But that has always been a remote possibility. The actual contribution of nuclear weapons to postwar stability, therefore, has been purely theoretical—extra insurance against an unlikely calamity.

HOW ABOUT PROLIFERATION AND TERRORISM?

Great powers are one thing, some might say, but rogue states or terrorist groups are another. If they go nuclear, it's game over—which is why any further proliferation must be prevented by all possible measures, up to and including war.

That logic might seem plausible at first, but it breaks down on close

examination. Not only has the world already survived the acquisition of nuclear weapons by some of the craziest mass murderers in history (Stalin and Mao), but proliferation has slowed down rather than sped up over time. Dozens of technologically sophisticated countries have considered obtaining nuclear arsenals, but very few have done so. This is because nuclear weapons turn out to be difficult and expensive to acquire and strategically provocative to possess.

They have not even proved to enhance status much, as many expected they would. Pakistan and Russia may garner more attention today than they would without nukes, but would Japan's prestige be increased if it became nuclear? Did China's status improve when it went nuclear—or when its economy grew? And would anybody really care (or even notice) if the current British or French nuclear arsenal was doubled or halved?

Alarmists have misjudged not only the pace of proliferation but also its effects. Proliferation is incredibly dangerous and necessary to prevent, we are told, because going nuclear would supposedly empower rogue states and lead them to dominate their region. The details of how this domination would happen are rarely discussed, but the general idea seems to be that once a country has nuclear weapons, it can use them to threaten others and get its way, with nonnuclear countries deferring or paying ransom to the local bully out of fear.

Except, of course, that in three-quarters of a century, the United States has never been able to get anything close to that obedience from anybody, even when it had a nuclear monopoly. So why should it be true for, say, Iran or North Korea? It is far more likely that a nuclear rogue's threats would cause its rivals to join together against the provocateur—just as countries around the Persian Gulf responded to Saddam's invasion of Kuwait by closing ranks to oppose, rather than acquiescing in, his effort at domination.

If the consequences of proliferation have so far proved largely benign, however, the same cannot be said for efforts to control it. During the 2008 U.S. presidential campaign, Senator Barack Obama of Illinois repeatedly proclaimed his commitment to "do everything in [his] power to prevent Iran from obtaining a nuclear weapon—everything," and his opponent, the Republican senator from Arizona John McCain, insisted that Iran must be kept from obtaining a nuclear weapon "at all costs." Neither bothered to tally up what "everything" entailed or what the eventual price tag of "all costs" would be.

All they needed to do was consider the fate of one country to understand the potentially disastrous consequences of such thinking. The Iraq war had been sold as an act of preventive counterproliferation, with President George W. Bush pointedly warning that "the United States of America will not permit the world's most dangerous regimes to threaten us with the world's most destructive weapons." A nuclear Iraq was considered unacceptable because it would "hold [its] neighbors hostage." Put aside for a moment the fact that Saddam had actually mothballed his covert weapons of mass destruction programs years earlier, so that the war turned out to be unnecessary by its own rationale. Imagine that Saddam, with his resentful population and unreliable army, had managed to acquire a modest nuclear

capability. What would have happened then? What could and would he have done with the weapons? Something worse than launching the war to prevent Iraq from going nuclear, which, along with its aftermath, has killed hundreds of thousands of people and destabilized an entire region?

As for nuclear terrorism, ever since al Qaeda operatives used box cutters so effectively to hijack commercial airplanes, alarmists have warned that radical Islamist terrorists would soon apply equal talents in science and engineering to make and deliver nuclear weapons so as to destroy various so-called infidels. In practice, however, terrorist groups have exhibited only a limited desire to go nuclear and even less progress in doing so. Why? Probably because developing one's own bomb from scratch requires a series of risky actions, all of which have to go right for the scheme to work. This includes trusting foreign collaborators and other criminals; acquiring and transporting highly guarded fissile material; establishing a sophisticated, professional machine shop; and moving a cumbersome, untested weapon into position for detonation. And all of this has to be done while hiding from a vast global surveillance net looking for and trying to disrupt such activities.

Terrorists are unlikely to get a bomb from a generous, like-minded nuclear patron, because no country wants to run the risk of being blamed (and punished) for a terrorist's nuclear crimes. Nor are they likely to be able to steal one. Notes Stephen Younger, the former head of nuclear weapons research and development at Los Alamos National Laboratory: "All nuclear nations take the security of their weapons very seriously."

The grand mistake of the Cold War was to infer desperate intent from apparent capacity. For the war on terrorism, it has been to infer desperate capacity from apparent intent.

DON'T DO STUPID STUFF

For nearly three-quarters of century, the world has been told it is perched precariously on Rube Goldberg's precipice, perennially at risk of plunging into apocalyptic devastation. But oddly enough, both we and the weapons are still here. Understanding their actual impact and putting them into the proper context would enable policymakers to view nuclear matters more sensibly.

In practice, that would mean retaining the capabilities needed to respond to the wildly unlikely nightmare scenario of having to deter a possible future Hitler while pruning nuclear arsenals and stepping back from dangerous strategies and postures. It would mean working with North Korea to establish a normal condition in the region and worrying about reducing its nuclear capabilities later. There is nothing wrong with making nonproliferation a high priority—indeed, it would do a favor to countries dissuaded from pursuing nuclear weapons by saving them a lot of money and pointless effort. However, that priority should be topped by a somewhat higher one: avoiding policies that can lead to massive numbers of deaths under the obssessive sway of worst-case fantasies.

The Vanishing Nuclear Taboo?

How Disarmament Fell Apart

Nina Tannenwald

On April 5, 2009, U.S. President Barack Obama stood before a massive crowd in Prague and gave a soaring speech announcing his commitment to "a world without nuclear weapons." In pursuit of that goal, he pledged to seek an arms reduction treaty with Russia, ratify the Comprehensive Nuclear Test Ban Treaty (CTBT), and convene a global summit to discuss the eventual elimination of nuclear stockpiles. He acknowledged that a nuclear-free world was unlikely to be achieved in his lifetime, yet his speech marked the first time a U.S. president had set out a step-by-step agenda for abolishing nuclear arms. It represented a sharp break from the approach of U.S. President George W. Bush, who had expanded nuclear missions and rejected arms control. Much of the world was elated. Nuclear disarmament was back on the global agenda. That September, the UN Security Council unanimously adopted a resolution endorsing Obama's vision and strengthening various disarmament and nonproliferation measures. The following month, the Nobel Committee awarded Obama the Nobel Peace Prize, citing his call for nuclear disarmament. More than six decades after humanity first harnessed the destructive power of nuclear reactions, the only country to have ever used nuclear weapons was charting a path for the world to put the genie back in the bottle.

Fast forward to 2018. In the space of barely ten years, the dream of disarmament now seems more distant than ever. All the nuclear-armed states are devoting vast resources to upgrading their arsenals. The United States and Russia are leading the way, undertaking massive modernization programs that entail new warheads and methods for delivering them. China is steadily increasing the size of its arsenal and developing new types of delivery systems, including missiles tipped with multiple warheads. These are considered more destabilizing because they create an incentive for the other side to strike first in order to knock them out early in a conflict. India and Pakistan, locked in a dangerous rivalry, are also expanding and upgrading their arsenals. If current trends continue, the combined stockpiles of nuclear weapons in China, India, and Pakistan could grow by around 250 warheads over the next ten years, from about 560 now to more than 800. Meanwhile, several of these countries have adopted dangerously escalatory nuclear doctrines and loosened their rules on the use of nuclear weapons.

At the same time, arms control agreements are unraveling. Joint reductions by the United States and Russia—which together hold more than 90 percent of the world's nuclear weapons—have stalled as tensions have increased. On the multilateral front, the global effort to prevent the spread of nuclear weapons—

NINA TANNENWALD is Director of the International Relations Program at the Watson Institute for International and Public Affairs at Brown University. She is the author of *The Nuclear Taboo: The United States and the Non-Use of Nuclear Weapons Since 1945*.

A dream deferred: U.S. President Barack Obama speaking in Prague, April 2009

PETR JOSEK / REUTERS

enshrined in the Nuclear Nonproliferation Treaty, one of the most successful security treaties in history—is fraying. The NPT's nonproliferation norms and monitoring procedures have helped stem the spread of nuclear weapons and are a key reason there are only nine nuclear weapons states today—many fewer than the "15 or 20 or 25 nations" that U.S. President John F. Kennedy forecast in 1963. But the bargain at the core of the treaty is breaking down. The states without nuclear weapons agreed to stay that way in exchange for a commitment to disarmament on the part of the states with nuclear weapons, and the nonnuclear states increasingly feel that the nuclear powers have failed to uphold their end of the deal.

Most disturbing, however, is a trend among some leaders to glorify the world's most destructive weapons. Russian President Vladimir Putin and North Korean leader Kim Jong Un are again turning nuclear weapons into symbols of national power, describing their capabilities in public, parading their weapons in the streets, and even issuing nuclear threats. Then there is U.S. President Donald Trump. He has boasted about the size of his nuclear "button," threatened that North Korea "will be met with fire and fury like the world has never seen," and backed a massive program to expand the U.S. arsenal.

How did we get from the Prague speech's "world without nuclear weapons" to where we are today? The answer is not simply Trump. For all his nuclear one-upmanship, Trump did not create the current crisis in disarmament and nonproliferation; he merely exacerbated trends that were already under way. Before Trump took office, rising geopolitical tensions, a resurgent Russia, arms modernization, and a hawkish Republican Congress hostile to international law and agreements had all conspired to

impede further weapons reductions. Facing a tidal wave of opposition, Obama's vision of a nuclear-free world got swept away.

Ever since the dawn of the nuclear age, the world has gradually developed a consensus that nuclear weapons are so destructive and abhorrent that it would be unacceptable to use them, a notion often referred to as "the nuclear taboo." But the norms and institutions of nuclear restraint are unraveling. Arms control agreements are being torn up. Cooperation is being replaced by unilateralism. Restraint is being replaced by excess. Now more than ever before, humanity risks facing a future in which the nuclear taboo, a hard-won norm that makes the world a safer place, is in retreat.

THE VISION THING

Obama's disarmament efforts got off to a good start. In 2009, he shelved a controversial plan from the George W. Bush administration to put ground-based strategic missile defense interceptors in Europe, replacing it with a more modest plan that was less threatening to Russia. In 2010, the United States and Russia concluded the New START treaty, a relatively modest but symbolically important agreement under which the two countries committed to reduce the number of their deployed strategic warheads by nearly one-third, to a total of 1,550 each. The treaty portended a new era of reductions. Soon after it was signed, the Obama administration convened the first of four global summits on nuclear security, which resulted in tangible improvements in the safeguarding of nuclear materials. In 2011, while warning that the United States would retain the ability to launch a nuclear first strike, the administration promised to develop no new warheads. Beginning in 2012, the Obama administration began to engage Iran diplomatically on its nuclear program, resulting in the Joint Comprehensive Plan of Action a few years later.

Obama also ushered in important shifts in thinking about nuclear use. His administration's Nuclear Posture Review, released in 2010, substantially narrowed the conditions under which the United States said it would use nuclear weapons—only "in extreme circumstances," to defend the vital interests of the United States and its allies. For the first time ever, the report explicitly endorsed the nuclear taboo: "It is in the U.S. interest and that of all other nations that the nearly 65-year record of nuclear non-use be extended forever."

Yet Obama largely failed to achieve the lofty goals he laid out in Prague. There was no follow-up to the 2010 New START treaty. Despite his administration's narrow nuclear doctrine, Pentagon planning remained mired in outdated Cold War nuclear strategies that emphasized first-strike capabilities. By late 2010, the Obama administration had signed off on a massive effort to modernize the U.S. arsenal, with plans to spend some $1 trillion on the development of a whole new generation of bombs and delivery systems. These included smaller, more discriminate nuclear warheads, which arms control advocates worried might prove more tempting to use. Pretending that this weapons buildup somehow constituted "disarmament," as Obama administration officials regularly did, only caused nonnuclear states to grow more cynical about the United States' commitment to the cause.

KEOUGH SCHOOL OF GLOBAL AFFAIRS

Notre Dame's newest school places development at the heart of global affairs.

Washington, DC Office

a space to explore new research and diverse policy perspectives

Master of Global Affairs

a two-year program offering concentrations in peace studies, sustainable development, and global affairs

learn more at

nd.edu/globalaffairs

UNIVERSITY OF NOTRE DAME

Most striking for an administration that had talked about the need for a "moral revolution" regarding nuclear weapons, the Obama administration refused to endorse a UN-organized campaign that sought to highlight the "humanitarian impact" of any use of such weapons. Launched in 2012 and inspired partly by the Prague speech, this campaign brought together civil society groups and nonnuclear states in a series of conferences designed to mobilize support for the elimination of nuclear arms. The United States, along with the other permanent members of the Security Council, mostly boycotted these meetings. Nevertheless, the campaign resulted in negotiations at the UN and ultimately a vote to adopt a total legal ban on nuclear weapons, a treaty that now counts 60 signatories. Supporters of the ban are under no illusions that the nuclear-armed states will sign the treaty anytime soon. Rather, the aim is to further stigmatize the possession and use of nuclear weapons. In snubbing the meetings that led to the treaty, the United States and the other permanent members of the Security Council likely missed an opportunity to steer the campaign away from an all-out ban and toward measures that, while still reducing nuclear dangers, might have proved more palatable to the nuclear-armed states.

WHAT WENT WRONG

Why was Obama largely unable to follow through on the promise of a nuclear-free world? The answer has a lot to do with deteriorating relations with Russia, the United States' main disarmament partner. For Russian leaders, the George W. Bush administration's withdrawal from the Anti-Ballistic Missile Treaty in 2002 marked the start of a new arms race with the United States—a qualitative one focused on new capabilities, rather than a quantitative one based on numbers alone. By 2011, Russia had begun modernizing its old Cold War systems, both strategic and tactical. It also started developing new weapons, including sea- and air-launched cruise missiles that can carry either conventional or nuclear payloads, and it conducted various military exercises combining conventional and nonstrategic nuclear weapons.

Things got worse after Vladimir Putin returned to the Russian presidency in 2012. Russian leaders had long objected to the eastward expansion of NATO and the deployment of U.S. ballistic missile defenses in Europe, but their obstinacy on nuclear issues shifted into high gear. (Obama, under pressure from hard-liners, showed little willingness to make any concessions on missile defense, other than to offer repeated assurances that the systems were not intended for use against Russia.) In 2013, when Obama proposed an agreement in which the United States and Russia would further reduce their strategic nuclear weapons, Putin didn't bite, and the next year, he invaded Ukraine. Later in 2014, Russia pulled out of the 1991 Nunn-Lugar Cooperative Threat Reduction Program, through which the United States had assisted Russia with securing its fissile material to prevent the problem of "loose nukes." Occasionally, Russian leaders made explicit nuclear threats against other countries, as when Russia's ambassador to Denmark said in 2015 that if that country joined NATO's missile defense system, Danish warships would become targets of Russian missiles. And

in 2016, Moscow boycotted the Nuclear Security Summit, the global forum first organized in 2010 by the Obama administration. These were final nails in the coffin of the U.S.-Russian security relationship.

Yet Russia was hardly alone in blocking Obama's nuclear ambitions; even U.S. allies got in on the act. NATO has 180 to 200 nuclear bombs based in Belgium, Germany, Italy, the Netherlands, and Turkey. Although some NATO allies, such as Germany and the Netherlands, had been enthusiastic about the abolition agenda, renewed Russian aggression eroded European governments' support for reducing the role of nuclear weapons in NATO security policy. France, meanwhile, was always much more dismissive of Obama's vision of a nuclear-free world and opposed discussing disarmament proposals in NATO, fearing that its own nuclear arsenal would be dragged into the talks. Poland and the Baltic states worried about a resurgent Russia and did not support de-emphasizing nuclear deterrence.

U.S. allies stymied Obama's nuclear goals until the very end of his tenure. In the summer of 2016, as Obama contemplated declaring a "no first use" policy, France, Japan, South Korea, and the United Kingdom lobbied against changes to the U.S. nuclear doctrine. In the face of rising nuclear tensions with Russia and North Korea, U.S. allies' defense ministries worried that a "no first use" pledge might be perceived as weakness. The White House relented.

Obama also faced formidable domestic opposition to key parts of his arms control agenda—especially from hawks on Capitol Hill and in the Pentagon. In Congress, in exchange for Republican support of the 2010 New START treaty, Obama threw the GOP a bone of billions of dollars to spend on nuclear modernization, a goal that most Republicans felt was long overdue. The Republican-controlled Senate also opposed the administration's efforts to ratify the CTBT, even though the treaty would lock in an area of U.S. advantage: the United States has little need to conduct nuclear testing, given its unmatched ability to simulate tests on supercomputers.

The Pentagon, meanwhile, was never really on board with Obama's nuclear-free world. It remained committed to the belief that a large nuclear arsenal was necessary to retain allies' confidence that the United States was willing and able to defend them. Both the Pentagon and the State Department opposed the UN's humanitarian campaign as an explicit attempt to delegitimize nuclear deterrence, on which U.S. security and alliances depended. State Department officials, more enthusiastic than their Pentagon colleagues about the Prague agenda, nevertheless worried that the humanitarian campaign's insistent demands for faster progress on disarmament detracted attention from the patient, step-by-step approach to disarmament they favored. White House officials wanted the allies to remained united in their opposition to a ban, and some officials worried that participating in the meetings would send the wrong signal and weaken allied unity. (Eventually, the United States did attend one meeting, in Vienna in 2014.) Yet even U.S. arms control officials admitted privately to me that, as the United States repeatedly failed to deliver on any of the vaunted steps toward disarmament, such as ratifying the CTBT or negotiating further arms cuts with Russia, the step-by-step approach was beginning to ring hollow.

Obama faced major international and domestic obstacles to pursuing his Prague agenda, but in truth, his policies were also undermined by internal contradictions. For one thing, it was hard to reconcile the huge modernization program with disarmament. Moreover, even as the administration was promoting its vision of a nuclear-free world, it ultimately gave priority to U.S. security, and the United States continued to rely on the threat of nuclear retaliation for its defense. One National Security Council spokesperson managed to capture the contradiction efficiently, telling a *Washington Post* columnist that the administration was "always looking for additional ways to achieve progress" on Obama's Prague agenda, "while maintaining a credible deterrent for the United States, our allies and partners." Hence, the administration had to oppose the humanitarian campaign, the very group working the hardest for disarmament.

Perhaps most tragic, Obama's interest in disarmament was genuine and deep, dating back to his undergraduate days at Columbia University, when the "nuclear freeze" movement, a reaction to the Reagan administration's arms buildup, swept through college campuses. During his senior year there, in 1983, he wrote a paper for a class on how to negotiate arms reductions with the Soviets and was even published in a campus newsmagazine writing about the "vision of a nuclear-free world." By the time he became president, nuclear disarmament had been on his mind for at least 26 years.

THE NEW NUCLEAR EXCESS

Since taking office, Trump has ushered in a frightening new world of nuclear excess. The president has not only enthusiastically embraced Obama's modernization program but also committed the United States to an even more massive expansion of its nuclear arsenal. Nearly every element of the U.S. nuclear arsenal is slated to be upgraded, at a mind-boggling cost of $1.7 trillion over the next 30 years. This includes $100 billion for an expansion of the intercontinental ballistic missile program, including 666 new missiles; the development of a novel, technically risky "interoperable" warhead that the Obama administration had put on hold; and 80 new warhead "pits" per year (a pit is the fissile core of a weapon). It also includes a significant increase in spending on developing, testing, and deploying new nuclear weapons. These changes were enshrined in doctrine in February 2018, with the release of the Trump administration's Nuclear Posture Review, which calls for the development of two new warheads and expanded ways to use nuclear weapons. The United States is now pursuing the most belligerent arms buildup since the end of the Cold War.

There is little reason to expect Trump to pursue arms control talks. As president-elect, when asked about his proposal to expand the arsenal, Trump responded, "Let it be an arms race. We will outmatch them at every pass and outlast them all." His national security adviser, John Bolton, has been a persistent critic of the New START treaty, which he has derided as "unilateral disarmament," as have Republican hawks in the Senate. Although the Trump administration has so far maintained the New START treaty, which is set to expire in February 2021, it has yet to hold talks with Russia about

extending it. If the treaty is not extended, the U.S. and Russian nuclear arsenals will be unregulated for the first time since 1972.

At the same time, Trump is taking a sledgehammer to the norms of nuclear restraint. The interviews he has given suggest that he has little understanding of nuclear weapons or their role in alliances, and there is little evidence that he cares about the norms of nonuse, nonproliferation, or disarmament. Trump has implied that Japan and South Korea should get their own nuclear weapons. He has not declared the United States' legal obligation, as a member of the NPT, to pursue disarmament, something every other U.S. president has done since the 1970s. He also withdrew from the Iran nuclear agreement, dealing yet another blow to the nonproliferation regime. If Iran decides to tear up the deal and get back to work on its nuclear program, then an arms race in the Middle East would likely unfold. Trump's decision also effectively eliminated the prospect of reaching a similar deal to restrain North Korea's nuclear program, since Pyongyang now has little reason to expect any agreement to last. Furthermore, his erratic behavior and bellicose rhetoric have vastly increased concerns about a U.S. president's unilateral ability to push the nuclear button. The media have even reported that Trump once asked a foreign policy expert what the point of nuclear weapons was if they couldn't be used. For the first time since the end of the Cold War, the possibility that an American president might actually contemplate the use of nuclear weapons has become a terrifyingly real prospect.

THE CASE FOR DISARMAMENT

The nonuse of nuclear weapons since 1945 is the single most important accomplishment of the nuclear age. Leaders must do everything possible to preserve this 73-year tradition. Despite the reversals since the launch of Obama's Prague agenda, disarmament is still the right goal for the United States.

There are 15,000 nuclear weapons in the world's arsenals, many on high-alert status. The risk of a nuclear launch or exchange started by accident or miscalculation remains high, and the consequences of even one such incident would be catastrophic. In fact, since the nuclear age began, there have been an alarmingly high number of nuclear near misses—accidents or miscalculations that almost led to a nuclear detonation or nuclear war. The qualitative arms race now under way, which increasingly mixes conventional and nuclear capabilities in deterrence strategies, is raising the risk of nuclear use. The new technologies increase the likelihood that a conventional strike could provoke a nuclear attack, whether through misperception or miscalculation. The threat to incinerate millions of people in the name of national security is both bad policy and morally bankrupt.

Many have argued that nuclear weapons are the United States' "instruments of peace," that they deter major-power war, or that they are needed as an insurance policy. Yet one need not be a radical antinuclear activist to arrive at the same conclusion that former Secretaries of State Henry Kissinger and George Shultz, former Secretary of Defense William Perry, and former Senator Sam Nunn arrived at in 2007, when they went public with their belief that disarmament—working toward "global zero"—is in the

United States' interest. As these senior statesmen realized, nuclear deterrence comes with tremendous risks and costs. The arguments in favor of deterrence, if sometimes true, are not likely to be true in every case. What happens when deterrence fails?

The growing risks of a catastrophic nuclear war outweigh the uncertain benefits of deterrence for the United States. Given its overwhelming conventional military power, the only thing that can really challenge the United States on the battlefield is another country armed with nuclear weapons. That means that the United States would be better served by a world in which no country had these weapons.

It is true that given the current international political context, nuclear disarmament is unlikely for the moment. For now, all nuclear-armed states remain committed to nuclear deterrence. But they can still take steps toward disarmament. As a first step, they should recommit to norms of nuclear restraint. This could include taking weapons off high alert and starting a dialogue about adopting mutual "no first use" policies. The United States and Russia, for their part, should negotiate an extension of the New START treaty. Furthermore, the nuclear-armed states should find a way to engage constructively with the goals of the treaty banning nuclear weapons, rather than simply dismiss it. For example, they could offer more public transparency about how their nuclear war plans meet humanitarian criteria. Such steps could be part of an expanded effort—possibly organized by the UN—to hold all the nuclear-armed states accountable for the possible consequences of their nuclear doctrines and decisions about use. Finally, the way policymakers and diplomats think about "responsible nuclear states" should also change: it is time for that oft-used label to apply only to those states that have demonstrated a concrete commitment to disarmament.

After decades of arms control agreements, security cooperation, and a growing consensus about the unacceptability of nuclear weapons, the world is now headed in the opposite direction. Geopolitical tensions have heightened. New arms races have started. States have reverted to valorizing nuclear weapons. The nuclear taboo is weakening. But nothing about this is inevitable; it is a choice our leaders have made. Nuclear disarmament will have to be a long-term project. Today's decision-makers may not be able to complete the task, but they have an obligation to pursue it.

If You Want Peace, Prepare for Nuclear War

A Strategy for the New Great-Power Rivalry

Elbridge Colby

In a little under three decades, nuclear weapons have gone from center stage to a sideshow in U.S. defense strategy. Since the 1990s, the United States has drastically reduced its stockpile and concentrated on its conventional and irregular warfare capabilities. Nuclear weapons policy has focused overwhelmingly on stemming proliferation to countries such as Iran and North Korea, and prominent political and national security figures have even called for abolishing nuclear weapons altogether. What was once the core of the country's Cold War strategy has been reduced to an afterthought.

Immediately after the Cold War, when the United States enjoyed unprecedented global power, this approach seemed reasonable. Washington didn't need much of a nuclear strategy against Iraq or Serbia. But now, great-power competition has returned. Russia wants to upend the post–Cold War status quo in Europe. A rising China seeks ascendancy, first over Asia and ultimately beyond. To accomplish this, each country has developed military forces ideally suited to fight and defeat the United States in a future war. And modern, mobile nuclear capabilities are a key part of their strategies.

These capabilities could allow Russia or China to pressure or attack U.S. allies and to block any efforts by the United States to fight back. This should cause great alarm among U.S. policymakers: American grand strategy is rooted in a network of alliances designed to maintain favorable regional balances of power and protect U.S. access and trade across the globe. These alliances work as long as they can be credibly defended against outside challengers. But if Russia and China can win wars against the United States in Europe and Asia, respectively, then these revisionist states will press their advantage—with painful and possibly disastrous consequences for U.S. interests in the world.

Washington's task is clear. It must demonstrate to Moscow and Beijing that any attempt to use force against U.S. friends and allies would likely fail and would certainly result in costs and risks well out of proportion to whatever they might gain. This requires conventional military power, but it also means having the right strategy and weapons to fight a limited nuclear war and come out on top.

For the first time in a generation, then, getting U.S. defense strategy right means getting nuclear strategy right. This requires more than just modernizing the current arsenal of immensely destructive strategic nuclear weapons and their delivery systems. This arsenal, designed to inflict unimaginable damage in an apocalyptic war, is necessary to deter the gravest forms of attack. But threatening

ELBRIDGE COLBY is Director of the Defense Program at the Center for a New American Security. He served as U.S. Deputy Assistant Secretary of Defense for Strategy and Force Development in 2017–18.

to use such weapons in a limited war in defense of allies thousands of miles from U.S. shores is just too extreme to be convincing and therefore unlikely to work.

Instead, the United States needs weapons systems that can bridge the wide gulf between conventional and all-out nuclear war. In particular, Washington should step up its efforts to develop low-yield tactical nuclear weapons and associated strategies that could help blunt or defeat a Russian or Chinese attack on U.S. allies without provoking a nuclear apocalypse. Demonstrating to potential opponents that the United States has this ability is the best way to avoid ever having to put it into practice.

DOING GOOD WHILE DOING WELL

During the Cold War, nuclear weapons formed the centerpiece of U.S. strategy. Initially, when the United States enjoyed vast nuclear superiority over the Soviet Union, it relied on the threat of an immediate and decisive nuclear attack to deter aggression in Europe. By the early 1960s, U.S. strategic forces dwarfed the Soviet Union's. NATO's defenses in Western Europe bristled with nuclear weapons, while conventional forces largely played second fiddle. As the Soviet nuclear arsenal ballooned and the United States' advantage faded, however, Washington decided that this strategy was no longer enough to credibly defend Western Europe. As a result, it reinvigorated its conventional forces and devised strategies for limited nuclear use designed to blunt a Soviet invasion and persuade Moscow to end any war short of nuclear Armageddon. Thus, although Washington continued investing in strategic nuclear forces, it also developed tactical nuclear weapons and capabilities designed to offset the Warsaw Pact's much larger conventional forces. Thankfully, these strategies never had to be put to use, probably because they were credible enough to dissuade the Soviet Union from risking a major offensive—a testament to their value for deterrence.

After the collapse of the Soviet Union, the United States turned its focus to the rogue states that now posed the main, if far more modest, threat to its interests. U.S. conventional forces demonstrated their ability to quickly defeat such foes, whether Saddam Hussein's army in Iraq in 1990–91, Serbian forces in 1998–99, or the Taliban government in Afghanistan in 2001. If nuclear strategizing had seemed morbidly excessive during the Cold War, it seemed positively absurd in this world of U.S. dominance.

Accordingly, Washington's emphasis shifted to conventional forces that could be used for preventive attacks and regime change abroad. The United States dramatically downsized its nuclear forces and reduced their role in its defense strategy. Concerns about nuclear weapons now focused on fears about their acquisition by rogue states or terrorists. As a result, successive administrations worked to contain proliferation and to delegitimize the use of nuclear weapons except in the narrowest of circumstances. This approach was appealing: given the United States' unrivaled conventional military might, pushing nuclear weapons out of the picture seemed like it would only solidify U.S. power.

Moreover, the strategy enjoyed support from across the political spectrum. It was no surprise that doves applauded getting rid of the weapons they so loathed, but even hawks welcomed the shift. Nuclear weapons, after all, tend to raise the

Locked and loaded: maintaining a U.S. Air Force missile complex in Wyoming, February 2018

BRAYDON WILLIAMS / U.S. AIR FORCE

threshold for military action. Thus, President George H. W. Bush cut over 5,000 warheads from the stockpile in 1992. Every administration after him—Democratic and Republican—continued the drawdown. All in all, the U.S. nuclear arsenal has shrunk to a fraction of its Cold War size.

A RUDE AWAKENING

But if this approach once made sense, it no longer does. Russia and China have made impressive strides toward building militaries that can take on the United States and its allies over key strategic interests. Gone are the days when the United States could easily swat away a Chinese attack on Taiwan or when it did not even have to contemplate a Russian assault on the Baltics.

The problem is not just that Russia's and China's increasingly sophisticated and powerful conventional militaries are well poised to strike U.S. allies and partners (think Poland or the Baltics in Europe and Japan or Taiwan in Asia). It is also that any future confrontation with Russia or China could go nuclear. First, in a harder-fought, more uncertain struggle, each combatant may be tempted to reach for the nuclear saber to up the ante and test the other side's resolve, or even just to keep fighting. Second, should Moscow seize the Baltics or Beijing invade Taiwan, both U.S. foes are likely to threaten to use or actually use nuclear weapons to close the door on U.S. counterattacks, or to drastically curtail their effectiveness. In fact, this forms a central pillar of their theories of victory—the potential playbooks they could use to take on the United States and come out the better for it.

This threat is not a figment of the imagination. Russia has spent much of its limited money building a modern and varied nuclear weapons arsenal. Much of this arsenal is designed to attack specific

military targets rather than to wipe out major cities in one fell swoop. For instance, Russia fields a substantial number of naval nuclear weapons, including antiship cruise missiles, nuclear torpedoes, and nuclear depth charges. As Russian exercises and military journals suggest, the idea behind Moscow's nuclear strategy is to use tailored nuclear weapons to settle a war on Russia's terms, gambling that going nuclear will intimidate the United States into backing down—a strategy known as "escalate to de-escalate."

If Russia wished to challenge NATO, it could deploy "little green men"—soldiers or intelligence officers in disguise or unmarked uniforms—to Poland or the Baltics in an attempt to sow confusion and shape opinion in Moscow's favor, as it did in Crimea in 2014. It could then send in lethal conventional forces, which could rapidly seize ground, dig in, and set up a formidable defensive position. Threatened or real nuclear attacks designed to knock back any conventional counterattack that U.S. and NATO forces might launch in defense of their allies would seal the deal. Moscow could, for example, hit key U.S. bases in western Europe or U.S. flotillas in the Atlantic. Washington would be left with a simple choice: a settlement or a major nuclear war.

China has been more restrained than Russia in its nuclear buildup, but it is also developing modern, nuclear-capable forces that could be used in a regional conflict, such as the DF-21 and DF-26 ballistic missiles. These are just the type of weapons China would need to checkmate the United States in Asia. In the event that it wanted to force the Taiwan question or dictate the terms of a settlement of territorial disputes with Japan, Beijing could rely on its newfound wealth and power to politically isolate one of these states. If the situation escalated, China's conventional forces could try to seize Taiwan or the disputed territories and prepare to block an effective response from U.S. and allied troops. If this didn't prove enough, China's increasingly accurate and flexible nuclear forces could hit U.S. air and naval bases in the western Pacific, testing how far the United States would be willing to go in defense of its allies and partners. The bottom line is that if the United States wants to sustain its alliance architecture in Europe and Asia, it must adapt its strategy to face an opponent prepared to escalate with nuclear weapons.

GETTING THE THREAT RIGHT

Above all, this requires jettisoning the outdated assumptions that continue to shape current debates on U.S. nuclear strategy. On one side are the doves, who argue that nuclear war simply cannot be limited or controlled and that the specter of nuclear devastation is enough to deter a major war. The key, as they see it, is to make sure that no one thinks otherwise and to avoid rocking the boat lest things get out of hand. In the meantime, all the United States needs to deter Russia or China is a relatively small arsenal of nuclear weapons with little purpose other than to destroy highly valued but unprotected targets such as cities. This threat is enough, the argument goes, provided that all parties maintain powerful but carefully constrained conventional forces and avoid unnecessary skirmishes.

This line of reasoning has influential supporters. In 2012, a study group chaired by James Cartwright, the former vice chairman of the Joint Chiefs of Staff, concluded that "there is no conceivable situation in the contemporary world" in

which a nuclear attack would be in the United States' or Russia's interest. The group's report urged the United States to reduce its nuclear arsenal substantially and eliminate its tactical nuclear weapons altogether. In the same vein, a letter signed this year by former Secretary of Defense William Perry and other heavyweights contended, "It is unlikely that there is such a thing as a limited nuclear war; preparing for one is folly."

Unfortunately, this view ignores the incentives that U.S. foes would face in a war and the evidence about how they would likely behave. Russia and, to a lesser extent, China field increasingly accurate, lower-yield nuclear weapons that would add little in an all-out nuclear conflagration but would be useful in a limited nuclear exchange. It appears that they believe that limited nuclear escalation is possible—and that it may even represent their winning move against the United States.

This shouldn't come as a surprise to Washington. The risks of nuclear brinkmanship may be enormous, but so is the payoff from gaining a nuclear advantage over an opponent. Nuclear weapons are, after all, the ultimate trump card: if you can convince your enemy that you have a way to play the card and are actually prepared to go through with it, nothing is more powerful. And the best way to do that is to have palatable options for the limited and effective use of nuclear weapons. Americans should know: they perfected this approach against the Soviet Union during the Cold War. The doves' strategy, however, would leave the United States without any means to do this, encouraging adversaries to exploit this gap and making war—including nuclear war—more likely.

Yet some super-hawk thinking would also lead U.S. policymakers astray. For many hawks, the solution is for the United States to develop forces of all kinds able to hobble Russia's or China's nuclear arsenal, while setting up massive missile defenses to block any retaliation. If the United States perfected this approach, it could carry out a disarming first strike against an adversary. The long shadow of this threat alone would discourage Russia or China from mounting an attack on U.S. friends or allies.

The problem with this approach is that it is simply too difficult to pull off and is therefore an obvious bluff. Destroying or blocking all Russian or Chinese nuclear forces would be a mind-boggling challenge. And in a nuclear war, you have to be perfect or just shy of it: allowing even a handful of thermonuclear weapons through U.S. defenses would mean staggering death and destruction. This human cost would be completely out of proportion with whatever interests prompted the United States to engage.

In order to fully disarm Russia or China, the United States would have to not only destroy or disable large numbers of widely dispersed mobile missile launchers, submarines, and aircraft but also do so concurrently, at most within hours, to prevent a counterstrike. This would involve finding and fixing mobile targets, tracking them if they moved, destroying them, and confirming their demise—a task the United States has found extremely difficult even against much weaker opponents, such as Iraq.

Meanwhile, U.S. defenses would have to keep any enemy missiles from reaching their targets—yet U.S. missile defenses have struggled against primitive ballistic and cruise missiles, let alone advanced Russian and Chinese projectiles. This is a function of the inherent difficulty of defending against incoming ballistic missiles traveling at several times the speed of sound, not to mention dealing with stealthy cruise missiles and underwater torpedoes. As James Winnefeld, then the vice chairman of the Joint Chiefs of Staff, put it in 2015, "Missile defense against these high-end threats is too hard and too expensive and too strategically destabilizing to even try." Put simply, there is no plausible scenario in which the super-hawk approach makes sense. And patent bluffing is not a wise long-term strategy.

GETTING THE ARSENAL RIGHT

Ultimately, the logic of deterrence dictates that the United States' defense strategy for its new great-power rivals must balance two competing demands: whatever actions Washington threatens must be potent enough to coerce the opponent but not so apocalyptic as to be implausible. For the United States, striking this balance is not easy. A country trying to defend its home territory may be able to convince opponents that it will risk nuclear annihilation to avoid foreign occupation. But for Washington, which is trying to help defend far-flung allies against foreign aggression, such threats are far less credible. As one U.S. official quoted former Secretary of State Henry Kissinger as saying, "Great powers don't commit suicide for their allies."

The good news is that the United States can protect its allies without going after its opponents' entire nuclear arsenals or marching on Moscow or Beijing. Instead, American forces must be able to blunt any invasion of allied territory by quickly attacking the conventional and

tactical nuclear forces that Russia or China would use to seize and hold on to that territory. Once the United States had successfully done so, Russia or China might decide to end the conflict there—an outcome that Washington could accept. If they decided, however, to press on even after U.S. forces had warded off an initial offensive, the burden of escalation would rest squarely on their shoulders.

Consider the case of China: instead of being able to quickly seize Taiwan and create facts on the ground, Chinese leaders would face a choice between backing down and risking a major, prolonged war with the United States—not to mention U.S. allies galvanized into action by large-scale Chinese aggression in East Asia. Once the path to a quick invasion of territory was blocked, any escalatory actions that China might turn to would, in effect, be self-defeating, as they would set off a unified response by the United States and its allies.

U.S. conventional forces would still do most of the work of blocking the adversary's advance by delaying, degrading, and ideally halting any invading forces. Accordingly, preparing combat-ready conventional forces to fight alongside allied militaries must be a central pillar of U.S. strategy. But American nuclear forces, especially those designed for a limited war, would have an equally important role to play. For one, Russia or China might decide to escalate to the nuclear level, forcing the United States to respond in kind or risk defeat. Moreover, if the United States' conventional edge further erodes in the coming decades, particularly in East Asia, it may have to rely on its nuclear forces to halt Chinese conventional forces.

To be able to pull of such a strategy, Washington will have to invest in modern tactical nuclear warheads and delivery systems designed for a regional military fight. As it exists today, the U.S. arsenal consists mostly of strategic weapons, built for waging a large-scale nuclear war against an enemy's strategic forces, leadership targets, and the like. Almost all U.S. tactical nuclear weapons have been dismantled. The few that remain are of only limited use in a war against Russia or China.

The Pentagon's 2018 Nuclear Posture Review recognized this gap. It committed to modernizing its air-delivered tactical bombs and developing low-yield nuclear warheads for submarine-launched ballistic missiles. But the United States should go further and specifically develop or adapt a modest number of nuclear weapons and delivery systems that could damage key Russian or Chinese conventional targets, especially those needed for an invasion of the Baltics or Taiwan: entrenched ground forces, maneuver troops, naval flotillas, and invasion fleets. The new weapons would need lower yields than most of those in the current arsenal, which have been optimized to destroy hardened silos sheltering enemy missiles, not to stop conventional forces.

These weapons would not replace U.S. conventional forces. They would, however, help offset any advantages that Russia and China derive from their own nuclear arsenals. Risking a confrontation with a similarly well-equipped United States would mean courting defeat or near-suicidal escalation.

TRIED AND TRUE

Because there is no effective deterrence without effective communication, Washington also has to change the way it talks about its nuclear strategy. In recent decades, the U.S. government

has tended to stress that nuclear war is uncontrollable. There is obviously great merit to this point, since crossing the nuclear threshold would indeed be tremendously perilous. But fixating too much on the uncontrollability of nuclear war actually invites escalation. Opponents may quite reasonably conclude that Washington is so convinced that any limited nuclear operations will escalate to Armageddon that it would never dare cross the threshold except for its own survival—which would leave U.S. allies out in the cold.

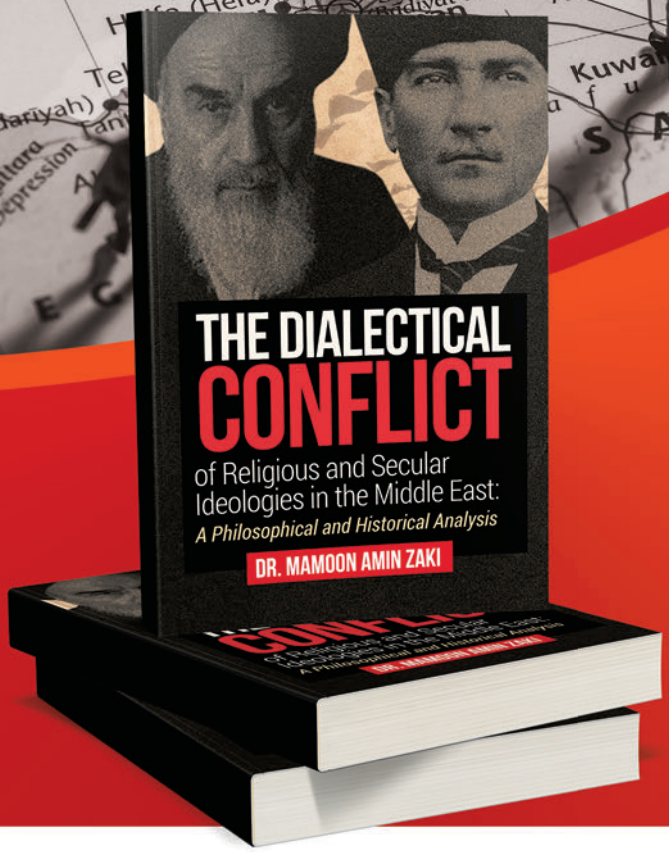
Accordingly, U.S. officials need to change their line. They should continue to stress that a nuclear war could quickly spin out of control, with calamitous effects. Yet they should also demonstrate—by deed, in the exercises the military holds, the training it undertakes, and the capabilities it develops, and by word, in the official statements Washington issues—that the United States is prepared to conduct limited, effective nuclear operations. This would signal to Russia and China that the United States has the will and the way to frustrate any nuclear brinkmanship.

Such a nuclear strategy is compatible with arms control. After all, the goal of arms control is not disarmament but strategic stability. In practice, this means ensuring that all sides have confidence in their own ability to launch an effective retaliatory nuclear strike, while leaving ample room for cooperative steps to reduce the risk that an accident or a miscalculation could lead to war.

For decades, the dominant thinking in U.S. nuclear policy has been to reduce, minimize, and eliminate. This approach may have been defensible in the 1990s and the early years of this century—but the world has changed. The United States now faces great-power competitors that believe they could successfully take on the United States, hoping to exploit Washington's fear of the nuclear precipice. Disabusing them of any such notion is the best deterrent against such a scenario. Perhaps paradoxically, then, the best way to avoid a nuclear war is be ready to fight a limited one.

To critics, this approach will smack of Cold War thinking. But when it comes to defense strategy, that may not be a bad thing. After all, Cold War thinking enabled the United States and its allies to deter major aggression for 45 years, even though their conventional forces in Europe were consistently outnumbered. The United States should consider itself lucky if it achieves such a result over the next half century. A certain kind of Cold War thinking may be just what Washington and its allies need.

THE DIALECTICAL CONFLICT



Available at amazon

OUT NOW

The Dialectical Conflict of Religious and Secular Ideologis in the Middle East

"Dr. Zaki takes us through a dramatic chronicle of the struggle between religious and secular ideologies in the Middle East.
An incisive, historical and political analysis, The Dialectical Conflict brilliantly illuminates the social cause of the conflict in the Middle East today, and helps us to understand and prepare for the Middle East of tomorrow."

https://thedialecticalconflict.com/

DR. MAMOON AMIN ZAKI

GLOBAL CITIZEN U

TO UNDERSTAND GLOBAL ISSUES, YOU MUST BECOME PART OF THEM.

The growing influence of new world powers, emerging states and non-state actors, socioeconomic transformation, nuclear weapon proliferation, and cross-border crises have reshaped the field of global affairs. Those pursuing careers in this area must study the issues and be deeply involved in them. The **MS in Global Affairs**, offered by the **NYU School of Professional Studies Center for Global Affairs**, positions you in the heart of the international community of NYC, providing you with the contextual perspectives you need to become an effective problem solver and innovator. Global field intensives and skills development in peacebuilding, mediation, and conflict assessment; exposure to renowned expert practitioners who advise governments, military, and private sector institutions on meeting today's security challenges; and projects that sharpen your predictive capacity and analysis of emerging threats, form the basis of an education that allows you to live what you learn—anticipating the next global challenge.

MS in Global Affairs

CONCENTRATIONS:

- Environment/Energy Policy
- Global Economy
- Global Gender Studies
- Human Rights and International Law
- International Development and Humanitarian Assistance
- International Relations/Global Futures
- Peacebuilding
- Transnational Security

APPLICATIONS NOW OPEN:

MS in Global Security, Conflict, and Cybercrime

sps.nyu.edu/msgs

VISIT: sps.nyu.edu/msga12d **CALL:** 212-998-7100
REQUEST INFORMATION: sps.nyu.edu/gradinfo12d **APPLY TODAY:** sps.nyu.edu/applygrad

NYU | SCHOOL OF PROFESSIONAL STUDIES

FIND YOUR FUTURE SELF

Armed and Dangerous

When Dictators Get the Bomb

Scott D. Sagan

There have always been good reasons to worry about nuclear weapons, but those reasons have changed over time. During the Cold War, U.S. national security experts fretted about an expensive nuclear arms race with the Soviet Union. After the 9/11 attacks, specialists and the American public alike were afraid that terrorists might get their hands on highly enriched uranium and make a primitive nuclear device. Those dangers remain. But the first concern has been mitigated to some degree by strategic arms control agreements between the United States and Russia, which are still in place (although not always adhered to). And the second concern has been ameliorated through a significant reduction in the amount of highly enriched uranium used in research reactors around the world.

Today, however, there is another reason to worry about nuclear weapons: the rise of personalist dictatorships in states that possess or could acquire the bomb. These dictatorships differ from other autocratic governments because their leaders have such dominant personal power that other state institutions—such as parties, politburos, or military officers—cannot overrule the decisions made at the top. Personalist dictators can make decisions on a whim, which creates a grave challenge to the concept of nuclear stability. The world has faced this particular nuclear danger only once before: between 1949 and 1953, when Joseph Stalin enjoyed unchallenged personal dominion over a nuclear-armed Soviet Union.

Of course, other threats from nuclear proliferation persist. Pakistan's nuclear arsenal is growing, for example. But it remains in the hands of professional military officers who share at least some degree of power with a democratically elected civilian government. Iran also has latent nuclear capabilities. Yet despite the Trump administration's unilateral withdrawal from the 2015 agreement that limited Iran's nuclear activities and the reimposition of U.S. economic sanctions on Iran, the Islamic Republic has, at least for now, decided to keep its commitments to not enrich uranium to bomb-grade levels and to permit international inspectors to monitor any suspected nuclear facilities.

To understand why a nuclear-armed personalist dictatorship poses a much graver danger than those countries, look no further than Kim Jong Un, the eccentric ruler of North Korea. In the six years since he came to power following the death of his father, Kim has solidified his control of the state apparatus and purged potential rivals, including his uncle, whom he executed in 2013, and his half brother, who was murdered in an airport in Malaysia in 2017 by assailants armed with the chemical weapon VX—almost certainly on Kim's orders. At the

SCOTT D. SAGAN is Caroline S. G. Munro Professor of Political Science, Mimi and Peter Haas University Fellow in Undergraduate Education, and a Senior Fellow at the Center for International Security and Cooperation and the Freeman Spogli Institute at Stanford University.

same time, Kim has achieved unprecedented success in North Korea's pursuit of nuclear weapons. After testing a thermonuclear device in September 2017 and an intercontinental ballistic missile in November of that year, Kim announced in his 2018 New Year's address that North Korea had "perfected" its nuclear arsenal and that "the nuclear button is on my office desk all the time."

Kim soon entered into direct negotiations with South Korea and, separately, with the United States. Like his three immediate predecessors, U.S. President Donald Trump seeks North Korea's "complete, verifiable, and irreversible nuclear disarmament." After meeting with Kim in June, Trump announced that the United States would suspend what he called "tremendously expensive" and "very provocative" military exercises with South Korea and declared that "there is no longer a nuclear threat from North Korea." In fact, Kim has shown no intention of giving up his weapons, and it is unclear how Washington can achieve its ambitious goal.

This dynamic is unlikely to remain confined to North Korea. Personalist dictators elsewhere are more likely to seek nuclear weapons in the future and, if they get them, more likely than other leaders to use them. The United States therefore needs to tailor its nuclear doctrine to better deter such leaders—and, if necessary, to fight and defeat them more effectively and ethically. The problem is daunting. The good news is that Washington and its allies have successfully adapted their strategies to meet new nuclear threats in the past, and the steps they must take to do so once again are well within reach. But the bad news is that the Trump administration is not thinking creatively enough and the president is making matters worse by issuing belligerent threats and making unfounded claims of success.

BOMB THROWERS

After 1945, the list of nuclear states grew to include five democracies (the United States, the United Kingdom, France, Israel, and India) and five nondemocratic states (the Soviet Union, China, Pakistan, North Korea, and apartheid South Africa). A number of democracies, such as Australia and Sweden, started nuclear weapons programs and then abandoned them, as have a few nondemocracies, such as Brazil and Egypt in the 1970s. Democracies and autocracies alike have joined the 1968 Nuclear Nonproliferation Treaty (NPT), pledging "not to manufacture or otherwise acquire nuclear weapons."

Yet only autocracies have started or maintained illicit nuclear weapons programs after joining the NPT. These nuclear cheaters were Iran, Iraq, Libya, North Korea, Romania, Syria, Taiwan, and, for a brief period in the 1970s, South Korea. When they began their nuclear weapons programs, all these states were led by autocrats who enjoyed nearly unchallenged authority. Such dictators find nuclear weapons particularly appealing, in part for the usual reason of warding off foreign military intervention, but also because nuclear weapons, unlike conventional ones, provide a way of countering external threats without increasing the risk of internal threats, especially that of a military coup. Such leaders are also less likely to fear the effects of international economic isolation and are not constrained by domestic

KCNA / REUTERS

Atomic autocrat: Kim Jong Un watching a missile launch in Pyongyang, September 2017

rivals who might oppose spending scarce resources on a nuclear weapons program. Nor are personalist dictators constrained much by the rule of law, which embolds them to engage in nuclear cheating, since they face little chance of being outed by internal whistleblowers and because, even if they are caught cheating by foreign powers, they will pay few domestic political costs.

Yet many of the traits that make personalist dictatorships dangerous also make them incompetent. Such dictators often weaken their state institutions by prizing loyalty over professionalism in military and scientific organizations, thus impeding their nuclear ambitions. In the 1980s, Romania's laughable nuclear program was run as a pet project by Elena Ceausescu, the wife of the strongman leader Nicolae Ceausescu, who was appointed the head of the National Council for Science and Technology despite having no serious background in scientific research. In Iraq during the late 1970s and early 1980s, the dictator Saddam Hussein executed his deputy prime minister, reportedly for opposing his defense spending plans, and sent a number of senior nuclear scientists to prison because he deemed them insufficiently loyal. During the late 1990s, the Libyan strongman Muammar al-Qaddafi put together a gang that couldn't proliferate straight: program managers imported the wrong nuclear components because they did not consult scientists first, and no one monitored progress in the program. Indeed, when the International Atomic Energy Agency inspected Libya's nuclear sites in 2003, they found smuggled-in centrifuges still in their packing crates.

North Korea's success therefore represents a watershed. For the first time, a poor and highly personalist dictatorship has developed large numbers of nuclear

weapons and long-range missiles to deliver them. North Korea's persistence, skillful engineering, and extensive support for its scientists helped. So, too, did the illicit assistance that the regime received from the proliferation network run by the Pakistani nuclear physicist A. Q. Khan (which provided centrifuges to enrich uranium) and from companies in Ukraine (which supplied the North Koreans with high-performance liquid-propellant rocket engines). Lastly, Washington failed to get strong global sanctions placed on North Korea until after Pyongyang had already tested its first nuclear weapon, in 2006; by then, it was too late.

North Korea's success may now serve as an inspiration. Other governments may calculate that they can copy the North Korean model, especially if Pyongyang offers to carry them across the nuclear threshold, as it has attempted to do at least once in the past. In 2007, the North Koreans were caught helping Bashar al-Assad's regime construct a secret plutonium-producing reactor in the Syrian desert, which the Israeli Air Force promptly destroyed.

THIS IS NOT A DRILL

It is difficult to predict which country with a personalist regime—or with a leader who is working to establish such a regime—will be the next to pursue nuclear weapons. Egypt, Syria, and Turkey all seem like contenders. Saudi Arabia might be next in line, if Crown Prince Mohammed bin Salman continues his ruthless consolidation of power when he eventually becomes king. Armed with nuclear weapons, the personalist rulers of these countries will be difficult to deter. They likely value their own lives and those of their family members and cronies more than the lives of their countries' citizens. They vanquish rivals in order to make their regimes coup-proof and rely on sycophants, often family members, to run their regimes, prizing personal loyalty over professional competence or expertise. A leader surrounded by yes men will have no one who can question faulty assumptions, much less challenge his decision-making authority.

Recent history demonstrates how such proclivities make personalist dictators particularly likely to miscalculate. In 1986, Libyan operatives, following Qaddafi's orders to carry out a campaign of terrorism against Americans, planted a bomb at a nightclub in Berlin popular with U.S. service members, killing two U.S. soldiers and one foreign civilian and injuring 229 other service members and civilians. In response, the United States launched air strikes against military targets in Libya and the compound outside Tripoli where Qaddafi lived with his family. In 1980, Saddam decided to attack Iran without consulting his advisers (resulting in an eight-year-long war), and in 1990, he ordered an attack on Kuwait after consulting with only his son-in-law (leading to the humiliating Persian Gulf War). Saddam even forbade his intelligence agencies from providing reports on the United States, telling them that intelligence was his "specialty." (He also elaborated on the sources of his unique insight: "some of it out of deduction, some of it through invention and connecting the dots, all without having hard evidence.")

Flawed decision-making of this sort also makes personalist regimes accident-prone. According to North Korean government pronouncements, Pyongyang has a preemptive military doctrine, which

calls for striking first if Kim receives intelligence that a U.S. attack is deemed imminent and unavoidable. But no outsiders know the exact indicators on which Kim would base his decision. Perhaps he might react to a formal warning issued by trusted organizations within the state. But even in technologically sophisticated societies, these are imperfect. In January, for example, the Hawaii Emergency Management Agency issued a false alarm: "Ballistic missile threat inbound to Hawaii. Seek immediate shelter. This is not a drill." Throughout the islands, citizens panicked, some running for the beaches, others (more appropriately) sheltering inside their homes. In Washington, fortunately, no one panicked: the U.S. military's sophisticated sensors did not detect an inbound missile, highly professional military officers quickly reported up the chain of command that the Hawaiian agency had made a mistake, and no high-level official believed that Kim would launch an unprovoked nuclear attack on Hawaii.

But just imagine what would have taken place had a similar false alarm occurred in Pyongyang rather than Honolulu. North Korea's missile warning system relies on archaic Soviet radar technology. The North Koreans lack the multiple and independent satellite-based warning systems that create redundancy and reliability for the United States: if someone in North Korea issued an erroneous warning of an attack, no alternative system would correct it. And it's unlikely that the military in North Korea would report a serious mistake, because if a bureaucrat or a military officer makes an error in North Korea, he doesn't just get fired; he might also get executed. Finally,

Kim is likely to believe that the United States would launch a first strike against North Korea thanks to Trump's frequent over-the-top threats to do just that.

HOW DO YOU SOLVE A PROBLEM LIKE KOREA?

Even though a nuclear North Korea will remain a dire threat, there are ways to reduce the likelihood of further proliferation. The United States should never rule out using military force against would-be proliferators if they are caught cheating, but diplomacy is always preferable. There is ample room for improvement on the diplomatic front. In 2003, the George W. Bush administration created the Proliferation Security Initiative, through which more than 100 countries coordinate intelligence and interdiction efforts to prevent the smuggling of components for weapons of mass destruction. China, however, is not a member. During the Obama administration, the United States, the Netherlands, and South Korea hosted a series of summits where more than 40 countries with nuclear power facilities shared best practices regarding security, training, and equipment. But Russia dropped out of the process after its invasion of Crimea in 2014. And North Korea's success in developing nuclear weapons has demonstrated that these efforts were insufficient. That's why Washington must work with its allies and partners—and also with rivals such as China and Russia—to establish even stricter export controls and countersmuggling measures.

One improvement would be to require all NPT members to ratify the so-called Additional Protocol of the International Atomic Energy Agency, which mandates that signatories permit inspectors to enter any suspected nuclear facilities on demand. There are many holdouts against universal ratification of the Additional Protocol, including states that may seek nuclear weapons, such as Egypt, Saudi Arabia, and Syria. In 2020, the UN will host the next NPT Review Conference, where all member states will meet to discuss how to improve nonproliferation. In the run-up to the conference, Washington, Beijing, and Moscow should agree to make a major push for universal ratification of the Additional Protocol and should pursue a coordinated bargaining strategy, offering nonnuclear states improved access to nuclear technology in exchange for agreeing to inspections.

In addition, the United States should develop a common strategy with China, Russia, and other nuclear technology exporters to ensure that countries constructing civilian nuclear power plants for the first time abstain from also taking steps consistent with pursuing a nuclear weapons program—namely, enriching uranium or reprocessing plutonium. This will be a severe challenge since the major exporters—China, France, Russia, South Korea, and the United States—have a clear incentive to prioritize sales over security and to not impose rules on importers. At a minimum, Washington should refuse to help countries acquire nuclear energy if they do not sign and ratify the Additional Protocol and agree not to enrich uranium or reprocess plutonium.

When it comes to the threat of nuclear-armed dictatorships, multilateral diplomacy can do only so much. Washington also needs to update its approach to deterrence and its nuclear

arsenal. In an interview with ABC News in August 2017, H. R. McMaster, Trump's national security adviser at the time, expressed intense skepticism about the possibility of deterring Kim. "Classical deterrence theory, how does that apply to a regime like the regime in North Korea?" he asked.

> A regime that engages in unspeakable brutality against its own people? A regime that poses a continuous threat to its neighbors in the region and now may pose a threat, direct threat, to the United States with weapons of mass destruction? A regime that imprisons and murders anyone who seems to oppose that regime, including members of [Kim's] own family [by] using [VX] in a public airport?

The answer is that the United States can deter such a regime not by threatening its subjects but by threatening its leader. Washington must make clear that it will respond with military force only to acts of aggression and that it will target only the dictator himself, the regime's leadership, and its military forces. And it should discourage senior military officers in such personalist dictatorships from following any rash and suicidal orders by offering them "golden parachutes" if they disobey. This will not be easy. The Obama administration's 2010 Nuclear Posture Review walked that fine line by stating that any country that "uses chemical or biological weapons against the United States or its allies and partners would face the prospect of a devastating conventional military response" and that "any individuals responsible for the attack, whether national leaders or military commanders, would be held fully accountable." A new U.S. nuclear doctrine should make explicit what the Obama doctrine implied: any military commander in a personalist dictatorship who disobeys a command to use nuclear weapons will not be held responsible for the consequences of his leader's aggression.

The Trump administration's 2018 Nuclear Posture Review also got this aspect of deterrence right, by threatening retaliation against the appropriate target:

> For North Korea, the survival of the Kim regime is paramount. Our deterrence strategy for North Korea makes clear that any North Korean nuclear attack against the United States or its allies and partners is unacceptable and will result in the end of that regime. There is no scenario in which the Kim regime could employ nuclear weapons and survive.

But Trump himself has repeatedly threatened to start a war with North Korea and to harm the North Korean people rather than just their leaders. In August 2017, Trump declared that "North Korea best not make any more threats to the United States. . . . They will be met with fire and fury like the world has never seen." At the UN in September 2017, he warned that he might "totally destroy North Korea," which sounded grossly indiscriminate. And in a press conference in May 2018, Trump threatened to start a preventive war against North Korea that would target the entire country: "In Libya, we decimated that country," he said. "That model would take place [in North Korea] if we don't make a deal, most likely."

Despite Trump's loose talk, his administration's 2018 Nuclear Posture Review recognized the need to tailor deterrence

to specific adversaries. For example, it called for the development of nuclear warheads with smaller yields for U.S. submarines to counter new Russian lower-yield weapons. Some eminent experts, such as William Perry, a former U.S. secretary of defense, and George Shultz, a former U.S. secretary of state, have criticized this step as making nuclear war more likely. But the logic of deterrence suggests the opposite is true. By enabling a limited and smaller-scale U.S. nuclear response, lower-yield weapons would enhance the credibility of a U.S. threat to retaliate and thus make aggression by Russia less likely.

The Trump administration, however, missed an opportunity by neglecting to call for the broader development of more lower-yield nuclear warheads and advanced conventional weapons to reduce the collateral damage in a future conflict with a proliferator. Such weapons would make U.S. deterrence both more ethical and more effective—more ethical because they could be used to kill only the leaders and military personnel responsible for acts of aggression, and more effective because they would make the possibility of U.S. retaliation inherently more credible.

THE NUCLEAR NECESSITY PRINCIPLE

Washington should always prefer conventional military options over nuclear ones. Yet as long as the United States possesses nuclear weapons, it must have war plans for how to use them when necessary. Such plans should always conform to the laws of armed conflict and the just war principles of never deliberately targeting noncombatants, adjusting the use of force in proportion to the threat, and doing everything feasible to spare the lives of innocent civilians.

In an era of nuclear-armed personalist dictators, the United States should adopt what the arms control expert Jeffrey Lewis and I have termed "the nuclear necessity principle." Washington should not aim nuclear weapons against any target that could be effectively destroyed with conventional weapons. And if the U.S. military does determine that it needs to attack a target that is so deeply buried or otherwise hardened that it cannot be destroyed with conventional weapons, it should use the lowest-yield nuclear weapon possible to accomplish the mission.

The historian Alex Wellerstein has developed a website called NUKEMAP that allows users to estimate the civilian fatalities that would result from a nuclear strike anywhere in the world (not including the longer-term deaths that would result from radioactive fallout). NUKEMAP bases its results on data from the 1945 attack in which the United States dropped a 15-kiloton bomb on Hiroshima, instantly killing more than 70,000 civilians. The website lets users adjust the yield of the weapon deployed in any hypothetical strike and thus grimly demonstrates the significance of lower-yield nuclear weapons. NUKEMAP can't predict whether a nuclear strike would destroy any particular target. Still, the exercise is sobering and revealing. For example, a U.S. attack with a one-megaton bomb on the North Korean command-and-control bunker near the town of Chunghwa, 20 miles from Pyongyang, would kill approximately 37,500 civilians, according to NUKEMAP, whereas a 100-kiloton weapon would immediately kill some 16,000 civilians. An attack on the

same site with a 6.5-kiloton weapon (the reported size of a new warhead that the Trump administration has proposed building) would kill around 2,900 civilians—still a terrible toll, but far lower. Using a one-megaton bomb to destroy the tunnels near Sunchon, a city 35 miles north of Pyongyang where the North Koreans have test-launched long-range missiles, would produce about 70,000 immediate civilian deaths. A 100-kiloton warhead would cause 5,700 fatalities. A 6.5-kiloton warhead would immediately kill approximately 800 civilians—again, a dreadful outcome, but far less tragic.

In addition to making U.S. deterrence more ethical, a more discriminate doctrine and the development of lower-yield weapons would allow Washington to better assure its allies that it is neither too cautious nor reckless. Developing lower-yield weapons and more clearly articulating limits on their use would also demonstrate Washington's commitment under the NPT to work in good faith toward the eventual elimination of nuclear weapons. (The Trump administration's 2018 Nuclear Posture Review conspicuously failed to mention that pledge.)

A more ethical targeting doctrine would also reduce the risk that a personalist dictator might think that the United States could be "self-deterred" by concerns about civilian deaths. In reality, the American public would likely demand vengeance if the United States or its allies were attacked even in a limited way. And Americans are quite hawkish on the use of nuclear weapons: surveys that the political scientist Benjamin Valentino and I commissioned in 2015 found that nearly 60 percent of Americans would approve of a nuclear strike against an Iranian city that would kill two million civilians in order to avoid a land war that might kill up to 20,000 American soldiers.

The final reason to support this change in U.S. nuclear doctrine is because it is the right thing to do. The arc of history should be bent, slowly but surely, toward just war doctrine.

THE WORLD AS IT IS

After the Cold War, many politicians and scholars thought that the danger of nuclear war had receded. In the years that followed, a number of states went nuclear (or tried to), but the threat of nuclear war seemed to remain far lower than it had been in the decades after World War II. In a 2009 speech in Prague, U.S. President Barack Obama renewed the United States' commitment to work toward "a world without nuclear weapons." It was a brave and lofty vision.

What a difference a decade makes. Today, thanks to North Korea's breakthrough, the world faces a future in which unpredictable, unconstrained personalist dictators might hold the fate of millions of people in their hands. The United States should remain committed to the distant goal of disarmament. But in the meantime, Washington will have to be much smarter about tailoring its nuclear arsenal and its nuclear doctrine to meet this current challenge.

Beijing's Nuclear Option

Why a U.S.-Chinese War Could Spiral Out of Control

Caitlin Talmadge

As China's power has grown in recent years, so, too, has the risk of war with the United States. Under President Xi Jinping, China has increased its political and economic pressure on Taiwan and built military installations on coral reefs in the South China Sea, fueling Washington's fears that Chinese expansionism will threaten U.S. allies and influence in the region. U.S. destroyers have transited the Taiwan Strait, to loud protests from Beijing. American policymakers have wondered aloud whether they should send an aircraft carrier through the strait as well. Chinese fighter jets have intercepted U.S. aircraft in the skies above the South China Sea. Meanwhile, U.S. President Donald Trump has brought long-simmering economic disputes to a rolling boil.

A war between the two countries remains unlikely, but the prospect of a military confrontation—resulting, for example, from a Chinese campaign against Taiwan—no longer seems as implausible as it once did. And the odds of such a confrontation going nuclear are higher than most policymakers and analysts think.

Members of China's strategic community tend to dismiss such concerns. Likewise, U.S. studies of a potential war with China often exclude nuclear weapons from the analysis entirely, treating them as basically irrelevant to the course of a conflict. Asked about the issue in 2015, Dennis Blair, the former commander of U.S. forces in the Indo-Pacific, estimated the likelihood of a U.S.-Chinese nuclear crisis as "somewhere between nil and zero."

This assurance is misguided. If deployed against China, the Pentagon's preferred style of conventional warfare would be a potential recipe for nuclear escalation. Since the end of the Cold War, the United States' signature approach to war has been simple: punch deep into enemy territory in order to rapidly knock out the opponent's key military assets at minimal cost. But the Pentagon developed this formula in wars against Afghanistan, Iraq, Libya, and Serbia, none of which was a nuclear power.

China, by contrast, not only has nuclear weapons; it has also intermingled them with its conventional military forces, making it difficult to attack one without attacking the other. This means that a major U.S. military campaign targeting China's conventional forces would likely also threaten its nuclear arsenal. Faced with such a threat, Chinese leaders could decide to use their nuclear weapons while they were still able to.

As U.S. and Chinese leaders navigate a relationship fraught with mutual suspicion, they must come to grips with the fact that a conventional war could skid into a nuclear confrontation. Although this risk is not high in absolute terms,

CAITLIN TALMADGE is Associate Professor of Security Studies at the Edmund A. Walsh School of Foreign Service at Georgetown University. This essay is adapted from "Would China Go Nuclear? Assessing the Risk of Chinese Nuclear Escalation in a Conventional War With the United States," *International Security*, Spring 2017.

Flash point: a military drill in Hualien, Taiwan, January 2018

TYRONE SIU / REUTERS

its consequences for the region and the world would be devastating. As long as the United States and China continue to pursue their current grand strategies, the risk is likely to endure. This means that leaders on both sides should dispense with the illusion that they can easily fight a limited war. They should focus instead on managing or resolving the political, economic, and military tensions that might lead to a conflict in the first place.

A NEW KIND OF THREAT

There are some reasons for optimism. For one, China has long stood out for its nonaggressive nuclear doctrine. After its first nuclear test, in 1964, China largely avoided the Cold War arms race, building a much smaller and simpler nuclear arsenal than its resources would have allowed. Chinese leaders have consistently characterized nuclear weapons as useful only for deterring nuclear aggression and coercion. Historically, this narrow purpose required only a handful of nuclear weapons that could ensure Chinese retaliation in the event of an attack. To this day, China maintains a "no first use" pledge, promising that it will never be the first to use nuclear weapons.

The prospect of a nuclear conflict can also seem like a relic of the Cold War. Back then, the United States and its allies lived in fear of a Warsaw Pact offensive rapidly overrunning Europe. NATO stood ready to use nuclear weapons first to stalemate such an attack. Both Washington and Moscow also consistently worried that their nuclear forces could be taken out in a bolt-from-the-blue nuclear strike by the other side. This mutual fear increased the risk that one superpower might rush to launch in the erroneous belief that it was already under attack. Initially, the danger of unauthorized strikes also loomed large. In the 1950s, lax safety procedures

for U.S. nuclear weapons stationed on NATO soil, as well as minimal civilian oversight of U.S. military commanders, raised a serious risk that nuclear escalation could have occurred without explicit orders from the U.S. president.

The good news is that these Cold War worries have little bearing on U.S.-Chinese relations today. Neither country could rapidly overrun the other's territory in a conventional war. Neither seems worried about a nuclear bolt from the blue. And civilian political control of nuclear weapons is relatively strong in both countries. What remains, in theory, is the comforting logic of mutual deterrence: in a war between two nuclear powers, neither side will launch a nuclear strike for fear that its enemy will respond in kind.

The bad news is that one other trigger remains: a conventional war that threatens China's nuclear arsenal. Conventional forces can threaten nuclear forces in ways that generate pressures to escalate—especially when ever more capable U.S. conventional forces face adversaries with relatively small and fragile nuclear arsenals, such as China. If U.S. operations endangered or damaged China's nuclear forces, Chinese leaders might come to think that Washington had aims beyond winning the conventional war—that it might be seeking to disable or destroy China's nuclear arsenal outright, perhaps as a prelude to regime change. In the fog of war, Beijing might reluctantly conclude that limited nuclear escalation—an initial strike small enough that it could avoid full-scale U.S. retaliation—was a viable option to defend itself.

STRAIT SHOOTERS

The most worrisome flash point for a U.S.-Chinese war is Taiwan. Beijing's long-term objective of reunifying the island with mainland China is clearly in conflict with Washington's longstanding desire to maintain the status quo in the strait. It is not difficult to imagine how this might lead to war. For example, China could decide that the political or military window for regaining control over the island was closing and launch an attack, using air and naval forces to blockade Taiwanese harbors or bombard the island. Although U.S. law does not require Washington to intervene in such a scenario, the Taiwan Relations Act states that the United States will "consider any effort to determine the future of Taiwan by other than peaceful means, including by boycotts or embargoes, a threat to the peace and security of the Western Pacific area and of grave concern to the United States." Were Washington to intervene on Taipei's behalf, the world's sole superpower and its rising competitor would find themselves in the first great-power war of the twenty-first century.

In the course of such a war, U.S. conventional military operations would likely threaten, disable, or outright eliminate some Chinese nuclear capabilities—whether doing so was Washington's stated objective or not. In fact, if the United States engaged in the style of warfare it has practiced over the last 30 years, this outcome would be all but guaranteed.

Consider submarine warfare. China could use its conventionally armed attack submarines to blockade Taiwanese harbors or bomb the island, or to attack U.S. and allied forces in the region. If that happened, the U.S. Navy would almost certainly undertake an antisubmarine campaign, which would likely threaten China's "boomers," the four nuclear-armed ballistic missile submarines that

form its naval nuclear deterrent. China's conventionally armed and nuclear-armed submarines share the same shore-based communications system; a U.S. attack on these transmitters would thus not only disrupt the activities of China's attack submarine force but also cut off its boomers from contact with Beijing, leaving Chinese leaders unsure of the fate of their naval nuclear force. In addition, nuclear ballistic missile submarines depend on attack submarines for protection, just as lumbering bomber aircraft rely on nimble fighter jets. If the United States started sinking Chinese attack submarines, it would be sinking the very force that protects China's ballistic missile submarines, leaving the latter dramatically more vulnerable.

Even more dangerous, U.S. forces hunting Chinese attack submarines could inadvertently sink a Chinese boomer instead. After all, at least some Chinese attack submarines might be escorting ballistic missile submarines, especially in wartime, when China might flush its boomers from their ports and try to send them within range of the continental United States. Since correctly identifying targets remains one of the trickiest challenges of undersea warfare, a U.S. submarine crew might come within shooting range of a Chinese submarine without being sure of its type, especially in a crowded, noisy environment like the Taiwan Strait. Platitudes about caution are easy in peacetime. In wartime, when Chinese attack submarines might already have launched deadly strikes, the U.S. crew might decide to shoot first and ask questions later.

Adding to China's sense of vulnerability, the small size of its nuclear-armed submarine force means that just two such incidents would eliminate half of its sea-based deterrent. Meanwhile, any Chinese boomers that escaped this fate would likely be cut off from communication with onshore commanders, left without an escort force, and unable to return to destroyed ports. If that happened, China would essentially have no naval nuclear deterrent.

The situation is similar onshore, where any U.S. military campaign would have to contend with China's growing land-based conventional ballistic missile force. Much of this force is within range of Taiwan, ready to launch ballistic missiles against the island or at any allies coming to its aid. Once again, U.S. victory would hinge on the ability to degrade this conventional ballistic missile force. And once again, it would be virtually impossible to do so while leaving China's nuclear ballistic missile force unscathed. Chinese conventional and nuclear ballistic missiles are often attached to the same base headquarters, meaning that they likely share transportation and supply networks, patrol routes, and other supporting infrastructure. It is also possible that they share some command-and-control networks, or that the United States would be unable to distinguish between the conventional and nuclear networks even if they were physically separate.

To add to the challenge, some of China's ballistic missiles can carry either a conventional or a nuclear warhead, and the two versions are virtually indistinguishable to U.S. aerial surveillance. In a war, targeting the conventional variants would likely mean destroying some nuclear ones in the process. Furthermore, sending manned aircraft to attack Chinese missile launch sites and bases would require at least partial control of the airspace over

China, which in turn would require weakening Chinese air defenses. But degrading China's coastal air defense network in order to fight a conventional war would also leave much of its nuclear force without protection.

Once China was under attack, its leaders might come to fear that even intercontinental ballistic missiles located deep in the country's interior were vulnerable. For years, observers have pointed to the U.S. military's failed attempts to locate and destroy Iraqi Scud missiles during the 1990–91 Gulf War as evidence that mobile missiles are virtually impervious to attack. Therefore, the thinking goes, China could retain a nuclear deterrent no matter what harm U.S. forces inflicted on its coastal areas. Yet recent research suggests otherwise. Chinese intercontinental ballistic missiles are larger and less mobile than the Iraqi Scuds were, and they are harder to move without detection. The United States is also likely to have been tracking them much more closely in peacetime. As a result, China is unlikely to view a failed Scud hunt in Iraq nearly 30 years ago as reassurance that its residual nuclear force is safe today, especially during an ongoing, high-intensity conventional war.

China's vehement criticism of a U.S. regional missile defense system designed to guard against a potential North Korean attack already reflects these latent fears. Beijing's worry is that this system could help Washington block the handful of missiles China might launch in the aftermath of a U.S. attack on its arsenal. That sort of campaign might seem much more plausible in Beijing's eyes if a conventional war had already begun to seriously undermine other parts of China's nuclear deterrent. It does not help that China's real-time awareness of the state of its forces would probably be limited, since blinding the adversary is a standard part of the U.S. military playbook.

Put simply, the favored U.S. strategy to ensure a conventional victory would likely endanger much of China's nuclear arsenal in the process, at sea and on land. Whether the United States actually intended to target all of China's nuclear weapons would be incidental. All that would matter is that Chinese leaders would consider them threatened.

LESSONS FROM THE PAST

At that point, the question becomes, How will China react? Will it practice restraint and uphold the "no first use" pledge once its nuclear forces appear to be under attack? Or will it use those weapons while it still can, gambling that limited escalation will either halt the U.S. campaign or intimidate Washington into backing down?

Chinese writings and statements remain deliberately ambiguous on this point. It is unclear which exact set of capabilities China considers part of its core nuclear deterrent and which it considers less crucial. For example, if China already recognizes that its sea-based nuclear deterrent is relatively small and weak, then losing some of its ballistic missile submarines in a war might not prompt any radical discontinuity in its calculus.

The danger lies in wartime developments that could shift China's assumptions about U.S. intentions. If Beijing interprets the erosion of its sea- and land-based nuclear forces as a deliberate effort to destroy its nuclear deterrent, or perhaps

even as a prelude to a nuclear attack, it might see limited nuclear escalation as a way to force an end to the conflict. For example, China could use nuclear weapons to instantaneously destroy the U.S. air bases that posed the biggest threat to its arsenal. It could also launch a nuclear strike with no direct military purpose—on an unpopulated area or at sea—as a way to signal that the United States had crossed a redline.

If such escalation appears far-fetched, China's history suggests otherwise. In 1969, similar dynamics brought China to the brink of nuclear war with the Soviet Union. In early March of that year, Chinese troops ambushed Soviet guards amid rising tensions over a disputed border area. Less than two weeks later, the two countries were fighting an undeclared border war with heavy artillery and aircraft. The conflict quickly escalated beyond what Chinese leaders had expected, and before the end of March, Moscow was making thinly veiled nuclear threats to pressure China to back down.

Chinese leaders initially dismissed these warnings, only to radically upgrade their threat assessment once they learned that the Soviets had privately discussed nuclear attack plans with other countries. Moscow never intended to follow through on its nuclear threat, archives would later reveal, but Chinese leaders believed otherwise. On three separate occasions, they were convinced that a Soviet nuclear attack was imminent. Once, when Moscow sent representatives to talks in Beijing, China suspected that the plane transporting the delegation was in fact carrying nuclear weapons. Increasingly fearful, China test-fired a thermonuclear weapon in the Lop Nur desert and put its rudimentary nuclear forces on alert—a dangerous step in itself, as it increased the risk of an unauthorized or accidental launch. Only after numerous preparations for Soviet nuclear attacks that never came did Beijing finally agree to negotiations.

China is a different country today than it was in the time of Mao Zedong, but the 1969 conflict offers important lessons. China started a war in which it believed nuclear weapons would be irrelevant, even though the Soviet arsenal was several orders of magnitude larger than China's, just as the U.S. arsenal dwarfs China's today. Once the conventional war did not go as planned, the Chinese reversed their assessment of the possibility of a nuclear attack to a degree bordering on paranoia. Most worrying, China signaled that it was actually considering using its nuclear weapons, even though it had to expect devastating retaliation. Ambiguous wartime information and worst-case thinking led it to take nuclear risks it would have considered unthinkable only months earlier. This pattern could unfold again today.

KEEP THEM GUESSING

Both the United States and China can take some basic measures to reduce these dangers. More extensive dialogue and exchange—formal and informal, high level and working level, military and political—could help build relationships that might allow for backchannel de-escalation during a conflict. The two countries already have a formal military hot line in place, although it does not connect political leaders. A dedicated and tested infrastructure for senior military and political leaders to reliably and easily communicate during wartime would provide at least one off-ramp in the event of a crisis.

But better communication can only do so much for a problem that ultimately stems from military doctrine and grand strategy. Given that the United States' standard wartime playbook is likely to back China into a nuclear corner, it would be logical for Washington to consider alternative strategies that would leave China's nuclear capabilities untouched. For example, some analysts have proposed coercing China through a distant naval blockade, and others have suggested confining any U.S. campaign to air and naval operations off China's coast. The goal in both cases would be to avoid attacks on the Chinese mainland, where the bulk of Chinese nuclear forces reside.

The problem with these alternatives is that the mainland is also where the bulk of Chinese conventional capabilities are located. The United States is unlikely to voluntarily leave these capabilities intact, given its predilection for reducing its own casualties and rapidly destroying enemy forces. If China is using its mainland bases to lob ballistic missiles at U.S. troops and allies, it is hard to imagine a U.S. president ordering the military to hold back in the interest of de-escalation. U.S. allies are particularly unlikely to accept a cautious approach, as they will be more exposed to Chinese military power the longer it is left intact. No one wants a U.S.-Chinese war to go nuclear, but a U.S. campaign that avoids escalation while letting China's conventional forces turn Taiwan—not to mention Japan or South Korea—into a smoking ruin would not seem like much of a victory either.

Of course, Beijing could also take steps to ameliorate the problem, but this is just as unlikely. China has chosen to mount both conventional and nuclear warheads on the same missiles and to attach both conventional and nuclear launch brigades to the same bases. It likely sees some strategic advantage in these linkages. Precisely because these entanglements raise the prospect of nuclear escalation, Beijing may believe that they contribute to deterrence—that they will make the United States less likely to go to war in the first place.

But just as China benefits if the United States believes there is no safe way to fight a war, the United States benefits if China believes that war would result not only in China's conventional defeat but also in its nuclear disarmament. In fact, the United States might believe that this fear could give it greater leverage during a conflict and perhaps deter China from starting one at all.

In short, neither side may see much value in peacetime reassurance. Quite the opposite: they may be courting instability. If this is the case, however, then U.S. and Chinese leaders should recognize the tradeoffs inherent in their chosen policies. The threat of escalation may make war less likely, but it also makes war radically more dangerous if it does break out. This sobering reality should encourage leaders on both sides to find ways of resolving political, economic, and military disputes without resorting to a war that could rapidly turn catastrophic for the region and the world.

Lee Kuan Yew School of Public Policy

NUS National University of Singapore

BE THE MASTER OF EVERY DOMAIN

The Lee Kuan Yew School of Public Policy (LKYSPP) international affairs and public policy graduate programs prepare students for successful careers in the public, private and non-profit sectors by honing their skills in a wide variety of areas. Through this experience, students of the LKYSPP are equipped with skill sets that are adaptable enough to move them across sectors and industries but yet are deep enough to help them become experts in their respective fields. Find out how studying at the LKYSPP can help you with a head start for the future.

Acquiring Skills for a Globally Minded Career

Find out how LKYSPP's international affairs and public policy graduate programs will give you a head start for the future

WHY CHOOSE THE LEE KUAN YEW SCHOOL OF PUBLIC POLICY?

Our students are skilled in policy analysis, research and evaluation as well as in public management and leadership applicable to an ever-changing world. Our programs blend broad preparation in critical thinking, quantitative analysis, public communications, finance and management; with the discussion of Asia in world affairs.

There is no better institution than LKYSPP to debate, define and learn about Asia. This powerful combination sets our international affairs and public policy programs apart. It provides the knowledge to navigate through challenges in the workforce of the future. Graduates in these fields can analyze complex situations, see global connections, influence current and emerging actors, and solve problems within their workplaces, communities and countries.

HOW WILL IT BENEFIT ME?

A course at LKYSPP will enable you to become an agent of change. What you learn will provide you with a broad set of career options. Throughout the course you will also build skills outside the classroom through guest lectures, internships, workshops and other opportunities.

MOVERS AND SHAKERS OF THE FUTURE

Asia increasingly dominates the global economy. The need has never been greater for the world's next generation of leaders to learn about Asia in an environment where experiences are discussed, compared and analyzed.

An international affairs or public policy graduate degree will prepare you for the job market of the future.

Join us today and find out how you can change the world

https://lkyspp.sg/masterprograms

Moscow's Nuclear Enigma

What Is Russia's Arsenal Really For?

Olga Oliker

Talk to anybody in Washington (except, perhaps, the U.S. president), and you will hear an ominous mantra: the Russians are back. Moscow, resurgent, is sowing discord among Western states and trying to reestablish its sphere of influence in former Soviet countries and beyond. One development, in particular, has caused much hyperventilating in Western ministries and think tanks: the Russian Federation not only has more nuclear weapons than any other country in the world but also is investing in an arsenal of modern, low-yield nuclear weapons that could be used for limited nuclear warfare.

These investments have many analysts worried that Russia would be the first to pull the nuclear trigger in a future war, and that it would do so early on, hoping to quickly bomb its adversary into submission and end the conflict—a strategy dubbed "escalate to de-escalate." If military confrontation of any kind might push Moscow to go nuclear, preparing for war with Russia means preparing for a potential nuclear war. The United States, the thinking goes, can only defend itself and its allies by modernizing its own nuclear arsenal. Above all, Washington should develop more low-yield nuclear weapons for use on the battlefield or risk being outgunned in a future war.

But those who fret about the Russian arsenal misread the Kremlin's intentions and put forward the wrong solutions. The real danger is not a new and more aggressive Russian nuclear strategy; it is the Kremlin's failure to communicate its goals effectively to leaders in Washington and elsewhere. Russia's actual strategy has not diverged much from plain old-fashioned deterrence: Russia believes that any major war with the United States could result in a massive U.S. nuclear attack, and so it maintains a nuclear arsenal of its own in order to discourage such an attack. But its policy of deliberate ambiguity is feeding into apprehension in Washington, driving a dangerous cycle of escalation that is bound to worsen suspicions and heighten the risk that clashes will escalate.

MOVING UP THE LADDER

The Soviet Union became a nuclear power in 1949, just four years after the United States did, kicking off a dizzying arms race. For decades, each country feared that the other might develop a nuclear advantage, be it technological or numerical, that would enable it to deliver a single, lethal blow and wipe out its opponent. As a result, simply possessing nuclear weapons was not enough; each side sought parity with or—better yet—dominance over the other. As part of these efforts, the two sides built both strategic weapons, many hundreds of times as powerful as the bombs dropped on Japan in World War II, and lower-yield, shorter-range tactical nuclear weapons. Strategists argued that these tactical weapons could be used to wage a limited and controlled nuclear

OLGA OLIKER is Senior Adviser and Director of the Russia and Eurasia Program at the Center for Strategic and International Studies.

Bringing out the big guns: at a military parade in Moscow, September 2017

POOL / REUTERS

war, invoking an "escalation ladder," with many rungs on the climb up toward all-out annihilation.

But as arsenals grew large enough to wipe out humankind several times over, cooler heads began to prevail. Starting in 1972, a series of arms control agreements between Moscow and Washington enabled each side to reduce the size of its arsenal and eliminate weapons systems that the other found provocative. In a 1982 speech at the United Nations, Soviet Premier Leonid Brezhnev even announced that the Soviet Union would never be the first to use nuclear weapons in a war. At the time, much of the U.S. national security establishment dismissed this announcement as disingenuous propaganda. Yet many Russian analysts, including those in senior roles at the time, argue that in the final stretch of the Cold War, the Soviet playbook was, indeed, to go nuclear only after receiving warning of an incoming nuclear attack by the United States.

The collapse of the Soviet Union in 1991 brought new challenges to the nuclear relationship. On the one hand, with the Cold War over, both sides strengthened their commitment to arms reduction and drastically cut their arsenals. Even today, as Russia and the United States are modernizing their nuclear programs and developing new capabilities, both countries are complying with the 2010 New START treaty, which bars them from deploying more than 1,550 strategic warheads each.

On the other hand, post-Soviet Russia's nuclear strategy seemed more trigger-happy than before. In 1993, it dropped Brezhnev's "no first use" pledge, citing the weakness of its conventional military as a reason to use its nuclear arsenal as a fallback against a broader range of threats. A 1999 article by a group of Russian military analysts outlined how this might work: it argued that Russia should consider using nuclear

weapons in future regional conflicts to signal its resolve and thus convince its adversaries to back down—that it should, in today's nuclear lingo, "escalate to de-escalate." The following year, Russia updated its military doctrine to permit nuclear escalation against conventional enemy forces "in situations deemed critical to the national security of the Russian Federation."

MOSCOW MISREAD

For many Western analysts, this escalatory strategy is still—or perhaps once again—the essence of Russian nuclear strategy. The Pentagon's 2018 Nuclear Posture Review makes this assumption explicit, arguing that the United States must prepare for "limited nuclear first use" by Moscow in any potential confrontation.

The Pentagon's assessment, however, ignores Russia's actual strategy. In 2010, Russia contradicted the expectations of many experts and of some of its own officials when, instead of lowering the bar for nuclear use, it raised it. That year, it released a new military doctrine that made clear that Russia would use nuclear weapons under just two circumstances: either in response to an attack with weapons of mass destruction, nuclear or otherwise, or in the face of a conventional offensive threatening the "very existence of the state." Russia's most recent doctrine, issued in 2014, reaffirmed this language. It also emphasized the need to develop "nonnuclear" deterrence—a capacity to prevent attacks without having to threaten nuclear war.

Taken at face value, this posture is a far cry from the aggressive mindset that many Washington policymakers consider to be the core of Russia's playbook. The country's long-range ballistic missiles clearly exist first and foremost to deter a U.S. nuclear attack, just as they did in Soviet times. In the event of a war, Russia expects that the United States will unleash massive barrages of airpower to take out Russian defenses. Because the United States' nuclear strategy emphasizes the importance of quickly disabling enemy capabilities, Russian strategists also believe that the United States would seek to eliminate Russia's nuclear arsenal at the outset, using its own conventional or nuclear strategic weapons to do so. Just as the Soviet Union planned to do before it, Russia is therefore likely to launch its most vulnerable nuclear weapons systems as soon as it receives warning of an incoming U.S. attack, lest its ability to retaliate be destroyed. This posture may sound disconcerting, but it puts the bar for escalation relatively high, in line with Russian military doctrine.

Why, then, have so many U.S. and Western analysts come to a much darker conclusion about Russia's nuclear intentions? Much of the answer lies in the way Russia has developed its nuclear arsenal in recent years. Arms control treaties have capped the number of deployed strategic warheads, but they place no limits on shorter-range, lower-yield capabilities. By a conservative estimate, Russia now has 2,000 of these tactical nuclear weapons stockpiled, whereas the United States has only a few hundred. Moreover, Russia has been modernizing its tactical inventory, developing weapons systems such as the Iskander missile launcher and the Kalibr cruise missile, both of which can be armed with nuclear warheads, although they are currently being used as conventional systems.

The development of these weapons systems may seem at odds with Russia's stated strategy. In the 1950s and 1960s, tactical nuclear weapons were conceived for active warfare; their purpose was not so much to deter conflict as to help defeat or intimidate an adversary when the shooting had already begun. Many analysts believe that the same holds true today, arguing that there is no good reason for a country to maintain, let alone modernize, a large arsenal of nonstrategic nuclear weapons unless it plans on using them on the battlefield. These analysts also point out that Russian military exercises often incorporate Iskander and Kalibr weapons systems, thus suggesting that Russia will escalate a conflict by launching low-yield nuclear weapons against its enemy. But the assumption that Russian weapons systems are built for this purpose does not hold up. Because these new weapons systems can deliver both conventional and nuclear warheads, one could just as easily argue that the exercises involving them are merely rehearsals for a conventional war.

Some analysts argue that recent changes to Moscow's military doctrine signal a shift toward the "escalate to de-escalate" strategy. Specifically, they point to Russia's 2017 naval doctrine, where one convoluted sentence notes that being ready and willing to use nonstrategic nuclear weapons in an escalating conflict can successfully deter an enemy. At first glance, this looks like an explicit threat to cross the nuclear threshold. Yet analysts may be reading too much into the text. The clear-cut reference to escalation is noteworthy, but the naval doctrine does not state that Russia would be the first to cross that threshold. As such, the line does not necessarily clash with the more restrained approach to deterrence outlined in other Russian documents.

Moreover, if "escalate to de-escalate" were Russia's new guiding strategy, it would be odd for this shift away from the 2014 position to be tucked away inside a tangled passage of its naval doctrine. If Moscow sought to strengthen its deterrence capabilities by lowering the bar for nuclear use, one would expect it to broadcast this change loud and clear. It might, for instance, make a public announcement that from now on, Russia would use nuclear weapons whenever it deemed it necessary. By contrast, a muted announcement would risk making an adversary more sanguine about the probable costs of war, encouraging, rather than deterring, an attack.

Western analysts accusing Russia of nuclear brinkmanship misread its public statements. Granted, lower-level Russian officials and pundits have made rather liberal use of hyperbole in their nuclear threats against NATO members and other countries. It is also true that new nuclear-capable weapons systems are a point of pride for the country. In a speech to parliament in March, for example, Russian President Vladimir Putin emphasized the country's nuclear modernization efforts and its new, exotic weapons. But in the same speech, Putin explained that Russia's newest strategic weapons could overcome U.S. missile defenses, a capacity that would be relevant only if Russia were retaliating, not attacking. Putin later affirmed that Russia would use nuclear weapons only if a U.S. attack were imminent or had already occurred—further confirming that Russia's arsenal is for deterrence, not escalation.

NUCLEAR MIND GAMES

Even though the evidence suggests that Russia does not have a strategy of using nuclear weapons early on in a conventional conflict, there's a reason this view has become predominant among outside observers. The Russian government has refused to clearly explain the exact purpose of its tactical nuclear weapons—a deliberate ambiguity that is probably intended to increase deterrence but in fact only heightens the risks of escalation.

Until about a decade ago, Russia's stocks of nonstrategic nuclear weapons and dual-use systems had largely fallen by the wayside. It was only after Western analysts noted the nuclear capabilities of Iskander missile launchers that Russian rhetoric began emphasizing such capabilities. This suggests that Russia may value the nuclear element of these systems because they make its adversaries nervous. There is little reason to have a stated policy that precludes going nuclear if one in fact plans to use nuclear weapons, but there is a logic to a nuclear strategy that keeps an adversary guessing. Moscow may be using its nonstrategic capabilities to plant seeds of doubt in the minds of the United States and its allies. If this leads to a more cautious U.S. policy toward Russia, then Russia has strengthened its deterrent. Moscow's nuclear strategy may owe something to the national security scholar Thomas Schelling's concept of "the threat that leaves something to chance": if you can convince your adversaries that the worst-case scenario, however unlikely, is at all possible, they will think twice about attacking you.

But a strategy of ambiguity is not one of "escalate to de-escalate." After all, the premise of the latter is that the Kremlin thinks a confrontation with the United States—even a nuclear one—could stay limited and that limited nuclear escalation in such a scenario would play out in Russia's favor. Yet most Russian strategists do not believe that such a conflict would ever be limited in scope: having studied how the Pentagon fights its wars, they expect that a military clash with the United States would almost certainly lead to, if not begin with, a large-scale attack on Russia, including an early strike on its nuclear capabilities. If Russia thought such an attack was imminent or under way, it would certainly consider going nuclear. For Moscow, this is fully in line with its doctrine.

The bottom line is that Russian leaders see a possible conflict with the United States not as a limited skirmish but as the prelude to the potential destruction of their country—what Putin has called "a world without Russia." To prevent this from happening, the Kremlin retains the capabilities needed to wage an earth-destroying retaliatory campaign. Against this background, Russia may indeed be developing tactical nuclear weapons and dual-use systems. Yet these are not part of a plan to escalate and quickly win a war. They are meant to send a strong signal to the United States about the dangers of starting one in the first place.

KEEP CALM

This ambiguity is backfiring. Russia's emphasis on dual-capable weapons may be intended to strengthen deterrence, but it undermines it in practice. Rather than deterring the United States, this ambiguity has led U.S. policymakers to interpret Russian posturing and rhetoric as a lowered bar for the use of nuclear weapons in any kind of conflict. And since Pentagon officials view any ability by

Russia to change their decision-making calculus as a threat in and of itself, their response has not been to back off and reduce tensions; it has been to consider developing more low-yield nuclear weapons of their own, as discussed in the Pentagon's most recent Nuclear Posture Review. If Russia wants to reduce the risk of nuclear war, it needs to make its doctrine clearer and ensure that the weapons it deploys match that doctrine.

The United States, meanwhile, should be careful not to overreact in the face of Russian posturing. The prevailing view in the Trump administration is that if Russia is developing tactical nuclear weapons, the United States must show that it is willing to do the same. But the underlying logic that smaller nuclear weapons mean that a nuclear war could be controlled is deeply flawed and dangerous. As long as one or both sides in such a conflict feel that their survival is at stake—which Russia would certainly assume—a U.S. playbook that relies more and more on nuclear weapons, no matter how low yield, would have disastrous consequences.

If the United States truly wants to avoid the worst, it should work to ensure that any future clashes with Russia stay out of the nuclear realm altogether. To do this, it must emphasize, through its force posture, planning, and stated policy, those capabilities that have long made Russia jittery: American advanced conventional systems. This is because, contrary to hawkish narratives in Washington, Russia fears the consequences of crossing the nuclear threshold and is therefore unlikely to take that step in any but the most extreme of circumstances. Greater U.S. emphasis on conventional weapons would not eliminate the possibility that Russia might launch a nuclear weapon if it believed itself to be under attack, whether with conventional or nuclear weapons. It would, however, help deter any aggressive Russian action in eastern Europe or elsewhere, thus addressing one of the biggest fears among NATO member states. And it would shift Russian incentives and encourage Moscow to focus on strengthening its own conventional capabilities, creating more nonnuclear rungs on the escalation ladder.

The more the United States highlights nuclear weapons in its posture, planning, and rhetoric, on the other hand, the more Russia will come to rely on them as crucial defensive and coercive tools. Blurring the lines between conventional and nuclear warfare may serve the purpose of deterrence if all parties involved understand one another's reasoning and signals, or interpret them as threatening the very worst, but both Moscow and Washington fall short on the first, and on the second, Moscow's posture is proving counterproductive. Unless policymakers on both sides come to understand this, they are following a path that could lead to unthinkable consequences.

ADVANCING YOUR *CAREER*, ADVANCING OUR *WORLD*

Scripps Pier at UC San Diego

Discover our degrees in International Affairs & Public Policy

The UC San Diego School of Global Policy and Strategy provides analytical training for the next generation of policymakers, using the latest science and technology to solve the world's greatest challenges.

30 YEARS School of GLOBAL POLICY & STRATEGY

gps.ucsd.edu

UC San Diego

ESSAYS

EDGAR SU / REUTERS

Confronting Iran

The Trump Administration's Strategy

Michael R. Pompeo

The end of the Cold War forced new thinking among policymakers and analysts about the greatest challenges to U.S. national security. The emergence of al Qaeda, cybercriminals, and other dangerous entities affirmed the threat of nonstate actors. But equally daunting has been the resurgence of outlaw regimes—rogue states that defy international norms, fail to respect human rights and fundamental freedoms, and act against the security of the American people, U.S. allies and partners, and the rest of the world.

Chief among these outlaw regimes are North Korea and Iran. Their transgressions against international peace are many, but both nations are most notorious for having spent decades pursuing nuclear weapons programs in violation of international prohibitions. Despite Washington's best efforts at diplomacy, Pyongyang hoodwinked U.S. policymakers with a string of broken arms control agreements going back to the George H. W. Bush administration. North Korea's nuclear weapons and ballistic missile programs continued apace, to the point where after Donald Trump was elected, President Barack Obama told him that this would be his greatest national security challenge. With Iran, likewise, the deal that the Obama administration struck in 2015—the Joint Comprehensive Plan of Action, or JCPOA—failed to end the country's nuclear ambitions. In fact, because Iran knew that the Obama administration would prioritize preserving the deal over everything else, the JCPOA created a sense of impunity on the part of the regime, allowing it to increase its support for malign activity. The deal has also given Tehran piles of money, which the supreme leader has used to sponsor all types of terrorism throughout the Middle East (with few consequences in response) and which have boosted

MICHAEL R. POMPEO is U.S. Secretary of State.

the economic fortunes of a regime that remains bent on exporting its revolution abroad and imposing it at home.

That the threats from North Korea and Iran grew in the post–Iraq war era has further complicated the question of how best to counteract them; Americans are rightly skeptical of the costs of a protracted military commitment in the name of protection from weapons of mass destruction. With the difficulties of Iraq fresh in mind, and with previous agreements to restrain the threats from North Korea and Iran having proved impotent, stopping these recalcitrant regimes from doing harm demands new diplomatic paradigms.

Enter President Trump. For all of the Washington establishment's fretting over his style of international engagement, his diplomacy is anchored in a deliberate approach that gives the United States an advantage in confronting outlaw regimes.

THE TRUMP DOCTRINE

Both on the campaign trail and in office, President Trump has been clear about the need for bold American leadership to put the United States' security interests first. This commonsense principle reverses the Obama administration's preferred posture of "leading from behind," an accommodationist strategy that incorrectly signaled diminished American power and influence. Leading from behind made North Korea a greater threat today than ever before. Leading from behind at best only delayed Iran's pursuit of becoming a nuclear power, while allowing the Islamic Republic's malign influence and terror threat to grow.

Today, both North Korea and Iran have been put on notice that the United States will not allow their destabilizing activities to go unchecked. The aggressive multinational pressure campaign that the United States has led against North Korea, combined with the president's clear and unequivocal statements that the United States will defend its vital interests with force if necessary, created the conditions for the talks that culminated in President Trump's summit with Chairman Kim Jong Un in Singapore this past June. It was there that Chairman Kim committed to the final, fully verified denuclearization of North Korea. North Korea has made similar commitments in the past, but unlike those, this was the first time there was a personal, leader-to-leader commitment on denuclearization. That may or may not signal a major strategic shift on the part of Chairman Kim, and

we have much work to do to gauge his intentions and make sure his commitment is implemented. But President Trump's approach has created an opportunity to peacefully resolve an issue of vital national security that has long vexed policymakers. The president, our special representative for North Korea (Stephen Biegun), and I will continue to work with clear eyes to seize this opportunity.

With Iran, similarly, the Trump administration is pursuing a "maximum pressure" campaign designed to choke off revenues that the regime—and particularly the Islamic Revolutionary Guard Corps (IRGC), part of Iran's military that is directly beholden to the supreme leader—uses to fund violence through Hezbollah in Lebanon, Hamas in the Palestinian territories, the Assad regime in Syria, the Houthi rebels in Yemen, Shiite militias in Iraq, and its own agents covertly plotting around the world.

Yet President Trump does not want another long-term U.S. military engagement in the Middle East—or in any other region, for that matter. He has spoken openly about the dreadful consequences of the 2003 invasion of Iraq and the 2011 intervention in Libya. Pundits may gin up fear over the idea that this administration will get the United States into a war, but it is clear that Americans have a president who, while not afraid to use military power (just ask the Islamic State, the Taliban, or the Assad regime), is not eager to use it, either. Overwhelming military force will always be a backstop for protecting the American people, but it should not be the first option.

North Korea and Iran have been put on notice that the United States will not allow their destabilizing activities to go unchecked.

Another important aspect of the president's diplomacy is his willingness to talk to the United States' staunchest adversaries. As he said in July, "Diplomacy and engagement is preferable to conflict and hostility." Consider his approach to North Korea: his diplomacy with Chairman Kim diffused tensions that were escalating by the day.

Complementing the president's willingness to engage is his instinctual aversion to bad deals. His understanding of the importance of leverage in any negotiation eliminates the potential for deeply counterproductive agreements like the JCPOA. He is willing to forge agreements with U.S. rivals, but he is also comfortable walking away from negotiations if they don't end up furthering U.S. interests. This is in stark con-

trast to the Obama administration's approach to the JCPOA, in which the deal itself became an objective to be obtained at all costs.

When considering a future North Korea deal that is superior to the JCPOA, we have described our objective as "the final, fully verified denuclearization of the Korean Peninsula, as agreed to by Chairman Kim Jong Un." "Final" means that there will be no possibility that North Korea will ever restart its weapons of mass destruction and ballistic missile programs—something the JCPOA did not provide for with Iran. "Fully verified" means that there will be stronger verification standards than were required under the JCPOA, which, among other weaknesses, did not require inspections at key Iranian military facilities. The exact contours of a North Korea agreement remain to be negotiated, but "final" and "fully verified" are centerpieces on which we will not compromise.

THE IRANIAN THREAT

President Trump's commitment to the American people's security, combined with his aversion to the unnecessary use of military force and his willingness to talk to adversaries, has provided a new framework for confronting outlaw regimes. And today, no regime has more of an outlaw character than that of Iran. That has been the case since 1979, when a relatively small cadre of Islamic revolutionaries seized power. The regime's revolutionary mindset has motivated its actions ever since—in fact, soon after its founding, the IRGC created the Quds Force, its elite special forces unit, and tasked it with exporting the revolution abroad. Ever since, regime officials have subordinated all other domestic and international responsibilities, including their obligations to the Iranian people, to fulfilling the revolution.

As a result, over the past four decades, the regime has sown a great deal of destruction and instability, bad behavior that did not end with the JCPOA. The deal did not permanently prevent Iran's pursuit of a nuclear weapon—indeed, the statement in April by Iran's top nuclear official that the country could restart its nuclear program in days suggests that it may not have delayed that program very much at all. Nor did the deal curtail Iran's violent and destabilizing activity in Afghanistan, Iraq, Lebanon, Syria, Yemen, and Gaza. Iran still supplies the Houthis with missiles that are fired at Saudi Arabia, supports Hamas' attacks on Israel, and recruits impressionable Afghan, Iraqi, and Pakistani youth to fight and die in Syria. Thanks to Iranian subsidies,

the average Lebanese Hezbollah fighter earns two or three times per month what a fireman in Tehran brings home.

In May 2018, President Trump withdrew from the nuclear deal because it was clearly not protecting the national security interests of the United States or our allies and partners, nor was it making Iran behave like a normal country. In July, an Iranian diplomat based in Vienna was arrested for supplying explosives to terrorists seeking to bomb a political rally in France. It is telling that while Iran's leaders try to convince Europe to stay in the nuclear deal, they are covertly plotting terrorist attacks in the heart of the continent. Taken together, Iran's actions have made the country a pariah, much to the despair of its own people.

THE PRESSURE CAMPAIGN

In place of the Iran nuclear deal, President Trump has initiated a multi-pronged pressure campaign. Its first component is economic sanctions. The president recognizes the power of sanctions to squeeze the regime while incurring a low opportunity cost for the United States. Under the Trump administration, the United States has imposed 17 rounds of Iran-related sanctions, targeting 147 Iran-related individuals and entities.

The goal of these aggressive sanctions is to force the Iranian regime to make a choice: whether to cease or persist in the policies that triggered the measures in the first place. Iran's decision to continue its destructive activity has already had grave economic consequences, which have been exacerbated by officials' gross mismanagement in pursuit of their own self-interests. Extensive meddling in the economy by the IRGC, under the guise of privatization, makes doing business in Iran a losing proposition, and foreign investors never know whether they are facilitating commerce or terrorism. Instead of using what wealth the JCPOA has generated to boost the material well-being of the Iranian people, the regime has parasitically consumed it and shelled out billions in subsidies for dictators, terrorists, and rogue militias. Iranians are understandably frustrated. The rial's value has collapsed in the past year. A third of Iranian youth are unemployed. Unpaid wages are leading to rampant strikes. Fuel and water shortages are common.

This malaise is a problem of the regime's own making. Iran's elite resembles a Mafia in its racketeering and corruption. Two years ago, Iranians rightfully erupted in anger when leaked pay stubs showed massive amounts of money inexplicably flowing into the bank accounts of senior government officials. For years, clerics and officials have

wrapped themselves in the cloak of religion while robbing the Iranian people blind. Today, protesters chant to the regime, "You have plundered us in the name of religion." According to the London-based newspaper *Kayhan*, Ayatollah Sadeq Larijani, the head of Iran's judiciary, who the United States sanctioned this year for human rights abuses, is worth at least $300 million, thanks to the embezzlement of public funds. Nasser Makarem Shirazi, a grand ayatollah, is also worth many millions of dollars. He became known as "the Sultan of Sugar" for having pressured the Iranian government to lower subsidies to domestic sugar producers while flooding the market with his own, more expensive imported sugar. This type of activity puts ordinary Iranians out of work. Ayatollah Mohammad Emami Kashani, one of the leaders of Friday prayers in Tehran for the last 30 years, had the government transfer several lucrative mines to his personal foundation. He, too, is now worth millions. The corruption goes all the way to the top. Iran's supreme leader, Ayatollah Ali Khamenei, has his own personal, off-the-books hedge fund called the Setad, which is worth $95 billion. That untaxed and ill-gotten wealth, often earned by expropriating the assets of political and religious minorities, is used as a slush fund for the IRGC. In other words, Iran's leading holy man captains the kind of plundering characteristic of Third World strongmen.

The regime's greed has created a chasm between the people of Iran and their leaders, making it difficult for officials to credibly persuade young Iranians to be the vanguard of the next generation of the revolution. The theocratic ayatollahs can preach "Death to Israel" and "Death to America" day and night, but they cannot mask their rank hypocrisy. Mohammad Javad Zarif, Iran's foreign minister, has degrees from San Francisco State University and the University of Denver, and Ali Akbar Velayati, the supreme leader's top adviser, studied at Johns Hopkins University. Khamenei himself is chauffeured around in a BMW, even as he calls for the Iranian people to buy goods made in Iran. This phenomenon is similar to what occurred in the Soviet Union in the 1970s and 1980s, when the spirit of 1917 began to ring hollow on account of the hypocrisy of its champions. The Politburo could no longer with a straight face tell Soviet citizens to embrace communism when Soviet officials were themselves secretly peddling smuggled blue jeans and Beatles records.

Iran's leaders—especially those at the top of the IRGC, such as Qasem Soleimani, the head of the Quds Force—must be made to feel the painful consequences of their violence and corruption. Given that the regime

is controlled by a desire for self-enrichment and a revolutionary ideology from which it will not easily depart, sanctions must be severe if they are to change entrenched habits. That's why the Trump administration is reimposing U.S. sanctions that were lifted or waived as part of the nuclear deal; the first of these went back into effect on August 7, with the remainder coming back on November 5. We intend to get global imports of Iranian crude oil as close to zero as possible by November 4. As part of our campaign to crush the Iranian regime's terrorist financing, we have also worked with the United Arab Emirates to disrupt a currency exchange network that was transferring millions of dollars to the Quds Force. The United States is asking every nation that is sick and tired of the Islamic Republic's destructive behavior to stand up for the Iranian people and join our pressure campaign. Our efforts will be ably led by our new special representative for Iran, Brian Hook.

The United States will continue its pressure campaign until Iran demonstrates tangible and sustained shifts in its policies.

Economic pressure is one part of the U.S. campaign. Deterrence is another. President Trump believes in clear measures to discourage Iran from restarting its nuclear program or continuing its other malign activities. With Iran and other countries, he has made it clear that he will not tolerate attempts to bully the United States; he will punch back hard if U.S. security is threatened. Chairman Kim has felt this pressure, and he would never have come to the table in Singapore without it. The president's own public communications themselves function as a deterrence mechanism. The all-caps tweet he directed at Iranian President Hassan Rouhani in July, in which he instructed Iran to stop threatening the United States, was informed by a strategic calculation: the Iranian regime understands and fears the United States' military might. In September, militias in Iraq launched life-threatening rocket attacks against the U.S. embassy compound in Baghdad and the U.S. consulate in Basra. Iran did not stop these attacks, which were carried out by proxies it has supported with funding, training, and weapons. The United States will hold the regime in Tehran accountable for any attack that results in injury to our personnel or damage to our facilities. America will respond swiftly and decisively in defense of American lives.

We do not seek war. But we must make painfully clear that escalation is a losing proposition for Iran; the Islamic Republic cannot match

How will you change the world?

#1 Master's Program* in International Affairs

Studying in the nation's capital offers unparalleled access to scholars and practitioners actively engaged in developing solutions to complex global problems. When you join Georgetown's extensive alumni community, which spans the globe and includes leaders in the public, private, and non-profit sectors, you are preparing to make a difference.

Join the legacy, change the world.

THEMATIC FOCUSES

- *Master of Science in Foreign Service*
- *Master of Arts in Security Studies*
- *Master of Global Human Development*

REGIONAL FOCUSES

- *Master of Arts in Arab Studies*
- *Master of Arts in Asian Studies*
- *Master of Arts in Eurasian, Russian and East European Studies*
- *Master of Arts in German and European Studies*
- *Master of Arts in Latin American Studies*

SFS | GEORGETOWN UNIVERSITY
Walsh School of Foreign Service

SFS.GEORGETOWN.EDU

**Ranking according to Foreign Policy Magazine February 2018. IMAGE ATTRIBUTIONS: "Expo Flags" by Cesarexpo, "US Capitol Building" by Citypeek, and "Self-portait" by Cindy Gao.*

the United States' military prowess, and we are not afraid to let Iran's leaders know it.

IRAN EXPOSED

Another critical component of the U.S. pressure campaign against Iran is a commitment to exposing the regime's brutality. Outlaw authoritarian regimes fear nothing more than having the lid blown off their true workings. The Trump administration will continue to reveal the regime's illicit revenue streams, malign activities, crooked self-dealing, and savage oppression. The Iranian people themselves deserve to know the grotesque level of self-interest that fuels the regime's actions. Khamenei and his ilk would not be able to tolerate the domestic and international outrage that would ensue if everything they were up to came to light. Beginning last year, protesters have taken to the street saying, "Leave Syria, think about us!" and "The people are paupers while the mullahs live like gods!" The United States stands with the Iranian people.

U.S. President Ronald Reagan understood the power of exposure when he cast the Soviet Union as "an evil empire." By throwing a spotlight on the regime's abuses, he was pledging solidarity with a people who had long suffered under communism. It is likewise for the sake of the Iranian people that the Trump administration has not been afraid to expose the regime's merciless domestic repression. The regime is so wedded to certain ideological principles—including the export of the Islamic Revolution through proxy warfare and the subversion of fellow Muslim-majority countries, implacable opposition to Israel and the United States, and stringent social controls that restrict the rights of women—that it cannot endure any competing ideas. Hence, it has for decades denied its own people human rights, dignity, and fundamental freedoms. That is why in May, for example, Iranian police arrested Maedeh Hojabri, a teenage gymnast, for posting an Instagram video of herself dancing.

The regime's views on women are particularly retrograde. Since the revolution, women have been required to wear the hijab, and as enforcement, government morality police beat women in the streets and arrest those who refuse to comply. Recent protests against this policy on female dress show that it has failed, and Khamenei surely must know it. Yet in July, an activist was sentenced to 20 years in prison for removing her hijab.

The regime also regularly arrests religious or ethnic minorities, including Bahais, Christians, and Gonabadi dervishes, when they

speak out in support of their rights. Untold numbers of Iranians are tortured and die in Evin Prison—a place no kinder than the basement of the Lubyanka, the dreaded headquarters of the KGB. Those imprisoned include several innocent Americans detained on spurious charges, victims of the regime's use of hostage taking as a tool of foreign policy.

Beginning last December, demonstrators took to the streets of Tehran, Karaj, Isfahan, Arak, and many other cities to peacefully call for a better life. In response, the regime welcomed in the new year in January by arbitrarily arresting up to 5,000 of them. Hundreds reportedly remain behind bars, and more than a dozen are dead at the hands of their own government. The leaders cynically call these deaths suicide.

It is in keeping with the character of the United States that we expose these abuses. As President Reagan said in a speech at Moscow State University in 1988, "Freedom is the recognition that no single person, no single authority or government, has a monopoly on the truth, but that every individual life is infinitely precious, that every one of us put on this world has been put there for a reason and has something to offer." In May, the Trump administration enumerated 12 areas in which Iran must make progress if there is to be any change in our relationship, including fully halting its uranium enrichment, providing a full account of the prior military dimensions of its nuclear program, ending its proliferation of ballistic missiles and provocative missile launches, releasing imprisoned U.S. citizens, ending its support for terrorism, and more.

President Trump has made clear that the pressure will only increase if Iran does not live up to the standards the United States and its partners and allies—and the Iranian people themselves—want to see. That is why Washington is also demanding that Tehran make substantial improvements on human rights. As the president has consistently said, he remains open to talks. But as is the case with North Korea, the United States will continue its pressure campaign until Iran demonstrates tangible and sustained shifts in its policies. If Iran makes those shifts, the possibility of a new comprehensive agreement will greatly increase. We think a deal with the regime is possible. In the absence of one, Iran will face increasing costs for all its reckless and violent activity around the world.

President Trump prefers not to conduct this campaign alone; he wants U.S. allies and partners on board. Indeed, other countries already

share a common understanding of the threat Iran poses beyond its nuclear aspirations. French President Emmanuel Macron has said, "It is important to remain firm with Iran over its regional activities and its ballistic program"; British Prime Minister Theresa May has said that she is "clear-eyed about the threat that Iran poses to the Gulf and the wider Middle East." This widespread agreement about the Iranian threat leaves no room for countries to remain ambivalent about whether to join the global effort to change Iran's behavior, an effort that is big and getting bigger.

THE POWER OF MORAL CLARITY

President Trump inherited a world in some ways as dangerous as the one faced by the United States on the eve of World War I, the one right before World War II, or that during the height of the Cold War. But his disruptive boldness, first on North Korea and now on Iran, has shown how much progress can be made by marrying clarity of conviction with an emphasis on nuclear nonproliferation and strong alliances. President Trump's actions in confronting outlaw regimes stem from the belief that moral confrontation leads to diplomatic conciliation.

This was the blueprint for one of the great foreign policy triumphs of the last century: the American victory in the Cold War. In the first week of his presidency, President Reagan described Soviet leaders, saying, "The only morality they recognize is what will further their cause, meaning they reserve unto themselves the right to commit any crime, to lie, to cheat." Foreign policy analysts derided his comments, believing their candor would hinder progress toward peace. But the president had also emphasized a commitment to negotiate with the Soviets, a fact that went largely ignored. President Reagan's combination of moral clarity and diplomatic acuity laid the groundwork for the 1986 talks in Reykjavik and, later, the downfall of Soviet communism itself.

Those who still bow to the same totemic conviction that candor impedes negotiations must recognize the effect that targeted rhetorical and practical pressure have had—and are having—on outlaw regimes. At the rate that the Iranian economy is declining and protests are intensifying, it should be clear to the Iranian leadership that negotiations are the best way forward.

NORWICH UNIVERSITY Online

1819
Norwich becomes the nation's first private military college.

1887
First Commandant and Professor of Military Science and Tactics assigned to Norwich by the United States government.

1916
Norwich made a Senior Division, Cavalry Unit, of the Reserve Officer Training Corps.

1987
Norwich founds the nation's first Peace Corps Preparatory Program.

2003
Online Master of Arts in Diplomacy program launched
Learn to navigate international economics, law, and the cultural complexities that define diplomacy in the 21st century.

2015
Online Master of Arts in International Relations program launched
Learn to examine real-world issues through a global lens to develop clear perspectives on international issues, global leadership and conflict resolution.

OUR LEGACY STARTED IN 1819.
YOURS STARTS NOW.

Graduate in as few as 18 months | No GRE | 15:1 student to faculty ratio

graduate.norwich.edu/ForeignAffairs

Return to Table of Contents

The Committee to Save the World Order

America's Allies Must Step Up as America Steps Down

Ivo H. Daalder and James M. Lindsay

The order that has structured international politics since the end of World War II is fracturing. Many of the culprits are obvious. Revisionist powers, such as China and Russia, want to reshape global rules to their own advantage. Emerging powers, such as Brazil and India, embrace the perks of great-power status but shun the responsibilities that come with it. Rejectionist powers, such as Iran and North Korea, defy rules set by others. Meanwhile, international institutions, such as the UN, struggle to address problems that multiply faster than they can be resolved.

The newest culprit, however, is a surprise: the United States, the very country that championed the order's creation. Seventy years after U.S. President Harry Truman sketched the blueprint for a rules-based international order to prevent the dog-eat-dog geopolitical competition that triggered World War II, U.S. President Donald Trump has upended it. He has raised doubts about Washington's security commitments to its allies, challenged the fundamentals of the global trading regime, abandoned the promotion of freedom and democracy as defining features of U.S. foreign policy, and abdicated global leadership.

IVO H. DAALDER is President of the Chicago Council on Global Affairs and served as U.S. Ambassador to NATO from 2009 to 2013.

JAMES M. LINDSAY is Senior Vice President, Director of Studies, and Maurice R. Greenberg Chair at the Council on Foreign Relations.

Grownups of the world, unite: at the G-7 summit in Quebec, June 2018

LEAH MILLIS / REUTERS

Trump's hostility toward the United States' own geopolitical invention has shocked many of Washington's friends and allies. Their early hopes that he might abandon his campaign rhetoric once in office and embrace a more traditional foreign policy have been dashed. As Trump has jettisoned old ways of doing business, allies have worked their way through the initial stages of grief: denial, anger, bargaining, and depression. In the typical progression, acceptance should come next.

But the story does not have to end that way. The major allies of the United States can leverage their collective economic and military might to save the liberal world order. France, Germany, Italy, the United Kingdom, and the EU in Europe; Australia, Japan, and South Korea in Asia; and Canada in North America are the obvious candidates to supply the leadership that the Trump administration will not. Together, they represent the largest economic power in the world, and their collective military capabilities are surpassed only by those of the United States. This "G-9" should have two imperatives: maintain the rules-based order in the hope that Trump's successor will reclaim Washington's global leadership role and lay the groundwork to make it politically possible for that to happen. This holding action will require

every member of the G-9 to take on greater global responsibilities. They all are capable of doing so; they need only summon the will.

Economic cooperation is a good place to start, and G-9 members are already creating alternatives to the trade deals Trump is abandoning. But they will have to go further, increasing military cooperation and defense spending and using a variety of tools at their disposal to take over the U.S. role as the defender and promoter of democracy, freedom, and human rights across the globe. If they seize this opportunity, the G-9 countries will not just slow the erosion of an order that has served them and the world well for decades; they will also set the stage for the return of the kind of American leadership they want and that the long-term survival of the order demands. Indeed, by acting now, the G-9 will lay the basis for a more stable and enduring world order—one that is better suited to the power relations of today and tomorrow than to those of yesterday, when the United States was the undisputed global power.

THE WORLD AMERICA MADE

The emergence of a rules-based order was not an inevitability but the result of deliberate choices. Looking to avoid the mistakes the United States made after World War I, Truman and his successors built an order based on collective security, open markets, and democracy. It was a radical strategy that valued cooperation over competition: countries willing to follow the lead of the United States would flourish, and as they did, so, too, would the United States.

"The world America made," as the historian Robert Kagan has put it, was never perfect. During the Cold War, the reach of American influence was small. The United States at times ignored its own lofty rhetoric to pursue narrow interests or misguided policies. But for all its shortcomings, the postwar order was a historic success. Europe and Japan were rebuilt. The reach of freedom and democracy was extended. And with the collapse of the Soviet Union, the U.S.-led postwar order was suddenly open to all.

But that success also created new stresses. The rapid growth in the movement of goods, money, people, and ideas across borders as more countries joined the rules-based order produced new problems, such as climate change and mass migration, that national governments have struggled to handle. Economic and political power dispersed as countries such as Brazil, China, and India embraced open markets, complicating

efforts to find common ground on trade, terrorism, and a host of other issues. Iran and Russia recoiled as the U.S.-led order encroached on their traditional spheres of interest. And the U.S. invasion of Iraq in 2003 and the global financial crisis of 2007–8 raised doubts about the quality and direction of U.S. leadership.

Upon leaving office in 2017, U.S. President Barack Obama urged his successor to embrace the indispensability of U.S. leadership. "It's up to us, through action and example, to sustain the international order that's expanded steadily since the end of the Cold War, and upon which our own wealth and safety depend," he wrote in a note he left in the Oval Office. Trump took the opposite approach. He had campaigned on a platform that global leadership was the source of the United States' problems, not a solution to them. He argued that friends and allies had played Washington for a sucker, free-riding on its military might while using multilateral trade deals to steal American jobs.

For all its shortcomings, the postwar order was a historic success.

At the start of Trump's tenure, his selection of proponents of mainstream foreign policy, such as James Mattis as secretary of defense and Rex Tillerson as secretary of state, for top national security jobs spurred hopes at home and abroad that he would temper his "America first" vision. But by withdrawing from the Trans-Pacific Partnership (TPP), the Paris agreement on climate change, and the Iran nuclear deal; embracing mercantilist trade policies; and continuing to question the value of NATO, Trump has shown that he said what he meant and meant what he said. He is not looking to reinvigorate the rules-based order by leading friends and allies in a common cause. They are the foes he wants to beat.

Trump's preference for competition over cooperation reflects his belief that the United States will fare better than other countries in a world in which the strong are free to do as they will. But he fails to understand that doing better than others is not the same as doing well. In fact, he is forfeiting the many advantages the United States has derived from the world it created: the support of strong and capable allies that follow its lead, the ability to shape global rules to its advantage, and the admiration and trust that come from standing up for freedom, democracy, and human rights.

Worse, by alienating allies and embracing adversaries, Trump is providing an opening for China to rewrite the rules of the global order in

its favor. "As the U.S. retreats globally, China shows up," Jin Yinan, a top Chinese military official, gloated last year. Beijing has positioned itself as a defender of the global trading system, the environment, and international law even as it exploits trade rules, builds more coal-burning power stations, and expands its control in the South China Sea. This bid to supplant the United States as the global leader is hardly destined to succeed. China has few friends and a lengthy list of internal challenges, including an aging work force, deep regional and economic inequalities, and a potentially brittle political system. But a world with no leader and multiple competing powers poses its own dangers, as Europe's tragic history has demonstrated. The United States will not be the only country to pay the price for a return to such a world.

THE NEW GUARD

The consequences of the United States' abdication of global leadership have not been overlooked abroad. If anything, Trump's policies have highlighted how much other countries have invested in the rules-based order and what they stand to lose with its collapse. "The fact that our friend and ally has come to question the very worth of its mantle of global leadership puts in sharper focus the need for the rest of us to set our own clear and sovereign course," said Chrystia Freeland, Canada's foreign minister, early in Trump's presidency.

That recognition has driven repeated efforts by U.S. allies to placate Trump. They have looked for common ground despite deep substantive disagreements—not to mention Trump's ham-handed tactics, petty insults, and unpopularity among their own citizens. But so far, these efforts to compromise haven't worked, and they aren't likely to for one simple reason: what U.S. allies want to save, Trump wants to upend.

The United States' friends and allies—with the G-9 countries in the lead—need to act more ambitiously. They must focus less on how to work with Washington and more on how to work without it—and, if necessary, around it. As German Foreign Minister Heiko Maas told a Japanese audience in Tokyo last July, "If we pool our strengths . . . we can become something like 'rule shapers,' who design and drive an international order that the world urgently needs."

Of the potential areas for G-9 cooperation, trade holds the greatest promise, as the G-9 pulls significant economic weight and has already looked for ways to blunt Trump's protectionist policies. The G-9 countries clearly have the capacity to push their point. Collectively,

they generate one-third of global output, more than double China's share and nearly 50 percent more than that of the United States. And they account for roughly 30 percent of global imports and exports, more than double both China's and the United States' share.

As important as the economic pull of the G-9 countries is the willingness they have already shown to counter Trump's mercantilist policies. After Trump withdrew the United States from the TPP shortly after taking office, Australia, Canada, and Japan led the effort to salvage the trade deal as a counterweight to China. In early 2018, the 11 remaining members agreed on a revised pact that preserved most of the deal's market-opening provisions; it will create a free-trade zone of 500 million people that will account for about 15 percent of global trade. Colombia, Indonesia, South Korea, and Thailand are among the nations that have expressed an interest in joining the so-called TPP-11, broadening its potential clout. The EU is also a logical partner for the TPP-11 countries. It has already negotiated separate trade agreements with Canada, Japan, and South Korea and has begun negotiating one with Australia; the EU-Japanese deal created a market of 600 million people, the largest open economic area in the world.

The United States' friends and allies need to act more ambitiously.

The TPP-11, the EU-Japanese free-trade agreement, and similar deals will intensify competition between the G-9 and the United States. The agreements give G-9 exporters an advantage over their U.S. counterparts in terms of market access and standards. But even with the growing need to work around or without the United States, the G-9 should still explore ways to cooperate with Washington. One example is the need to reform the World Trade Organization. Trump has repeatedly criticized the WTO, at times suggesting he might pull the United States out. That's likely an empty threat, because leaving would decidedly disadvantage U.S. firms. But Washington and the G-9 share legitimate concerns about the global trading regime, particularly when it comes to China's predatory practices. They might, for example, work to limit the sorts of subsidies that give state-owned enterprises in China and elsewhere a competitive advantage, replace the current system of "self-graduation" with objective standards for when developing countries must shoulder their full WTO obligations, and revamp the dispute-settlement process so that

decisions are rendered more quickly and adhere more closely to the rules member countries have agreed on.

COOPERATION IS KEY

Security cooperation will be more challenging. European allies have the necessary mechanisms for cooperation through NATO and the EU, but they don't spend sufficiently on defense. Asian allies spend more on defense, but they lack an equivalent to NATO or the EU. Yet if G-9 members can make good on commitments to invest more in their own security, the potential waiting to be tapped is impressive. The G-9 represents a military power second only to the United States. In 2017, G-9 countries together spent more than $310 billion on defense, at least a third more than what China spends and more than four times what Russia spends. Every G-9 country ranked in the top 15 of the largest military spenders in the world.

When it comes to defense, much of Trump's criticism of U.S. allies is misguided, if not outright wrong. Despite Trump's griping that allies don't pay their fair share, they in fact cover a substantial part of the cost of the United States' military presence in their countries: Germany contributes 20 percent of the cost, South Korea contributes 40 percent, and Japan pays half. What is more, the integrated command structures of U.S. and NATO forces act as a force multiplier to deliver a far bigger punch than would be possible if the United States had to act on its own. It should also not be forgotten that large numbers of allied troops have fought and died alongside Americans in Afghanistan and elsewhere.

But Trump's complaint about free-riding allies—which several of his predecessors shared but expressed more diplomatically—has some merit with regard to both European and Asian allies. No alliance can survive if its members refuse to carry their own weight, and many U.S. allies, especially in Europe, depend too heavily on Washington for their security. They conceded as much in 2014, when every NATO member pledged to spend at least two percent of GDP on defense by 2024. Although the United States' global security responsibilities require it to spend far more, the two percent target would still represent a significant increase for many countries and allow Europe to carry its fair share of the overall defense burden.

If all of NATO's European members met the two percent target, their combined annual defense spending would jump from about

"The United States requires the next generation of national security professionals to face a host of new issues."

— Dr. Steven Meyer
Dean of Graduate Studies, Daniel Morgan Graduate School

MISSION

The Daniel Morgan Graduate School educates and prepares future leaders to develop actionable solutions to global and domestic security challenges.

MASTER'S PROGRAMS

National Security

Intelligence

Managing Disruption & Violence

Visit **dmgs.org/fa** to learn more.

DANIEL MORGAN
GRADUATE SCHOOL OF NATIONAL SECURITY

— WASHINGTON, D.C. —

$270 billion to $385 billion—an increase nearly twice the size of Russia's total defense budget. An increase of that scale would allow for a major upgrade in military capabilities, especially if new funds were spent with an eye toward enhancing cooperation and connectivity among the armed forces. That is precisely the goal of the EU's Permanent Structured Cooperation, founded earlier this year, which aims to deepen European defense cooperation. The challenge is to make sure that the aggregation of this military potential adds up to more than the sum of its parts by avoiding duplication, consolidating research-and-development expenditures, and procuring complementary military capabilities.

When it comes to military cooperation, U.S. allies in Europe have an edge over those in Asia. Asia has no equivalent to NATO and is unlikely to develop one anytime soon. U.S. allies there are, however, strengthening their defense and security cooperation in the face of China's growing power and concerns over the reliability of the United States as a military partner. In January 2018, Australia and Japan pledged to work together more closely, including by allowing joint exercises of their armed forces. The two countries are also developing ties with India and exploring ways to conduct joint naval exercises. These early steps toward collaboration could evolve into regular planning, training, and cooperation on defense research, development, and procurement.

The lack of deep, multilateral military cooperation among Asian allies is partially offset by their willingness to invest in defense. Australia and South Korea both spend at least two percent of GDP on their militaries. Australia and New Zealand have long sent forces in support of major military operations in Afghanistan, the Middle East, and even Europe, demonstrating their belief that their own regional security is linked to security worldwide. Japan spends just one percent of GDP on defense, in accordance with its unique pacifistic constitution drafted by occupying U.S. forces after World War II. In spite of constitutional constraints, the Japanese military is one of the most capable in Asia, and Prime Minister Shinzo Abe has opened an important national debate about changing the constitution and increasing the country's military capabilities.

For the G-9 to function as a unit when it comes to security, European and Asian countries will need to collaborate more directly. Although the major European military powers are unlikely to take on a large

defense role in Asia, they can and should do more. The threat posed by North Korea has long preoccupied European capitals, and European forces continue to be part of the UN command established at the onset of the Korean War. China is a major concern as well. Europe has a critical interest in ensuring freedom of navigation throughout the Asia-Pacific region and sustaining a balance of power there. Strengthening defense ties between Europe and Asia will be key to counterbalancing China's rise. During a May 2018 visit to Sydney, French President Emmanuel Macron had this goal in mind when he called for an alliance among Australia, France, and India, saying, "If we want to be seen and respected by China as an equal partner, we must organize ourselves."

STEPPING UP

Liberal democracy has come under assault after many decades of advancing across the globe. Led by China, authoritarian countries are openly challenging global rules and ideas about freedom and making the case that their sociopolitical systems work better than liberal democracy. The rise of populist movements in many Western countries has led to increased support for illiberalism even within established democracies. A growing refugee and migration crisis is challenging liberal norms regarding tolerance and diversity. But the loss of the United States as a strong global leader is perhaps the biggest change.

For 70 years, Western allies shared a commitment to democracy, freedom, and human rights and a belief that advancing them globally was an essential contribution to international peace and prosperity. The G-9 needs to carry on this work, even if Washington bows out. It can start by taking the lead in international institutions, such as the UN and the World Bank. Washington's voice has fallen silent in these forums. The G-9 countries must speak up loudly, clearly, and in unison in favor of democracy and freedom wherever and whenever these are challenged.

Political exhortation is unlikely to be sufficient on its own. The G-9 needs to flex its economic muscles, too. For example, it could use trade preferences and development assistance as leverage (a strategy China never shies away from). In 2017, the G-9 spent more than $80 billion on official development assistance, well over twice what the United States spent. Conditioning aid on the protection and promotion of democracy, freedom, and human rights would be a powerful way for G-9 countries to defend and extend these core values.

The G-9 will also have to use military force independent of Washington. France and the United Kingdom have already led military interventions for humanitarian purposes, mainly in northern and western Africa. In June 2018, together with seven other EU allies, the British and the French agreed to establish a joint military force to intervene in times of crisis. This is another small but important step that could serve as a model for similar collaborations.

PROTECTING THE ORDER

To be effective, the G-9 will have to institutionalize in some form. Annual leader summits and regular meetings of foreign, defense, and other ministers will be needed to give the group's efforts weight and significance. The G-9 could also form an informal caucus in international institutions, such as the UN, the WTO, and the G-20. In strengthening formal ties and cooperation, the G-9 should avoid appearing exclusive; it should at all times welcome the participation and support of like-minded countries, including the United States. The goal should be to uphold and rejuvenate the existing order, not to create a new, exclusive club.

The primary obstacle the G-9 will face, however, isn't likely to be institutional; it will be a lack of political will to step up and defend the order. Washington has exhorted its European and Asian allies to carry more weight for years and has been met mostly with shrugs and excuses. Meanwhile, countries such as Germany and Japan have grown comfortable complaining about U.S. policy but remain unprepared to take on more responsibility. European countries have tended to look inward, and U.S. allies in Asia have preferred to deal with Washington bilaterally rather than work with one another.

U.S. allies are also tempted to avoid taking action by the hope that Trump might not actually do what he threatens or that a new president will take office in January 2021, and the storm will pass. But Trump's first 20 months in office suggest that he believes his nationalist, unilateralist, and mercantilist policies have produced "wins" for the United States. And even if Trump serves only one term, his successor may pay a political price for trying to reclaim a global leadership role for the United States. Although recent polls by the Chicago Council on Global Affairs and others have shown that the American public rejects critical parts of "America first"—support for an active U.S. role in the world, for trade deals, and for defending U.S. allies has increased

markedly since Trump took office—the idea that lingering resentment toward ungrateful allies propelled Trump to victory has become conventional wisdom in some circles. Without evidence that the United States' partners are doing their fair share, a new president may choose to remain on the sidelines of international politics and focus on domestic issues.

The G-9 must act now to prepare for such risks. Yet at the same time, it should recognize that without U.S. help, it can sustain the order for only so long. In the long run, the best the G-9 can hope to accomplish is to keep the door open for the eventual return of the United States. The challenges to the postwar order are too broad and the task of collective action too great to expect G-9 members to sustain alliances, maintain open markets, and defy democratic regression indefinitely. Unlike the United States, the G-9 consists of nine different political entities (including one that represents 28 nations), each of which faces distinct political pressures and requirements. Their ability to act in concert and to lead globally will invariably be less effective than that of a single great power.

Fortunately, "America first" need not become America's future. Instead, it could be a productive detour that reminds Washington and its allies why the order was created in the first place. Indeed, by investing more in that order and carrying a greater share of the burdens and responsibilities of global leadership, the G-9 may not only help sustain the order but also place it on a more stable and enduring foundation. The outcome may be one many U.S. leaders have long sought—a more balanced partnership with European and Asian allies in which everyone contributes their fair share and has a say in how the order should evolve to meet the new challenges.

Allied leaders know that they need to take more action. They understand that although the demise of the liberal order will cost the United States dearly, it will cost them even more. Great-power competition will intensify, predatory trade practices will spread, and the democratic reversal already under way will pick up speed. "The times when we could completely count on others, they are over to a certain extent," German Chancellor Angela Merkel remarked a few months after Trump came to office. "We Europeans really must take our fate into our own hands." Now is the time for Germany and the other G-9 countries to match deeds to words. If they settle for complaints and laments, they will have more than Trump to blame for the passing of the rules-based order.

Return to Table of Contents

The Crisis Next Time

What We Should Have Learned From 2008

Carmen Reinhart and Vincent Reinhart

At the turn of this century, most economists in the developed world believed that major economic disasters were a thing of the past, or at least relegated to volatile emerging markets. Financial systems in rich countries, the thinking went, were too sophisticated to simply collapse. Markets were capable of regulating themselves. Policymakers had tamed the business cycle. Recessions would remain short, shallow, and rare.

Seven years later, house prices across the United States fell sharply, undercutting the value of complicated financial instruments that used real estate as collateral—and setting off a chain of consequences that brought on the most catastrophic global economic collapse since the Great Depression. Over the course of 2008, banks, mortgage lenders, and insurers failed. Lending dried up. The contagion spread farther and faster than almost anyone expected. By 2009, economies making up three-quarters of global GDP were shrinking. A decade on, most of these economies have recovered, but the process has been slow and painful, and much of the damage has proved lasting.

"Why did nobody notice it?" Queen Elizabeth II asked of the crisis in November 2008, posing a question that economists were just starting to grapple with. Ten years later, the world has learned a lot, but that remains a good question. The crash was a reminder of how much more damage financial crises do than ordinary recessions and how much longer it takes to recover from them. But the world has also learned that how quickly and decisively governments react can make a crucial

CARMEN REINHART is Minos A. Zombanakis Professor of the International Financial System at the Harvard Kennedy School. She is the author, with Kenneth Rogoff, of *This Time Is Different: Eight Centuries of Financial Folly*.

VINCENT REINHART is Chief Economist at Standish, a brand of BNY Mellon Asset Management North America.

difference. After 2008, as they scrambled to stop the collapse and limit the damage, politicians and policymakers slowly relearned this and other lessons of past crises that they never should have forgotten. That historical myopia meant they hesitated to accept the scale of the problem and use the tools they had to fight it. That remains the central warning of 2008: countries should never grow complacent about the risk of financial disaster. The next crisis will come, and the more the world forgets the lessons of the last one, the greater the damage will be.

CRASH LANDING

Before 2007, most economists had been lulled into a false sense of security by the unusual economic calm of the preceding two and a half decades. The prior U.S. recession, in 2001, was shallow and brief. Between 1990 and 2007, rates of economic growth in the United States varied far less than they had over the previous 30 years. The largest annual decline in GDP was 0.07 percent (in 1991), and the largest increase was 4.9 percent (in 1999). Inflation was low and steady.

The period came to be known as "the Great Moderation." The economists Olivier Blanchard and John Simon reflected the views of their profession when they wrote in 2001, "The decrease in output volatility appears sufficiently steady and broad based that a major reversal appears unlikely. This implies a much smaller likelihood of recessions." That view ignored much of what was happening outside the West, and even those whose perspectives stretched back more than just two decades tended to look back only to the end of World War II. In that narrow slice of history, the U.S. economy had always grown unless the Federal Reserve raised interest rates too high. When it did, the Fed reversed course and the economy recovered quickly. That assurance was further bolstered by another belief about downturns. Economists compared them to plucking a guitar string: the more forcefully it is pulled, the faster it snaps back. More painful recessions, the wisdom went, produce more vigorous recoveries.

Yet had economists looked farther afield, they would have realized that financial crises were by no means a thing of the past—and that they have always led to particularly large and persistent losses in economic output. As research we have published since the crisis with the economist Kenneth Rogoff has demonstrated, systemic financial crises almost invariably cause severe economic downturns, and the

string does not snap back. This fact screams out from every aspect of the historical record. Data on the 14 worst financial crises between the end of World War II and 2007 show that, on average, these led to economic downturns that cost the affected countries seven percent of GDP, a much larger fall than what occurred in most recessions not preceded by a financial crisis.

In the worst case, when a financial crisis in 2001 forced Argentina to default on over $100 billion in foreign debt, the country's GDP per capita fell by more than 21 percent below its prior peak. On average across these episodes, per capita GDP took four years to regain its pre-recession level. That is far longer than after normal recessions, when growth does snap back. In the worst case, after Indonesia was hit by the 1997 Asian financial crisis, it took the country seven years to recover.

Also noteworthy was that all 14 of the largest postwar crises took place after the mid-1970s. The three decades beginning in 1946 were unusually free of financial catastrophe. (That likely resulted from the tight controls on international flows of capital that formed part of the Bretton Woods system, a reminder that although open global capital markets bring major benefits, they also produce volatility.) But the crises after the mid-1970s show how much economic output can be lost when capital flows come to a sudden stop—and how hard it can be to recover from the downturn.

Systemic financial crises almost invariably cause severe economic downturns.

Given this background, the economic pain that followed the financial crisis of 2007–8 should have come as no surprise. As it turned out, the effects were even worse than history would have predicted. We compiled data from the 11 economies that suffered the deepest crises in 2007–8, as assessed by the loss of wealth in the stock market and the housing market, the market capitalization of the financial institutions that failed, and the amount spent by the government on bailing everyone out. On average, these countries saw a nine percent drop in real GDP per capita, compared with the average seven percent fall among the countries that experienced the previous 14 worst financial crises since World War II.

Not only did output fall further, it recovered more slowly. On average, it took over twice as long to regain the ground lost in the recession—nine years rather than four. Some countries have still not fully recovered. The economies of Greece and Italy experienced falls in per capita GDP—

Bad news, bankers: at Lehman Brothers' offices in London, September 2008

KEVIN COOMBS / REUTERS

26 percent and 12 percent, respectively—of a scale seldom seen in the modern world outside of wartime. Today, both countries have yet to climb back to the levels of per capita GDP they reached in 2007. They are not likely to anytime soon. According to the latest forecast from the International Monetary Fund, per capita real GDP in Greece and Italy will come in below 2007 levels through 2023, as far out as the IMF forecast runs.

THE LONG ROAD BACK

Financial crises do so much economic damage for a simple reason: they destroy a lot of wealth very fast. Typically, crises start when the value of one kind of asset begins to fall and pulls others down with it. The original asset can be almost anything, as long as it plays a large role in the wider economy: tulips in seventeenth-century Holland, stocks in New York in 1929, land in Tokyo in 1989, houses in the United States in 2007.

From their peak at the end of 2006 to their nadir at the beginning of 2009, U.S. house prices fell so far that the average American homeowner lost the equivalent of more than a year's worth of dispos-

able income. The destruction of wealth was about 50 percent larger than that resulting from the previous major financial shock, the technology stock crash in 2000. The bursting of the tech bubble led to a brief and shallow downturn. The collapse of house prices triggered something far more serious. The crucial difference lay in the form of wealth destroyed.

The 2000 crash had little effect on the wider economy since most people and institutions owned few technology stocks. In 2007, by contrast, houses formed a major part of most Americans' wealth, and banks around the world had used them as collateral in vast numbers of complicated and opaque financial instruments. Once house prices fell and Americans began defaulting on their mortgages, the elaborate system of financial obligations built on top of U.S. household debt came crashing down. The bursting of the tech bubble was just a stock market crash; the bursting of the housing bubble became a systemic financial crisis.

Recovering from a severe financial crisis typically involves three stages. First, the affected country must acknowledge the extent of the wealth that has been destroyed. This can take some time if the assets that have collapsed in value are held by institutions that have opaque balance sheets and are protected by risk-averse government agencies. The housing market, for example, often takes some time to account for price falls, as owners hang on in the hope of better days ahead, and even if the price continues to fall, they have legal protections in bankruptcy law that delay forced sales. The many complicated instruments that use those underlying mortgages as collateral can also be slow to adjust, as they are difficult to price and banks often cannot sell them once trading dries up in a crisis. All too often, the day of reckoning is put off as banks fail to acknowledge how much the value of their assets has fallen.

Financial supervisors sometimes look the other way because once they have admitted the depth of the problem, their governments will be forced to take the second step: allocating the losses among their citizens. Even doing nothing marks an implicit decision, as the people and financial institutions that own the assets then have to bear all the pain. Officials usually worry that major banks are too important to the economy to go under, so the government steps in with bailouts.

Understanding these first two steps goes a long way toward explaining why countries have followed such different paths since the financial

crisis. In the United States, the Troubled Asset Relief Program, passed by Congress in 2008, and the bank stress tests that followed, which measure whether banks have enough capital to survive another catastrophe, created a formal mechanism to recognize and allocate losses. Europe, by contrast, lagged behind the United States because some governments were unwilling to admit how much wealth had been destroyed. And even once European governments did face the facts, some were reluctant to allocate the losses within their own economies because of the international nature of the institutions affected and, in a few cases, the sheer magnitude of the sums involved.

The five European countries hit hardest by the crisis were Greece, Iceland, Ireland, Italy, and Spain. The governments of Iceland, Ireland, and Spain ultimately forced their banks to acknowledge their losses and relieved them of some of the junk weighing down their balance sheets. But Greece and Italy lumbered along with impaired banking systems, which acted as a drag on economic activity. Partly out of concern about the consequences for their own balance sheets if they bailed out the banks—they had the continent's highest levels of debt even before the crisis—the Greek and Italian governments looked the other way for as long as possible.

THE CENTRALITY OF CENTRAL BANKS

The final step in dealing with a financial crisis is for governments and central banks to do what they can to blunt the effects. How far the economy falls and how fast it recovers depend on what tools officials have available—and on how willing they are to use them.

For most advanced economies, the events of 2008–9 will go down in history as "the Great Recession," not "the Second Great Depression." That should stand as a credit to the governments that prevented a new depression by actively managing their economies. This was a far cry from the 1920s and early 1930s, when politicians believed that it was best to let the economy correct on its own. From 2008 to 2011, across the 11 countries hit hardest by the crisis, governments spent an average of 25 percent of GDP on stimulating their economies.

But they all could have done better. The United States spent heavily but too slowly and inefficiently. In Europe, too much of the stimulus went toward picking up the pieces of failed financial institutions, which provided neither the immediate fillip that would have come from policies such as raising compensation for the unemployed nor the

permanent benefits that would have come from building infrastructure. Moreover, the governments that had the most room to borrow—most notably Germany, the eurozone's largest economy—did the least to boost spending.

Europe also wasted valuable time when it came to monetary policy. In 2012, Mario Draghi, the president of the European Central Bank, famously promised to "do whatever it takes to preserve the euro." He kept his word, by lowering interest rates below zero and buying vast quantities of financial assets. But his U.S. counterpart, Ben Bernanke, the chair of the Federal Reserve, was more than three years ahead of him. In December 2008, the Fed cut the nominal interest rate to zero and then over the next four years broke new ground in several other ways. It launched new lending programs that accepted collateral the Fed had previously never touched from institutions it had not previously lent to. And it bought huge tranches of financial assets, inflating its balance sheet to an unprecedented size, around one-quarter of U.S. nominal GDP.

Yet as effective as central banks ultimately were at fighting the crisis, they may come to regret their unconventional policies, some of which had the effect of reducing democratic accountability. In particular, the Fed supported financial institutions well beyond the commercial banks it usually deals with. It lent to investment banks and an insurance company and directly supported money market mutual funds (which buy and sell mostly short-term government and commercial debt) by starting special lending programs that accepted a wider range of collateral than was normal. By lending to some institutions and industries but not others, the Fed affected their stock prices and the relative interest rates they had to pay. That effectively favored specific companies and industries and, by extension, the people who owned the companies and lent to them. Such policies are normally carried out by Congress. But now that the Fed has opened the door to them, future politicians might see an opportunity to achieve some public policy aim by supporting a particular company or industry without having to pass a law; if politicians believe that they only need to make a phone call to the Fed, the Fed could come under far more political pressure than in the past.

Early on in the crisis, the Fed also extended huge loans to foreign commercial banks and central banks that needed dollar funding, obviating the need for the U.S. Treasury to supply them with dollars. That saved

the Treasury from having to report the actions to Congress, which would have looked askance at U.S. government support for foreign banks. Another legacy of the central banks' assertiveness is that the majority of government debt that is sold on the open market in the United States, Japan, and the eurozone is now owned by central banks. That threatens to erode central bank independence by tempting politicians to fix their budgetary math by forcing central banks to write off the government debt they own. Concentrating government debt in official coffers has also made the private market for it less liquid, which might make it harder for governments in advanced economies to borrow more in the future.

It shouldn't have taken policymakers as long as it did to relearn what they should have already known.

The regulated banking sector is healthier today than it was before the crisis, both because a generation of bankers were chastened by the crash and because governments have erected a firmer scaffold of regulation around it. In the United States, the Dodd-Frank Act of 2010 gave regulators the power to force the largest banks to significantly increase the amounts of capital they hold, making them more able to absorb losses in the future. Banks were also induced to reduce their reliance on short-term funding, giving them more breathing room should their access to short-term markets be shut off, as it was in 2008.

To make sure banks are following the rules, regulators now supervise them more closely. Large banks undergo regular stress tests, with real money riding on the results. If a bank fails the test, regulators may block it from paying dividends to shareholders, buying back its own shares, or expanding its balance sheet. Large banks also have to show that their affairs are in order by submitting "living wills" to the authorities that detail how their assets and liabilities will be allocated should they go bust. This has made the traditionally opaque business of banking a little more transparent.

Yet the fatal flaw in the Dodd-Frank Act is its focus on the mainstream banking system. The act makes it more expensive for banks to operate by forcing them to hold more capital, pay more for longer-term funding, and comply with increased reporting requirements. But American attitudes toward risk taking remain the same: aspiring homeowners still want to borrow, and investors still want to lend to them. By making it more expensive to take out a mortgage with a mainstream

STUDY WITH **PURPOSE**

"It's never been more important to study international relations at a school that understands that truth is elusive but real; that history cannot be rewritten to suit today's preferences; that tradeoffs are inescapable facts of economic life; and that leaders are those who inspire, not those who inflame."

— ELIOT COHEN, PhD

Director of the Philip Merrill Center for Strategic Studies and Robert E. Osgood Professor of Strategic Studies

SAIS JOHNS HOPKINS
SCHOOL *of* ADVANCED
INTERNATIONAL STUDIES

LEARN HOW YOU CAN ADVANCE YOUR CAREER WITH GRADUATE DEGREES AND CERTIFICATE PROGRAMS IN INTERNATIONAL RELATIONS, ECONOMICS, AND MORE

sais-jhu.edu/purpose

bank, regulators have shifted borrowing and lending from the monitored sector to the unmonitored one, with homebuyers increasingly turning to, say, Quicken Loans rather than Wells Fargo. A majority of U.S. mortgages are now created by such nonbanking institutions, also known as "shadow banks." The result is that the financial vulnerability remains but is harder to spot.

After a crisis, the regulatory pendulum typically swings too far, moving from overly lax to overly restrictive. Dodd-Frank was no exception; it swept more institutions into a burdensome compliance scheme than was necessary to limit systemic risk. The Trump administration has undone some of this overreach by directing agencies to regulate less aggressively and passing legislation to amend Dodd-Frank. So far, the changes have mostly trimmed back excesses. But at some point, if efforts to cut the fat continue, they will reach the meat of the supervisory process.

DOOMED TO REPEAT

Ten years after the financial crisis, what have we learned? The most disquieting lesson is how complacent politicians, policymakers, and bankers had grown before the crisis and how much they had forgotten about the past. It shouldn't have taken them as long as it did to relearn what they should have already known.

Several other specific lessons stand out. First, authorities must follow the three-step process of dealing with a crisis—admit the losses, decide who should bear them, and fight the ensuing downturn—as quickly as possible. Delay allows problems to fester on bank balance sheets, increasing the ultimate cost of bailing out the financial system. This was the mistake Europe made and the United States avoided.

The second lesson of the crash is that a system of fixed exchange rates can turn into an economic straitjacket. When aggregate demand falls sharply, central banks usually respond by cutting interest rates and using every other tool at their disposal to get the economy going again. The effect of such policies is to lower the value of the country's currency, stoke domestic inflation, and reduce the interest rates at which domestic banks lend to customers and to one another. This boosts exports, stimulates demand at home, and encourages lending.

As members of the eurozone, some of the hardest-hit countries—Greece, Ireland, Italy, and Spain—had neither independent central banks nor their own currencies, so this course of action was unavailable

to them. Monetary policy for the entire region was instead set in Frankfurt by the European Central Bank, which took too long to react aggressively to the crisis, since it was initially focused on the performance of the countries at the eurozone's core—France and Germany—not that of those at the periphery. The only way to make Greek, Irish, Italian, and Spanish goods and services more attractive to foreign customers was to cut wages and accept lower profit margins, a slow and painful process compared with devaluing one's currency.

The crisis also showed that it matters how much room governments have to borrow, even when interest rates are extremely low. In times of trouble, policymakers are less likely to be sure that investors will buy new government debt. In the eurozone, they are limited in another way: governments cannot borrow as much as they want, since they worry their fellow member states will trigger the EU's enforcement mechanisms meant to prevent excessive borrowing. During the 2007–8 crisis, government debt exploded. From 2007 to 2011, the Greek government borrowed an amount equivalent to about 70 percent of the country's GDP, and Italy borrowed about 20 percent of its GDP, bringing government debt in both countries to over 100 percent of GDP. Iceland, Ireland, and Spain borrowed equally spectacular sums. Yet most of this new debt went toward propping up these countries' financial systems, leaving the governments with little left over to boost growth.

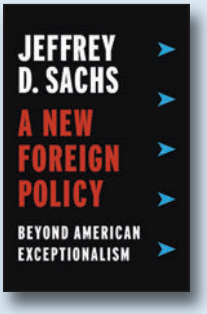
The final lesson of the crisis is that it is possible for inflation to be too low. Before 2007, inflation in most advanced economies (with the notable exception of Japan) was stable and close to the goal set by central banks, typically two percent. This was a measure of the progress made by the world's central bankers over the previous three decades. Markets had come to expect that central banks would keep prices steady. After the crash, that progress became a poisoned chalice. Central banks cut nominal interest rates close to zero, but this pulled the real interest rate (that is, the nominal interest rate less the expected rate of inflation) to no lower than negative two percent, which was not low enough to stimulate economies suffering from massive losses in wealth and confidence.

The tragedy is that none of these lessons is new. The importance of moving quickly to stimulate the economy after a financial crisis was shown by Japan's "lost decade" in the 1990s, when a period of low GDP growth followed an economic bubble. The value of a system of flexible

exchange rates was demonstrated in 1953, when the economist Milton Friedman showed how devaluing one's currency would avoid the need to cut wages and prices. For decades, economists in the United States and Europe have urged governments to control spending during times of growth. The EU even imposes rules limiting the size of the deficits member states can run, although countries routinely break them. There are many good economic reasons to limit the buildup of debt, including avoiding crowding out private spending, but the most practical warning may have come from the American diplomat John Foster Dulles in the first issue of this magazine: large debt loads take away oxygen from the discussion of other political issues. Finally, the fact that a higher background inflation rate can be a good thing, because it allows for a lower real interest rate and thus faster recoveries, has been known since 1947, when the economist William Vickrey argued that higher inflation made economies more resilient.

That the world had to relearn so many important lessons during the last crisis suggests that it will forget them again. Economic vulnerabilities vary from place to place. Some countries default on their debt, in some cases frequently; others never do. Some have repeated bouts of virulent inflation; others avoid the problem entirely. Some have exchange-rate crises; others do not. What determines which countries are prone to these problems is a combination of institutional design, the strength of the rule of law, and national attitudes, such as an aversion to debt. Despite this diversity, financial crises turn up in every country, whatever its history of sovereign defaults, periods of high inflation, or exchange-rate volatility. This suggests that there are important human elements behind financial meltdowns: greed, fear, and the tendency to forget history. The most recent crisis, dramatic as it was, will not be the last.

COLUMBIA UNIVERSITY PRESS

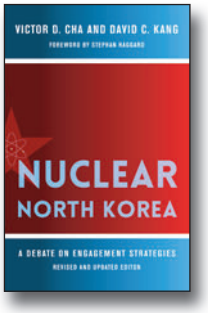


A New Foreign Policy

Beyond American Exceptionalism

JEFFREY D. SACHS

A New Foreign Policy explores both the danger of the "America first" mindset and the possibilities for a new way forward, proposing timely and achievable plans to foster global economic growth, reconfigure the United Nations for the twenty-first century, and build a multipolar world that is prosperous, peaceful, fair, and resilient.



Nuclear North Korea

A Debate on Engagement Strategies

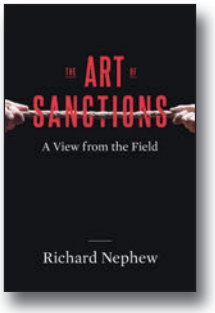
Revised and updated edition

VICTOR D. CHA AND DAVID C. KANG

Foreword by Stephan Haggard

"[Cha and Kang's] contribution is important for its frank discussion of the possibility of a nuclear attack and their presentation of potential courses of action."

—The New York Times
(review of the previous edition)



The Art of Sanctions

A View from the Field

RICHARD NEPHEW

"Sanctions have become a hot policy tool and Richard Nephew—a key sanctions policy practitioner during the Obama administration—has written a masterful insider's how-to guide. Those dealing with or worried about North Korea, Russia, or Iran would do well to learn lessons from *The Art of Sanctions*."

—Daniel Fried,
former U.S. State Department coordinator for sanctions policy, and distinguished fellow, Atlantic Council

Noteworthy Titles

Triadic Coercion

Israel's Targeting of States That Host Nonstate Actors

WENDY PEARLMAN AND BOAZ ATZILI

Columbia Studies in Terrorism and Irregular Warfare Series

Changing Cultures in Congress

From Fair Play to Power Plays

DONALD R. WOLFENSBERGER

Woodrow Wilson Center Press Series

The Return of Bipolarity in World Politics

China, the United States, and Geostructural Realism

ØYSTEIN TUNSJØ

The Conflicted Superpower

America's Collaboration with China and India in Global Innovation

ANDREW B. KENNEDY

A Nancy Bernkopf Tucker and Warren I. Cohen Book on American-East Asian Relations Series

Red China's Green Revolution

Technological Innovation, Institutional Change, and Economic Development Under the Commune

JOSHUA EISENMAN

Contesting Cyberspace in China

Online Expression and Authoritarian Resilience

RONGBIN HAN

Politics Recovered

Realist Thought in Theory and Practice

EDITED BY MATT SLEAT

What Is a Nation? and Other Political Writings

Realist Thought in Theory and Practice

ERNEST RENAN

Translated and edited by M. F. N. Giglioli

Columbia Studies in Political Thought / Political History

CUP.COLUMBIA.EDU · CUPBLOG.ORG

Return to Table of Contents

How to Save Globalization

Rebuilding America's Ladder of Opportunity

Kenneth F. Scheve and Matthew J. Slaughter

We live in a time of protectionist backlash. U.S. President Donald Trump has started a trade war with China, upended the North American Free Trade Agreement, imposed tariffs on the United States' closest allies, withdrawn from the Trans-Pacific Partnership, and talked endlessly about building a wall on the U.S.-Mexican border. But the backlash against globalization goes far beyond Trump himself. In fact, his presidency is more a symptom of it than its cause. Even as they may decry Trump's particular methods, many voters and politicians in both parties approve of his objectives.

By now, it is well known that this backlash followed a dramatic rise in inequality in the United States. Whether one looks at the percentage of income going to the highest earners (the top ten percent earn 47 percent of national income now, versus 34 percent in 1980), differences in income across educational groups (the premium that college-educated workers earn over high-school-educated workers nearly doubled over the same period), or stagnating real wage performance for many workers (the median real weekly wages for men working full time have not grown at all since 1980), the United States has become markedly more unequal over the past four decades. That period was also characterized by rapid globalization and technological change, which, as a large body of research demonstrates, helped increase inequality.

Still, the strength of the backlash continues to take many observers by surprise. That's because focusing only on the increase in income inequality misses the full extent of the dissatisfaction driving the reaction. For many Americans, a deteriorating labor market brings not just lower

KENNETH F. SCHEVE is Professor of Political Science at Stanford University and a Senior Fellow at the Freeman Spogli Institute for International Studies.

MATTHEW J. SLAUGHTER is Paul Danos Dean and Earl C. Daum 1924 Professor of International Business at the Tuck School of Business at Dartmouth College.

wages and less job security; it also cuts to the heart of their sense of dignity and purpose and their trust and belief in their country. That is especially true for those workers who can no longer provide for their family's basic needs or have dropped out of the labor market altogether. In a series of recent studies we conducted in communities across the United States, we heard the same sentiments from a range of respondents in a variety of circumstances: anxiety and anger about globalization and change that was not related to income alone but more broadly concerned whether Americans can still secure meaningful roles in their families and communities.

There is good reason to find a way to counter the backlash: it threatens to reverse a trend toward global openness and integration that, even with its drawbacks, has delivered real gains in the United States and around the world while bringing global inequality—as opposed to inequality within countries—to its lowest level in centuries. But because the problem goes beyond income inequality, the usual policy solutions are inadequate. It is not enough simply to redistribute income to financially compensate the losers from globalization. Addressing the backlash requires giving all Americans the tools they need to carve out the sense of security and purpose they have lost amid change.

That can happen only if the United States completely transforms the way it invests in and builds human capital. No longer can those efforts be limited mostly to the early years of a person's life, with minimal public expenditures. The country needs to rethink the role of government in developing human capital and invest substantially in doing so. The goal must be to erect a lifelong ladder of opportunity that goes from early childhood education to employment-based training throughout an individual's working life—saving globalization in a way that appeals to people from across the political spectrum.

NO NEW DEAL

Just over a decade ago, we argued in this magazine that stagnant income growth among American workers was leading to a protectionist drift in public policy. As we saw it, "a New Deal for globalization," with a significant income redistribution that would allow globalization's gains to be shared more widely, was required to prevent a harmful backlash.

There was, of course, no such deal. Instead, what followed was the financial crisis and a set of inadequate policy responses to globalization and technological change. The stew of vast success for a few, uneasy

stagnation for the great majority, and an actual decline for many others came to a boil in the 2016 election. Leading presidential candidates for both parties called for less globalization, not more.

Our diagnosis a decade ago emphasized that income growth in the United States had become extremely skewed. That trend has continued. From 2000 through 2016, the inflation-adjusted total money income (the broadest official measure of worker compensation) of most Americans fell. The only two educational categories to enjoy an increase were workers with advanced professional degrees and those with doctorates. For the vast majority of American workers, earnings fell: by 0.7 percent for high school graduates and high school dropouts, by 7.2 percent for those with some college, by 4.3 percent for college graduates, and by 5.5 percent for those with a nonprofessional master's degree. In 2016, the median household's real income stood at $59,039—only $374 higher than it had been a generation earlier, in 1999.

Both globalization and technological change have contributed to this trend. (The financial crisis exacerbated the effects: because of the plunge in home prices, the net worth of the median U.S. household in 2016 was 30 percent less than it was in 2007.) As research by David Autor, David Dorn, and Gordon Hanson found, about 40 percent of the decline in U.S. manufacturing employment between 2000 and 2007 was due to surging U.S. imports from China—with persistent income losses in the communities most exposed to this trade competition. Of course, technology has also played a role. But so far, the backlash has focused on globalization, at least in part because citizens see technological change as both inevitable and fair—and globalization as neither.

IDENTITY AND FAIRNESS

Even as income inequality has grown over the past decade, it explains only part of the anxiety and dissatisfaction. Changes in labor markets have undermined people's ability to fulfill their expected roles in their families and their communities. And so people have grown angry at globalization for eroding both their identity and their basic sense of fairness.

People care not just about their absolute levels of income but also about their incomes over time—relative to their expectations and relative to what their parents made and other reference points. In the United States today, fewer children are growing up to earn more

than their parents. For the cohort of Americans born in 1940, more than 90 percent earned more at age 30 than their parents did at the same age. For the cohort of Americans born in 1984, this share had fallen to barely 50 percent. Moreover, a growing number of Americans have stopped seeking work altogether. Labor-market participation, especially among the groups with stagnant incomes, has fallen dramatically in recent years. From 1970 to 2015, among American men with only a high school degree, the labor-force participation rate fell from 98 percent to 85 percent. For American male high school dropouts, that rate fell from 94 percent to 79 percent.

The human consequences of these changes have been devastating. The economists Anne Case and Angus Deaton have shown that many of the groups with the poorest labor-market outcomes (and non-Hispanic whites without a college degree, in particular) have seen their health deteriorate markedly, with surging "deaths of despair"—suicide, drug overdoses, alcohol poisoning—raising overall mortality rates. Other researchers have connected trade-induced income changes to poor health; Justin Pierce and Peter Schott, for example, have shown that counties whose economic structures gave them greater exposure to Chinese competition had higher rates of suicide.

There has also been growing inequality across physical space. For most of American history, different regions have grown more equal in relation to one another over time, as firms and workers have taken advantage of variations in cost. But more recently, this convergence has slowed or reversed. As the value of new ideas has dramatically increased, the value of living or locating a business in a large, high-talent city has grown; an accumulating body of research shows that workers are more productive when they are surrounded by other highly skilled workers. The metropolitan areas already doing well have thus started to do even better, while areas that are suffering have had a harder time catching up.

As of 2016, there were 53 metropolitan areas in the United States with a population of at least one million. From 2010 through 2016, their output grew by an average of more than 14 percent, compared with under seven percent for cities with populations under 250,000. Total employment in the largest cities grew by 15 percent, compared with just four percent in small cities and two percent in rural areas. Those 53 cities have accounted for 93 percent of the United States' population growth over the past decade, even though they account for

only 56 percent of the overall population. From 2010 through 2016, they also accounted for about two-thirds of total GDP growth and nearly three-quarters of total job growth. And even among the largest cities, there has been growing divergence. Over the last three and a half decades, the difference in GDP per capita between the ten wealthiest and the ten poorest large cities more than doubled in real dollars.

Amid such divergences, Americans have lost faith in the future. For decades, *The Wall Street Journal* and NBC have periodically asked, "Do you feel confident or not confident that life for our children's generation will be better than it has been for us?" Even during the two recessions that preceded the financial crisis (in 1990 and 2001), more Americans said they felt confident than said they felt not confident in their children's future. But more recently, that confidence has evaporated. Even in August 2017—the start of the ninth year of the current economic recovery—nearly twice as many Americans were not confident about the future as were confident.

THE CASE FOR GLOBALIZATION

If the backlash against globalization is driven by such developments, that does not mean that simply letting the backlash proceed—shutting down trade, cutting off imports, putting up walls—will solve the underlying problems. Despite its very real role in increasing inequality, globalization does, as its champions argue, still do more good than harm. The United States' connections to the global economy through trade, investment, and immigration have spurred gains for millions of American workers, families, and communities that, in total, exceed the losses. One study by the Peterson Institute for International Economics estimated that U.S. national output and income today would be about ten percent lower had the United States not liberalized international trade and investment as it did over the past two generations.

A United States that is cut off from the world would be a less prosperous place. An economy behind walls must generate its own ideas, technologies, and techniques rather than relying on innovations from around the world. It must provide its own savings for investment in new ideas and opportunities rather than tapping into savings abroad. And it must produce all its own goods and services rather than specializing in its particular strengths.

Indeed, the research shows that global engagement is correlated with innovation—which, by driving productivity, is the key factor in

THE FLETCHER SCHOOL
TUFTS UNIVERSITY

"GMAP offered me the opportunity to explore better, more innovative solutions to global problems, all while continuing to work full-time."

–Paloma Serra Robles, GMAP 2017

Deputy Head of Mission of Spain,
To the Republic of South Africa, Lesotho, Madagascar, Comoros, and Mauritius

(Position during GMAP: Cultural and Development Counselor, Embassy of Spain in South Africa)

Global Master of Arts Program (GMAP)

- One-year master's degree in international affairs without interrupting your career or relocating
- Hybrid program structure of 3 two-week residencies and 33 weeks of internet-mediated learning
- Diverse cohort of 50 mid-career and senior-level professionals working around the globe in the public, private, and non-profit sectors
- Professional network of 9500 Fletcher alumni (including 1000 GMAP alumni)

fletcher.tufts.edu/GMAP

fletcher-gmap@tufts.edu • +1.617.627.2429

GMAP CLASS AT A GLANCE

NON-US STUDENTS:	50%
COUNTRIES REPRESENTED:	20+
AVERAGE AGE:	40

CLASSES START **JANUARY 7, 2019**
AND **JULY 29, 2019**

raising incomes. Companies that export and import or are part of a multinational enterprise tend to outperform their purely domestic counterparts, and global companies pay higher wages. Consider the performance of U.S.-based multinational companies. In 2015 (the last year for which data are available), they spent $700 billion on new capital investment, 43 percent of all private-sector nonresidential investment in the United States; exported $794 billion worth of goods, 53 percent of all U.S. goods exported; and spent $284 billion on research and development, a remarkable 79 percent of total U.S. private-sector R & D. That translates directly into good jobs. In 2015, U.S. multinationals employed 28 million Americans (making up 23 percent of all private-sector jobs), paying them a third more than the average private-sector job. And contrary to conventional wisdom, academic research has repeatedly found that expansion abroad in these companies' foreign affiliates tends to create jobs in their U.S. parents, not destroy them.

Saving globalization requires restoring to tens of millions of Americans the dignity and the trust and faith in the United States that they have lost.

Perhaps the most immediate and long-lasting damage from walling off the United States would come from new restrictions on the immigration of high-skilled workers. Immigrants have long made substantial contributions to American innovation. Immigrants, only 13 percent of all U.S. residents today, made up 39 percent of the U.S.-resident Nobel Prize winners in chemistry, medicine, and physics over the past 20 years; 31 percent of the U.S.-resident Nobel winners in all categories during that time; and 37 percent of all the U.S.-based MacArthur Foundation "genius award" winners since 2000. One recent study by the Kauffman Foundation concluded that immigrants accounted for 25 percent of all new high-tech companies founded from 2006 through 2012. As of 2017, immigrants or their children had founded 43 percent of Fortune 500 companies.

On top of the economic case for saving globalization, there is a national security case. Open markets contribute to peaceful relations between countries by raising the costs of military disputes. As trade fosters economic development, it also contributes to greater state capacity and political stability, preventing civil conflict and state failure, which can create the conditions for terrorism and other threats. And

the United States' outsized role in launching and governing institutions such as the International Monetary Fund and the World Trade Organization has projected U.S. power and values in peaceful ways unprecedented in world history.

A LIFELONG LADDER OF OPPORTUNITY

If globalization has substantial benefits but is contributing to the problem of growing inequality, what can be done? The political establishment is offering Americans three alternatives: the status quo, walls that limit engagement with the world, and income redistribution. The status quo sparked the backlash and thus will only further inflame it. Walls will leave the country poorer and less secure.

Redistribution should be part of the solution. It is a policy we recommended a decade ago, when we proposed making the U.S. tax system more progressive by eliminating payroll taxes for all workers earning below the median income while requiring high earners to pay the tax on a greater percentage of their income. But redistribution is not sufficient, because the problem extends beyond money.

Saving globalization requires restoring to tens of millions of Americans the dignity and the trust and faith in the United States that they have lost. This, in turn, requires building a lifelong ladder of opportunity that will give all citizens the human capital needed to adapt to the forces of globalization. Such a ladder would not guarantee success for everyone. But it is human capital, more than any other asset, that determines an individual's chances of thriving in a dynamic economy. The United States should expand its investments in human capital at every stage of every American's life.

The first rung of this ladder should be a collection of early childhood education programs for every American child from birth to kindergarten, funded by the federal government and based on evidence of what works. Recent research confirms the enormous private and social gains from investing in children's human capital—and, conversely, the costs of neglecting to do so. A series of studies by the Nobel laureate James Heckman and other researchers, for example, looked at two early childhood interventions in North Carolina and concluded that the benefits were seven times as large as the costs.

Today, there are about 25 million children in the United States between the ages of zero and five. Every one of these children should each year receive an average of $4,000 worth of early childhood

programming, for a total annual fiscal cost of about $100 billion. This programming should focus on activities that have well-documented cognitive benefits, including classroom instruction for parents on language development and high-quality prekindergarten childcare.

The second rung of the ladder of opportunity should be federal funding for two years of community-college tuition for every high school graduate who is not pursuing a bachelor's degree, which would ensure that each could earn an associate's degree. The economic case for this is compelling. In the United States today, the median lifetime earnings of a high school graduate is about $1.3 million in constant dollars. The figure for someone with an associate's degree is $1.7 million, nearly a third higher. That additional $400,000 in income comes from spending only about $30,000 on the typical two-year associate's degree—a substantial return on investment, which is even larger for many in-demand programs, such as radiation therapy.

Last year, about 1.6 million of the United States' 2.9 million high school graduates did not go on to a four-year college or university. Every one of them should receive full tuition, limited income support, and assistance for other related costs to attend a two-year community college, for a total annual cost to the federal government of about $50 billion. Providing income support and covering other costs beyond just tuition are important to substantially boost graduation rates, which are widely acknowledged to be far too low. (This investment would more directly address the needs of those most harmed by globalization than would current proposals to make four-year public colleges tuition free.)

The third rung should be a lifetime training scholarship for every working American who does not have a four-year college degree. Each person would get $10,000 a decade through his or her 20s, 30s, 40s, and 50s for use as a tax credit by his or her employer to invest in that person's skills. Eligible investments would include online courses, in-person programs at local colleges, and in-house training crafted by the employer.

Rather than rely on the ability of the government or higher education institutions to identify the skills needed by workers across the U.S. labor force, this program would harness the insights that businesses uniquely have about which skills they need the most. (Since the program would be available to every worker without a college degree, the stigma that has been attached to many similar training programs would be removed; those programs often fail to boost earnings because companies infer that individuals chosen for them suffer from some

shortcoming.) Companies should prove willing to make these once-a-decade, $10,000 investments in their employees because of the tax credit and because of the competitive pressures. Today, there are about 100 million U.S. workers who never graduated from college. With a tax credit of up to $10,000 per decade for every one of these workers, about ten million of whom can be expected to take up the scholarship a year, the annual price tag would be about $100 billion.

The three rungs together would cost the U.S. government about $250 billion each year, which would represent the largest federal investment in human capital in American history. (For comparison's sake, the 2018 budget of the U.S. Department of Education is $68 billion.) But there is a way to fund this new federal spending. First, Congress could reverse the 2017 tax cuts for individuals, which are estimated to have cost the government an annual average of over $125 billion in revenue. Second, it could partially cut the exemption that allows employers to deduct the money they spend on health insurance premiums from their taxable income—an exemption that costs the federal government $250 billion a year in lost revenue. That exemption is both regressive, in that it benefits high-income taxpayers more than low-income ones, and economically inefficient, in that it fuels higher health-care costs. There are, of course, other ways to come up with $250 billion. The important point is that this investment in the human capital of Americans would be not just feasible but also economically productive.

BEYOND BACKLASH

There is good reason to think that Americans will see a lifelong ladder of opportunity as a response both suited to the problem and in line with their particular goals and values—giving it a chance to help reestablish a political consensus in favor of globalization. We recently conducted a representative online survey of over 5,000 U.S. adults across the country and asked them to think about how the U.S. economy could better deliver good jobs and incomes in today's world. We presented three broad policy options.

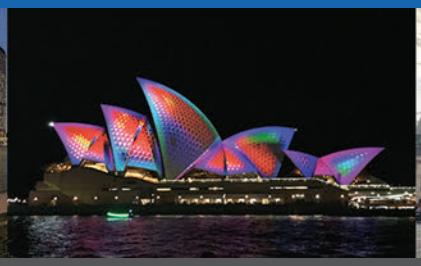
The first was walls: "Implement policies that reduce international trade, prevent firms from going overseas, and decrease immigration." The second, safety nets: "Adopt new policies that substantially tax those firms and individuals that benefit from globalization and then spend the new revenue on government income programs for everyone

else." And the third, ladders: "Adopt new policies that substantially tax those firms and individuals that benefit from globalization and then spend the new revenue on programs—for example, training and education—that provide more people with greater opportunity to benefit from globalization." The third option, ladders, was overwhelmingly the preferred strategy: 45 percent of respondents selected it, versus just 29 percent opting for walls and 26 percent choosing safety nets.

We also held focus groups in several cities and asked about the preference for ladders. Several points stood out in the discussions. First, participants emphasized that globalization does make significant contributions to overall growth. "I think the whole economy has become a world economy, so I don't think you can start cutting off international trade," said one respondent. "It's going to hurt everybody." Many also expressed ambivalence about programs that redistribute income, articulating a desire to help those in need but also concerns about the fairness and incentive effects of such programs; some of these respondents also stressed that such programs can sometimes generate as much resentment as globalization itself.

Most important, a majority of the members of these focus groups recognized the ladders strategy as a way to help people share in the benefits of a dynamic economy rather than just mitigate its harms. As one respondent put it, "You're not just spreading revenue across to everybody; you're using it to provide greater opportunity and training and education—which then, in theory, should bring everybody up, also, to where they benefit from trade." Many also stressed that the strategy would not just address income disparity but also help workers fulfill their perceived duties to their families and communities. "I want to take care of my family," one told us. "I can start my own business if I want to. I think there are too many people who don't feel that way, who can't."

The large number of Americans who believe that the United States' economic and political institutions are no longer delivering enough opportunity are right. It should be no surprise that they are anxious, angry, and open to proposals to build walls to keep out the rest of the world. But the right response to these trends is not complacently accepting the status quo or simply letting the backlash against globalization proceed. By investing seriously in ladders of opportunity, the United States can give all its citizens the human capital that will let them take part in a changing economy—not just saving globalization but also ensuring that Americans benefit from it.


BRIDGING THE DISTANCE

For nearly 30 years, Australia reported positive economic growth each year and has grown its GDP per capita to become the fifth largest in the world. Consolidating its status as a regional and even a global economic powerhouse, the vast country has surmounted its geographical disadvantage. Its distance from the world's major markets meant growth came most from domestic consumption, rather than foreign trade.

"We were so distant from the rest of the world, but we were able to develop our own economy from that," **Australia Industry Group (Ai Group) Chief Executive Innes Willox** explains.

In the last decade, as supply chains improved and business grew more globalized in the last decade, Australia adapted quickly by developing its services sector, which now accounts for most of its overall GDP, as well as strengthening its exports, particularly from mining. As of 2017, Australia sends out close to $230 billion worth of goods annually.

According to the Australian Trade & Investment Commission (AUSTRADE), last year the value of Australian exports of goods and services increased 17 percent following a two year decline. This was mainly driven by the higher prices of minerals and fuel, which account for more than 45 percent of total exports.

Buying almost 30 percent of exports, China has become the most important trading partner of Australia, a long-term supplier of natural resources and premium agricultural produce to the Chinese market and the rest of the Asia-Pacific. AUSTRADE predicts that this year Australia's economic growth will be the highest among major advanced economies.

"Australia benefited enormously from China's economic boom and its huge demand for natural resources. That was one essential reason we avoided the global financial crisis," **Melbourne Business School Dean Ian Harper** says.

A strong advocate of globalization, Australia has free trade agreements with China, Japan and Korea. It also signed the Asia-Pacific Trade Agreement (APTA) with Brunei, Canada, Chile, Japan, Malaysia, Mexico, New Zealand, Peru, Singapore and Vietnam earlier this year, and pursuing trade talks with the European Union.

"Australia is a trading nation. Our prosperity is built on opening access to new markets," says **Steven Ciobo**, a member of parliament and former minister of trade, tourism and investment.

In terms of revenue, some of Australia's industries are ranked among the largest in the world: mining and fuels (3rd), international tourism (10th) and agricultural products (12th). It also has the third-largest enrolment of foreign students and the sixth-largest investment

CONTINUED ON NEXT PAGE

Bridging the distance

CONTINUED FROM PREVIOUS PAGE

fund in the world.

Yet, the international perception of Australia is still associated more with beaches, landscapes and wildlife than its economic prowess.

"Australians are historically quite modest. We are trying to change some of that and encourage our businesses to be braver and bolder. We would like our businesses to be born global. This country has been built and developed on foreign investment," **AUSTRADE CEO Dr. Stephanie Fahey** says.

For Australia to sustain its continuous growth, all sectors agree that attracting foreign direct investment must be a priority.

"Australia welcomes foreign investments that are consistent with its national interest," Ciobo says.

While the United States and the United Kingdom remain the top sources of FDI, investments from South Korea, Hong Kong and mainland China have seen double digit growth in the last five years, a trend that does not appear to be slowing down, according to the Ministry of Foreign Affairs.

So, Australia's midterm and long-term economic growth is strongly connected to its neighboring Asian markets. By 2022, China and India alone are expected to represent almost a third of global GDP.

Leaving behind domestic consumption as an engine of growth and well-integrated with the fastest growing economies, Australia is perfectly positioned to become the world's next economic powerhouse. ■

LOCALLY TESTED, GLOBALLY APPROVED

As automotive manufacturing in Australia declined, many in the supply chain were forced to overhaul their business model and seek growth overseas. Among those most affected by this shift was **Australian Performance Vehicles (APV)**, an industrial testing services organization and a global OEM within the passive safety systems market supplying occupant restraints (seatbelts) for the automotive, bus, defense, truck and materials handling sectors.

APV Managing Director Harry Hickling

"It wasn't enough for us to provide capability but to offer something more than our competitors. A large part of our success was being able to help in solving problems that our clients didn't even know they had," **APV Managing Director Harry Hickling** says.

Only one of 12 such facilities in the world, APV Tech Centre or APV-T is the most advanced dynamic, static, crash, and environmental test facility in the Southern Hemisphere and a Tier-1 provider of engineering and test services to many FTSE100, Fortune500, ASX200, and Nikkei225 companies.

Its success in the defense sector helped strengthen APV's international reputation. Working with leading military forces, APV showed that its military applications were "battle proven."

"We are very proud of our track record in keeping U.S. and Australian soldiers safe in Afghanistan with no loss of life from 15,000 military restraints. We are also proud to support the new generation of military vehicles in the United States," Hickling says.

Although determined to expand abroad, particularly in Europe, APV still regards the U.S. market as an important part of its global strategy.

"You may not have heard about who APV is, but the United States is a strategic market for us. We are focused on supporting the transport, bus and coach and defense companies there," Hickling says. ■

www.apvcorporation.com

Investing in the future

While its distance to key markets like the United States and Europe stood as a disadvantage for a long time, Australia has defied expectations by strengthening its network in the fast-growing Asian-Pacific region. With its highly developed infrastructure and young population, particularly in its major cities like Sydney and Melbourne, the country has attracted a lot of foreign investment and built strong trade relationships across the globe.

The development of megaprojects, such as World Trade Center Sydney and a new airport complex in Western Sydney, hopes to further facilitate trade and foreign investment by enhancing the city's connectivity to the rest of the world.

"There is a lifetime of investment opportunities created in the various components of this mixed-use development. With Aerotropolis Group as the developer, foreign direct investment partners will be part of shaping this city as they create significant economic and employment activity near Australia's new gateway airport," **Aerotropolis Group CEO and Managing Director Jomon Varghese** says.

For its part, the New South Wales Department of Industry has taken a more expansive approach to industrial development in its effort to attract more business.

"Sydney is a world class location. There are already 600 multinationals located here. We also offer connectivity between business programs, support startups, SMEs, a well-connected education and research industry. That really drives a whole-of-industry approach to industry development," **NSW Department of Industry Executive Director Kylie Bell** says.

For many years, Australia invested heavily into its education system while aggressively recruiting the brightest foreign students from around the world. This has not only built a strong skill-based workforce but, just as importantly, has established a very strong research culture, which has devoted its efforts to solving some of the world's most complex issues.

Melbourne, in the state of Victoria, has developed a reputation as a hotbed of innovation. Many of the city's most innovative companies have become success stories in health care, life sciences, fintech and even in transportation and defense. APV Safety Systems, just of the many SMEs, is an example of an Australian company whose pioneering technology has saved many lives around the world.

"We've got lots of ideas and more patents per capita than many other countries. But for various reasons, we find it difficult to commercialize these ventures," **Melbourne Business School Dean Ian Harper** says.

Monash University's Caulfield Campus in Melbourne, Australia

While the wide gap between research and industry stands as a huge challenge to surmount, the robustness of the two fields also represents the key to the sustainable growth of Melbourne and, by extension, Australia.

"This is the biggest opportunity facing Melbourne Business School and also its greatest challenge. We are part of the country's number one ranked research university. We are part of the fastest growing knowledge economy in the country. Melbourne has a bit of a comparative advantage in making these things work

CONTINUED ON NEXT PAGE

Investing in the future

CONTINUED FROM PREVIOUS PAGE

to catalyze the knowledge economy," Harper says.

In the same city, another leading institution is rethinking its approach to education as part of its continuous contribution to narrow the gap between research and industry.

"In recent years, the Monash MBA program has reimagined what business leaders want from an MBA program. So, we designed and launched new programs fit for the 21st century," says **Monash Business School MBA Programs Director Prof. Patrick Butler**.

"The Monash MBA focuses on next-generation challenges including AI, sustainability and governance. We take on consulting projects in the commercialization of technology, new venture start-ups and international business," Butler adds.

"Our Global Executive MBA students study at leading business schools internationally and undertake projects in advanced manufacturing, life sciences and digital transformation for Australian businesses. Our economy really needs these ambitious, tech-savvy executives with a global mindset," he also says.

The next frontier

Although regarded as an advanced economy, some of Australia's regions present untapped investment opportunities similar to those of developing nations. Comprising one-fifth of the country's territory, the Northern Territory (NT) accounts represent only one percent of the total population.

NT's abundant reserves of minerals, natural gas and petroleum have powered the region's export sector and attracted massive investments from the United States, Europe and Japan. It has also put forward agriculture, aerospace and defense as its favorable investment sectors.

"We are the only developing economy, within a developed nation, in a tropical region, on the planet," **NT Department of Trade, Business and Innovation Chief Executive Michael Tennant** says.

The NT wants to position itself as a gateway to and from Asia. Its capital Darwin, also Australia's northernmost city, is geographically closer to Indonesia than it is to Sydney.

Aside from its expanding seaport, Darwin is expanding its international airport, building a much-needed cold storage facility and adding routes to major Asian cities. The infrastructure projects are laying the groundwork for NT's economic takeoff.

In the field of science, the Menzies School of Health Research is making a name for itself around the world as a leading research institute in tropical diseases and indigenous health.

"We are on the doorstep of the fastest growing area in the planet with the fastest growing middle class. The opportunities for trade and investment here are limitless," Tennant says. ■

The Next Arab Uprising

The Collapse of Authoritarianism in the Middle East

Marwan Muasher

Two perfect storms have struck the Arab world in the past decade. In 2011, in what was at first optimistically called "the Arab Spring," popular uprisings unseated autocrats across the region. Hopes ran high that these peaceful protest movements would usher in a new era of democracy in the Middle East. But except in Tunisia, they ended in turmoil or deadly civil wars. Then, in 2014, the region's leaders were dealt another blow when the price of oil plummeted, threatening the basic model of governance on which their power rested. Low oil prices since have made it difficult for regimes to fund bloated budgets, buy off elites, and hold up long-postponed reforms. This is not a temporary aberration: it is unlikely that the price of oil will ever again rise to its pre-2014 levels.

On the surface, many Arab states appear to have weathered these two storms—however shakily. But there is more turbulence ahead. The shocks of 2011 and 2014 were just the first symptoms of a deeper transformation under way in the region: the fundamental bargain underpinning stability in Middle Eastern states is coming undone, and unless regional leaders move quickly to strike new bargains with their citizens, even larger storms will come.

For more than half a century, Middle Eastern governments have used oil wealth to fund a system of economic patronage. Known as "rentier states," these governments derive a substantial portion of their revenue from selling off national resources or bargaining for foreign backing rather than extracting taxes from citizens. In some countries, such as Saudi Arabia and the United Arab Emirates (UAE), the revenue has come from the sale of domestic oil resources; in

MARWAN MUASHER is Vice President for Studies at the Carnegie Endowment for International Peace.

others, such as Egypt and Jordan, they have come in the form of transfers from regional patrons with oil wealth. Throughout the Middle East, governments have used oil resources to fund stable jobs, education, and health care, and in return, leaders have received political submission. But as oil prices have remained low and the region's demographics have shifted, that basic tradeoff has begun to seem unsustainable. Without the revenue necessary to continue feeding bloated, inefficient systems, governments are struggling to hold up their end of the bargain. Their primary source of political legitimacy is slipping away.

If they respond to these shifting fortunes by tightening their grip on power and failing to implement meaningful reforms, Middle Eastern governments risk unleashing social unrest on a scale beyond anything they've seen before. The only way around such a disruption will involve economic and political reforms that create a fundamentally new social contract in the Middle East, one negotiated from the bottom up. Without the rentier model to lean on, governments must build productive economies that are based on merit rather than loyalty and dominated by the private sector rather than the state. Because such large structural changes will create pushback and problems of their own, they will be impossible without the buy-in of the public. Economic adjustments will not succeed without political changes that are at least as dramatic. If Middle Eastern governments embrace economic reforms in conjunction with greater political accountability and participation, they may have a fighting chance at long-term stability. If they do not, the next, larger storm will arrive before long.

THE BROKEN BARGAIN

The social contracts binding Middle Eastern governments and their citizens have traditionally been imposed from the top down. These authoritarian bargains, in which rulers secure legitimacy and support through public spending rather than participatory political processes, have been predicated on a rentier system. Using oil wealth, governments would provide economic patronage, acting as the main purveyors of jobs, subsidies, and basic health care and education. The oil-producing states—Algeria, Bahrain, Iran, Iraq, Kuwait, Libya, Oman, Qatar, Saudi Arabia, and the UAE—used revenue from the sale of their own oil. Oil-importing states—Egypt, Jordan, Morocco, and Tunisia—relied on large grants from their flush oil-producing neighbors and

We're not gonna take it: during protests in Amman, Jordan, June 2018

AMMAR AWAD / REUTERS

remittances from their citizens working abroad in the oil industry. The Gulf states supported oil-importing countries, especially Egypt and Jordan, for political reasons (to ensure that these countries' positions were largely in line with their own) and economic ones (Egypt and Jordan provided cheap, educated labor). By the turn of the century, grants and remittances accounted for, on average, over ten percent of Egypt's and Jordan's GDPs. Rentierism took different forms in different states, but in one way or another, oil revenues long allowed many oil-importing Middle Eastern countries to live beyond their means.

In return for their patronage, states expected citizens to leave governing to a small elite, which, over time, became more and more isolated from the general population. Meanwhile, oil rents helped regimes buttress themselves with political, economic, and bureaucratic circles whose loyalty was ensured and whose interests were tied to their own. The more jobs and subsidies governments could provide, the better. But rather than creating jobs through productive systems based on merit and led by the private sector, they found that providing public-sector jobs, whether or not they were useful,

was the best way to ensure allegiance and dampen demands for accountability. The ratio of public-sector jobs to private-sector jobs in the Middle East and North Africa was the highest in the world.

Social contracts predicated on rentierism functioned throughout the second half of the twentieth century—that is, for as long as citizens considered the services provided in exchange for their acquiescence to be at least minimally satisfactory. But in the 1990s, the conditions states needed to hold up their end of the deal had begun to disappear. As governments grew, they needed the price of oil to remain high in order to fund expanding bureaucracies and the needs of elites. States were stretched well beyond their means. In Jordan, for example, the government and the army employed a whopping 42 percent of the labor force by the early years of this century. Energy subsidies provided by the government to citizens reached 11 percent of GDP in Egypt, ten percent in Saudi Arabia, nine percent in Libya, eight and a half percent in Bahrain and the UAE, and eight percent in Kuwait.

Once the size of these states' bureaucracies began to outpace the rise in oil prices at the turn of the century, something had to give. Governments could no longer afford to hire more people or pay for subsidies on commodities such as bread and gasoline. Unemployment rates in the Middle East and North Africa reached an average of 11 percent in 2000; among young people, the average was 30 percent. As governments struggled to maintain bloated states, the quality of health and educational services started to decline. But rather than offer citizens more political representation to help ease the blow, governments continued to insist that citizens uphold their end of the authoritarian bargain—refrain from demanding greater influence—even as leaders came up short on theirs.

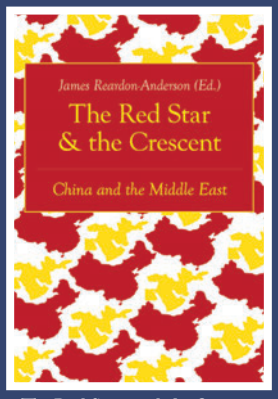
SHOCK WAVES

Many Middle Eastern governments tried to address the fracturing of the old social contract by introducing economic reforms without accompanying political changes. Although these reforms were largely intended to help regimes preserve their grip on power, some of them, if well implemented, could have also benefited citizens. But without the systems of checks and balances necessary to oversee economic transformations, even well-intended efforts—privatizing state-run industries, liberalizing trading systems, integrating into the global economy—ended up benefiting elites rather than the broader population.

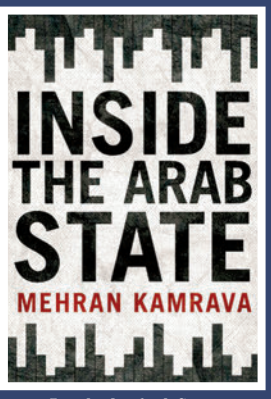
جامعة جورجتاون قطر
GEORGETOWN UNIVERSITY QATAR
Center *for* International *and* Regional Studies

Recent Books from CIRS

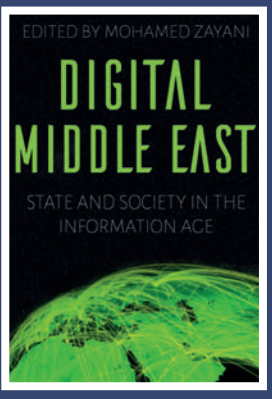
Social Currents in North Africa
Osama Abi-Mershed, ed. (2018)
Oxford University Press/Hurst, $34.95



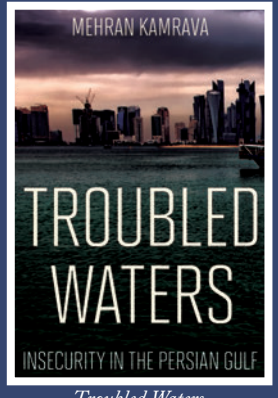
The Red Star and the Crescent
James Reardon-Anderson, ed. (2018)
Oxford University Press/Hurst, $34.95



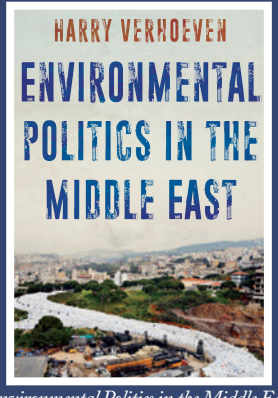
Inside the Arab State
Mehran Kamrava (2018)
Oxford University Press/Hurst, $29.95



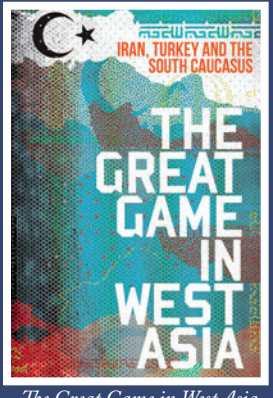
Digital Middle East
Mohamed Zayani, ed. (2018)
Oxford University Press/Hurst, $39.95



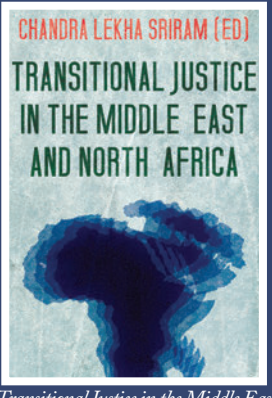
Troubled Waters
Mehran Kamrava (2018)
Cornell University Press, $29.95



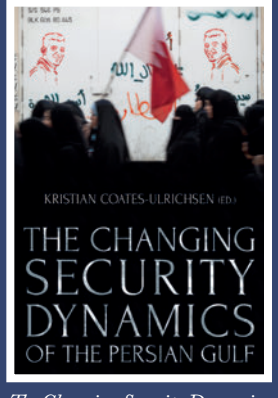
Environmental Politics in the Middle East
Harry Verhoeven, ed. (2018)
Oxford University Press/Hurst, $34.95



The Great Game in West Asia
Mehran Kamrava, ed. (2017)
Oxford University Press/Hurst, $34.95



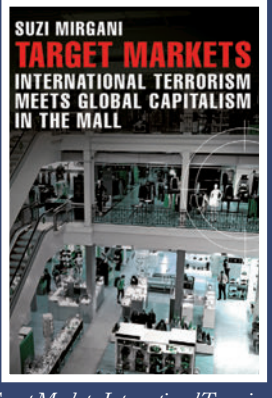
Transitional Justice in the Middle East
Chandra Sriram, ed. (2017)
Oxford University Press/Hurst, $35.00



The Changing Security Dynamics of the Persian Gulf
Kristian Coates Ulrichsen, ed. (2017)
Oxford University Press/Hurst, $34.95

Arab Migrant Communities in the GCC
Zahra Babar, ed. (2017)
Oxford University Press/Hurst, $39.95

Critical Issues in Healthcare Policy and Politics in the GCC
Mamtani & Lowenfels, eds. (2018)
Georgetown University Press, $19.95



Target Markets: International Terrorism Meets Global Capitalism in the Mall
Suzi Mirgani (2017)
Transcript Press, $37.00

The Center for International and Regional Studies (CIRS) at Georgetown University in Qatar is a premier research institute devoted to the academic study of regional and international issues.

cirs.georgetown.edu

Without proper monitoring bodies, corruption skyrocketed. Most Middle Eastern publics came to associate the economic reforms of the beginning of this century with elite self-enrichment rather than their own betterment. The ranking of several Middle Eastern countries on Transparency International's Corruption Perceptions Index declined considerably. Jordan fell from a ranking of 43 (out of 133 countries) in 2003 to 50 (out of 178) in 2010. During the same period, Egypt's ranking fell from 70 to 98, and Tunisia's from 39 to 59.

In some cases, the breaking of the old social contract proved too much for societies to bear. Although it was by no means the only factor that led to the Arab uprisings of 2011, it contributed to the collapse of several regimes, particularly those in countries where institutions were already weak. Tunisian President Zine el-Abidine Ben Ali and Egyptian President Hosni Mubarak were the first to fall. In Libya, Syria, and Yemen, where the sitting regimes had never been interested in building solid institutions, street protests overwhelmed weak states and led to the crumbling of the existing order and, ultimately, civil war. In Bahrain, antigovernment demonstrations gave way to an ongoing low-level insurgency that has irritated but not seriously threatened the monarchy. The monarchies in Jordan and Morocco faced sustained protests but survived the upheaval relatively unscathed.

The uprisings of 2011 should have taught Middle Eastern governments that serious attention to governance was long overdue.

In the Gulf countries, regimes had a solution at hand, at least in the short term: throw money at the problem in order to pacify the public. King Abdullah of Saudi Arabia promised an aid package of $130 billion that included higher salaries and more housing assistance for Saudi citizens. Other Gulf governments offered similar packages, all made possible by high oil prices. In February 2011, the Kuwaiti government gave every citizen 1,000 Kuwaiti dinars (about $3,560) and free staple foods for over a year. In Oman, the government funded 30,000 more jobs and 40 percent more university scholarships. In Jordan, King Abdullah responded to protests by immediately introducing ad hoc reform measures that helped temporarily stave off discontent. A $5 billion aid package put together by various Gulf states helped the country withstand the pressure from the

street. But even this turned out to be only enough to quell dissent until the next storm struck, in 2014.

The uprisings of 2011 should have taught Middle Eastern governments that serious attention to governance—not just economic reforms—was long overdue. But once the initial pressure had subsided, the surviving governments reverted to their old habits almost immediately. They were bolstered in their turn back toward authoritarianism by the violence and enormous human suffering unfolding in Libya, Syria, and Yemen, as well as by the rise of Islamists in Egypt, which discouraged citizens elsewhere from pursuing further confrontations with the state.

Then came the next shock. In August 2014, the price of oil, which had reached over $140 a barrel in 2008, fell below $100 a barrel. It reached a low of $30 a barrel in 2016 before rebounding to around $70 a barrel, where it remains today. For Saudi Arabia, which needs the price of oil to stay above approximately $85–$87 a barrel to maintain a balanced budget and to fund lavish assistance to other regional governments, this decline meant that the government had to dramatically change its spending habits to avoid going into debt. Other grant-giving countries, such as Kuwait and the UAE, also had to curtail their regional assistance. Across the Middle East, oil producers could no longer afford to function as welfare states, and oil-importing countries could no longer rely on grants awarded by oil-producing ones or remittances from their citizens working in those countries to finance their patronage systems.

The end of the era of high oil prices triggered a new wave of protests. In 2018, demands for change escalated in Saudi Arabia, including by leading preachers, women, and political activists, and Jordan witnessed street protests for the first time since the Arab Spring. These two countries illustrate particularly well the repercussions of the end of rentierism in the region. The first, Saudi Arabia, is an example of an oil-producing country that can no longer act as welfare state. The second, Jordan, is an example of an oil-importing country that can no longer depend on oil money from abroad to fuel an inefficient economic and political system.

CHANGING COURSE

In Saudi Arabia, the end of high oil prices coincided with the passing of power to a new generation of leaders—most prominent among

them Crown Prince Mohammed bin Salman, also known as MBS. The economic writing was on the wall for Saudi Arabia well before MBS, who is only in his early 30s, rose to prominence. Starting in 2015, large deficits meant that Saudi Arabia could no longer afford to maintain its generous internal and external subsidies. In 2017, the budget deficit reached $61 billion, or 9.2 percent of GDP. The country expects to run deficits until at least 2023. As a consequence, the Saudi government has cut subsidies and allowed the price of services to rise. Saudi Arabia's regional interventions in Syria, Yemen, and elsewhere have further strained its struggling economy. The Yemeni war alone is estimated to cost the Saudi government $6–$7 billion each month.

Apparent stability concealed deeper problems.

The Saudi government has responded to this new reality with a weak package of reforms that are unlikely to fully address the challenges. In an attempt to boost the country's stagnant economy, the government announced a radically expansionary budget for 2018 but offered no sense of how it will be financed. The Saudi government has stopped its traditional assistance to Jordan for three years and can no longer support the regime of Abdel Fattah el-Sisi in Egypt to the tune of tens of billions of dollars each year, a program the Saudis began after Sisi ousted Egypt's Islamist government in 2013. It has also embarked on an impressive social reform agenda, including allowing women to drive, reopening movie theaters, and curtailing the powers of the Islamist police force, in what is probably an effort to appease the new generation and divert attention from demands for political reform.

These social reforms have gained MBS significant popularity among young Saudis. But youth unemployment in the kingdom remains staggering: it reached almost 35 percent in 2017. Will the new generation accept austerity and the loss of privileges and subsidies without more of a voice in the running of their country in exchange? If the revolts of 2011 offer any evidence, the answer is likely no. The Jordanian example, in particular, suggests that continued economic austerity, coupled with over 30 percent youth unemployment, is likely to push the new generation to demand more of a voice. Those demands may even include calls for the introduction of an elected parliament, which would be a first in Saudi history.

Saudi Arabia is not the only Gulf country facing the challenge of low oil prices. Kuwait, which already has an elected parliament, faced

a drop in its oil revenues of around $15 billion in 2014 and again in 2015. As in the Saudi case, Kuwait first relied on its massive fiscal reserves (estimated at over $600 billion) but is now introducing cuts in subsidies and a medium-term plan of economic reforms that will begin steering the Kuwaiti economy away from its reliance on oil. Oman has reacted similarly to the low oil prices: cutting subsidies, reducing benefits for public-sector workers, and hiking taxes.

PRECARIOUS PEACE

In Jordan, declining financial support from neighboring oil-producing countries and a drop in remittances have challenged the government's ability to continue funding a system of economic patronage. Although Jordan is ruled by a monarchy that much of society accepts as legitimate, recent waves of protests suggest that the system is more vulnerable than many think. The monarchy has traditionally responded to demands for reform by implementing ad hoc measures that pacify the public but never result in true power sharing with the legislative and judicial branches of government. Essential to such measures has been generous financial aid from the Gulf states (and other powers, including the United States), which has allowed the Jordanian government to maintain an inefficient, patronage-based political and economic system. The government has used the money to continue buying the support of the elite and funding a bloated bureaucracy in a system that prioritizes patronage over merit.

In 2011 and 2012, large-scale protests erupted throughout Jordan in response to economic and political grievances, but they petered out after King Abdullah made a series of political reforms and regional instability directed attention elsewhere. But King Abdullah's actions—firing prime ministers, reforming the constitution, and replacing the government three times in 18 months—were quick fixes designed to appease the protesters rather than lasting, serious reforms. By 2016, Jordan's political elite was so confident that it had gotten through the Arab uprisings unharmed that it amended the constitution to give the king additional powers and further consolidate the executive branch's grip on power.

But the apparent stability concealed deeper problems. Jordan is in the grip of a slowly developing economic crisis, driven by soaring public debt, which now stands at 95 percent of GDP; low growth, now around two percent; and high unemployment, now 18.5 percent and

over 30 percent among young people. The sharp reduction in financial support from oil-producing states has meant that the country can no longer rely on that aid to keep its debt in check and finance its public deficit. Saudi Arabia, which headed a Gulf initiative that provided Jordan with $5 billion after the 2011 protests, put a three-year freeze on subsidies to Jordan starting in 2015. (After more recent protests, Kuwait, Saudi Arabia, and the UAE announced a new, $2.5 billion aid package to Jordan, mostly in the form of guarantees to pay the country's loans, but that hardly replaced the lost assistance.)

Successive Jordanian governments have treated such challenges as purely technical problems. Among the public, however, demands have escalated beyond the need for economic changes. In May 2018, protests erupted throughout Jordan, particularly in affluent neighborhoods in western Amman, led by the middle class (the Islamists, who had spearheaded protests in 2011 and 2012, were conspicuously absent). In addition to calling for the withdrawal of a controversial income tax law, the protesters demanded the dissolution of Parliament and a change of government. Evidently, King Abdullah's quick fixes in 2011 and 2012 failed to address the roots of the unrest: without the rents necessary to keep funding a system of patronage, the social contract in Jordan has broken down. Durable solutions to the protesters' demands will require a new social contract, not symbolic reforms.

Egypt continues to suffer from the economic effects of its revolution and from the decrease in the massive assistance it used to receive from Saudi Arabia and the UAE. In 2016, two years after that Gulf assistance dropped, Egypt floated its currency and had to rely on a $12 billion loan from the International Monetary Fund to help it restore economic stability.

The one notable exception to the current state of affairs in the Middle East is Tunisia. After its revolution in 2011, Tunisia may not have solved its political, economic, and security issues, but its leaders understood the need for a new social contract. For three difficult years, an elected constituent assembly negotiated and ultimately agreed on a new constitution that upheld the principle of the peaceful rotation of power, gave women almost full rights, and affirmed a commitment to the collective and individual rights of all parts of Tunisian society. Tunisia is by no means out of the woods, but it has achieved a solid footing for future stability and prosperity.

A NEW SOCIAL CONTRACT

If the message coming from the Arab street was lost on the region's leaders in 2011, in part due to the failure of the protests to spark serious efforts to build new institutions (except in Tunisia), the end of rentierism is giving Middle Eastern governments another chance to hear it. Economic reforms must be accompanied by political ones that give people a meaningful say in the running of their countries.

The transition to more efficient economies is sure to be slow and rocky and to face significant pushback from the forces that benefit from the status quo. Decades-old rentier systems have created vested interests with little desire to usher in merit-based structures that might rob them of their privileges.

Political will at the top will be needed to put in place gradual, serious, and participatory processes that the public can believe in. The necessary reforms will require a period of material hardship. Middle Eastern citizens will accept short-term sacrifices in the name of badly needed long-term change—but only if they are included in the process and guided by leadership they can trust.

Middle Eastern governments should begin this process by doing more to empower women. Women's participation in the work force in the region is the lowest in the world (32 percent, compared with a world average of 58 percent, according to a 2009 World Bank report). Governments must also better exploit technology to raise productivity and gear their efforts toward a more knowledge-based economy. They must rapidly diversify their sources of revenue away from oil by empowering the private sector and encouraging public-private partnerships. And they must promote the rule of law and a culture of equality among all citizens, which will help foster innovation. This will require ending legal discrimination against women and minority groups.

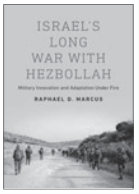
Critically, governments cannot remain the primary employers in Middle Eastern countries. Fostering the proper legal and financial environments to promote the private sector, particularly small and medium-sized enterprises, will help companies expand and replace public-sector jobs. This is easier said than done: outdated educational systems and inadequate health services have left large parts of the population in most Middle Eastern states ill equipped for work in the private sector. In order to minimize unemployment and hardship, transitions to economies dominated by the private sector must include

big changes to educational and health-care systems. In particular, schools and universities need to shift from promoting the rote learning of absolute truths toward encouraging critical thinking, innovation, and the acceptance of diverse viewpoints.

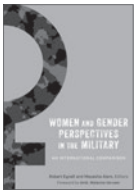
Even if governments start now, these changes will require a generation or two to fully take effect. But the uprisings of 2011 should have already taught Middle Eastern leaders that they are short on time. They must make painful economic decisions now to avoid worse suffering down the road. And whether leaders like it or not, the consent of the governed will be a critical factor in the success of transitions from rentier economies to productive systems. Citizens and leaders will have to agree on a new social contract. This time, rather than governments imposing contracts from the top down, the ethnically, culturally, and religiously diverse communities that make up Middle Eastern countries must be allowed to negotiate them from the bottom up.

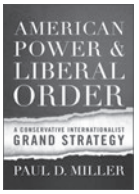
Forging this new social contract will require visionary leaders who have the will to stand up to their country's own elite, who grasp that the way to keep power is to share it, and who can persuade the populace that they are capable of guiding it to a better future. Sadly, not many such leaders exist today. (They are rare everywhere, not just in the Middle East.) But Middle Eastern governments have no choice. If they continue to ignore the need for change, the havoc to come will bring change on its own.

NEW FROM GEORGETOWN UNIVERSITY PRESS

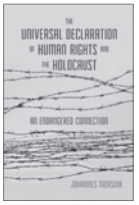


Military Strategy, Joint Operations, and Airpower
An Introduction
Ryan Burke, Michael Fowler, and Kevin McCaskey, editors
paperback, $49.95, 978-1-62616-623-3
hardcover, $149.95, 978-1-62616-622-6

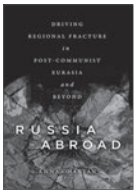




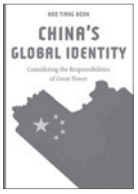
Women and Gender Perspectives in the Military
An International Comparison
Robert Egnell and Mayesha Alam, editors
Foreword by Amb. Melanne Verveer
paperback, $36.95, 978-1-62616-626-4
hardcover, $110.95, 978-1-62616-625-7

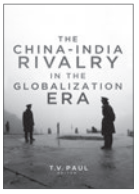


Hacking the Bomb
Cyber Threats and Nuclear Weapons
Andrew Futter
Foreword by Lord Des Browne
paperback, $29.95, 978-1-62616-565-6
hardcover, $89.95, 978-1-62616-564-9

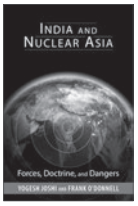


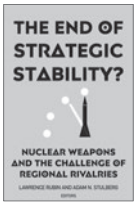
NOW IN PAPERBACK!
Meeting China Halfway
How to Defuse the Emerging US-China Rivalry
Lyle J. Goldstein
paperback, $32.95, 978-1-62616-634-9
hardcover, $64.95, 978-1-62616-160-3





China's Global Identity
Considering the Responsibilities of Great Power
Hoo Tiang Boon
paperback, $32.95, 978-1-62616-614-1
hardcover, $98.95, 978-1-62616-613-4





India and Nuclear Asia
Forces, Doctrine, and Dangers
Yogesh Joshi and Frank O'Donnell
paperback, $36.95, 978-1-62616-617-2
hardcover, $110.95, 978-1-62616-616-5

Israel's Long War with Hezbollah
Military Innovation and Adaptation Under Fire
Raphael D. Marcus
paperback, $36.95, 978-1-62616-611-0
hardcover, $110.95, 978-1-62616-610-3

NOW IN PAPERBACK AND WITH A NEW PREFACE!
American Power and Liberal Order
A Conservative Internationalist Grand Strategy
Paul D. Miller
paperback, $32.95, 978-1-62616-642-4
hardcover, $64.95, 978-1-62616-342-3

The Universal Declaration of Human Rights and the Holocaust
An Endangered Connection
Johannes Morsink
paperback, $49.95, 978-1-62616-629-5
hardcover, $149.95, 978-1-62616-628-8

Russia Abroad
Driving Regional Fracture in Post-Communist Eurasia and Beyond
Anna Ohanyan, editor
paperback, $36.95, 978-1-62616-620-2
hardcover, $110.95, 978-1-62616-619-6

The China-India Rivalry in the Globalization Era
T.V. Paul, editor
paperback, $36.95, 978-1-62616-600-4
hardcover, $110.95, 978-1-62616-599-1

The End of Strategic Stability?
Nuclear Weapons and the Challenge of Regional Rivalries
Lawrence Rubin and Adam N. Stulberg, editors
paperback, $36.95, 978-1-62616-603-5
hardcover, $110.95, 978-1-62616-602-8

GEORGETOWN UNIVERSITY PRESS
800.537.5487 • www.press.georgetown.edu
FOLLOW US @GUPRESS

AVAILABLE AS EBOOKS FROM SELECT EBOOK RETAILERS.

Venezuela's Suicide

Lessons From a Failed State

Moisés Naím and Francisco Toro

Consider two Latin American countries. The first is one of the region's oldest and strongest democracies. It boasts a stronger social safety net than any of its neighbors and is making progress on its promise to deliver free health care and higher education to all its citizens. It is a model of social mobility and a magnet for immigrants from across Latin America and Europe. The press is free, and the political system is open; opposing parties compete fiercely in elections and regularly alternate power peacefully. It sidestepped the wave of military juntas that mired some Latin American countries in dictatorship. Thanks to a long political alliance and deep trade and investment ties with the United States, it serves as the Latin American headquarters for a slew of multinational corporations. It has the best infrastructure in South America. It is still unmistakably a developing country, with its share of corruption, injustice, and dysfunction, but it is well ahead of other poor countries by almost any measure.

The second country is one of Latin America's most impoverished nations and its newest dictatorship. Its schools lie half deserted. The health system has been devastated by decades of underinvestment, corruption, and neglect; long-vanquished diseases, such as malaria and measles, have returned. Only a tiny elite can afford enough to eat. An epidemic of violence has made it one of the most murderous countries in the world. It is the source of Latin America's largest refugee migration in a generation, with millions of citizens fleeing in the last few years alone. Hardly anyone (aside from other autocratic governments) recognizes its sham elections, and the small portion of the media not

MOISÉS NAÍM is a Distinguished Fellow at the Carnegie Endowment for International Peace, Chief International Columnist for *El País,* and a Contributing Editor at *The Atlantic*.

FRANCISCO TORO is Chief Content Officer at the Group of Fifty, Founder of *Caracas Chronicles*, and a Global Opinion Columnist at *The Washington Post*.

CARLOS GARCIA RAWLINS / REUTERS

Venezuela is burning: at an anti-Maduro rally in Caracas, June 2017

under direct state control still follows the official line for fear of reprisals. By the end of 2018, its economy will have shrunk by about half in the last five years. It is a major cocaine-trafficking hub, and key power brokers in its political elite have been indicted in the United States on drug charges. Prices double every 25 days. The main airport is largely deserted, used by just a handful of holdout airlines bringing few passengers to and from the outside world.

These two countries are in fact the same country, Venezuela, at two different times: the early 1970s and today. The transformation Venezuela has undergone is so radical, so complete, and so total that it is hard to believe it took place without a war. What happened to Venezuela? How did things go so wrong?

The short answer is Chavismo. Under the leadership of Hugo Chávez and his successor, Nicolás Maduro, the country has experienced a toxic mix of wantonly destructive policy, escalating authoritarianism, and kleptocracy, all under a level of Cuban influence that often resembles an occupation. Any one of these features would have created huge problems on its own. All of them together hatched a catastrophe. Today, Venezuela is a poor country and a failed and criminalized state run by

an autocrat beholden to a foreign power. The remaining options for reversing this situation are slim; the risk now is that hopelessness will push Venezuelans to consider supporting dangerous measures, such as a U.S.-led military invasion, that could make a bad situation worse.

CHAVISMO RISING

To many observers, the explanation for Venezuela's predicament is simple: under Chávez, the country caught a strong case of socialism, and all its subsequent disasters stem from that original sin. But Argentina, Brazil, Chile, Ecuador, Nicaragua, and Uruguay have also elected socialist governments in the last 20 years. Although each has struggled politically and economically, none—aside from Nicaragua—has imploded. Instead, several have prospered.

If socialism cannot be blamed for Venezuela's demise, perhaps oil is the culprit. The most calamitous stage of Venezuela's crisis has coincided neatly with the sharp fall in international oil prices that started in 2014. But this explanation is also insufficient. Venezuela's decline began four decades ago, not four years ago. By 2003, Venezuela's GDP per worker had already declined by a disastrous 37 percent from its 1978 peak—precisely the decline that first propelled Chávez into office. Moreover, all of the world's petrostates suffered a serious income shock in 2014 as a result of plummeting oil prices. Only Venezuela could not withstand the pressure.

The drivers of Venezuela's failure run deeper. Decades of gradual economic decline opened the way for Chávez, a charismatic demagogue wedded to an outdated ideology, to take power and establish a corrupt autocracy modeled on and beholden to Cuba's dictatorship. Although the crisis preceded Chávez's rise to power, his legacy and Cuba's influence must be at the center of any attempt to explain it.

Chávez was born in 1954 into a lower-middle-class family in a rural town. He became a career military officer on a baseball scholarship and was soon secretly recruited into a small leftist movement that spent over a decade plotting to overthrow the democratic regime. He exploded into Venezuela's national consciousness on February 4, 1992, when he led an unsuccessful coup attempt. This misadventure landed him in jail but turned him into an improbable folk hero who embodied growing frustration with a decade of economic stagnation. After receiving a pardon, he launched an outsider bid for the presidency in 1998 and won in a landslide, upending the two-party system that had

anchored Venezuelan democracy for 40 years.

What drove the explosion of populist anger that brought Chávez to power? In a word, disappointment. The stellar economic performance Venezuela had experienced for five decades leading up to the 1970s had run out of steam, and the path to the middle class had begun to narrow. As the economists Ricardo Hausmann and Francisco Rodríguez noted, "By 1970 Venezuela had become the richest country in Latin America and one of the twenty richest countries in the world, with a per capita GDP higher than Spain, Greece, and Israel and only 13 percent lower than that of the United Kingdom." But by the early 1980s, a weakened oil market had brought the era of fast growth to an end. Lower oil revenue meant cuts in public spending, scaled-down social programs, currency devaluation, runaway inflation, a banking crisis, and mounting unemployment and hardship for the poor. Even so, Venezuela's head start was such that when Chávez was elected, it had a per capita income in the region that was second only to Argentina's.

Chávez was brilliant at mining discontent.

Another common explanation for Chávez's rise holds that it was driven by voters' reaction against economic inequality, which was driven in turn by pervasive corruption. But when Chávez came to power, income was more evenly distributed in Venezuela than in any neighboring country. If inequality determined electoral outcomes, then a Chávez-like candidate would have been more probable in Brazil, Chile, or Colombia, where the gap between the well-off and everyone else was larger.

Venezuela may not have been collapsing in 1998, but it had been stagnating and, in some respects, backsliding, as oil prices slumped to just $11 per barrel, leading to a new round of austerity. Chávez was brilliant at mining the resulting discontent. His eloquent denunciations of inequality, exclusion, poverty, corruption, and the entrenched political elite struck a chord with struggling voters, who felt nostalgic for an earlier, more prosperous period. The inept and complacent traditional political and business elite who opposed Chávez never came close to matching his popular touch.

Venezuelans gambled on Chávez. What they got was not just an outsider bent on upending the status quo but also a Latin American leftist icon who soon had followers all around the world. Chávez became both a spoiler and the star attraction at global summits, as well as a

leader of the burgeoning global wave of anti-American sentiment sparked by U.S. President George W. Bush's invasion of Iraq. At home, shaped by his career in the military, Chávez had a penchant for centralizing power and a profound intolerance of dissent. He set out to neuter not just opposition politicians but also political allies who dared question his policies. His collaborators quickly saw which way the wind was blowing: policy debates disappeared, and the government pursued a radical agenda with little forethought and no real scrutiny.

A 2001 presidential decree on land reform, which Chávez handed down with no consultation or debate, was a taste of things to come. It broke up large commercial farms and turned them over to peasant cooperatives that lacked the technical know-how, management skills, or access to capital to produce at scale. Food production collapsed. And in sector after sector, the Chávez government enacted similarly self-defeating policies. It expropriated foreign-owned oil ventures without compensation and gave them to political appointees who lacked the technical expertise to run them. It nationalized utilities and the main telecommunications operator, leaving Venezuela with chronic water and electricity shortages and some of the slowest Internet connection speeds in the world. It seized steel companies, causing production to fall from 480,000 metric tons per month before nationalization, in 2008, to effectively nothing today. Similar results followed the seizure of aluminum companies, mining firms, hotels, and airlines.

The relationship between Cuba and Venezuela became more than an alliance.

In one expropriated company after another, state administrators stripped assets and loaded payrolls with Chávez cronies. When they inevitably ran into financial problems, they appealed to the government, which was able to bail them out. By 2004, oil prices had spiked again, filling government coffers with petrodollars, which Chávez spent without constraints, controls, or accountability. On top of that were the easy loans from China, which was happy to extend credit to Venezuela in exchange for a guaranteed supply of crude oil. By importing whatever the hollowed-out Venezuelan economy failed to produce and borrowing to finance a consumption boom, Chávez was able to temporarily shield the public from the impact of his disastrous policies and to retain substantial popularity.

But not everyone was convinced. Oil industry workers were among the first to sound the alarm about Chávez's authoritarian tendencies. They went on strike in 2002 and 2003, demanding a new presidential election. In response to the protests, Chávez fired almost half of the work force in the state-run oil company and imposed an arcane currency-exchange-control regime. The system morphed into a cesspool of corruption, as regime cronies realized that arbitraging between the state-authorized exchange rate and the black market could yield fortunes overnight. This arbitrage racket created an extraordinarily wealthy elite of government-connected kleptocrats. As this budding kleptocracy perfected the art of siphoning off oil proceeds into its own pockets, Venezuelan store shelves grew bare.

It was all painfully predictable—and widely predicted. But the louder local and international experts sounded the alarm, the more the government clung to its agenda. To Chávez, dire warnings from technocrats were a sign that the revolution was on the right track.

PASSING THE TORCH

In 2011, Chávez was diagnosed with cancer. Top oncologists in Brazil and the United States offered to treat him. But he opted instead to search for a cure in Cuba, the country he trusted not only to treat him but also to be discreet about his condition. As his illness progressed, his dependence on Havana deepened, and the mystery about the real state of his health grew. On December 8, 2012, an ailing Chávez made one final television appearance to ask Venezuelans to make Maduro, then vice president, his successor. For the next three months, Venezuela was governed spectrally and by remote control: decrees emanated from Havana bearing Chávez's signature, but no one saw him, and speculation was rife that he had already died. When Chávez's death was finally announced, on March 5, 2013, the only thing that was clear amid the atmosphere of secrecy and concealment was that Venezuela's next leader would carry on the tradition of Cuban influence.

Chávez had long looked to Cuba as a blueprint for revolution, and he turned to Cuban President Fidel Castro for advice at critical junctures. In return, Venezuela sent oil: energy aid to Cuba (in the form of 115,000 barrels a day sold at a deep discount) was worth nearly $1 billion a year to Havana. The relationship between Cuba and Venezuela became more than an alliance. It has been, as Chávez himself once put it, "a merger of two revolutions." (Unusually, the senior

partner in the alliance is poorer and smaller than the junior partner—but so much more competent that it dominates the relationship.) Cuba is careful to keep its footprint light: it conducts most of its consultations in Havana rather than Caracas.

It did not escape anyone's attention that the leader Chávez annointed to succeed him had devoted his life to the cause of Cuban communism. As a teenager, Maduro joined a fringe pro-Cuban Marxist party in Caracas. In his 20s, instead of going to university, he sought training in Havana's school for international cadres to become a professional revolutionary. As Chávez's foreign minister from 2006 to 2013, he had seldom called attention to himself: only his unfailing loyalty to Chávez, and to Cuba, propelled his ascent to the top. Under his leadership, Cuba's influence in Venezuela has become pervasive. He has stacked key government posts with activists trained in Cuban organizations, and Cubans have come to occupy sensitive roles within the Venezuelan regime. The daily intelligence briefs Maduro consumes, for instance, are produced not by Venezuelans but by Cuban intelligence officers.

With Cuban guidance, Maduro has deeply curtailed economic freedoms and erased all remaining traces of liberalism from the country's politics and institutions. He has continued and expanded Chávez's practice of jailing, exiling, or banning from political life opposition leaders who became too popular or hard to co-opt. Julio Borges, a key opposition leader, fled into exile to avoid being jailed, and Leopoldo López, the opposition's most charismatic leader, has been moved back and forth between a military prison and house arrest. Over 100 political prisoners linger in jails, and reports of torture are common. Periodic elections have become farcical, and the government has stripped the opposition-controlled National Assembly of all powers. Maduro has deepened Venezuela's alliances with a number of anti-American and anti-Western regimes, turning to Russia for weapons, cybersecurity, and expertise in oil production; to China for financing and infrastructure; to Belarus for homebuilding; and to Iran for car production.

As Maduro broke the last remaining links in Venezuela's traditional alliances with Washington and other Latin American democracies, he lost access to sound economic advice. He dismissed the consensus of economists from across the political spectrum: although they warned about inflation, Maduro chose to rely on the advice of Cuba and fringe Marxist policy advisers who assured him that there would be no consequences to making up budget shortfalls

with freshly minted money. Inevitably, a devastating bout of hyperinflation ensued.

A toxic combination of Cuban influence, runaway corruption, the dismantling of democratic checks and balances, and sheer incompetence has kept Venezuela locked into catastrophic economic policies. As monthly inflation rates top three digits, the government improvises policy responses that are bound to make the situation even worse.

ANATOMY OF A COLLAPSE

Nearly all oil-producing liberal democracies, such as Norway, the United Kingdom, and the United States, were democracies before they became oil producers. Autocracies that have found oil, such as Angola, Brunei, Iran, and Russia, have been unable to make the leap to liberal democracy. For four decades, Venezuela seemed to have miraculously beat these odds—it democratized and liberalized in 1958, decades after finding oil.

But the roots of Venezuelan liberal democracy turned out to be shallow. Two decades of bad economics decimated the popularity of the traditional political parties, and a charismatic demagogue, riding the wave of an oil boom, stepped into the breach. Under these unusual conditions, he was able to sweep away the whole structure of democratic checks and balances in just a few years.

When the decadelong oil price boom ended in 2014, Venezuela lost not just the oil revenue on which Chávez's popularity and international influence had depended but also access to foreign credit markets. This left the country with a massive debt overhang: the loans taken out during the oil boom still had to be serviced, although from a much-reduced income stream. Venezuela ended up with politics that are typical of autocracies that discover oil: a predatory, extractive oligarchy that ignores regular people as long they stay quiet and that violently suppresses them when they protest.

The resulting crisis is morphing into the worst humanitarian disaster in memory in the Western Hemisphere. Exact figures for Venezuela's GDP collapse are notoriously difficult to come by, but economists estimate that it is comparable to the 40 percent contraction of Syria's GDP since 2012, following the outbreak of its devastating civil war. Hyperinflation has reached one million percent per year, pushing 61 percent of Venezuelans to live in extreme poverty, with 89 percent of those surveyed saying they do not have the money to buy enough

food for their families and 64 percent reporting they have lost an average of 11 kilograms (about 24 pounds) in body weight due to hunger. About ten percent of the population—2.6 million Venezuelans—have fled to neighboring countries.

The Venezuelan state has mostly given up on providing public services such as health care, education, and even policing; heavy-handed, repressive violence is the final thing left that Venezuelans can rely on the public sector to consistently deliver. In the face of mass protests in 2014 and 2017, the government responded with thousands of arrests, brutal beatings and torture, and the killing of over 130 protesters.

Meanwhile, criminal business is increasingly conducted not in defiance of the state, or even simply in cahoots with the state, but directly through it. Drug trafficking has emerged alongside oil production and currency arbitrage as a key source of profits to those close to the ruling elite, with high-ranking officials and members of the president's family facing narcotics charges in the United States. A small connected elite has also stolen national assets to a unprecedented degree. In August, a series of regime-connected businessmen were indicted in U.S. federal courts for attempting to launder over $1.2 billion in illegally obtained funds—just one of a dizzying array of illegal scams that are part of the looting of Venezuela. The entire southeastern quadrant of the country has become an exploitative illegal mining camp, where desperate people displaced from cities by hunger try their luck in unsafe mines run by criminal gangs under military protection. All over the country, prison gangs, working in partnership with government security forces, run lucrative extortion rackets that make them the de facto civil authority. The offices of the Treasury, the central bank, and the national oil company have become laboratories where complicated financial crimes are hatched. As Venezuela's economy has collapsed, the lines separating the state from criminal enterprises have all but disappeared.

THE VENEZUELAN DILEMMA

Whenever U.S. President Donald Trump meets with a Latin American leader, he insists that the region do something about the Venezuelan crisis. Trump has prodded his own national security team for "strong" alternatives, at one point stating that there are "many options" for Venezuela and that he is "not going to rule out the military option." Republican Senator Marco Rubio of Florida has similarly flirted with a military response. Secretary of Defense James Mattis, however, has

echoed a common sentiment of the U.S. security apparatus by publicly stating, "The Venezuelan crisis is not a military matter." All of Venezuela's neighboring countries have also voiced their opposition to an armed attack on Venezuela.

And rightly so. Trump's fantasies of military invasion are deeply misguided and extremely dangerous. Although a U.S.-led military assault would likely have no problem overthrowing Maduro in short order, what comes next could be far worse, as the Iraqis and the Libyans know only too well: when outside powers overthrow autocrats sitting atop failing states, open-ended chaos is much more likely to follow than stability—let alone democracy.

Nonetheless, the United States will continue to face pressure to find some way of arresting Venezuela's collapse. Each initiative undertaken so far has served only to highlight that there is, in reality, little the United States can do. During the Obama administration, U.S. diplomats attempted to engage the regime directly. But negotiations proved futile. Maduro used internationally mediated talks to neutralize massive street protests: protest leaders would call off demonstrations during the talks, but Chavista negotiators would only stonewall, parceling out minor concessions designed to divide their opponents while they themselves prepared for the next wave of repression. The United States and Venezuela's neighbors seem to have finally grasped that, as things stand, negotiations only play into Maduro's hands.

The other Latin American countries are finally grasping that Venezuela's instability will inevitably spill across their borders.

Some have suggested using harsh economic sanctions to pressure Maduro to step down. The United States has tried this. It passed several rounds of sanctions, under both the Obama and Trump administrations, to prevent the regime from issuing new debt and to hamper the financial operation of the state-owned oil company. Together with Canada and the EU, Washington has also put in place sanctions against specific regime officials, freezing their assets abroad and imposing travel restrictions. But such measures are redundant: if the task is to destroy the Venezuelan economy, no set of sanctions will be as effective as the regime itself. The same is true for an oil blockade: oil production is already in a free fall.

Washington can sharpen its policy on the margins. For one thing, it needs to put more emphasis on a Cuban track: little can be achieved without Havana's help, meaning that Venezuela needs to be front and center in every contact Washington and its allies have with Havana. The United States can cast a wider net in countering corruption, preventing not just crooked officials but also their frontmen and families from enjoying the fruits of corruption, drug trafficking, and embezzlement. It could also work to turn the existing U.S. arms embargo into a global one. The Maduro regime must be constrained in its authoritarian intent with policies that communicate clearly to its cronies that continuing to aid the regime will leave them isolated in Venezuela and that turning on the regime is, therefore, the only way out. Yet the prospects of such a strategy succeeding are dim.

After a long period of dithering, the other Latin American countries are finally grasping that Venezuela's instability will inevitably spill across their borders. As the center-left "pink wave" of the early years of this century recedes, a new cohort of more conservative leaders in Argentina, Brazil, Chile, Colombia, and Peru has tipped the regional balance against Venezuela's dictatorship, but the lack of actionable options bedevils them, as well. Traditional diplomacy hasn't worked and has even backfired. But so has pressure. For example, in 2017, Latin American countries threatened to suspend Venezuela's membership in the Organization of American States. The regime responded by withdrawing from the organization unilaterally, displaying just how little it cares about traditional diplomatic pressure.

Venezuela's exasperated neighbors are increasingly seeing the crisis through the prism of the refugee problem it has created; they are anxious to stem the flow of malnourished people fleeing Venezuela and placing new strains on their social programs. As a populist backlash builds against the influx of Venezuelan refugees, some Latin American countries appear tempted to slam the door shut—a temptation they must resist, as it would be a historic mistake that would only worsen the crisis. The reality is that Latin American countries have no idea what to do about Venezuela. There may be nothing they can do, save accepting refugees, which will at least help alleviate the suffering of the Venezuelan people.

POWER TO THE PEOPLE

Today, the regime is so solidly entrenched that a change of faces is much more likely than a change of system. Perhaps Maduro will be pushed

out by a slightly less incompetent leader who is able to render Cuban hegemony in Venezuela more sustainable. Such an outcome would merely mean a more stable foreign-dominated petro-kleptocracy, not a return to democracy. And even if opposition forces—or a U.S.-led armed attack—somehow managed to replace Maduro with an entirely new government, the agenda would be daunting. A successor regime would need to reduce the enormous role the military plays in all areas of the public sector. It would have to start from scratch in restoring basic services in health care, education, and law enforcement. It would have to rebuild the oil industry and stimulate growth in other economic sectors. It would need to get rid of the drug dealers, prison racketeers, predatory miners, wealthy criminal financiers, and extortionists who have latched on to every part of the state. And it would have to make all these changes in the context of a toxic, anarchic political environment and a grave economic crisis.

Given the scale of these obstacles, Venezuela is likely to remain unstable for a long time to come. The immediate challenge for its citizens and their leaders, as well as for the international community, is to contain the impact of the nation's decline. For all the misery they have experienced, the Venezuelan people have never stopped struggling against misrule. As of this summer, Venezuelans were still staging hundreds of protests each month. Most of them are local, grass-roots affairs with little political leadership, but they show a people with the will to fight for themselves.

Is that enough to nudge the country away from its current, grim path? Probably not. Hopelessness is driving more and more Venezuelans to fantasize about a Trump-led military intervention, which would offer a fervently desired deus ex machina for a long-suffering people. But this amounts to an ill-advised revenge fantasy, not a serious strategy.

Rather than a military invasion, Venezuelans' best hope is to ensure that the flickering embers of protest and social dissent are not extinguished and that resistance to dictatorship is sustained. Desperate though the prospect may seem, this tradition of protest could one day lay the foundations for the recovery of civic institutions and democratic practices. It won't be simple, and it won't be quick. Bringing a state back from the brink of failure never is.

The Use and Misuse of Economic Statecraft

How Washington Is Abusing Its Financial Might

Jacob J. Lew and Richard Nephew

Since the end of the Cold War, the United States has come to rely more and more on economic tools to advance its foreign policy goals. Some of these tools, such as sanctions, involve the direct application of economic pressure. Others, such as the promotion of free trade and open markets, work by changing other countries' incentives. But all of them rest on a recognition that unrivaled economic power gives the United States a singular capacity to pursue its interests without resorting to force.

But economic power, like any tool, can have unfortunate results if wielded unwisely, producing unwanted short-term consequences and prompting the long-term decline of U.S. economic leadership. Today, Washington is increasingly using its economic power in aggressive and counterproductive ways, undermining its global position and thus its ability to act effectively in the future. Symptoms of the problem have been evident for years, but it has gotten markedly worse under the Trump administration, which has pursued reckless tariffs against both allies and rivals, reimposed sanctions on Iran without any pretense of international support, and acted in both cases with little evident regard for the negative consequences to U.S. interests.

Every policy presents a tradeoff. Yet U.S. officials seem to have adopted the belief that the United States is so large and powerful that the laws of

JACOB J. LEW is Visiting Professor of International and Public Affairs at the School of International and Public Affairs (SIPA) at Columbia University and a Partner at Lindsay Goldberg. He served as U.S. Treasury Secretary from 2013 to 2017.

RICHARD NEPHEW is Senior Research Scholar at SIPA's Center on Global Energy Policy and served as Deputy Coordinator for Sanctions Policy at the U.S. State Department from 2013 to 2015.

economic and political gravity no longer apply to it. According to this line of thinking, the country can start trade wars and no one will retaliate because, in the words of Peter Navarro, the director of the Trump administration's National Trade Council, "we are the most lucrative and biggest market in the world." The United States can threaten sanctions against its closest partners and allies, and they will somehow still cooperate, now and in the future. And it can continue to make poor economic choices, and the primacy of the U.S. dollar will somehow remain unchallenged.

But in an increasingly multipolar world, the economic influence that the United States has enjoyed since the end of World War II can no longer be taken for granted. And an aggressive or unilateral approach to economic statecraft—a dynamic that was evident at times across multiple administrations but that has reached an extreme under the current one—threatens that very influence. If the Trump administration continues down its current road, then it runs the risk not only of provoking global resistance that will thwart its immediate policy goals but also of reducing the United States' long-term leverage on the global stage. That outcome would be both tragic and ironic: U.S. policymakers, blinded by a belief in their country's unlimited power, will have accelerated its decline.

THE IMPORTANCE OF BEING PRUDENT

Economic statecraft—the use of economics as a tool of foreign policy—can take many forms. The best example is sanctions, which directly impose economic penalties on foreign countries or individuals for noneconomic reasons, but other types of economic policy can also be used for strategic ends. Trade, for example, is often used to gain international influence or pursue diplomatic goals. And as with military power, the tools of economic statecraft don't always have to be used to achieve their desired effect: sanctions sometimes work best when the mere threat of them prompts a concession.

Over the past three decades, globalization has increased the importance of good economic statecraft. Greater interconnectedness means that countries are now benefiting from opportunities around the world; at the same time, they are more exposed than ever to risks that flow from decisions made on the other side of the planet. This interconnectedness gives policymakers, especially those in a country as economically powerful as the United States, an important source of leverage. Thanks to globalization, foreign banks and companies will often comply with U.S. sanctions not because their own governments require it but because

they wish to retain access to the U.S. market, dollar, and financial system, greatly magnifying the power of those sanctions.

Yet this advantage is not a license for the United States to do whatever it wants. There are risks and costs to economic statecraft, and using it properly is a careful balancing act. Before imposing sanctions, for instance, U.S. policymakers should consider whether the measures might violate trade agreements or other international obligations and, if so, whether the benefits will still outweigh the costs. They should be doubly cautious in cases where their actions could undermine fundamental U.S. interests, whether in the promotion of free trade, the creation of markets for U.S. goods and services, or the protection of institutions that facilitate global business and development. In fact, prudence and restraint are often cardinal virtues in U.S. economic statecraft, since radical changes may threaten the United States' current position of economic power.

KING OF THE HILL

Although sanctions and other forms of economic coercion had long been tools in the U.S. foreign policy arsenal, their use greatly expanded after the collapse of the Soviet Union, which left the United States with unprecedented economic and political power. According to the economists Gary Clyde Hufbauer, Jeffrey Schott, and Kimberly Ann Elliott, during the 1990s, Washington used some form of unilateral sanctions against 35 countries, up from 20 the previous decade. In some cases, including the U.S. sanctions against Iraq in 1990–91, Yugoslavia in 1991, and Rwanda in 1994, the United States worked with other countries in the UN Security Council to legitimize the measures. But if coordinated international pressure was unachievable or failed to convince a country to change its behavior, Washington did not hesitate to resort to more aggressive, unilateral measures.

The most important of these were what policymakers call "secondary sanctions." Regular, or "primary," sanctions bar U.S. citizens and firms from doing business with particular companies or individuals. Secondary sanctions, by contrast, prohibit Americans from doing business not only with sanctioned companies and people but also with any third parties dealing with them. If a bank in France made a loan to a company in Iran, for instance, Americans could be barred from dealing with that bank, even if the loan were legal under French law. The result would be to effectively shut the French bank out of the U.S. financial system. And because so

many of the world's major companies are involved in the American financial system or conduct business in U.S. dollars, secondary sanctions give U.S. policymakers a far longer reach than they would otherwise enjoy.

Other countries often bristle at secondary sanctions, viewing them as a particularly brazen example of American unilateralism and an illegal, extraterritorial application of U.S. law. In 1996, Congress authorized the U.S. government to sanction foreign companies for doing business with Cuba or for investing in the Iranian or Libyan oil sectors. The EU responded by accusing Washington of violating both European sovereignty and international law, initiating proceedings against the United States at the World Trade Organization (WTO), and passing legislation prohibiting European firms from complying with U.S. sanctions against those countries. Tensions were defused only when the Clinton administration agreed not to enforce secondary sanctions against European companies in exchange for greater U.S.-European policy harmonization on Cuba, Iran, and Libya.

Other countries often view secondary sanctions as a particularly brazen example of U.S. unilateralism.

After the 9/11 attacks, President George W. Bush took a more aggressive line as part of the war on terrorism, regularly asserting that the United States could impose penalties against companies and people that had no physical presence in the country yet did business in dollars or through U.S. financial institutions. In 2006, for instance, U.S. officials invoked an executive order concerning the proliferation of weapons of mass destruction (signed by Bush the year before) to warn foreign firms that they could be sanctioned for working with Iranian companies. And in 2010, in an effort to further punish Tehran for its nuclear program, Congress dramatically expanded secondary sanctions on foreign financial institutions doing business with Iran while limiting the president's authority to waive their enforcement.

European governments, among others, could have resisted these sanctions and complained about their enforcement, as they did in the 1990s. At the time, however, they were working closely with the United States to deal with the Iranian threat, including by tightening UN sanctions on Iran. The Europeans were therefore willing to cooperate with the United States in sanctions enforcement, leading many in Washington to believe that they had accepted secondary sanctions as a legitimate policy tool.

They had not. Although the Europeans agreed that Iran needed to be pressured, they continued to insist that the EU pass its own sanctions and that European companies follow European, not U.S., law. European officials continued to object, moreover, when Washington enforced its primary sanctions on European banks using the U.S. financial system to do business with sanctioned entities. In 2014, for example, the United States fined the French bank BNP Paribas nearly $9 billion for violating U.S. sanctions on Cuba, Iran, and Sudan, prompting accusations from Paris of "economic warfare" and an attempt by French President François Hollande to convince Washington to waive the fine. Europe's frustrations sent a clear signal: aggressive use of U.S. economic power can produce blowback, even from close allies.

Yet even as U.S. policymakers became more willing to assert global sanctioning authority during the Bush and Obama administrations, they understood the limits of confrontation. Consider how the Obama administration dealt with getting China to join the sanctions against Iran. True, the administration compelled China to reduce its purchases of Iranian oil and used secondary sanctions to punish myriad Chinese entities for doing business with Iran. But the administration picked its battles. Although China reduced its purchases of Iranian oil by less than the 20 percent that other countries did, Washington accepted China's contribution to the pressure campaign and declined to apply secondary sanctions against Chinese entities buying Iranian oil, since doing so could have undermined progress on other important bilateral issues or started a costly sanctions or trade war.

The Obama administration also chose to tread carefully when organizing sanctions against Russia in response to its invasion and annexation of the Crimean Peninsula in early 2014. Unlike China, Russia is not a global economic power, but it does have a great deal of leverage in Europe, particularly in the energy sector. Even today, the country is the EU's fourth-largest trading partner, and the Russian and European financial sectors are tightly linked, meaning that any damage done to financial institutions in Russia could easily spread to those in Europe, creating the risk of global contagion.

In deciding how to respond to Russian aggression, U.S. policymakers thus had to consider the interests of their European allies. When the United States and the EU finally agreed on sanctions, they carefully engineered them to concentrate pressure on the key decision-makers in Moscow while leaving Russia's energy exports to Europe intact. The early

sanctions, enacted in the initial months of 2014, targeted influential individuals around Russian President Vladimir Putin and their preferred financial institution, Bank Rossiya. As Russia moved deeper into Ukraine throughout 2014, the campaign intensified, with the United States, the EU, and other allies passing new sanctions limiting Russian access to international debt and equity financing. Although the results of these sanctions were mixed—Russia did not withdraw from Ukraine, but it did suffer real economic pain and eventually came to the negotiating table—Washington managed to preserve a cooperative relationship with its allies.

To be sure, excessive deference to international concerns is not always a virtue. For example, the Obama administration could have—and in retrospect perhaps should have—pushed China earlier and harder to join in the international sanctions against North Korea. Believing that Pyongyang was still years away from developing a deliverable nuclear warhead, the White House limited its short-term pressure on Beijing over this issue in order to secure its cooperation in other areas, such as the negotiations with Iran over its nuclear program and the Paris agreement on climate change. Only once it became clear in 2016 that North Korea's nuclear and missile programs were advancing rapidly did the Obama administration increase pressure on China and win support in the UN Security Council for tougher international sanctions.

President Donald Trump, to his credit, has been more willing to squeeze China for concessions on North Korea. Through bellicose rhetoric and a tightened multilateral sanctions regime, he succeeded in convincing China to step up its enforcement of international sanctions on North Korea. It is doubtful whether the current U.S.–North Korean talks will go anywhere, but even so, Trump's high-risk approach helped drive North Korea to the negotiating table. A potential side effect, however, is that the Trump administration has learned the wrong lesson from its success: that the aggressive use of sanctions pressure always pays off.

PENNY WISE, DOLLAR FOOLISH

Although sanctions have been key instruments for the United States, they are not the only tools of U.S. economic statecraft. During the 1990s and the first decade of this century, the United States worked to remove trade barriers through both bilateral and multilateral agreements while strengthening institutions behind them, such as the WTO. In so doing, it expanded growth, encouraged developing countries to embrace free markets and open societies, and helped reduce global poverty.

Yet in its engagement with international institutions, as with sanctions, Washington's perception of its own invulnerability has at times undermined its interests. Even as it promoted free trade, the United States was gradually becoming a less reliable partner in funding the institutions that held up the global economic order. It fell into arrears at the UN in 1985, and its commitments to the World Bank and the International Monetary Fund have been in constant peril since the 1990s. Washington has historically been the main funder of the largest international financial institutions (IFIs)—the World Bank and the IMF—which has granted the United States powerful influence within them, including veto power over their major decisions. Although U.S. funding for those IFIs has remained sufficient to retain that veto power, it has been shrinking as a percentage of total new commitments.

Helping fund IFIs serves U.S. interests. By contributing to international financial stability, IFIs reduce the risk of crises that could damage the U.S. economy; by establishing common standards for financial behavior, they get emerging-market countries invested in the rules-based liberal order; and by distributing economic burdens, they allow the United States to pursue its interests at a reduced cost to itself, as was the case with the U.S.-led IMF campaign to stabilize Ukraine's economy in the face of Russian aggression. But when Washington does not pay its bills or prevents the institutions from giving greater voice to emerging-market countries, it limits its own ability to project power.

The IMF is a case in point. Since the 1990s, its funding has been a source of fractious debates in Congress. In 1998, a bill to appropriate money for the fund passed thanks mainly to the bipartisan efforts of senators representing agricultural states, who saw the IMF as a means to maintain U.S. export markets abroad. And when the IMF attempted to enact reforms in 2008 and 2010 to replenish its capital after the global financial crisis, proposing a doubling of total member contributions and a greater vote share for developing countries, it took Congress until 2015 to approve the reforms. Frustrated by the long delay and their lack of influence within the organization, emerging-market countries responded by creating new multilateral institutions, such as the New Development Bank and the Asian Infrastructure Investment Bank.

U.S. leadership at the World Bank and IMF grants Washington enormous leverage. But although it has veto power in these institutions, it cannot automatically win support for its priorities within them. Doing so requires international consensus, which becomes harder to achieve the

more that other countries think the United States is shirking its responsibilities. Washington supported IMF loans to Europe after the 2007–8 economic crisis, which reduced U.S. exposure to financial contagion, and to Iraq in 2004 and 2016, which helped the U.S. war effort by stabilizing the Iraqi economy. In both cases, IFIs bore much of the financial burden for policies important to the United States. Washington was able to win support for these efforts, but the longer its commitment to IFIs withers, the harder such support will be to obtain.

TRUMP'S WRONG TURN

Although international concerns about Washington's aggressive use of economic tools have been growing for decades, they have become even more acute under Trump. His administration is behaving as if the United States is immune to consequences, whether in the form of adversaries exerting economic pressure or allies rejecting the legitimacy of U.S. policy. This hubris is particularly evident in two areas: the administration's protectionist trade policy and its withdrawal from the Iran nuclear deal.

On trade, Trump got off to bad start by pulling out of the Trans-Pacific Partnership, a 12-nation free-trade agreement, during his first week in office. Matters have only gotten worse in 2018, as the United States has imposed tariffs on a wide range of imports, including aluminum, solar panels, steel, and washing machines. These have applied not only to rival states, such as China, but also to close allies, such as Canada, Mexico, and the EU. Although the United States can point to legitimate concerns, such as China's exporting of aluminum and steel at artificially low prices, Trump's policies are doing more harm than good. Other countries have responded with retaliatory tariffs against U.S. goods, from soybeans to Harley-Davidson motorcycles, but even more concerning than the economic costs is the damage that has been done to relations with allies. Moreover, Trump's tariffs, coming at the same time as his shift on Iran, have antagonized Washington's European allies, in particular, with leaders across the continent now calling for greater EU independence from the United States.

On Iran, Trump has also managed to undermine U.S. interests through bellicose, unilateral action. When Trump withdrew the United States from the Iran deal in May, he did so against the wishes of every other party to the agreement and despite all available evidence suggesting that Iran was complying with it. The administration then began reimposing U.S. sanctions and threatening to aggressively enforce secondary sanctions against

companies whose governments have remained in the deal, including those of the United States' Asian and European allies.

Trump's decision has begun to seriously affect Iran's already shaky economy. Iranian oil exports have been dropping since April, and analysis by BMI Research estimates that the country's GDP will shrink by 4.3 percent in 2019. This should come as no surprise. Officials in the Obama administration often stated that U.S. sanctions, if reimposed, could damage the Iranian economy, notwithstanding the relief it had enjoyed under the Iran deal. But the point of sanctions is not simply to impose pain; it is to use this pain as part of a negotiating process, with the aim of getting policy concessions from the other side. Sanctions work only if other countries believe that they can obtain relief by changing their behavior. If a country bows to U.S. demands only for Washington to reimpose sanctions, as Trump has done with Iran, there is little incentive for compliance in the future.

The Trump administration is behaving as if the United States is immune to consequences.

By going it alone and pulling out of the Iran deal, the United States has potentially failed in terms of both exerting pain and prompting concessions. Washington's closest European allies, such as France, Germany, and the United Kingdom, are now working directly with the Iranian government to find ways of diverting business away from the dollar-based financial system in order to avoid U.S. sanctions and keep the existing deal in place. In July, the remaining participants in the nuclear deal released a joint statement that included a lengthy list of efforts to block the enforcement of U.S. sanctions, such as maintaining financial channels with Iran, promoting trade and export credits, and encouraging European investment in the country. Even if these efforts fail in the short term, they could eventually lead to the development of new strategies for working around U.S. policy.

LOSING THE RACE

The outlook for U.S. economic statecraft, if it continues on its present trajectory, is bleak. When it comes to sanctions, other countries will likely soon begin challenging or ignoring measures that have been imposed by Washington without international support. The more that other countries are willing to cheat on sanctions or simply look the other way, the more the United States alone will have to shoulder the burden for

monitoring and enforcing them. As more nations find means of avoiding enforcement, such as business structures that separate companies transacting with the United States from those transacting with sanctioned entities, U.S. sanctions will begin to lose their effectiveness. And if other countries band together to reject U.S. sanctions, Washington could find itself having to choose between enforcing against everyone and giving up on the sanctions.

Things will get even worse as the United States loses its dominant position in the global economy. Today, the country largely gets its way because there is no alternative to the dollar and no export market as attractive as the United States. But if Washington continues to force other nations to go along with policies that they consider both illegal and unwise, over the next 20 to 30 years, they are likely to shift away from the United States' economy and financial system. On a long enough timeline, the formation of alternative centers of economic power may be inevitable, but it would be foolish to accelerate this process and worse to make the United States toxic while doing so.

On trade, too, the United States faces a future of more, and possibly more unfair, competition. The current international economic system does not operate perfectly, but it does have rules against unfair trading practices and the means of enforcing them. Moreover, the system incentivizes all nations to obey the rules. China and Russia did not join the WTO simply for prestige; they also wanted to obtain the benefits that flow from membership, such as preferential tariff rates and a legal remedy against protectionism. If the United States abandons its role as the guarantor of this system, other countries may rewrite the rules of trade. They are unlikely to do so with U.S. interests in mind.

GETTING BACK ON TRACK

If Washington wants to maintain its economic leverage in the future, U.S. policymakers will have to temper the unilateral approach to economic statecraft that they have increasingly adopted since the end of the Cold War. To begin with, they must be honest with themselves about the limits of U.S. power and the tradeoffs that accompany any policy. The United States must protect its right to act unilaterally, and in some cases, it will make sense to pursue an aggressive line or act against the wishes of U.S. allies. But policymakers should do so in full knowledge of the potential consequences and only when truly necessary—indeed, unilateral actions will be easier to justify if they are seen as exceptions rather than the rule.

There are three immediate policy changes that would help get U.S. economic statecraft back on track. First, the Trump administration should stop its destructive and divisive trade war, especially with U.S. allies. Given its economic strength, the United States may not lose a trade war with Canada or the EU, but it will not win one, either. Regardless of which side suffers more, a sustained trade war will not just damage the U.S. economy by disrupting long-standing patterns of trade and incentivizing companies to avoid doing business in the United States. It will also limit U.S. power and influence.

Second, the United States should restrict its use of secondary sanctions, deploying them only in pursuit of the most important national security objectives and only after trying and failing to persuade other nations to join in multilateral sanctions. Secondary sanctions are a tempting policy tool, since using them is far easier than working through international institutions or diplomacy. But they should be used sparingly and in coordination with partners. If Washington continues to rely on them without developing a broad consensus in favor of its policy goals, efforts on the part of other countries to reduce their dependence on the United States will only accelerate.

Finally, the United States should seek to coordinate internationally when possible. The Trump administration has sung the praises of independent action, which allows Washington to avoid the compromises that come with multilateral approaches. But although getting buy-in can be time consuming and frustrating, the resulting measures are more likely to succeed and persist. Multilateralism also strengthens international institutions, which distribute responsibility and make it less likely that the United States will have to shoulder a disproportionate share of the burden.

At present, it seems unlikely that Trump will arrest the trend toward more aggressive unilateralism in U.S. economic statecraft; indeed, he may accelerate it. If he does, it will fall to Congress to both control its own impulses toward unilateral action and exercise oversight over executive-branch decisions on sanctions and trade policy, ensuring that these are prudent and in keeping with U.S. interests. It is not too late for the United States to mitigate some of the risks it currently faces and to set the stage for a more effective use of economic statecraft in the future. Doing so, however, will require something more than threats and bluster—it will require an honest reckoning on the part of U.S. policymakers with the limits of American power.

Generation Stress

The Mental Health Crisis on Campus

Sylvia Mathews Burwell

It is supposed to be the time of their life—the halcyon days of college, when young adults grow, acquire knowledge, and learn new skills. But according to the 2016–17 Healthy Minds Study, an annual survey of mental health on American college campuses, while 44 percent of students said that they were flourishing, 39 percent reported experiencing symptoms of depression or anxiety. The proportion of students experiencing suicidal ideation has grown from six percent in 2007 to 11 percent in 2017. The percentage of students receiving psychotherapy has jumped from 13 percent to 24 percent over the same period. Even though more students are getting help, only a little more than half of those with symptoms of depression and anxiety had received treatment in the previous year.

The rise in mental health challenges is not limited to college students. One in every four adults in the United States will suffer from an anxiety disorder in the course of his or her lifetime, and suicide rates for men and women have risen since 2000. Whether these figures are a passing trend, the new normal, or a harbinger of greater challenges to come, one cannot fully know. But no matter what, universities need to deal with this uptick in psychological distress. No longer can they consider students' mental health to be outside their area of responsibility.

Nowadays, that responsibility has broadened to include increasing students' resiliency—that is, helping them not just avoid stress but also develop the tools to work through it. Resiliency is about decreasing students' sense of overwhelming stress while fostering their growing autonomy to tackle difficult life challenges. It's also about treating their very real depression and anxiety.

Taking responsibility for students' mental health needs is particularly complex at a time when universities are rightfully under pressure about

SYLVIA MATHEWS BURWELL is President of American University. From 2014 to 2017, she was U.S. Secretary of Health and Human Services.

cost and access. And it is all the more complex given that part of the core mission of higher education is to challenge students. To put it succinctly, college is supposed to be hard. How to balance the natural challenges and stress that university life presents while supporting students' mental health is an increasingly difficult tightrope to walk. Yet it needs to be walked, since students' mental health is a growing concern, and when that health is poor, it can inhibit the core mission of learning. To address the issue, universities must raise awareness of the problem through education inside and outside the academy; focus on prevention, detection, and treatment; and acknowledge the importance of community—all while recognizing that stress is a part of life.

Following World War II, the United States built a thriving middle class and became the engine of the global economy thanks to the foundation of a thriving higher education system. Now, that same system must be a part of resolving today's mental health crisis, which presents a broad challenge to American competitiveness and productivity.

STRESSED OUT

In my first year as president of American University, I met with students from a variety of backgrounds and quickly learned that they have a great deal of insight into why they experience more stress and anxiety than previous generations. The answer boils down to three factors: safety, economics, and technology.

Students' concerns about safety stem from different sources. Most undergraduates have no memory of a world before 9/11. They have grown up with bag searches on subways, SWAT teams at stadiums, and body scanners at airports—constant visual reminders that the United States was attacked and could be again. Students of an older generation would note that those are no different from Cold War–era "duck and cover" drills. Yet today's students point out that Americans never experienced nuclear war, only the threat of it.

They have also grown up with increasingly deadly mass shootings. This fall, students arrived on campus with the 2018 attack at Marjory Stoneman Douglas High School, in Parkland, Florida, fresh in their minds, but they also remember the attacks in 2017 at a concert in Las Vegas, in 2016 at the Pulse nightclub in Orlando, in 2012 at Sandy Hook Elementary School, and in 2007 at Virginia Tech. For some students on campus, incidents that have involved racially motivated acts of violence—such as the events in Charlottesville, Virginia, in 2017—

add to their fear, stress, and anxiety. Female students have additional cause for worry. While the increasing transparency about how often sexual assault occurs on campus has helped advance the conversation about the issue, it has also added to safety concerns.

Other fears are rooted in economics. A college education is essential to social mobility, but tuition at both public and private universities continues to rise. Many students, especially first-generation college students, come from families with already stretched budgets and little experience in the nuances of financing higher education, making the prospect of student debt particularly daunting.

Students also worry about the economy they are graduating into—they are old enough to remember the Great Recession—and fear that they will end up jobless, unable to pay off their debt, and forced to live with their parents. Although unemployment is now low in the United States, wage growth has stayed relatively flat throughout the recovery, and early career salaries, in particular, dropped during the recession.

As a result, many students worry that they will do no better than their parents, and with good reason: in the United States, the likelihood that a child will earn more than his or her parents has dropped from 90 percent to 50 percent over the past half century. Students also see an economy that offers them not a single career choice but an ever-changing panoply of career steps. Such a path may be exciting, but it is nowhere as conducive to stable health insurance and a secure retirement as the one their parents and grandparents followed.

Then there is the anxiety that results from social media. Part of the stress has to do with the pressure on young people to constantly present a curated version of their lives on Instagram, Snapchat, and other platforms. The way I translate this concern to older generations is by asking, "What would it be like if you had to update your resumé every day?" The obvious answer: incredibly stressful. Another part of the stress comes from the observing side of social media. Because people tend to heavily curate what they present, it can sometimes seem as if everyone else has better internships, earns higher grades, and attends more exclusive parties.

THINGS REALLY ARE DIFFERENT

Some argue that all this is nothing new, that school has always been anxiety inducing. But regardless of whether today's students really do face a greater number of stressors than generations past, there is little doubt that the impact of those stressors is felt more than before. Today's young adults seem to arrive at college with less resiliency and a lower appetite for risk and failure.

In raising their children, parents have focused more on protecting them from stress and anxiety and less on teaching them how to cope. Today's incoming classes are of a generation that received athletic trophies merely for participating. Becoming so used to winning makes it all the harder to deal with losing. It makes it harder to learn resiliency. On top of this, parents have created a culture of risk aversion. Today's students were warned as children not to walk home alone, and they grew up playing on playgrounds designed to break their falls. In many ways, children have been taught both explicitly and implicitly to avoid risk, and for many of them, the resulting safety has made them less capable of coping with failure and disappointment.

Today's young adults seem to arrive at college with less resiliency and a lower appetite for risk and failure.

When students have a panic attack because they received a B minus on a test, it becomes clear that parents have probably not done enough to prepare them for the fact that life involves both success and failure. Today, high school graduates arrive on American University's campus with higher SAT scores, more Advanced Placement credits, and more International Baccalaureate degrees than ever before. They are book smart but perhaps less life ready. This problem can be seen not only in how they deal with bad news but also in what they know about basic life skills, from managing their finances to doing their laundry. There are exceptions, of course, but American University's faculty and staff are probably not unique in observing that students increasingly come to college with less mastery of such skills.

Another way that today's students differ from their predecessors is in their relationships with their parents and other adults in their lives. Gone are the days when a five-minute phone call every Sunday was the extent of communication with family. For many students, thanks in part to advances in technology, there is nearly constant communication with parents through texting and calls. In the interactions I see with faculty and staff on campus, students seem to seek more adult guidance and assistance with problem solving than previous generations did.

Stress can play out in different ways. One common type of student is the overachiever: a first-year student who was at the top of his class in high school and never needed to exert much effort to get there. In his first semester at college, he fails a couple of midterm exams and

finds himself too embarrassed to lean on his support network from home. At night, when his friends have gone to bed, he heads to the library and immerses himself in his studies. Eventually, he's sleeping less than four hours a night. And only when he reaches a breaking point does he seek out counseling that can help him work through his own expectations and time management.

Another common type is the overcommitted student. She comes to college with a strong sense of what she wants to do afterward—say, work on a political campaign—and loads up on extracurricular activities in pursuit of that goal. In her first semester, she joins several political clubs, runs for student government, and takes on a part-time internship on Capitol Hill. She even adds an extra class to get ahead. Without this level of commitment, she fears, she won't be competitive for the best campaigns. The result is long days of meetings, work, and classes, along with late nights trying to catch up. Only after she breaks down emotionally does she confide in her dorm's resident assistant, who refers her to the counseling center.

CHALLENGE AND RESPONSE

According to a 2015 report from the Center for Collegiate Mental Health, the number of students visiting counseling centers increased by 30 percent between 2009 and 2015 (enrollment grew by only six percent). Across the country, colleges and universities are adding extra professional staff to help students, in part because the types of counseling needs have also expanded. Some students arrive with complex medication regimes, whereas others are part of the growing number of students experiencing thoughts of suicide, a trend that requires more emergency services, such as 24-hour rapid-response counseling. As student bodies become more diverse, schools need support staff who can reach across cultural divides. Adding all these resources is not easy, especially for schools in rural areas, where mental health providers are in short supply.

Universities are struggling to keep up with rising numbers of students seeking support: according to the Association for University and College Counseling Center Directors, in 2016–17, 34 percent of college counseling centers had to put some students on a waitlist. And it's important to note that many students remain reluctant to talk to a professional: while stigma concerning mental health today is less than what it was in the past, it still impedes students from recognizing their challenges, seeking out help, and committing to treatment.

Universities are putting more effort into prevention. Harvard University has started the Success-Failure Project, a program that hosts discussions aimed at redefining success and dealing with rejection. Duke University offers a mindfulness program designed to help students manage stress. At American University, we introduced a mandatory, two-semester course aimed at helping students adjust to their first year in college. Of course, it's important to make sure such programs don't end up adding to the problem: when I asked students if stress-reduction seminars might be helpful, one responded, "Please don't add anything to my already packed schedule that will further stress me out!"

Campuses that focus on creating a sense of community and belonging find that students who have support networks to turn to are better able to work through their challenges and stress. This sense of belonging can act as a preventive tool, countering students' feelings of loneliness and depression and providing a way for them to alert others to the problems they are facing. Increasing a campus' sense of community can often mean running into long-standing questions—for instance, about the value of fraternities and sororities and about whether to increase student engagement by offering more activities and clubs. Universities must face these old questions in the new context of growing mental health issues.

PRODUCING HAPPIER GRADUATES

Universities are in the early stages of grappling with the increase in stress and anxiety. Although there is no agreed-on formula at this time, there are some approaches that show promise.

There is general agreement that the solution lies in more education about the issue, inside and outside the academy. Creating awareness of the problem and teaching faculty, staff, and students how to prevent, recognize, and respond to it can help. Just as many campuses have made progress on educating students about sexual assault, they can do the same when it comes to mental health.

Moreover, as odd as it may sound, universities should draw on some of the lessons learned during the 2014 Ebola outbreak—a global health threat that emerged during my tenure as U.S. secretary of health and human services—and adopt a public health approach to the problem. With Ebola, the priorities were prevention, detection, and treatment. These core elements can also guide universities in framing their approach to mental health. Prevention can mean introducing courses that help

students adjust to college life. Detection might mean developing ways to quickly notice when a student doesn't download an assignment or show up for classes.

As for treatment, universities need to secure adequate resources for counseling so that students seeking help receive timely and effective care. On many campuses, triage systems prioritize the most acute cases, determine which students can be treated in a limited number of sessions, and refer to other providers those who require long-term care. No university is capable of offering unlimited sessions and all kinds of care, so administrators need to determine which cases to refer and which to keep in house. They must also have the capacity to meet demand without long waitlists for treatment. To inform their investments, universities should use data about their campus' particular needs—especially at a time when the economics of higher education are under both scrutiny and pressure.

Universities also need to acknowledge the power of communities. Communities can not only act as a knowledge base and a source of referrals; at a more basic level, they can also stem the problem to begin with. Study after study has found that social connectedness is correlated with well-being and resiliency, so universities should strive to build inclusive communities. Encouraging in-person (not Instagram) connections can help. Administrators should make sure that students are aware of the clubs and groups on campus, offer a sense of belonging, and invest in first-year residence halls and other communities for living and learning. Faculty and staff should recognize the value of engaging with students.

Finally, students, parents, and universities should embrace the healthy idea that stress is a part of what makes college great. College students develop intellectually, socially, and morally through a combination of challenge and support. Their time on campus should be not so overwhelming that they retreat, yet not so comfortable that there is no incentive to grow. Thus, the college experience should teach students not to avoid challenges—life is full of them, after all—but how to handle the stress that results. Recognizing this is the first step to producing more resilient students, as well as happier, better-adjusted graduates.

Old Money, New Order

American Philanthropies and the Defense of Liberal Democracy

Darren Walker

The world is experiencing a realignment unlike any other since the end of World War II. Nationalism and populism are surging in the United States and Europe, at the expense of liberal internationalism and democratic values. This poses a challenge to a wide range of institutions, including philanthropies committed to international development and social justice. Such foundations played a crucial role in building the liberal international order that has come under assault in recent years, and that the United States seems less willing to defend than ever before.

During much of the last century, philanthropic foundations based in the United States exported American ideals about democracy, market economies, and civil society. That mission was made possible by ideological support from and alignment with the U.S. government, which, in turn, imbued foundations with prestige and influence as they operated around the world. American philanthropies such as the Ford Foundation can no longer count on such support. Nor can they be sure that the goals of increased equality, the advancement of human rights, and the promotion of democracy will find backing in Washington.

As U.S. leadership of the global order falters, American foundations must blaze a new path. The first step will be recognizing difficult truths about their history. The old order they helped forge was successful in many ways but also suffered from fundamental flaws, including the fact that it often privileged the ideas and institutions in prosperous Western countries and failed to foster equitable growth and stability in poorer countries. For all the good that American philanthropies have done, they have also helped perpetuate a system that produces far

DARREN WALKER is President of the Ford Foundation.

too much inequality. Their task today is to contribute to the construction of a new, improved order, one that is more just and sustainable than its predecessor.

HOW TO SPEND IT

Although it was founded in 1936, prior to World War II, the Ford Foundation as it exists today took shape mostly in the war's aftermath. The social and political upheaval that the war left in its wake and the widespread anxiety about future conflict colored every decision the foundation made from 1950 onward.

The foundation was chartered in Michigan by Henry Ford's son, Edsel, and was designed in part to protect the Ford family's estate from new federal inheritance taxes. In its early years, the foundation was a modest organization that funded projects of interest to the Ford family. But the war, along with the deaths of Edsel Ford, in 1943, and his father, in 1947, fueled the foundation's transformation into a global actor.

Their bequests to the foundation totaled nearly 90 percent of the stock of the Ford Motor Company and created an endowment that was valued officially at $417 million in 1954 but was likely much larger. (A 1955 *New Yorker* article put the number, based on Ford Motor Company earnings, at closer to $2.5 billion, or $23.6 billion in today's dollars.) That wealth made the foundation the largest philanthropy in the world, overtaking older institutions such as the Carnegie Corporation and the Rockefeller Foundation.

In 1948, Edsel Ford's eldest son, Henry Ford II, asked the lawyer and investment banker H. Rowan Gaither to lead a study to determine what the foundation should do. Gaither's team collected input from a wide range of figures across the American establishment, from Dwight Eisenhower to Walt Disney. Its report recommended that the organization commit itself to human welfare through, first and foremost, "the establishment of peace," a lofty goal that could be achieved only by international cooperation and global economic development. This mission aligned perfectly with Washington's push to construct a liberal order backed by U.S. military power and composed of alliances such as NATO, multilateral organizations such as the International Monetary Fund and the UN, and trade agreements such as the General Agreement on Tariffs and Trade. In embracing this emerging order, the Ford Foundation was hardly alone among the philanthropic set: the

Rockefeller family, for example, had helped secure land for the UN headquarters and facilitated the 1944 Bretton Woods conference, which led to the creation of the IMF.

To define the foundation's role in the emerging order, Ford turned to some of the order's most influential shapers. The first person from outside the Ford family to serve as president of the foundation was Paul Hoffman, who took charge in 1950 after having overseen the execution of the Marshall Plan in postwar Europe. To Hoffman, the foundation's mission represented, in a sense, a global extension of the Marshall Plan's goals: to foster democratic institutions and free markets, ward off the spread of communism, prevent the return of fascism, and secure American influence abroad. Hoffman toured the world, identifying projects to fund in democracies that Ford and the U.S. government deemed essential. Hoffman's goals were to mitigate global tensions, develop understanding among peoples, strengthen international institutions such as the UN, and improve how the United States engaged in global affairs.

American philanthropies have helped perpetuate a system that produces far too much inequality.

Other boldface names served in important positions at Ford, creating a revolving door between the foundation and the highest levels of the U.S. government. In 1950, George Kennan, the author of the famous "Long Telegram" (and a related, seminal article titled "The Sources of Soviet Conduct," published pseudonymously in this magazine in 1947), took a leave from the State Department, during which he advised the foundation on its early programming and worked on a Ford-funded project to create, in his words, "a more up-to-date, more realistic concept of the objectives of American foreign policy: that is, what the American government ought to be trying to achieve in its foreign policies." In 1952, John McCloy, after having served as U.S. assistant secretary of war, U.S. high commissioner for Germany, and the first president of the World Bank, was tasked by Hoffman with investigating "the conditions of peace"—a project that led to the foundation's support of the Council on Foreign Relations (which publishes *Foreign Affairs*) and of organizations such as the Brookings Institution and the International Institute for Strategic Studies. McCloy later served as chair of the foundation's board, from 1958 to 1965.

The cozy relationship between Ford and the U.S. government would eventually draw a fair amount of criticism, particularly when it came to the foundation's influence on American foreign policy. John Howard, a staff member who accompanied Hoffman on his world tour, remarked that in India, "there was already suspicion that the foundations were just arms of the State Department; [Indian commentators] could never make the distinction between State and the Ford Foundation." At the same time, critics in India and Latin America accused the foundation of entanglement with the CIA. It's easy to imagine how their interests might have converged during that period, given the close relationship between the foundation and the U.S. government. Nonetheless, efforts were made to ensure that, as Francis Sutton, a foundation official, wrote, "the CIA was kept at a prudent distance."

Ford's critics in Washington were more concerned with the foundation's domestic programs than with its international ones. In the early 1950s, the U.S. House of Representatives' Select Committee to Investigate Tax-Exempt Foundations and Comparable Organizations (known as the Cox Committee, after Representative Edward Cox, a Democrat from Georgia) sought to discover whether such foundations were using their resources for "un-American and subversive activities." In a familiar Cold War paradox, some accused Ford and other foundations of being agents of American imperialism, and others accused them of being secret Soviet sympathizers.

COLD WARRIORS

As the Cold War intensified, alignment between the U.S. government and major U.S. foundations became a de facto alliance against communism, which both official Washington and its philanthropic allies saw as a major threat to peace and to their joint mission. A memo from Hoffman's very first board meeting, in January 1951, makes clear that "the main danger of war stems from tension between the East, led by the Soviet Union, and the West, led by the United States." According to Howard, Hoffman's visits to places such as India and Pakistan stemmed from a "Cold War philosophy." Although Hoffman "didn't speak like a Cold War warrior," Howard later recalled, "the mere choice of the underbelly of China was in the same genre of thinking."

A foundation annual report from 1953 stated that the Ford Foundation would work "only in those nations whose political philosophy and

objectives, if sustained or achieved, are incompatible with Communism." Throughout the 1950s and 1960s, Ford invested millions of dollars to build state capacity in emerging democracies in Africa, Latin America, and Southeast Asia. The foundation established its first international office in New Delhi in 1952, in part due to concerns that intense poverty would imperil the newly democratic and independent India by giving communists an opening.

Fighting communism and promoting democracy through massive poverty-reduction initiatives became a mainstay of Cold War–era U.S. philanthropy. Beginning in the late 1950s, for instance, Ford collaborated with the Rockefeller Foundation to support what became known as the green revolution, helping to build and fund institutions focused on agricultural research all over the world. Vastly improving agricultural output, these efforts saved hundreds of millions—perhaps billions—of lives and helped lift millions more out of destitution.

Many of Ford's activities abroad involved connecting foreign government officials with American academics and experts, who could aid postcolonial democracies in crafting plans for economic development and institutional reform. The foundation also trained foreign civil servants in fields such as business, finance, law, management, and urban planning. The Ford Foundation followed in the Rockefeller Foundation's footsteps by building academic centers abroad and creating exchange programs for policymakers and academics. By the late 1970s, Ford had invested $450 million (approximately $1.7 billon in today's dollars) in these programs.

In 1968, in coordination with the State Department, the foundation formalized these activities in the International Research and Exchanges Board, which became extraordinarily influential in places such as Hungary and Poland, and even in the Soviet Union itself. It also sought to consolidate postwar democratic gains in Western Europe. The origins of the European Union can be traced back to grants from Ford and other American foundations, which funded scholarly research on European integration in the early 1950s, the work of the French diplomat Jean Monnet (one of the founding fathers of the EU), and a series of conferences for young leaders from across the continent who wanted to forge a common European identity.

Through these kinds of projects, the foundation trained and supported a generation of civil servants, diplomats, and leaders around the world, thousands of whom went on to achieve great things—most notably

the late UN Secretary-General Kofi Annan. Some, however, later served repressive, even violent regimes. These include a number of Indonesian economists at the University of California, Berkeley, who became known as "the Berkeley Mafia" when they went to work for Suharto's dictatorship. Ford also helped train the so-called Chicago Boys, a group of Chilean economists who were educated at the University of Chicago with the help of Ford grants and who later joined the authoritarian government of Augusto Pinochet. These kinds of outcomes serve as reminders that foundations such as Ford do not have complete control over the downstream impact of their grants. Inevitably, some funding will have unintended consequences and confounding results.

SHOCKS TO THE SYSTEM

Pinochet's rise was part of a larger turning point for the Ford Foundation in the late 1960s and the first half of the 1970s. In democracies across Latin America in which the foundation operated—not only Chile but also Argentina and Brazil—right-wing autocrats came to power, often with Washington's direct or tacit backing. Ford could no longer work closely with those governments and had to find new approaches to supporting democratic ideals there. It pivoted from assisting officials with national planning to supporting civil society organizations such as think tanks, watchdog groups, grass-roots organizations, and even certain religious societies. It also began to prioritize its advocacy for the rights and norms required to protect such groups, including freedom of expression and association and the rule of law. In Chile, following Pinochet's 1973 overthrow of Salvador Allende, the foundation began to support groups that protected Chilean scholars and their academic work from the dictatorship, including the Latin American Council of Social Sciences, the Emergency Committee to Aid Latin American Scholars, and the Vicariate of Solidarity.

This new focus on civil society organizations informed the foundation's work in authoritarian countries in other regions, as well. The foundation supported a 1973 conference on legal aid at the University of Natal, in South Africa, which drew international attention to the apartheid regime's abuses. In 1975, at the urging of several staff members, the foundation's board of trustees approved a human rights program, which began with $500,000 to support reforms, individual rights, local organizations, and social movements in various countries.

Political change also led philanthropies to modify their approaches in the wealthy countries of the West. Foundations had played a significant role in building the postwar global economic architecture, including the system of international financial exchange that emerged from Bretton Woods. But in 1971, the so-called Nixon shock—which saw, among other developments, the United States abandon the gold standard—transformed the world economy. Ford adapted by establishing a program on international economic order, which supported research into new fiscal models, inflation, and national stabilization policies, and helped establish networks to connect economists and policymakers.

Ford also became increasingly known for its work on social issues in the United States, particularly civil rights and women's rights, and the creation of new disciplines at universities. Much of the research that informed President Lyndon Johnson's Great Society agenda was funded by the Ford Foundation—including Head Start, the federal program that supports early childhood education. (As a five-year-old in Ames, Texas, I attended one of the first preschools funded by Head Start.)

Whereas World War II had bred near-universal alignment between foundations and the U.S. government on most issues, the Vietnam War had the opposite effect. By sowing public distrust of the U.S. foreign policy establishment and reminding institutions of the danger of uncritically supporting government policies, Vietnam gave foundations ample reason to assert more independence.

MULTIPOLAR GIVING

Today, the world is once again undergoing tectonic shifts. Liberal values and the U.S.-led global order have come under assault. If Washington continues to retreat from its traditional role as the order's principle guarantor, authoritarian regimes will grow stronger and illiberal ideas will spread. The rise of China means that foundations will have to learn to operate in a world defined by multiple spheres of influence.

This learning process has already begun. Consider, for example, the Carnegie Endowment for International Peace's establishment, in 2010, of the Carnegie-Tsinghua Center for Global Policy, in Beijing, or the Brookings Institution's investment in research centers in Beijing, Doha, and New Delhi. More foundations should follow suit by establishing partnerships outside the United States and making their programming less reliant on U.S.-centric views of global order and

economic development. Just this year, for instance, the Ford Foundation has adjusted its own programs to be more global in nature, seeking to use our footprint in ten countries outside the United States to work together toward global outcomes on global issues—issues such as imbalanced financial flows from extractive industries, violence against women and girls, and the increasingly endangered space for civil society. In order to address such problems effectively, we will have to draw on ideas and talent from all parts of the world, working toward solutions that help encourage a new kind of international cooperation in a multipolar era.

Foundations must abandon the old habit of relying on top-down initiatives designed by technocrats in New York and Washington.

Foundations must also invest in non-U.S. institutions and individuals who intend to stay in and serve their home countries. In 2001, Ford invested $280 million—its largest single grant ever—to create the International Fellowships Program, which funded the education of foreign scholars around the world and sought to build the capacity of universities outside the United States. By 2013, the program had paid for more than 4,300 fellows from 22 developing countries to earn graduate or postgraduate degrees, many of whom were educated in the global South. When the program ended, in 2013, 82 percent of the fellows it had funded were working for social change in their home countries.

A multipolar world will also foster the proliferation of non-American philanthropy. For most of the twentieth century, international giving was dominated by the great families of U.S. industry: the Carnegies, the Fords, the Rockefellers, and many others. During the first two decades of the twenty-first century, American philanthropic preeminence has persisted and even expanded, as foundations established by Michael Bloomberg, Bill and Melinda Gates, and George Soros have made tremendous contributions to human progress. But as other parts of the world produce greater wealth, U.S.-based foundations will have to share the stage with foundations established by wealthy individuals such as Mukesh Ambani of India, Aliko Dangote of Nigeria, Jack Ma of China, and Carlos Slim of Mexico.

This is a hopeful development, because American foundations cannot address the world's most pressing problems alone. U.S. foundations

must find ways to support the growth of philanthropy in other countries and unleash the potential of new wealth around the world.

The Ford Foundation has provided seed funding for local and regional foundations, such as TrustAfrica, and networks of philanthropies, such as the African Philanthropy Forum, the East Africa Philanthropy Network, and the China Global Philanthropy Institute. By sharing ideas, best practices, and strategies for funding with these smaller, non-American groups, legacy foundations can offer the perspective they've gained through their own successes and failures. Yet at the same time, they must abandon the old habit of relying on top-down initiatives designed by technocrats in New York and Washington and listen instead to people with on-the-ground knowledge. Over the past 15 years, Ford has moved away from the practice of staffing its offices in the developing world with Americans and has benefited from tapping deep reservoirs of local talent.

In the postwar era, American foundations—working with the U.S. government and other countries, development agencies, the private sector, and civil society—helped build a global order that brought impressive advances in poverty reduction, the promotion of democracy, gender equality, and social progress but that also produced unsustainable inequality. Today, U.S. foundations have a responsibility to contribute to a more just and sustainable order. Doing so will require working with a broader range of partners and including voices that were left out of the twentieth century's order-building project. The time for change is now, and there isn't a moment to lose.

BUILDING **DEMOCRACY**

CREATING **OPPORTUNITY**

PROMOTING **PEACE**

2009 2018

HALIFAX

INTERNATIONAL SECURITY FORUM

November 16—18, 2018 • Halifax Nova Scotia

Canada

HALIFAX CANADA CLUB

FOREIGN AFFAIRS MEDIA PARTNER

FP MEDIA PARTNER

HalifaxTheForum.org

Health Without Wealth

The Worrying Paradox of Modern Medical Miracles

Thomas Bollyky

For the first time in recorded history, bacteria, viruses, and other infectious agents do not cause the majority of deaths or disabilities in any region of the world. Since 2003, the number of people who die each year from HIV/AIDS has fallen by more than 40 percent. Deaths from malaria, tuberculosis, and diarrheal diseases have fallen by more than 25 percent each. In 1950, there were nearly 100 countries, including almost every one in sub-Saharan Africa, South Asia, and Southeast Asia, where at least one out of five children died before his or her fifth birthday, most of them from infectious diseases. Today, there are none. The average life expectancy in developing countries has risen to 70.

But the news is not all good. In the past, gains in longevity went hand in hand with broader improvements in health-care systems, governance, and infrastructure. That meant the byproducts of better health—a growing young work force, less deadly cities, and a shift in countries' health-care needs to the problems of older people—were sources of wider prosperity and inclusion. Today, improvements in health are driven more by targeted medical interventions and international aid than by general development. Without that development, the changes that now accompany declines in infectious diseases are potential sources of instability: rising youth unemployment, overcrowded and underbuilt cities, surging rates of premature chronic diseases, and more migration.

Many developing countries are not investing enough to ensure that children who survive past adolescence get a good education, solid job opportunities, and high-quality health care as adults. Many

THOMAS BOLLYKY is Director of the Global Health Program at the Council on Foreign Relations. He is the author of *Plagues and the Paradox of Progress* (MIT Press, 2018), from which this essay is adapted.

Against medical advice: a miner smoking in Heilongjiang Province, China, October 2015

JASON LEE / REUTERS

rich countries, meanwhile, are embracing policies on trade, immigration, and climate change that make those tasks even harder.

There is a paradox in humanity's progress against infectious diseases: the world has been getting healthier in ways that should make us worry. The recent hard-won gains threaten to bring a host of new and destabilizing problems. Whether the dramatic improvements in global health turn out to be a blessing or a curse depends on what the world does next.

THE ALMIGHTY GERM

Infectious disease, the historian William McNeill once wrote, has been "one of the fundamental parameters and determinants of human history." Epidemics helped bring down the Roman Empire; parasites delayed the colonization of Africa; and measles, smallpox, and other infections enabled the Spanish conquest of the Aztec and Inca Empires. The invention of the printing press came partly in response to the scarcity of labor that followed the Black Death in fourteenth-century Europe.

The power of microbes over human affairs comes from several traits. Infectious diseases, by definition, spread. The risk of transmission is

greatest when large numbers of people and animals come into close contact. And people who haven't previously been exposed to a particular disease—isolated populations, such as the Aztecs and the Incas or infants and children—are the most vulnerable to it. These traits mean that diseases such as smallpox and malaria shaped the outcomes of wars, enabling some conquests and thwarting others. They also explain why for most of history, the only large cities were wealthy industrial centers or the capitals of empires, such as Rome, which could draw enough migrants from the countryside to compensate for the death toll caused by dysentery, tuberculosis, and other diseases of urban density.

Recent dramatic declines in plagues and parasites have brought more modest economic benefits than past declines did.

The measures taken to fight infectious diseases have driven human history just as much as the diseases themselves have. Preventing and controlling pestilence depend on cooperation between people and governments. Individuals and communities could not isolate themselves from the risk of infectious disease for long, and even then only at great cost. The historian Mark Harrison has argued that starting in the fourteenth century, the need to control infectious diseases helped create the modern state by forcing local and national authorities to begin assuming greater power over their citizens' lives.

The same factors that made infectious diseases so influential through history also explain why overcoming them can lead to so much prosperity. As mortality rates from infectious diseases declined in the United States and Europe at the end of the nineteenth century, larger urban areas became more viable. Packed in cities, people swapped ideas, improved on one another's inventions, and started successful businesses. Indeed, no country has ever grown wealthy without urbanizing first.

Better health brought other benefits, too. Lower child mortality meant a larger share of young working-age adults in the population. Once fewer children died of infectious diseases, parents generally had fewer of them, freeing up women to join the labor force and leaving more resources to educate the children they did have. The government measures taken to reduce the incidence of infectious disease, such as quarantining the sick, mandating vaccinations, and building

sewers and safe water systems, set early precedents for other forms of social regulation, such as compulsory schooling and military service, and for public investments in roads, railways, and ports.

This combination of better health and broad social improvement was a recipe for prosperity. As the economist Robert Gordon has written, "The historic decline in infant mortality centered in the six-decade period of 1890–1950 is one of the most important single facts in the history of American economic growth." In the 1950s, China was among the world's poorest countries and on the cusp of a famine that would kill some 30 million people when it began a dramatic campaign against infectious diseases. Between 1960 and 1976, average life expectancy in China rose by 21 years, despite the Great Famine and the Cultural Revolution. The success of that campaign, which was built around immunization programs and a massive rural hygiene, health-education, and sanitation effort, helped the country emerge decades later as one of the great global economic powers. Most of the countries that achieved sustained economic booms over the past 50 years did so some two decades after getting infectious diseases and child mortality under control.

PROGRESS AIN'T WHAT IT USED TO BE

This same opportunity to harness the benefits of a healthier population is now emerging in today's poor countries. But taking advantage of it will be harder than it was in the past, since more recent improvements in public health have not been accompanied by the same economic and social benefits.

Progress against infectious diseases over the past two decades has not occurred in the same way as such progress did in the past. When now-wealthy countries took on infectious diseases in the nineteenth and early twentieth centuries, they did so before the invention of effective medicines for most diseases. The main drivers of progress in public health were government-mandated measures—such as milk pasteurization, laws against overcrowded tenements, and investments in clean water and sewage treatment systems—and better social norms around hygiene, childcare, and girls' education. In fact, nearly two-thirds of the gains in U.S. life expectancy since 1880 came before widespread access to antibiotics and the development of most vaccines. Only half of the decline in death rates in China and other developing countries between World War II and 1970 was due to antibiotics and

immunization, with education, sanitation, and improved local oversight of public health playing large roles.

Today, large-scale quality-of-life improvements are no longer the main drivers of public health progress in many countries. Take Niger. Its citizens are poorer now, with the country's per capita GDP at $363 in 2016, than they were in 1980, when the per capita GDP was $419. A child in Niger today can expect to receive five years of schooling, tied for the lowest amount of education in the world. The national government spends just $17 per person each year on health care. Of the 188 countries that the United Nations ranked in its 2015 Human Development Index, Niger finished second to last. Yet despite these difficulties, a person born in Niger today can expect to live to be 61 years old, 16 years longer than someone born in that country 25 years ago. Infant mortality has declined by nearly 60 percent over the same period. Death and disability from infectious diseases has fallen by 17 percent since 1990.

The average government in the developing world spends just $23 per person on health care each year.

The progress in Niger—and in other poor countries like it—reflects the tireless efforts of foreign donors, international agencies, and local governments. From 2002 to 2012, aid to address infectious diseases in poor countries rose from $11 billion to $28 billion. The returns on that investment have been impressive: longer lives, fewer dead children, and less human suffering. Yet the focus on narrow medical interventions against specific infectious diseases has come at the expense of broader investments in infrastructure, governance, good health care, and the other determinants of health. Without those societal gains, recent dramatic declines in plagues and parasites have brought more modest economic benefits than past declines did.

In fact, although extreme poverty has declined everywhere, in Africa and Southeast Asia, the places that have recently seen the greatest progress against infectious diseases, the middle class has hardly grown at all. According to the Pew Research Center, the middle class in developing countries—people making between $10 and $20 per day—expanded by 385 million people between 2001 and 2011. But that growth occurred almost exclusively in China, eastern Europe, and South America. When low-income countries achieved an average life expectancy of 60 in 2011, their median per capita GDP was $1,072, a quarter of the figure for high-

income countries when they reached that same average life expectancy, in 1947. In other words, the world has gotten dramatically better at lengthening life spans and reducing child suffering in poor places, but the improvements in much of everything else that matters to people's well-being have failed to keep pace.

RICH-WORLD DISEASES GO GLOBAL

The decline in infectious diseases has enabled many more people in poor countries to survive past infancy and adolescence, but their prospects for good health on reaching adulthood have not improved nearly as much. The life expectancy of a 15-year-old in the average low-income country is no better than it was in 1990. That is in large part due to the rise in chronic diseases.

People have to die sometime, so it is unsurprising that fewer children dying from plagues and parasites means more adults dying from cancer, heart attacks, and diabetes. Yet the decline in infectious diseases does not explain why so many people in poor countries are developing chronic ailments at much younger ages and with much worse outcomes than people in wealthier countries. Deaths from hypertensive heart disease (caused by high blood pressure) among people under 60 have increased by nearly 50 percent in sub-Saharan Africa in the past 25 years. In 1990, heart disease, cancer, and other noncommunicable diseases caused about a quarter of deaths and disabilities in poor countries. By 2040, that number is expected to jump as high as 80 percent in countries that are still quite poor. At that point, the share of the total deaths and disabilities from chronic diseases in Bangladesh, Ethiopia, and Myanmar, for example, will be roughly the same as it is in the United Kingdom and the United States, but the diseases will affect much younger people.

Part of the problem is that most noncommunicable diseases are chronic, require more sophisticated health-care infrastructure, and cost more to treat than infectious diseases. Yet the average government in the developing world still spends just $23 per person on health care each year. In comparison, the United Kingdom spends $2,695 per person on health care, and the United States spends $3,860. So great is the disparity that in 2014, the governments of all 48 sub-Saharan African countries together spent less on health care ($67 billion) than the government of Australia did ($68 billion).

International donors have been slow to adjust to a world in which infectious diseases no longer pose the chief threat to public health.

Although noncommunicable diseases now cause the majority of deaths in developing countries, they receive less than two percent of annual health aid. It is simply unsustainable to spend a lot of money to save someone from a preventable and treatable infectious disease in childhood only for that same person to succumb to a preventable and, in many cases, equally treatable chronic disease in middle age, when he or she will leave behind a family that needs to be cared for and a job that needs to be done. Those knock-on effects mean that noncommunicable diseases, in addition to claiming lives, also sap the labor force and diminish economic productivity. The World Economic Forum projects that these diseases will cost developing countries some $21 trillion in lost economic output between 2011 and 2030.

WHEN IN ROME

Perhaps no places have been more affected by the rise and fall of infectious diseases than cities. History remembers the great urban epidemics, such as the Plague of Athens, which reduced the city to "unprecedented lawlessness," according to the Greek historian Thucydides. But it was everyday killers—tuberculosis, typhoid fever, and other food- and fecal-borne diseases—that for millennia made large cities deadly for their inhabitants. In the late seventeenth century, John Graunt, an amateur demographer in England, noted that London was recording significantly more deaths than christenings and that about 6,000 migrants had to come from the countryside each year to make up the shortfall. In the United States, as late as 1900, life expectancy was ten years higher in rural areas than in towns and cities.

The combination of public health reform, laws against overcrowded tenements, and better sanitation revolutionized urban health. In 1857, no U.S. city had a sanitary sewer system; by 1900, 80 percent of Americans living in cities were served by one. According to the economists David Cutler and Grant Miller, improved access to filtered and chlorinated water alone accounted for nearly half of the decline in mortality in U.S. cities between 1900 and 1936. Clean running water had the secondary benefit of enabling more manufacturing, especially in the textile sector, and indoor plumbing freed women from the drudgery of carrying fresh water into their homes and dirty water out of them. Building these waterworks and sanitation systems also marked the first major undertakings for many city governments that required significant public financing, usually in the form of long-term bonds.

Having learned how to finance big projects, city councils later turned to the same methods to build railways, ports, highways, canals, and electrical grids.

As infectious disease rates fall in developing countries, their cities are now experiencing population booms. By 2020, 1.48 billion more people will live in cities than did in 2000, and the vast majority—1.35 billion of them—will be in lower-income countries. But urban infrastructure has not kept pace, leaving many city dwellers living in slums. The UN estimates that in 2014, roughly one out of every eight humans, some 881 million people, lived in slums in poor countries. Some 96 percent of the urban population of the Central African Republic, for example, lives in slums. By 2030, the global population of slum dwellers is expected to reach two billion.

Although the urban residents of poor nations are healthier than their parents and grandparents, many do not enjoy the accompanying benefits that residents of now-wealthy metropolises once did. In too many developing countries, the electricity in cities is unreliable. The municipal water systems are old and poorly maintained and suffer from low or intermittent water pressure, which reduces the effectiveness of adding chlorine to kill bacteria and other microbes. Waste treatment plants are rare in Africa and Asia and treat only 15 percent of municipal wastewater in Latin America.

Many urban transportation networks have also failed to keep up with all the extra people. In the past ten years, according to the World Bank, the average driving speed in Dhaka, the capital of Bangladesh, which has nearly 16 million inhabitants, has dropped to less than four miles an hour, little faster than walking. Sitting in traffic consumes 3.2 million of Dhaka's residents' work hours each day. Clogged roads, slums, and overwhelmed electrical and sewer systems threaten to cancel out the economic benefits that urbanization usually provides. If that pattern persists, fast-growing cities in developing countries may become the first to keep their residents poor rather than make them rich.

THE PERILS OF YOUTH

Both the promise and the peril of the recent decline in infectious diseases are most acute in sub-Saharan Africa. By 2035, more sub-Saharan Africans will be reaching working age (15 to 64) each year than will people in the rest of the world combined. Each year for the next ten years, 11 million young people in sub-Saharan Africa will join the job market.

In the past, countries with a fast-growing work force of young adults employed them in labor-intensive manufacturing industries, from the textile mills in nineteenth-century Lancashire to smartphone factories in Shenzhen today. Yet manufacturing has made up the same share of economic output in sub-Saharan Africa since the 1960s. In 2010, only seven percent of the region's work force was employed in factories, compared with 15 percent in Asia and 12 percent in Latin America. On top of that, agricultural employment is falling as climate change makes it harder for African farmers to earn a living. And most of the private-sector jobs created in the region over the past two decades have been in temporary or day labor.

Progress against infectious diseases cannot be measured just in terms of the lives that were once lost to plagues and parasites.

Some of the reasons for the lack of manufacturing jobs in sub-Saharan Africa are unsurprising: too few roads and ports, too little access to reliable electricity, too much corruption, and too many cumbersome labor regulations. Robots in wealthy countries are doing more and more of the jobs for which companies might have once hired low-skilled workers in poorer countries. But the biggest factor operating against manufacturing in sub-Saharan Africa may be that the decline of infectious diseases arrived in the region too late.

With improved health, the working-age populations of many African countries are growing, but they face stiff competition from workers in China and other countries that achieved their big gains against plagues and parasites earlier. A few African countries, such as Ethiopia, have made some headway in textile manufacturing, but the wages in China and other low-cost Asian labor centers are not rising fast enough to push most factory owners to leave for Africa. That poses a problem for African countries trying to build a domestic consumer base, make inroads into global markets, and employ their over 200 million young people.

One alternative is to increase employment in the service sector, but here, too, poor countries are running into problems. Many service-sector jobs require specialized education—medical school, law school, an accounting degree. Although sub-Saharan Africa has greatly increased school attendance, the World Bank reports that as many as 40 percent of children in the region still do not meet basic learning standards in numeracy and around half fall short in literacy. Lower-skilled services, such as building and grounds maintenance, are harder

to automate and can employ large numbers of people, but they do not offer the same track to the middle class that manufacturing jobs do.

Demographics are working against many poor countries just when these characteristics should be the engine of economic prosperity. The World Bank estimates that the working-age population in developing countries will increase by 2.1 billion by 2050. Unless national employment rates improve, that will mean nearly 900 million more young adults without work. A disproportionate number of young unemployed or underemployed adults can lead to social unrest, particularly in weak or corrupt states already riven by ethnic or religious conflicts.

THE RIGHT MEDICINE

In the past, people have often responded to dramatic reductions in infectious diseases and potentially destabilizing youth bulges by emigrating. The nineteenth-century wave of migration from Europe to North America came primarily from countries with a surplus of young adults, around 20 years after sharp declines in infant mortality. In the 1980s and 1990s, similar demographic factors pushed large numbers of people to migrate from Latin America and the Caribbean, the Middle East, and South Asia to Spain, the United Kingdom, and the United States.

Today, it is sub-Saharan Africans who are on the move. Between 1990 and 2013, the number of economic migrants leaving sub-Saharan Africa increased sixfold, from less than one million to six million each year. Most went to France, Italy, Portugal, the United Kingdom, and the United States. In 2016, 311,000 migrants passed through Niger on their way to Europe, and over 5,000 of them died trying to cross the Mediterranean in ramshackle boats. Most came from Niger, Nigeria, and neighboring poor countries that all experienced sharp declines in child mortality and infectious diseases in the past 20 years.

This wave of migration has sparked a backlash in the United States and Europe, where more and more politicians are campaigning for office—and sometimes winning—on platforms opposing immigration and espousing economic nationalism. Yet limiting trade undermines economic growth, making it even harder for developing countries to generate enough jobs to keep pace with their rising numbers of young adults.

Populist politicians in the United States, Europe, and the rest of the developed world must come to terms with the inconsistencies in their policies on global health, trade, and immigration. More economic opportunity alone will not stop all young people from emigrating—

their aspirations often go beyond a better job—but it can make waves of migration shorter, less desperate, and less intense. American and European voters can choose opposition to trade from low-wage countries or opposition to immigration; they cannot have both.

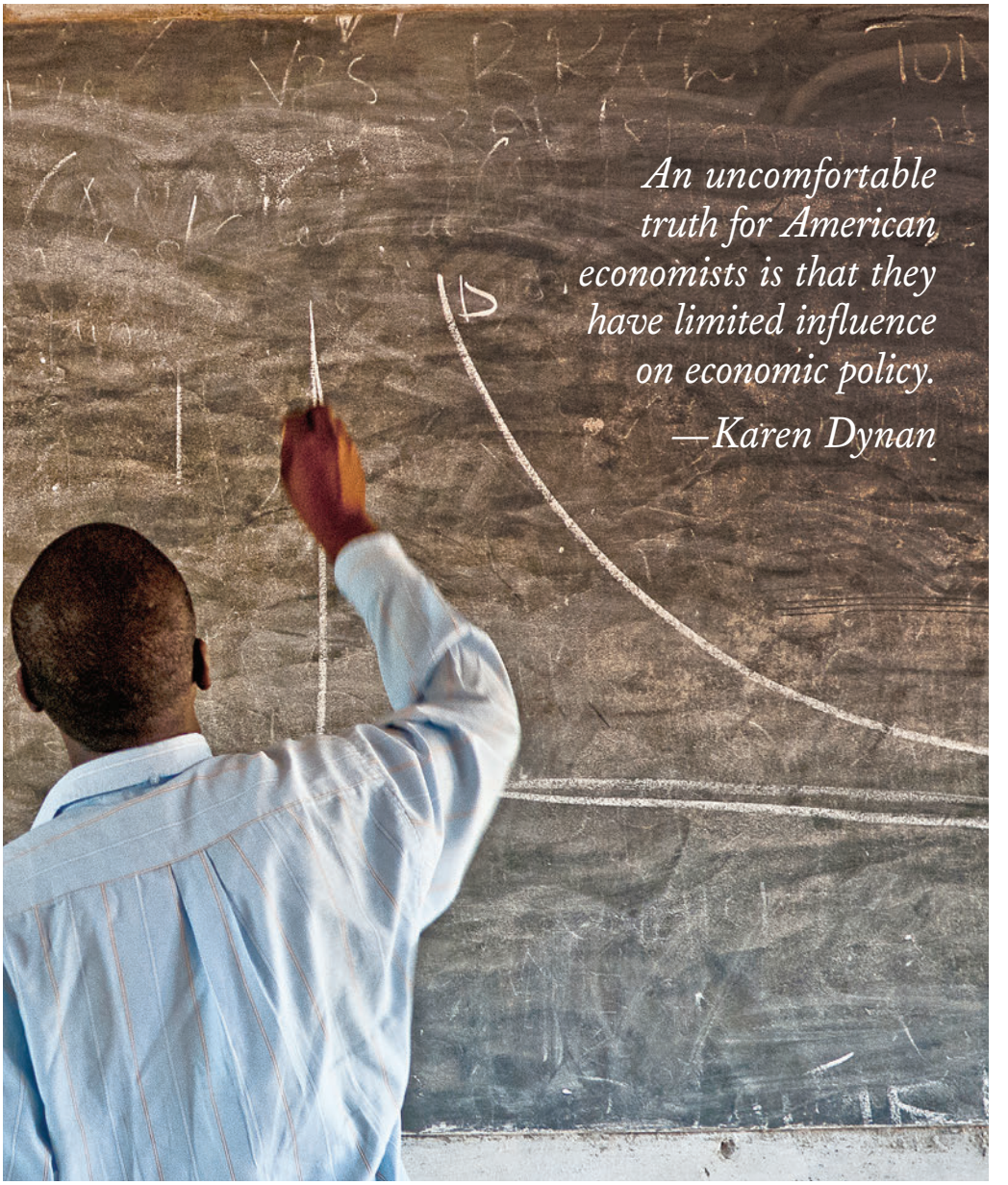
The lesson is not that progress against disease is not worthwhile or that it came too soon to developing nations. Nor is it that the war against microbes is over: global health threats, such as pandemic flu and antibiotic-resistant bugs, still loom. There is no worthier goal than reducing unnecessary pain and preventing deaths, especially among children. And a dire future is not inevitable; healthier populations can still lead poor countries to prosperity, just as they did in the past.

To make sure that they do, the world needs to pair global health aid with investments that can help countries improve their health-care systems, make their cities more livable, and enable their companies to employ more people more productively. Voluntary family-planning and girls' education initiatives have helped reduce fertility rates in countries, such as Senegal, to sustainable levels and better integrate women into the economy. Programs that encourage private investors to put their money toward building infrastructure and electricity generation, such as the U.S. government's Power Africa initiative, which aims to get enough government and private investment to provide energy to 20 million African households and companies by 2030, can make it easier for entrepreneurs to start businesses and for factories to hire more young workers.

At the same time, developing countries need to devote more resources to their cities and health-care systems. Establishing more easily enforceable urban land rights can promote investment in formal housing, free up workers to move to find jobs, and create the foundation for a system of property taxes. Strong health-care systems can help doctors spot disease outbreaks quickly and diagnose chronic diseases early enough that patients can still be treated. That makes investments in basic health-care infrastructure a cost-effective way to improve public health. Brazil's Family Health Strategy, for example, covers more than half the population, costs the government roughly $50 per person per year, and has sharply reduced deaths from heart disease, diabetes, and infectious diseases.

Progress against infectious diseases cannot be measured just in terms of the lives that were once lost to plagues and parasites. The real miracles in global health will happen when the people whose lives are saved by better health care can seize the opportunities and gain the prosperity that have come with health improvements in the past.

REVIEWS & RESPONSES



MARCO VACCA / GETTY IMAGES

The Unheard Nerds

How Economists Can Talk So Policymakers Will Listen

Karen Dynan

Advice and Dissent: Why America Suffers When Economics and Politics Collide
BY ALAN BLINDER. Basic Books, 2018, 368 pp.

An uncomfortable truth for American economists is that they have limited influence on economic policy. Take trade, for example. Anyone who has studied introductory economics knows that free trade benefits countries in the long run, by allowing them to specialize in producing the goods and services in which they have a comparative advantage. Economists are in near-universal agreement about this point, although most also agree that it is important to help workers who lose their jobs in the short run because of trade.

Yet free trade has never been very popular in Washington. The administration of U.S. President Donald Trump has imposed costly tariffs on imports from Canada, China, Mexico, and the EU, but such restrictions are not a mere idiosyncrasy of Trump. President Ronald Reagan introduced quotas on Japanese auto imports in 1981, and the North American Free Trade Agreement faced opposition from both Democrats and Republicans when it was introduced to Congress in 1993. And many previous administrations have imposed trade restrictions on steel in order to support U.S. producers: Richard Nixon imposed import quotas, Jimmy Carter set price floors for foreign steel, and both George W. Bush and Barack Obama enacted steel tariffs during their presidencies.

Trade is hardly the only area in which economic policy goes against expert consensus. The Republicans' 2017 tax reform left largely intact the mortgage interest deduction, which allows homeowners to deduct the interest on loans used to buy or build a home, even though the vast majority of economists believe that it leads to overinvestment in housing and excessive mortgage debt relative to the social optimum. And in recent decades, U.S. states have greatly expanded occupational licensing—regulations setting minimum qualifications for entering a field—for florists, hair stylists, interior designers, and other professions for which the consumer protection benefits of licensing are doubtful. Most economists agree that this sort of occupational licensing hurts workers by restricting entry into a profession and hurts consumers by keeping prices high.

Why don't economists have more influence? This is the question posed by Alan Blinder in his new book, *Advice and Dissent*. And Blinder, a prominent macroeconomist who formerly served on President Bill Clinton's Council of Economic Advisers and as vice chair of the Federal Reserve Board, is well equipped to answer it. Based on decades of experience

KAREN DYNAN is Professor of the Practice of Economics at Harvard University. From 2014 to 2017, she served as Assistant Secretary for Economic Policy and Chief Economist at the U.S. Department of the Treasury.

in both economics and policymaking, Blinder argues that political incentives often force elected officials to ignore the best advice of economists, to the clear detriment of all. Although Blinder recognizes that there are no simple solutions, he provides clear and compelling, albeit modest, suggestions for how to design economic policy that takes account of political reality.

GET SMART

Blinder, riffing on a famous quote often misattributed to the Scottish writer Andrew Lang, argues that politicians typically use economists "the same way that a drunk uses lamp-posts—for support rather than illumination." Economic policy is too often shaped by officials and their advisers in accordance with political goals, with economists used after the fact to justify policies that have been chosen by others. There are enough economists that a politician can always find one to support almost any policy, even one that most economists reject. The result is policies that make political sense but leave the country as a whole worse off.

The root of the problem, according to Blinder, is that politicians are dealing with a fundamentally different set of incentives and constraints than economists are. The framers of the U.S. Constitution designed a system in which it is difficult to make sweeping policy changes, meaning that politicians generally need broad popular support to do anything. Voters, in turn, have a limited understanding of many issues, especially those related to economic policy. And members of the media often privilege raising their own profile—or the market share of their employer—over fair and balanced reporting, limiting experts' ability to better inform the electorate. Together, these factors produce a strong incentive for politicians to champion simple ideas that sell well over the more complex, less emotionally charged solutions preferred by economists.

The situation is made worse by political short-termism and the influence of interest groups. Politicians who face reelection every few years tend to adopt policies that will deliver gains in the near future, even if the costs will eventually outweigh the benefits. Conversely, economists favor bearing short-term costs in order to realize long-term gains. For example, Blinder notes that although "many economists favor a consumption tax over an income tax," arguing that the former is more efficient, "the transitional problems that would arise" from enacting a consumption tax—such as the potentially steep penalty on retirees, who paid income taxes while working only to face higher consumption costs in retirement—are "enough to make a strong politician weep." Likewise, a politician's survival may require policies that disproportionately benefit small, well-organized groups yet impose significant costs on the rest of the population.

Advice and Dissent also explores how voters' misconceptions and politicians' devotion to special interests conspire to keep policymakers in Washington from applying economists' knowledge in a number of hotly debated areas, such as inequality, international trade, and tax reform. On the topic of inequality, for instance, Blinder argues that if more people understood that "it is harder to raise taxes on mobile factors of production than immobile factors," they would be more willing to "assign the job of

redistribution to the federal government," since "people are far less likely to change countries than to change cities."

Yet even considering the conflicting incentives and uninspiring record, Blinder believes that there is room for improvement. He points out that contrary to the popular impression, economists agree on a great many things: that people and companies are heavily influenced by incentives, that there is a tradeoff between the size of a country's economy and how equally its wealth is distributed, and that simple policy fixes, such as congestion charges for car use, could help solve common problems that inconvenience everyone, such as gridlock. Against the populist, antiestablishment sentiment driving much of U.S. politics today, Blinder advocates giving technocrats a greater role in government, especially in areas that are more or less value neutral. "An issue is a good candidate for technocratic decision making," he writes, "if it is technically complex, if it requires a long time horizon, and if it involves the apportionment of pain. It is a bad candidate if value judgments are central to the decision." For instance, Blinder proposes the creation of a federal infrastructure bank and a nonpolitical federal tax board to redesign the details of the tax system, both of which would represent a significant change from current arrangements.

BIG LITTLE LIES

Blinder deserves ample credit for taking the interaction between economics and politics seriously at a time when the challenge of making good economic policy has become even more acute. Politicians and the public now show less deference to expertise than in the past, a view encapsulated in the 2016 remark by Michael Gove, then the British justice secretary and a pro-Brexit campaigner, that people "have had enough of experts." This likely has multiple causes, including the rise of the Internet, a collapse of confidence in the press, and understandable frustration over the role played by experts in the 2003 U.S. invasion of Iraq, the 2007–8 financial crisis, and trade policies that have led to unemployment in certain sectors of the economy. But although these examples show that experts can clearly be wrong, expert economic opinion is generally more right than political guesswork. For example, despite economists' failure to predict the financial crisis, the Federal Reserve's response to it—providing additional liquidity to backstop the financial system—generated a much better outcome than would have been achieved by following the advice of politicians who wanted to let the banks fail. As trust in experts has declined, however, it has become easier for politicians to offer far-fetched solutions regardless of their economic merit.

To make matters worse, the major U.S. political parties have been severely weakened in their ability to select their preferred candidates or target their financial resources. This has only exacerbated short-termism. Party leaders generally have longer time horizons than individual politicians because they are responsible for ongoing relationships with the other party and with voters. Concern for maintaining these relationships and protecting their party's reputation gives party leaders an incentive to restrain their members from pursuing misguided policies that deliver enticing short-term gains. And traditionally, party leaders have gotten what they wanted.

In the 2016 U.S. presidential election, however, Trump and Senator Bernie Sanders of Vermont ran insurgent campaigns directly challenging their respective party establishments, with Trump winning the Republican nomination and Sanders only narrowly losing the Democratic one. Insurgent candidates are, as a rule, less worried about longer-term reputational consequences than are those beholden to a party hierarchy and are thus more willing to make wildly unrealistic proposals. Trump, for example, promised to simultaneously cut taxes, reduce deficits, maintain Social Security and Medicare benefits, and provide good health insurance to everyone.

Dishonest communication with the public is especially problematic because politicians shape the views of their constituents. According to data from the Pew Research Center, Republicans' views on trade have been converging with those of Trump: in 2009, 57 percent of Republican or Republican-leaning voters polled thought that trade agreements had been a good thing for the United States; by 2018, only 43 percent thought so, with most of the drop occurring in the lead-up to the 2016 election. (Similar shifts, among both Democrats and Republicans, can be seen on other issues strongly associated with the president, including immigration and U.S. relations with Russia.) When politicians deliberately mislead voters, it makes it even more difficult for experts to advocate effective but potentially unpopular policies.

MARGINAL EVOLUTION

Blinder acknowledges that there is much more that economists could do to build bridges with politicians and voters. He urges his colleagues to speak in ways

that nonexperts can understand and to recognize that "fairness is far more meaningful and important to most people than the economist's cherished notion of efficiency."

There are other ways that economists who want to influence policy could increase their own relevance. First, they need to take political constraints more seriously. Economists often see their job as designing policies that get the economics right and delivering them to Washington, at which point it becomes someone else's job to turn those ideas into law. One problem with this attitude is that nearly all policy proposals require reworking before they can be put into action—and some need a great deal of reworking. Economists should keep this in mind and be more willing to develop what they call "second-best" solutions, or policies that move in a desirable direction while getting the economics as right as possible given political and other constraints. For example, most economists agree that the most efficient way to cut taxes in order to stimulate a weak economy is to narrowly target the cuts at those who are most likely to spend the extra money. But it will usually be more politically feasible to enact a broad-based payroll tax cut. This is a case in which it would be better to accept the less efficient policy if the alternative is having no fiscal stimulus at all.

More broadly, economists should view political constraints as potentially useful sources of information about people's preferences. Although resistance to what economists regard as an ideal policy may sometimes reflect the entrenched influence of a powerful few, at other times it may represent a constructive form of popular feedback. For example, the second-best policy may be much easier to explain than the first-best, and there is real value in having policies that people can understand. In other cases, such as the opposition to the Trans-Pacific Partnership (a trade deal that Trump scrapped shortly after entering office), political resistance may reflect in part the fact that voters place greater value on equity than efficiency. Economists need not become legislative experts, but everyone would benefit if they showed more interest in working with politicians to find workable compromises.

Economists could also increase their influence by developing more realistic models that account for institutional considerations, such as the complex linkages among different parts of the financial system, and for behavior that does not fit the simplifying assumptions of traditional economics, which hold that fully informed individuals will rationally pursue their preferences without any cognitive biases or limitations. Making these changes will make economic research messier and less conclusive, but politicians and voters probably won't support proposals based on analyses that only vaguely resemble the real world anyway.

The financial crisis was a wake-up call in this regard. Despite clear warning signs, economists were slow to recognize the inflation of a housing bubble in the years leading up to the crash because most were taught that markets were too efficient to overprice an asset for a long period of time. Economists also missed the ways in which risky mortgage-backed securities linked the housing market to the broader financial system, causing them to vastly underestimate the impact of a wave of foreclosures.

Since the financial crisis, economists have made considerable strides in their

understanding of financial institutions and how they are connected to the real economy. They are paying more attention to institutional considerations in other policy areas, as well. In student loan policy, for instance, economists are beginning to recognize the risks to students and taxpayers posed by for-profit colleges, many of which encourage students to borrow from the federal government to fund educations that are unlikely to result in high enough incomes to repay the debt. And in labor-market policy, there is a new focus on the challenge of developing institutions that can finance and administer benefits in the gig economy comparable to the arrangements, such as employer-provided health insurance, that have grown up over time with traditional employers.

Similarly, a thriving behavioral economics literature has emerged over the past two decades that incorporates more realistic assumptions about behavior than those embedded in traditional economic models. Consider retirement savings. Economists used to assume that individuals decided how much to save by projecting their income and consumption needs into the future and then saving in order to maintain a preferred standard of living over their lifetime. Yet behavioral economics has shown that people are generally not so sophisticated: they make decisions using simple rules of thumb and often have self-control problems, consuming in the present even when they know they shouldn't. This insight has led to policies designed to address these limitations, such as workplace retirement saving plans, in which people commit to saving a certain amount out of every paycheck. These are effective at encouraging saving, especially

if employers "nudge" their workers into such plans by signing them up automatically and making them request to opt out. Although economists are still only beginning to understand the degree to which individual economic decisions can be explained by cognitive limitations and biases, rather than rational calculations based on preferences, advances in behavioral economics will pave the way for improved policy.

Finally, economists must develop more and better evidence about which policies work. Such evidence can be hard to come by, because opportunities to conduct experiments and collect data on outcomes, especially across longer time periods, are necessarily limited. But today, both the accumulation of evidence from previous policies and improvements in methodology are allowing economists to more rigorously evaluate what works and why. One particularly important line of research has examined the long-term effects of government programs aimed at providing better education, health care, housing, and nutrition to children in low-income families. The economists Hilary Hoynes, Diane Whitmore Schanzenbach, and Douglas Almond, for instance, have shown that access to food stamps in childhood leads to significantly better adult outcomes in health and, for women, economic self-sufficiency. Politicians are likely to find policy proposals backed by hard evidence much more appealing than those that simply sound good on paper.

Such research may hold the potential to help move policy beyond the left-right divide. In 2016, Paul Ryan, the Republican Speaker of the House, and Patty Murray, a Democratic senator from Washington State, sponsored legislation creating the bipartisan Commission on Evidence-Based Policymaking. The commission, which includes many economists in its ranks, issued a report last fall with recommendations for how the federal government can improve its gathering and use of data to shape policy, including increasing the coordination of evidence-gathering efforts within the government and developing a uniform process for outside researchers to gain secure access to confidential government data.

There is no silver bullet for making economic policy better in the face of political constraints. Economists and elected officials will continue to face different incentives, and in many cases, political necessity will triumph over economic sense. There is certainly some scope for increasing the influence of economists and other experts, through changes both in the policymaking process and in the way that economists do their work. But these changes need to go hand in hand with a commitment by elected leaders to communicate honestly and show respect for evidence. Political leaders need to recognize that they will ultimately get more support from voters by addressing their problems, which they can do effectively only with help from experts. Voters, for their part, need to hold their leaders responsible for outcomes. Otherwise, honesty, for a politician, will continue be a fool's game.

Doomsday Delusions

The Case for Optimism in a Pessimistic Age

Steven Radelet

It's Better Than It Looks: Reasons for Optimism in an Age of Fear
BY GREGG EASTERBROOK. PublicAffairs, 2018, 352 pp.

Factfulness: Ten Reasons We're Wrong About the World—and Why Things Are Better Than You Think
BY HANS ROSLING. Flatiron Books, 2018, 352 pp.

Enlightenment Now: The Case for Reason, Science, Humanism, and Progress
BY STEVEN PINKER. Viking, 2018, 576 pp.

Anyone glancing at a newspaper these days finds a litany of woes: war, crime, disease, terrorism, and environmental disasters, all sandwiched between predictions of the coming collapse of market capitalism and liberal democracy. U.S. politicians on both the right, such as President Donald Trump, and the left, such as Senator Bernie Sanders of Vermont, warn that the United States and the world are sliding toward calamity. Pessimism rules the day.

STEVEN RADELET holds the Donald F. McHenry Chair in Global Human Development at Georgetown University.

The world does indeed face challenges. Yet by almost any measure, life for most people has been getting better in almost every way. Levels of war and conflict are near historic lows. People are living longer and healthier lives and are better educated than ever before. Incomes for most families are higher than at any time in history. One billion people around the world have been lifted out of extreme poverty in the last two decades, and although income inequality has worsened within many Western countries, across the globe, income is more equal than it has been in centuries. Far fewer people than ever go hungry, and the world now grows more food than it needs. Women have more opportunities, democracy has expanded, and basic human rights are more widely respected than ever before. Electricity, automobiles, the Internet, modern medicines, and simple conveniences have made most people's lives far easier than their great-grandparents could have imagined. And after centuries of being largely confined to the West, since the 1980s, such benefits have spread across the world—not just to China and India but also to Brazil, Chile, Costa Rica, Ghana, Indonesia, Malaysia, Mongolia, Mozambique, Peru, South Africa, South Korea, and dozens of other countries.

Amid the prevailing pessimism, few people—especially in the West—are aware of the extent of this progress. That ignorance matters. For as three terrific recent books—Gregg Easterbrook's *It's Better Than It Looks*, Hans Rosling's *Factfulness*, and Steven Pinker's *Enlightenment Now*—make clear, continuing this progress is possible but not guaranteed; if people fail to appreciate the institutions and policies that have generated this success, citizens and policymakers are more likely

to abandon them going forward. A full understanding of the unprecedented progress in human development is essential to ensuring that it continues.

ALWAYS LOOK ON THE BRIGHT SIDE OF LIFE

Easterbrook, a writer for *The Atlantic*, focuses primarily on the United States, while also examining global patterns. He wants to explain why the country's politics have gotten so gloomy at a time of such prosperity. In his view, Trump succeeded in 2016 in part because he convinced voters that their country was near collapse: its economy broken, its borders overrun by illegal immigrants, its cities rife with crime. That none of these things were true did not matter. Instead, these falsehoods won Trump accolades for "telling it like it is." Easterbrook notes that Sanders played into some of the same sentiment by arguing that the country was getting worse for all but the wealthiest few.

Easterbrook attacks this pessimism by documenting a series of crises that past commentators predicted but that never happened: humanity has not starved, nor has it run out of energy; there are no runaway plagues; pollution has not made the world's air unbreathable or its water undrinkable; and dictators have not taken over. Just the opposite has occurred. Technology, far from bringing annihilation, has made nearly every aspect of human life safer and easier. Violent crime in the United States has fallen by almost 30 percent since 1993. More Americans, especially minorities and women, have greater freedom than ever before. Air pollution in the United States has fallen sharply over the last 50 years: levels of lead are down by 99 percent, carbon monoxide is down by 77 percent, and smog is down by 33 percent. The share of the world's population that is malnourished has fallen from 50 percent to 13 percent since the 1960s. Between World War II and 1990, there were an average of ten military coups each year; since then, there have been about three each year as democracies have replaced dictatorships.

Easterbrook recognizes that not all is well. The United States and other countries must contend with climate change, inequality, and other threats. But his core argument is that to tackle those problems, the world needs to recognize its successes and draw the right lessons about how they were achieved. He pushes back against those who confuse optimism with naiveté. "Optimism," he believes, "is the conviction that problems can be solved if we all roll up our sleeves and get to work." He devotes a full chapter to addressing climate change and another to overcoming inequality.

Easterbrook is clearly exasperated by popular myopia. He lays a large part of the blame on the media, where "if it bleeds, it leads," and part of it on politicians who demonize their opponents, cast nearly everything as a failure, and hark back to an idealized past. Research centers and government agencies, he says, "lean towards doom predictions because they justify more funding." Demographic changes add to the pessimism: Western societies are getting older, and Easterbrook argues that older people tend to be gloomier. And he asserts that part of it is simple human nature: "People want to believe the worst about society."

Easterbrook's arguments are not always convincingly backed up by the data. For example, his contention that middle-class

Looking up: students at a public school outside Juba, South Sudan, April 2013

ANDREEA CAMPEANU / REUTERS

buying power in the United States has been rising faster than most analysts believe is not persuasive, and the citations he gives do not support it. In other cases, he provides data that look plausible but are not well documented, which weakens his analysis.

Easterbrook's core conclusions are compelling, and he writes with a journalist's flair. But convincing skeptics will require comprehensively documenting all the facts and figures.

KNOW-NOTHINGS

In *Factfulness*, Rosling steps in to fill this gap. He is as perplexed as Easterbrook is by the common misunderstandings of progress. How, he wonders, can so many people get the world so wrong? In the book, which was co-written with Rosling's son Ola and daughter-in-law Anna, he draws on years of research he carried out during his career as a professor of international health in Stockholm, which was cut short by his untimely passing just before the book was published. "This book," he writes, "is my very last battle in my lifelong mission to fight devastating global ignorance."

Rosling carried out surveys that asked thousands of people simple questions about global trends. The results show that people are not just uninformed but also systematically biased toward pessimism. In 2013, Rosling asked what had happened to the proportion of the world's population living in extreme poverty during the previous 20 years and provided three choices: almost doubled, remained the same, or almost halved. If people had guessed randomly, about one-third would have chosen the correct answer (almost halved). But only seven percent got the answer right. He asked what share of one-year-old children have

been vaccinated against various diseases and again provided three options: 20 percent, 50 percent, or the correct answer of 80 percent. This time, 13 percent of respondents chose correctly. On question after question, people did not just guess wrong. They consistently demonstrated that they believed the world was much worse off than it actually is.

Rosling's goal is not just to provide the facts, although he offers plenty of them. He wants people to change the way they think so that they can see the world more accurately and better equip themselves to solve problems. He frames the book around ten human instincts that lead people to see disaster rather than progress. The "fear instinct," for example, is an evolutionary trait that helps people avoid danger, but it also pushes them toward irrational fear of rare events, such as shark attacks and lightning strikes. That instinct also helps explain the constant crisis mode of the press, which profits from public anxiety: "Fears that once helped keep our ancestors alive, today keep journalists employed." Another human trait, the "gap instinct," pushes people to divide the world into "us" and "them" and to imagine much larger differences between themselves and others.

Rosling argues that people can combat these instincts by consciously learning to be "factful": examining the data, being wary of stories of impending doom and skeptical of quick fixes, seeking to understand the reality that lies behind simple averages and extreme events. Pursuing a mindset of "factfulness," in his view, will allow people to control their negative instincts, see the world more accurately, and act to improve it.

THE AGE OF MIRACLES

Although Rosling richly documents the world's gains, he does not address the underlying question: What accounts for all this progress in the first place? Pinker, a psychology professor, aims to provide an answer. *Enlightenment Now* is the most comprehensive and compelling of the three books. In it, Pinker offers rich historical data on a wide variety of indicators of human development. On average, people are approximately 100 times as wealthy as they were 200 years ago. IQ scores have increased at an astonishing rate of three points per decade over the last century. Americans are more than 90 percent less likely to die in a fire or from a lightning strike than they were a century ago, thanks to better safety measures. Deaths in car crashes per mile driven have fallen by over 95 percent since 1921, for the same reason. Annual global deaths in battle have fallen by 75 percent since the 1980s (although they have recently increased due to the Syrian civil war). Pinker underscores how widely these gains have spread and the speed with which gaps in well-being between rich and poor countries are closing. For example, child mortality has fallen in every single country in the world since the 1950s. The share of the global population living in extreme poverty fell from 40 percent in 1980 to less than ten percent in 2015. And although income inequality has worsened within the United States and many other Western countries since 1980, globally it has improved: the global Gini coefficient, which ranges from zero (perfect equality) to one (perfect inequality), improved from 0.60 in 1990 to 0.47 in 2013.

Pinker argues that the progress has gone beyond material gains: individual and societal norms of behavior and morality are also improving. At the same time as technology has advanced, morals have, too. Tyranny, slavery, torture, violence, racism, and the subjugation of women were all accepted by past generations; today, most people understand them to be morally wrong.

In Pinker's view, these gains stem from the eighteenth-century Enlightenment and the accumulation of knowledge and changes in thinking that it brought about. Pinker focuses on four Enlightenment themes—reason, science, humanism, and progress—and the accompanying belief that applying these ideas would lead to continuous improvement in the quality of life. It was these forces, he argues, that transformed a world of near-universal poverty, disease, illiteracy, and violence into one of healthy people earning middle-class incomes and with much greater personal security and freedom. "The Enlightenment has *worked*," he writes. Its success is "perhaps the greatest story seldom told."

Yet for 250 years, various counter-Enlightenment movements have tried to turn back the tide. Nationalism, authoritarianism, religious orthodoxy, anti-science campaigns, and various forms of "declinism" that predict impending global doom have all sought to supplant reason and a belief in progress. Pinker argues that Enlightenment values are once again under attack by those who denounce scientific knowledge, espouse nationalism and tribalism, and seek to erode trust in modern institutions. He sees these attacks coming from the political left and right alike.

Pinker spares no criticism for anti-modern intellectuals and those he terms "romantic Green" activists, who resist new technologies, and he jabs at the antiscientific beliefs of those who oppose the use of genetically modified organisms and nuclear power. But he sees the rise of authoritarian populism as the greatest threat to Enlightenment values. The central problem with these movements, Pinker argues, is that they focus on tribes rather than individuals and place no value on protecting the rights of those outside the chosen group or promoting human welfare in other countries. They disdain knowledge and diverse opinions, valorize strong leaders, and scorn rules-based governance, compromise, and checks on power. They look backward to the greatness of a fictionalized past rather than embracing progress. Yet despite the populist threat, Pinker believes that liberal democratic institutions will survive. Right-wing populism, he argues, is "better understood as the mobilization of an aggrieved and shrinking demographic . . . than as the sudden reversal of a century-long movement toward equal rights."

DON'T STOP BELIEVING

One of the dangers of public pessimism is that it empowers political leaders who want to destroy the institutions that foster progress. In the United States, this is especially true when it comes to foreign policy. After World War II, Washington advanced an international system designed to ensure U.S. security and prosperity while spreading, however imperfectly, the ideals of freedom, opportunity, and the rule of law. The United States aimed to strengthen countries that shared those values so that they would become allies

in promoting them, something that in turn would help secure the peace.

These goals have been achieved far more fully than anyone in 1945 could have imagined. Germany and Japan, once sworn enemies of the United States, are now among its closest allies. Western Europe is at peace. Most countries around the world have signed on to the economic and political system founded by the United States. Even China has joined the club and is closer to sharing some of these ideals than it was in the days of Mao Zedong and the Cultural Revolution. China now has more economic opportunities, a slightly greater degree of personal freedom, and better rule of law.

The fact that there has been so much progress does not mean that all is well and that no changes are necessary—far from it. The very breadth of this progress means that the global institutions that produced it must change if they are to keep working to address the world's problems. The structures, decision-making processes, and power balances that functioned well after World War II are no longer appropriate now that so many countries rightly demand a voice in the system. The United Nations, the International Monetary Fund, the World Bank, the World Trade Organization, regional security pacts, and other institutions will all have to give developing countries greater influence. Only then will these countries be willing to work with the United States to fight the major challenges the world faces. The United States must be willing, once again, to share power rather than simply wield it. It needs to understand that doing so will strengthen, not weaken, its long-term security.

The Trump administration is doing just the opposite. It starts from the false premise that the world is getting worse and the United States is losing from the current international system. As a result, Trump seems intent on taking a wrecking ball to the old order. He thrills in insulting U.S. allies, glad-handing dictators, starting trade wars, and loudly walking away from international agreements, including the Trans-Pacific Partnership, the Iran nuclear agreement, and the Paris climate accord.

The liberal world order that has brought so much progress is not dead, nor is it doomed. But it is under threat, not from some outside hegemon but from within. The threat is aggravated by the widespread inability to recognize progress and people's tendency to focus on only bad news. As all three authors point out, pessimism can be self-fulfilling: in countries where people believe the world is getting worse, they may dismantle some of the very institutions that made it better and thereby fulfill the predictions of decline. As has always been the case, the supporters of the liberal order will have to fight hard to keep it—and to improve it. Only that way will the world sustain the unprecedented progress in the human condition that the order helped create and continue to expand the reach of peace, prosperity, and freedom.

Praying for Pakistan

Extremism and Corruption in a Troubled State

Mohammed Hanif

Pakistan Under Siege: Extremism, Society, and the State
BY MADIHA AFZAL. Brookings Institution Press, 2018, 208 pp.

Around a dozen years ago, during a visit to my ancestral village in Pakistan, I joined my brother for Friday prayers at the local mosque. At the time, the country's military dictator, President Pervez Musharraf, was busy explaining to Pakistanis that they were in the middle of a do-or-die battle against militants—although it seemed that, for ordinary people, this mostly involved dying. People all over the country were wary of prayer leaders preaching about jihad or creating pretexts for others to wage it.

My brother, who runs a business in a fruit and vegetable market, served on a committee of mosque leaders that had recently hired a new imam. Before offering him the job, the committee had checked him out to make sure he was not a radical. "The new imam is not a troublemaker," my brother assured me. "Times are bad, and what goes on in the mosque affects people's minds, so we wanted to be sure."

That day, the imam's sermon was suitably vague: health and wealth for everyone, sweet words about the *ummah* (the global community of Muslims), and no calls to arms or support for holy wars. The imam did take a jab or two at those who preached "enlightened moderation"—a meaningless label that Musharraf had apparently picked up during his numerous visits to think tanks in the United States and that he had begun using to describe the ideological direction of his dictatorship. Musharraf was at the height of his double game: allowing the United States to use Pakistani military bases to bomb the Afghan Taliban while signing peace deals with the Pakistani Taliban. The new imam might have been a moderate by my brother's standards, but he had no appetite for Musharraf's brand of enlightenment. I wondered if this imam could help stem the tide of radicalism or whether he was part of it.

I found my answer around midnight, when a loudspeaker attached to the mosque's exterior came alive with the sound of the imam performing a long recitation from the Koran and exhorting people to perform their midnight prayer. The speaker was remarkably loud; the house where I was staying was a few hundred meters from the mosque, but the imam seemed to be shouting directly into my ears. It is not traditional for an imam to call people to the midnight prayer. Performing it is completely voluntary; one is not even supposed to go to the mosque for it. In Pakistan, most people seem to not even know that such a prayer exists. The imam, it seemed, was a moderate by day but a zealot at night.

MOHAMMED HANIF is a journalist, novelist, and playwright. He is a contributing opinion writer for *The New York Times.*

"Why make such a big deal of your personal piety?" my brother's wife, a homemaker, groused in the morning. "What kind of imam have you hired? He doesn't let us sleep at night." My brother mumbled that he would bring it up at the next committee meeting. It was clear that he wasn't quite sure how to stop a man of faith from reminding the faithful of their duty to Allah—even if it was the middle of the night, and even if they had no such duty.

My brother is one of many Pakistani Muslims who believe that a revolution akin to the one that transformed Iran in 1979 is the only solution to the country's problems. (Although they hope for a revolution like Iran's, which was led by Shiite clerics, they also suspect that Shiites are not good enough Muslims—and they don't really see any contradiction there.) By Western standards, he acts like a radical; by a radical's standards, he acts like a moderate. In this, he is like many other Pakistanis, who go about making a living and raising families, only to find themselves accused of being not good enough Muslims whenever they pause to pray in the company of more pious people. Most Muslims are encouraged to think of themselves as sinners; when confronted about the quality of their faith, they promise to strive to be better Muslims. This is the original meaning of "jihad"—a struggle to better oneself, to get over the baser urges, to become a better Muslim. Of course, according to extremists, no one is a better Muslim than the one who lays down his life for Allah.

This tension between the urge to be a better Muslim in this world and the wish to take a short cut to paradise has riven Pakistani society for decades, and it's what makes the country a subject of such fascination for scholars and social scientists. Books about Pakistan by Western and Pakistani experts alike tend to focus on religion and radicalism. They are often suffused with a sense of alarm and danger, as many of their titles or subtitles demonstrate: *Can Pakistan Survive? Pakistan: A Hard Country*. *The Scorpion's Tail*. *Deep Inside the World's Most Frightening State*. *Courting the Abyss*. *Eye of the Storm*.

With its title, Madiha Afzal's *Pakistan Under Siege* follows in this tradition. But compared with what is found in other recent books on the country, her analysis is mild, even matter of fact. Afzal's multilayered approach to explaining Pakistan makes it sound like a normal country—almost. The book details the rise of religious extremism and explains how the state has been both complicit in extremist violence and victimized by it. Afzal, a young Pakistani economist, examines the evolution of legal and educational institutions in the country and relates how they have fostered a hatred for ethnic and religious minorities and a general antipathy toward the West. The book delves into the Pakistani army's efforts to create a "good Taliban" to counter the "bad Taliban" and emphasizes the ways in which civilian officials have been kept out of the decision-making process behind such policies. "There is doubt that the civilians are up to the task of handling security policy," she writes. "But it is also clear that the military is not ready to let it go."

In August, the former cricket star Imran Khan led the political party he founded to victory in national elections and became prime minister. Throughout the campaign, Khan seemed to enjoy the

A time to mourn: remembering victims of an attack in Peshawar, Pakistan, January 2016

KHURAM PARVEZ / REUTERS

tacit backing of the military establishment. Many analysts believe that with the army and the civilian political leadership finally on the same page, Khan has a historic opportunity to slowly wrest away the military's control of foreign policy and national security. Those analysts may be expecting too much from Khan—and, moreover, they have things backward. In fact, it is the military that has a historic opportunity: to finally learn to live with the aspirations of its civilian partners and acknowledge that the army cannot be the sole arbiter of the country's fate. The army, however, seems unlikely to do so.

Afzal's book offers a useful survey of the many pressures—cultural, religious, economic—that add to social and political instability in Pakistan. One of the ironies that emerges is that although commentators have long focused on the intersection of extremism and poverty in the country, the combination of extremism and growing prosperity may prove even more dangerous.

ZIA'S LEGACY

Pakistanis' attitude toward extremism changes frequently and depends to a great degree on context. When Pakistan itself is not under attack, Pakistanis take a fairly benign view of militants. But if the same militants start blowing themselves up near Pakistan's mosques or shops, many Pakistanis' first reaction is to think, "These can't really be my brothers in faith."

The question of foreign intervention in the country scrambles things even further. Afzal shares the results of a survey conducted in 2009 by the Program on International Policy Attitudes in Pakistan, in which 90 percent of respondents expressed opposition to the presence of al Qaeda in Pakistan and neighboring Afghanistan. On the other hand, she

reports, a different survey conducted around the same time found that 63 percent of Pakistanis opposed the 2011 U.S. raid in Abbottabad that killed Osama bin Laden. Pakistanis don't want violent jihadists in their backyards, but they also do not want American assassins stealing into their country in the middle of the night.

Afzal rightly assigns much of the blame for Pakistan's confusing relationship with extremism to Muhammad Zia-ul-Haq, the military dictator who ruled the country from 1978 until his death in 1988. Zia sought to "Islamize" society by establishing and enforcing his version of sharia, bolstering religious education, and preventing Pakistanis from accessing Western cultural products. To accomplish this goal, he made a mockery of Pakistani democracy. In 1984, he held a referendum in which Pakistani voters were asked whether they supported the imposition of an Islamic system and another five-year term in office for Zia himself. The only acceptable answers were yes and no. Since it would have been almost unthinkable for anyone to vote "against Islam," it was practically impossible for anyone to vote against Zia. Many voters abstained altogether; some cities looked like ghost towns on polling day. On top of that, Zia's cronies stuffed ballot boxes, awarding him and his initiative more than 98 percent of the votes.

Zia's successors curtailed some aspects of his Islamization program, but much of it remains in place, as Afzal reveals. Authorities frequently invoke discriminatory laws against minorities. Charges of blasphemy have led to the imprisonment of hundreds, and sometimes lynch mobs have killed the accused. Members of the Ahmadiyya sect were declared non-Muslims by Pakistan's parliament in 1974, and they remain one of the most persecuted minority groups. (To apply for a passport or a national identity card, Pakistani Muslims must sign the following statement: "I consider Mirza Ghulam Ahmad"—the founder of the sect—"to be an imposter prophet [and] also consider his followers . . . to be non-Muslims.")

One can also still see Zia's legacy in Pakistan's educational system, which teaches children a number of astounding lies about their country's history and place in the world. According to Afzal, history textbooks borrow language and concepts about the relationship between Islam and politics from Jamaat-e-Islami, the oldest Islamist political party in Pakistan. In examining Pakistan's schools, Afzal usefully debunks the common myth that madrasahs are central to jihadist movements. In reality, it is the country's mainstream educational system that fosters militancy.

MOSQUES AND MONEY

Afzal also sheds light on how economic change has fueled religiosity and extremism in Pakistan. In recent decades, Pakistan's middle class has grown substantially. According to the Pakistani economist S. Akbar Zaidi, Pakistan's upper- and middle-class population now stands at 84 million—larger than the entire population of Germany. Most political scientists or economists would expect newly prosperous Pakistanis to become more secular in their outlook and behavior. But middle-class Pakistanis often spend their newfound wealth not on material comforts but on things they believe will ensure their safe passage to paradise after they leave this world.

They go on luxury pilgrimages to Mecca, donate to Islamic charities, and fund the construction of new mosques. (They really love building mosques: throughout Pakistan, one can find freshly minted houses of worship with marble floors and minarets decorated with elaborate mirror work, even in places that lack sewage systems and paved roads.)

A few years ago, a man who was a classmate of mine in high school opened a gas station in central Punjab. He proudly showed me a tastefully designed mosque that he'd built on the premises, to offer his customers a place to pray. A few years later, he built another gas station—and another mosque—on the same piece of property. When I visited, I noticed that the first mosque was mostly empty. "Why another mosque in the same spot?" I asked him. "Because if God has given me two businesses instead of one, why shouldn't I pay him back?" he replied.

Afzal also focuses on Pakistan's military, which she correctly identifies as the most powerful institution in the country, even when civilians are in control of the government. The military has a strong hold on Pakistanis; it is widely feared but also widely respected. The generals have suffered losses and humiliations but have always managed to get back on their feet quickly. In 2010, the entire world was looking for bin Laden. When he was found living a stone's throw away from a major Pakistani military academy, the generals more or less shrugged it off.

Whenever I interact with midranking army officials, they don't want to discuss religion, regional security, or any of the other issues that Afzal analyzes. All they want to talk about is real estate prices. Thanks to the military's vast holdings and deep participation in the Pakistani economy, military officials enjoy privileges unavailable to their counterparts in most other countries. The armed forces have recently added processing and selling meat to the already large portfolio of businesses in which they dabble, which also includes cereals, cement, banking, sugar, telecommunications, transport, and many other sectors.

In some countries, such profiteering might generate a popular backlash against the military. To prevent such an outcome in Pakistan, military officers have taken a cue from the civilian nouveaux riches, funneling some of their profits to religious charities and mosque-building projects. The idea that money can buy one a ticket to paradise is so well entrenched that most Pakistanis don't even question the obvious corruption that has enriched the military elite.

By publicly performing their piety and thus allowing judgments about religiosity to shape public debate, middle-class Pakistanis and the military have aided the cause of the extremist militants who loathe them. Seven years ago, the governor of Punjab Province, Salman Taseer, was assassinated by his own bodyguard. Taseer was a liberal who lived a secular lifestyle and who had raised questions about Pakistan's harsh law against blasphemy, which calls for the death penalty for offenders. Among many middle-class and educated Pakistanis, discussions of his assassination often began with the observation that murder can never be justified but then quickly shifted to cataloging the many things that a "good Muslim" shouldn't do in order to avoid Taseer's fate: never speak up for minorities, for example, and never say anything that might offend a religious scholar.

In May, as Pakistan prepared for national elections, a gunman attempted to kill the country's interior minister, Ahsan Iqbal; he was shot in the arm but survived. As with the attack on Taseer, it appeared that Iqbal's assailant was motivated by extremist views relating to the laws prohibiting blasphemy. But unlike Taseer, Iqbal is a highly observant Muslim; he comes from a conservative family known for its affiliation with Islamist movements. He is, by all prevailing standards, a pious man. For the man who tried to kill him, however, Iqbal wasn't a good enough Muslim.

Pakistanis try hard to become better Muslims—and the country's courts, media, and educational system work to ensure that they do. But every so often, someone comes along wielding a gun, telling them that they have been doing it all wrong. And unfortunately, they seem willing to listen.

EXPECTATIONS GAME

Recently, I returned to my family's village and attended Friday prayers. The mosque was full of worshipers; others were lined up outside on the pavement. Since my last visit, the mosque had let go the imam who had called them to the midnight prayer and chosen a more moderate one. My brother found the new imam's Friday sermons a bit dull and was contemplating inviting someone more lively to deliver an occasional sermon.

I mentioned to him that many more people turned up for prayer these days than when we were children. He agreed. Then he sighed and pointed out that, at the same time, there were now more petty crimes in the village and that people were stealing water and electricity from their neighbors and dragging one another to court over minor land disputes. "What I don't understand is that when fewer people came to the mosque, there were hardly any crimes in the village," he said. "People didn't think they could commit fraud and get away with it in such a small place. But today, everyone's lying, everyone's cheating, everyone's stealing, and they think by coming to the mosque, they have booked themselves a plot in paradise and they don't need to fulfill their obligations in this world."

When people come into a bit of money, their expectations rise. They also start craving respect and demanding that the state provide them with basic services. But the Pakistani state is still stuck in its old ways, relying on colonial-era laws and riddled with corrupt patronage networks. When the state inevitably fails to meet people's raised expectations, they turn to religious parties and look for messiahs who can fix their broken world, as well as promise a shiny bridge to paradise in the afterlife.

I called my brother on election day and asked him if he had voted yet. He said that it was quite hot and that he was waiting for the weather to cool down a bit. "And who are you going to vote for?" I asked. He chuckled and said, "I am going to go out and find a good mullah on the ballot."

The Secret Sharers

Leaking and Whistle-Blowing in the Trump Era

Too Many Leaks

Peter Feaver

Is leaking sensitive national security information ever justified? Yes, under rare and exacting circumstances. Does the kind of leaking that has become the new normal during the Trump administration meet those conditions? Almost certainly not, even if it hasn't imperiled the republic—at least so far.

Sorting through the complex moral calculus of leaking is precisely in Michael Walzer's wheelhouse, and there is much to admire about his measured assessment ("Just and Unjust Leaks," March/April 2018). Walzer is right not to blindly celebrate leaking as some sort of First Amendment sacrament. Yet he does not go far enough in parsing the different types of leaks.

Walzer distinguishes between a "leaker," who "anonymously reveals information that might embarrass officials or open up the government's internal workings to unwanted public scrutiny," and a "whistleblower," who "reveals what she believes to be immoral or illegal official conduct to her bureaucratic superiors or to the public." From the point of view of national security professionals, however, there is a world of difference between whistle-blowing to one's bureaucratic superiors and whistle-blowing to the public. The former is permitted and even encouraged in a healthy bureaucracy. Whistle-blowing to the public, on the other hand, is a punishable violation of professional standards or even criminal law. It should not be differentiated from leaking.

To be sure, officially sanctioned whistle-blowing still entails risks. If one blows the whistle on legitimate behavior, the whistleblower could lose credibility or even her job. And whistle-blowing might not accomplish anything if the chain of command itself is corrupt. Appealing through proper channels is no guarantee that the outcome will be optimal, but it is preferable to the alternative, which sets up the individual as a law unto herself.

A second problem with Walzer's typology is that his definition of leaking excludes many of the day-to-day exchanges that take place between the government and the media. For Walzer, an anonymous quote does not count as a leak unless it was intended to embarrass officials or engender unwanted public scrutiny. But most interactions belong to another category, which could be called "benign leaking." Communications offices in the government depend on anonymous or unattributed sourcing to provide context and detail about their initiatives in a way that keeps the focus on the project rather than the individuals involved. Briefing journalists is part of any well-executed policy rollout. In some cases, governments will also authorize leaks to gauge an idea's political viability without committing the administration's prestige and credibility to the project.

Perhaps these sanctioned forms of contact with the media should not be considered leaking at all. Yet in terms of sheer volume, benign leaking accounts

for more of the anonymous quotes in the media than malign leaking, regardless of the administration. Most of the time, benign leaking serves a noble First Amendment purpose: fostering a better-informed, more balanced media marketplace. Still, it can be overdone. Over the past several decades, there has been a marked expansion of the practice. In previous eras, administrations relied on clubby relationships with well-sourced reporters to shape public narratives; today, they use anonymous quotes. This tactic has metastasized into an overused and possibly self-defeating communications strategy. The unintended consequence has been an increase in leaking of all sorts. And although every modern president has occasionally resorted to unattributed quotes to provide context or float an idea, reporters claim that Donald Trump does this more than any of his predecessors. Likewise, although all administrations simultaneously leak and criticize leakers, this kind of hypocrisy has become particularly acute under Trump.

It is the other kind of leaking, malign leaking, that drives the most sensationalistic stories and all too often wins those involved fame and fortune, not to mention coveted journalism awards. Malign leaking is the focus of Walzer's attention, and he claims that it can serve the broader public good. It can, but this probably happens less often than people think. And at their current level, unauthorized leaks are creating a climate that undermines effective and accountable governance.

Malign leaking is the moral equivalent of disobeying an order. Is that ever the right thing to do? Consider the U.S. military: those who serve are supposed to obey all legal orders but disobey all illegal ones. Some officers believe that this means they have an obligation to refuse orders that are unethical or unwise, but the Uniform Code of Military Justice provides no such exception. This does not mean that members of the military are powerless; they can express concerns within their chain of command or the regular civil-military advisory process. In fact, they have a professional obligation to speak up, but not to speak out. When those in the military circumvent the internal process in order to generate political pressure on their civilian bosses, they undermine the norm of civilian control.

Those serving in the military should assume that orders coming down through the regular chain of command are legal. Indeed, commanders have access to lawyers whose job it is to make sure that this is the case. An individual who decides to exercise her own judgment and refuse an order on the grounds of illegality should expect to be arrested and face a court-martial. If she is right, the system should vindicate her. If not, she should be punished.

The same logic applies to malign leaking. Malign leaking is fundamentally antidemocratic because the individual leaker places her own judgment over the authority of the system established by the Constitution. Walzer leans heavily on the counterargument that leaking provides a vital public service by rescuing the country from disastrous policies that leaders are able to impose only by hiding things. It is certainly possible to conjure up hypotheticals that fit this tidy morality tale: for example, a mentally unhinged president seeking to launch an unjustified nuclear strike. Clearly, the crime of leaking is preferable to a

needless nuclear war, but these hypotheticals tend to collapse under closer scrutiny. For starters, the system already provides avenues to push back within the chain of command. Lower-ranking officials do not need to rely on leaks to save the globe. Moreover, actual cases are rarely so tidy. As Walzer himself observes, even those who believe that the former National Security Agency contractor Edward Snowden was justified in leaking information about controversial surveillance programs must grapple with the inconvenient truth that he leaked much more than was needed to prompt a public debate about the civil liberties of U.S. citizens—including, as Walzer notes, "information about U.S. intelligence operations against non-American targets in mainland China." Snowden also leaked information about programs that were authorized by established executive-branch protocols and had been properly briefed to congressional overseers. Snowden does not deserve the moral protection of whistleblower status. If he disagrees, he should come back and face the legal system. If he has truly done a public service, the courts can take that into consideration.

The Snowden case is a reminder that the U.S. Constitution already provides a legitimate way to prevent abuses of power and official misconduct: rigorous congressional oversight. Congress has the capacity to compel testimony from the executive branch. Revealing information to an open session of Congress—or discussing classified information in a closed hearing—does not count as malign leaking. Most leaks to the media bypass this kind of oversight: they catalyze investigations rather than result from them.

Some of the most celebrated leaks in the Trump era fit this pattern. When the contents of December 2016 conversations between Sergey Kislyak, the Russian ambassador to the United States, and Michael Flynn, whom Trump had tapped to serve as national security adviser, were leaked to *The Washington Post*, they set in motion a media frenzy that eventually led to extensive congressional investigations into the Trump campaign's possible collusion with Russia. Similarly, former FBI Director James Comey admitted that he asked a friend to leak the contents of his confidential memos in order to trigger a special counsel investigation. It would have been better if that information had initially gone to the relevant congressional committees, which are already empowered to explore such issues. (And better still if Trump had authorized an independent commission to fully investigate the entire affair.)

The same goes for the *New York Times* op-ed published anonymously in September and purportedly written by a senior Trump administration official who claimed to be part of a "quiet resistance" to Trump, whom the author described as amoral, ill informed, impetuous, and petty. Writing the op-ed was legal but probably counterproductive. It did nothing to empower constitutional checks and balances, and it has likely driven Trump to do more of the very things that the author complained about. It would have been better for the official to resign and then testify before Congress.

Of course, congressional oversight leaves much to be desired. And Congress itself is generally considered to be a fountain of malign leaks. Still, congressional investigations into the Iraq war; the assault on U.S. facilities in Benghazi, Libya;

and now Russian interference in the U.S. election show that this oversight can bring information into the public eye that the administration might prefer to keep private.

Walzer's argument that the ends justify the means treats leaking like speeding. But if you need to rush someone to the hospital, you should call an ambulance before deciding to disregard the speed limit yourself. If that is not feasible, then speed, but be prepared to face the consequences. Yet the vast majority of speeding does not take place under such extreme circumstances. Likewise, the vast majority of malign leaking advances the selfish interests of the leaker rather than the public interest. Reckless leaking may be irresistible to watch, but it will likely end in a crash. It is possible to overreact on the other side, as well. Ruthlessly tracking down every malign leaker would be no wiser than an analogous effort to catch every speeder. This means that there will always be leeway for the rare instances when a leaker really does need to do the dirty deed.

The prevalence of leaking today is likely a symptom, not a disease. The underlying cause has many components, including a government that does not value transparency, a national security establishment that overclassifies information, a hyperpartisan and dysfunctional oversight system, and a media marketplace that is dominated by shrill advocacy. Until those factors are addressed, the leaking, and the complaints about leaking, will continue.

PETER FEAVER is Professor of Political Science and Public Policy at Duke University.

No Ordinary Time

Allison Stanger

Michael Walzer identifies several types of leaking and whistle-blowing and explores their ethical implications. His reasoning is thoughtful and nuanced and fine for politics as usual. But American politics today are highly unusual, and taking that context into account changes the moral calculus he presents.

Extraordinary times demand extraordinary actions. Because the current administration has launched an assault on the rule of law and the norms and practices of American democracy, officials in a position to blow the whistle on that effort are justified in doing so.

Walzer argues that "whistleblowers have a role to play in a democratic political universe" but that "it is an unofficial role, and one must recognize both its possible value and its possible dangers." In general, that is and should be true. But it should not be difficult to see that today, the value outweighs the danger.

Whistle-blowing is the exposure of illegal or improper activity, and it has been recognized as a legitimate part of American politics from the founding onward. (It was first given legal protection by the Second Continental Congress in 1778.) It has never been extended coherently and consistently to national security, however—a realm in which it can clash with another professional imperative, the duty not to reveal classified material to the public without authorization.

In the corporate world, protection of whistle-blowing has become increasingly

formalized in legislation such as the 1986 amendments to the False Claims Act, the Sarbanes-Oxley Act of 2002, and the Dodd-Frank Wall Street Reform and Consumer Protection Act of 2010. National security employees, however, were explicitly excluded from the Whistleblower Protection Act of 1989, an exclusion ratified when Congress updated the act in 2012.

Extending whistleblower protection to the national security arena is admittedly a complex challenge. In ordinary circumstances, officials should not have the right to decide for themselves whether classified information should be made public. And even today, leaks such as the release of transcripts of the president's conversations with foreign leaders do not constitute whistle-blowing, because the behavior revealed did not involve a gross violation of the rule of law. In such circumstances, Walzer's invocation of the ethical calculus of civil disobedience is valid.

But when high officials in the executive branch who are sworn to uphold the law openly flout and subvert it, and Congress fails to exercise its oversight responsibilities, then internal channels of dissent atrophy and a whistleblower's calculations change. When the rule of law itself is threatened, whistle-blowing can be necessary to defend liberal democracy as a whole. Illegal leaks that expose true betrayals of American democracy are neither partisan nor political. They are patriotic.

Within days of taking office, President Donald Trump fired Sally Yates, the acting attorney general, and a few months later, he fired James Comey, the FBI director. Since then, Trump has repeatedly tried to impede the investigation of

Robert Mueller, the special counsel who is looking into Russian interference in the 2016 U.S. presidential election; attacked and slandered anybody who criticizes him or refuses to accept his claims of absolute authority; and polluted public discourse with a constant stream of lies. "Our whole system falls apart when the citizens of our country lose confidence in the justice system and the Department of Justice," Yates would later say. "But almost from the very beginning [of the Trump administration], we've seen breaches of these rules and norms from the White House." As a dedicated public servant confronting the danger firsthand, Yates came out in a different place than Walzer. Her recommendation? "When you see something happening that you [think] is wrong—and that's different from something that you just don't think will be effective—I encourage you to speak up."

Yates was not alone in believing that these are exceptional times. An unprecedented number of former senior officials from the intelligence and national security communities, of both political parties, have spoken out against what they consider a unique threat to American political culture and institutions. Many of their counterparts inside the system agree and feel obliged to cry foul themselves, as well—not on a whim or as an act of partisanship but to honor their own sworn oath to preserve, protect, and defend the Constitution. The anonymous author of the *New York Times* op-ed who claimed to be "working diligently from within to frustrate parts of [Trump's] agenda and his worst inclinations" argued that accommodating Trump's "amorality" was justified by the pursuit of a higher cause. But he or she failed to provide any new information that might have been used to uphold the rule of law. The author overlooked the philosopher Hannah Arendt's warning that those who claim to be choosing the lesser evil often forget that they are nevertheless still choosing to do evil.

In his classic *Just and Unjust Wars*, Walzer discusses the case of Arthur Harris, the leader of the United Kingdom's Bomber Command and the architect of terror bombing raids on Germany. Walzer argues that in cases of supreme emergency, when the very existence of the state is at stake, it might be possible to fight unjustly for a just cause. (He cites Dresden and Hiroshima as examples.) But when the emergency has passed, he continues, moral order (and ordinary bureaucratic behavior) needs to be restored.

If such reasoning could encompass and excuse those strategically worthless, random massacres of vast numbers of unarmed civilians, how can it not—at least hypothetically—encompass and excuse the occasional unauthorized disclosure of accurate but classified information? Accepting that point allows the national discussion to turn to the real issue: whether Trump does indeed constitute a threat to the republic, and if so, what to do about it.

Once these unique depredations end, the leaking that is occurring in response will obviously need to end, as well. (There is every reason to expect it to, since there has never been any previous outbreak of such widespread whistle-blowing that anyone can remember.) And at that point, it will be possible to draw up the ethical balance sheets and assign everyone involved his or her proper penance. But until the immediate danger has passed, it makes sense to focus on the

shocking substance of the information being revealed rather than the questionable means by which that information is coming to light. In short: don't shoot the messenger; listen to the message.

ALLISON STANGER is Russell J. Leng '60 Professor of International Politics and Economics at Middlebury College and Scholar-in-Residence with the Cybersecurity Initiative at New America. Her forthcoming book is *Life, Liberty, and the Pursuit of Leaks: The Story of Whistleblowing in America.*

Walzer Replies

These two responses to my article present an interesting contrast. Peter Feaver thinks that I am too ready to defend whistle-blowing; Allison Stanger thinks that I am not ready enough—indeed, she argues that we should all be encouraging whistle-blowing in these dark times. Criticized from both sides, I could just enjoy the comforts of the middle position. But I am not exactly in the middle; it's more as if I am moving from side to side. I admire the nuance of Feaver's response, and I share Stanger's sense of urgency.

Feaver's enhanced typology is helpful. I should have said more about "benign leaking" and about the way that officials use leaks for their own purposes. And I obviously could have said more about working within the bureaucracy and about the ways in which any given chain of command is open, or not, to internal protest. Feaver is a bit too sanguine about bureaucratic openness, but I agree that this should always be tested.

Feaver is wrong, however, to say that soldiers "should assume that orders coming down through the regular chain of command are legal." The whole point of teaching military personnel the rules of engagement is to make it possible for them to know whether the orders are legal or not. And even in cases in which soldiers are not certain, they should assume that monstrously immoral orders are also illegal.

Feaver's phrase "tidy morality tale" doesn't accurately describe the hypothetical cases (let alone the actual cases) that I and other critics cite when defending whistle-blowing. Say, for example, that the U.S. president decided to use military force without congressional oversight or democratic debate. Such an action might fit an expansive definition of the powers granted to the executive branch by the U.S. Constitution, but it wouldn't be an obvious fit. Internal protest and whistle-blowing might well be justified in such a situation, and to make such a judgment, one would rely not on morality tales but on answers to specific questions: Is this government policy legal or illegal, restrained or brutal? Is its violence necessary or gratuitous?

In some cases, the end (an informed public) will justify the means (whistle-blowing). What other justification is possible? Means are not self-justifying. A whistleblower aims to tell citizens in a democracy things that he or she believes they need to know—and if the whistle-blower is right about the need, his or her aim does indeed justify the means.

Feaver concludes his critique by trying to explain "the prevalence of leaking today," which he deplores. But his account of the causes of the prevalence—the lack of transparency, the overclassification of

information, dysfunctional oversight—suggests strongly that, as Stanger argues, the leaking is not entirely deplorable. The conditions that explain it also sometimes justify it.

Stanger is certainly right to defend the exposure of "true betrayals of American democracy," but she doesn't tell us enough about what she means by "true betrayals." Despite some qualifications, her argument has a wholesale quality. What is necessary, even in the age of Donald Trump, is retail analysis—case by case. Like Stanger, I would defend whistleblowers who exposed authoritarian behavior that the public didn't know about. But I would still insist on the conditions that I described in my article—that the act of the whistleblower expressed in all its aspects a democratic intention.

I also need to clarify two points. Stanger wrongly suggests that in *Just and Unjust Wars*, I defend the British firebombing of Dresden during World War II and the U.S. atomic bombing of Japan as examples of "supreme emergency," a phrase Winston Churchill coined in 1940 to justify violating Norway's neutrality in the fight against the Axis powers by sinking Norwegian ships carrying ore to Germany. In fact, I condemn both actions, in Dresden and in Hiroshima, in very strong terms. Nor do I think that a doctrine as radical as "supreme emergency" is necessary to justify "the occasional unauthorized disclosure" of illegal or monstrously immoral government activity. Whistleblowing should never be routine, but it doesn't have to be an act of desperation.

Finally, I agree with Feaver's and Stanger's criticisms of the anonymous author of the *New York Times* op-ed. The official who wrote that piece is not a whistleblower. He or she doesn't name any of the dangerous or immoral steps that Trump supposedly wanted to take but was prevented from taking by the author or others in the internal "resistance." I, like Feaver, am opposed to anonymous writing of this kind. If I believed that the author were actually engaged in saving the republic, I would excuse the anonymity. I am inclined instead to believe that salvation will have to come from another place.

Recent Books

Political and Legal

G. John Ikenberry

The Lost History of Liberalism: From Ancient Rome to the Twenty-first Century
BY HELENA ROSENBLATT. Princeton University Press, 2018, 368 pp.

Although liberalism dominates Western politics, there is little agreement over what "liberalism" means. For some, it is the Lockean idea of individual rights and limited government; for others, it is the doctrine of the modern welfare state. In this lively and penetrating book, Rosenblatt offers an intellectual history of the term, from its roots in Roman notions of civic duty and public morality down to its modern use. She shows how the idea was "Christianized, democratized, socialized, and politicized" over the centuries. She also challenges the traditional narrative of liberalism as an Anglo-American project, placing greater emphasis on nineteenth-century French and German thinkers who tried to conjure up "liberal principles" of politics—the rule of law, civic equality, constitutionalism, and freedom of the press and religion—that could answer the radical forces unleashed by the French Revolution. It was only in the twentieth century, particularly during the Cold War, that liberalism became a uniquely American creed of individualism and political rights. Rosenblatt shows that liberalism has survived thanks to its appeal as a moral ideal, a vision of political community that is based not just on interests but also on values: respect, tolerance, and justice.

Can Democracy Work? A Short History of a Radical Idea, From Ancient Athens to Our World
BY JAMES MILLER. Farrar, Straus and Giroux, 2018, 320 pp.

Many people today worry that John Adams might have been onto something when he observed that "there has never been a democracy yet that did not commit suicide." Miller tries to put these worries in perspective by tracing the tumultuous history of democracy from its ancient Athenian origins through the American and French Revolutions to the populist upheavals afoot today. What makes the book compelling is its focus on colorful thinkers, activists, and political leaders who lived and breathed the democratic moment throughout history, from Pericles and Socrates in ancient Athens to Woodrow Wilson and Vladimir Lenin in the early twentieth century. Miller shows that democracy's ascent is best seen not as a gradual unfolding of a political principle driven by reason and moral destiny but rather as a grand roller coaster ride of struggle, revolution, and backlash. Today's populist outbursts look quite ordinary alongside this history. Miller's message is that democracy is not just a fixed set of governing institutions; it is, as the French political theorist Alexis de Tocqueville argued, a way of life. If democracy is to survive, the first imperative is to recognize its fragility and step forward and defend it.

Unrivaled: Why America Will Remain the World's Sole Superpower
BY MICHAEL BECKLEY. Cornell University Press, 2018, 248 pp.

It has become conventional wisdom that the United States is in decline, the unipolar era is ending, and China is on the rise. In this smart and sophisticated book, Beckley tackles this thesis head-on. He does not dispute that the United States has its problems or that misguided leaders often squander its advantages. But he points out that the United States' deep geographic, demographic, and institutional reserves give the country unique resilience. The United States is the only great power without regional rivals. Its companies and universities dominate the world. And most important, Beckley argues that it has by far the best fundamentals for future economic growth, thanks to its abundant natural resources, favorable demographics, secure property rights, and lasting political institutions. China's growth prospects, in contrast, are "dismal." Beckley also thinks the declinists use the wrong measures of power. GDP, for example, exaggerates the influence of populous but poor countries, such as China, while overlooking problems that drain those countries' economic and military resources. He does not argue that the United States can—or should—try to preserve the unipolar era, but he does think that it will long remain the world's leading power.

Cultural Evolution: People's Motivations Are Changing, and Reshaping the World
BY RONALD F. INGLEHART. Cambridge University Press, 2018, 288 pp.

Inglehart is one of the last great postwar exponents of modernization theory, which sees economic development as leading to shifts in society toward liberal democracy. Modernization theory has gone in and out of fashion over the years, as critics have questioned its Western biases and its vision of universal pathways of development. Yet in previous work using data from the World Values Survey, Inglehart has identified systematic connections between long-term economic changes and shifts in attitudes on gender equality, religion, and democratic values. In this book, Inglehart offers a restatement of modernization theory, focusing on the links between economic and physical security and tolerance of outsiders and openness to new ideas. For most of history, people lived under the constant threat of violence and disease, leading societies to emphasize solidarity with fellow members, conformity to group norms, and suspicion of outsiders. Inglehart argues that in the second half of the twentieth century, industrialization, urbanization, and mass literacy systematically reduced the "existential insecurity" of vast numbers of people, making modern societies more open and tolerant. Inglehart claims that these more liberal societies generated a surge in democratization in the 1990s. Now, he sees a creeping return of economic insecurity in the rich world, which is opening the door to intolerance and authoritarianism.

Restraining Great Powers: Soft Balancing From Empires to the Global Era
BY T. V. PAUL. Yale University Press, 2018, 256 pp.

For some 400 years, the world's leading states pursued security by preserving the balance of power. But since the end of the Cold War, the idea has been

strangely absent. Paul argues that the idea of a balance of power is not dead; it has simply taken new, more peaceful forms, which he calls "soft balancing." This seems to have been largely driven by economic interdependence, which has made it more costly for great powers to disrupt markets by splitting the world into competing blocs. The modern global norm of territorial integrity and the availability of nuclear weapons both serve to deter great-power aggression and make balancing less necessary. And the creation of international institutions has given the United States and China ways to signal their restraint and thus dampen the worries that might otherwise push other countries to balance against them. U.S. President Donald Trump's "America first" strategy and China's growing military power will put his thesis to the test.

Economic, Social, and Environmental

Richard N. Cooper

Prioritizing Development: A Cost Benefit Analysis of the United Nations' Sustainable Development Goals
EDITED BY BJORN LOMBORG.
Cambridge University Press, 2018, 554 pp.

In 2015, the UN General Assembly adopted the Sustainable Development Goals (SDG), which identify 169 targets for the world to hit by 2030. Lomborg's think tank, the Copenhagen Consensus Center, thought that was too many, so it brought together a group of economists to conduct a cost-benefit analysis of each one (except for those that were too qualitative to evaluate). This useful book is the result, covering topics ranging from air pollution to water and sanitation. For each SDG, the contributors assess how much the world will have to spend and what it will get for the money. Prioritizing is important, since governments and donors will not be able to spend nearly enough to meet all the targets. The contributors conclude that the highest return would come from completing the stalled Doha Round of trade negotiations, which they estimate would boost the global economy by over $2,000 for each $1 spent. On the other hand, they project that trying to meet some other targets, such as guaranteeing employment for everyone, would return less than it would cost. The book concludes that apart from trade liberalization, the highest payoffs would come from immunizing vulnerable populations, reducing malnutrition among young children, and fighting tuberculosis.

Mastering Catastrophic Risk: How Companies Are Coping With Disruption
BY HOWARD KUNREUTHER AND MICHAEL USEEM. Oxford University Press, 2018, 248 pp.

This interesting book uses interviews and case studies from the business world to identify 21 categories of risk faced by publicly traded companies and to draw useful lessons about how to prepare for them. The categories cover not only natural disasters, such as earthquakes and tsunamis, but also risks arising from employee behavior, regulations, and financial shocks caused by human error

or by the wider political, social, and economic environments. The resulting damage can be physical, financial, or reputational. The authors urge corporations to plan for potentially catastrophic incidents, even remote ones, and to train teams to deal with unexpected events when they occur. The authors offer many concrete examples of companies that dealt successfully with the unforeseen, and of ones that failed, and show how those that did better had learned from the experience of others.

World Inequality Report 2018
EDITED BY FACUNDO ALVAREDO, LUCAS CHANCEL, THOMAS PIKETTY, EMMANUEL SAEZ, AND GABRIEL ZUCMAN. Harvard University Press, 2018, 344 pp.

This is the latest installment of an ongoing effort by a team of economists to assemble and refine data on the distribution of income and wealth within and across many large countries, including Brazil, China, France, Germany, India, Russia, South Africa, and the United States. The authors combine information from household surveys, national income accounts, and tax records to create what is sure to become a standard source for data on income and wealth inequality. Since 1980, the distribution of income, as measured by the shares of total national income earned by the top one percent, the top ten percent, and the bottom 50 percent, has grown more unequal in all but one of the countries studied. (The exception is Brazil, where inequality has declined but still exceeds the levels in most other countries.) Although increases in inequality differ greatly across countries, in most, inequality has grown in income earned from labor, such as wages, and in income derived from the ownership of capital, such as stock dividends. Data on wealth are public for far fewer countries, but the information that is available shows that the distribution of wealth has also grown more unequal. The editors end the book with a discussion of various policies that could reduce these inequalities.

Renewables: The Politics of a Global Energy Transition
BY MICHAËL AKLIN AND JOHANNES URPELAINEN. MIT Press, 2018, 344 pp.

The world is going through a slow transition from coal and oil to renewables, mainly solar and wind power, as its main sources of energy. This is partly due to the much higher price of oil and partly to cost-cutting technological breakthroughs and greater practical experience using solar and wind power. But those factors don't explain the whole story, since different economies have adopted renewable technologies at very different speeds. Aklin and Urpelainen persuasively argue that a combination of domestic politics and external shocks, such as the OPEC oil price hikes of the mid-1970s and the 1986 Chernobyl nuclear disaster, has led to different levels of support for renewables from country to country. The book usefully documents the most important shocks and explains how domestic policies have changed since the 1970s, focusing on Denmark, Germany, and the United States.

Outsourcing Welfare: How the Money Immigrants Send Home Contributes to Stability in Developing Countries
BY ROY GERMANO. Oxford University Press, 2018, 240 pp.

This illuminating book addresses an important but often overlooked consequence of international migration: remittances sent by immigrants to relatives in their countries of origin. Each year, these amount to an estimated $500 billion, three times the annual total spent by governments, aid agencies, and charities on foreign assistance to poor countries. Germano has carried out extensive fieldwork in the Americas, but the book also covers other parts of the world, including Africa and the Middle East. As he explains, remittances amount to a kind of "outsourcing" of welfare that immigrants' home countries do not or cannot provide. Recipients use them to pay for a wide variety of things, including medical care, clothing, and food for themselves and their children.

Military, Scientific, and Technological

Lawrence D. Freedman

War Isn't the Only Hell: A New Reading of World War I American Literature
BY KEITH GANDAL. John Hopkins University Press, 2018, 288 pp.

Contrary to what is often assumed, the American literature generated by World War I was not based on the trauma of combat. As Gandal points out, battle was far from the typical experience. Many would-be conscripts were deemed unfit for service, most of those who passed their physical exams were given jobs away from the frontlines, and many of those assigned combat roles never saw any fighting. A lot of young men, therefore, came away with a sense of personal failure. And since the selection of officers was based on merit rather than social class or ethnicity (except for African Americans, who were excluded as a group), many men resented watching those they considered their social inferiors giving orders. Much of the postwar literature, Gandal argues, was therefore about emasculation more than danger. He shows how unsatisfactory wartime experiences informed the fiction of a range of writers, including William Faulkner and Ernest Hemingway, both of whom lied about their military roles in later years.

Wars of Law: Unintended Consequences in the Regulation of Armed Conflict
BY TANISHA M. FAZAL. Cornell University Press, 2018, 342 pp.

Ever since World War II, countries have been reluctant to officially declare war on one another, even after they appear to be fighting one. Because a declaration of war brings burdensome legal consequences, the simplest approach is to find a euphemism to describe the conflict. In this intriguing book, Fazal argues that this is a consequence of the separation between the lawyers who write international humanitarian law and the military personnel who have to follow it. As a result, the laws have become so complex and demanding that even states that intend to comply with them sometimes struggle to do so. The situation

has been further complicated by the rise of civil wars, for which the laws of war were not designed. The idea that ill-judged regulations can produce perverse incentives is not new, but Fazal's analysis of this tendency within the laws of war skillfully blends quantitative and qualitative methods to produce something genuinely original.

The 2020 Commission Report on the North Korean Nuclear Attacks Against the United States: A Speculative Novel
BY JEFFREY LEWIS. Mariner Books, 2018, 304 pp.

This clever and gripping book, written in the manner of the 9/11 Commission's report, takes as its starting point the United States' failure to get North Korea to give up its nuclear arsenal. It then imagines that the North's air defenses shoot down a South Korean civilian airliner, sparking a crisis that escalates rapidly to nuclear war. Although the book is a work of fiction, each step in the plot is backed up by research into past incidents and current capabilities. The war snowballs thanks to a risky retaliation by South Korean President Moon Jae-in, undertaken without consulting the United States (the part of the book that is the least convincing). The crisis is worsened by the dysfunction of the Trump administration—including, inevitably, a tweet from U.S. President Donald Trump that convinces North Korean leader Kim Jong Un that the South's attack is part of a coordinated effort to topple his regime. Although the plot is not entirely persuasive, one does not have to accept every aspect to appreciate Lewis' warnings about the dangers of poor communication within governments and between states and how exaggerated claims by leaders, for example, about the effectiveness of their missile defense systems, create risks.

Democracy in Exile: Hans Speier and the Rise of the Defense Intellectual
BY DANIEL BESSNER. Cornell University Press, 2018, 312 pp.

Hans Speier was one of the many German intellectuals who left Germany for the United States before World War II and later came to play a major part in the war effort against the Nazis. Speier began his academic career studying the sociology of knowledge, and after he arrived in the United States, he directed the U.S. government's propaganda effort against Germany. The debates recounted in Bessner's biography between Speier and other officials over how to develop effective campaigns are particularly fascinating in the context of contemporary worries about information warfare. Speier relished his influential advisory role in government and later drew on his experience at the new RAND Corporation, where he made sure that academic work still flowed to senior policymakers. Bessner's book, which largely focuses on the intellectual and says little about Speier's personal life, picks up on an issue that bothered Speier but did not ultimately deter him from his work: What are the implications for democracy when unelected experts, often working in secret, shape government policy?

LikeWar: The Weaponization of Social Media
BY P. W. SINGER AND EMERSON T. BROOKING. Eamon Dolan, 2018, 416 pp.

Many books have charted the use and misuse of social media, but this is one of the most comprehensive and up to

date. It comes after a shocking few years in which the abuse of the Internet has had profound political consequences. Belligerents now prepare for Twitter wars at the same time as conventional ones. Activists understand the subversive potential of online campaigns, but so do governments that seek to stifle them. The Chinese government has built the most extensive mechanisms to prevent free expression and weed out dissent, showing the way forward for authoritarian states everywhere. Meanwhile, the main online platforms—Facebook, Google, and Twitter—have come to realize how their creations have been used to stir up hate and spread false stories, and they are belatedly wrestling with ways to curb the worst offences. Singer and Brooking explain not only how this new information environment developed but also why our attitudes and behaviors are so susceptible to manipulation.

The United States

Walter Russell Mead

No Property in Man: Slavery and Antislavery at the Nation's Founding
BY SEAN WILENTZ. Harvard University Press, 2018, 368 pp.

Was the U.S. Constitution, as the South Carolinian statesman John C. Calhoun believed, a pro-slavery document, or did it, as President Abraham Lincoln argued, deny slavery a place in national law and point toward abolition? Although most Americans outside the academy would assume that Calhoun was wrong and Lincoln right, the contrary view has gained so much ground among academics in recent years that Wilentz's qualified endorsement of Lincoln's interpretation is both bracing and brave. Wilentz's thoroughly researched argument serves as a useful example of solid scholarship and effective writing on a sensitive topic. It also highlights the growing importance of historians to legal studies as the federal bench fills with originalist interpreters of the Constitution. Wilentz is not an originalist himself, but the historical methods he employs here to uncover the intended meaning of the Constitution are exactly those that originalists use. Lawyers and jurists looking to develop arguments that will impress conservative judges would be well advised to study the tools Wilentz deploys to such great effect.

Political Tribes: Group Instinct and the Fate of Nations
BY AMY CHUA. Penguin Press, 2018, 304 pp.

Chua is no stranger to controversy, and her latest book is sure to provoke. She argues on the basis of psychological research that humans are hard-wired to prefer members of their own tribe and to regard outsiders with suspicion. Chua argues that American ignorance about the power of tribalism led U.S. officials to make costly errors in Vietnam, Iraq, and elsewhere. Her second point is more controversial: that the rise of identity politics is linked to a resurgent American tribalism that will ultimately divide Americans and undermine their common identity and the common good.

Chua's speculations about the future of U.S. politics are interesting, if unsettling; her portrayal of the consequences in foreign policy of ignorance about the power of group identity should be required reading for U.S. policymakers.

The Rise of Andrew Jackson: Myth, Manipulation, and the Making of Modern Politics
BY DAVID S. HEIDLER AND JEANNE T. HEIDLER. Basic Books, 2018, 448 pp.

Since the election of U.S. President Donald Trump in 2016, Jacksonian populism has begun to receive serious, if not always sympathetic, scholarly treatment. In this detailed and diverting book, the Heidlers look at something quite different but equally relevant: the political and media machinery that Andrew Jackson's core supporters erected to assist his presidential bids. The Heidlers call these savvy media manipulators and occasional purveyors of fake news "Jacksonites" rather than "Jacksonians" to reflect the fact that some of them were more interested in associating with a successful presidential candidate than in promoting Jackson's (often inchoate) ideas. The Jacksonites created a network of patronage and media influence that led to positive press coverage for Jackson across the country, and they leaped into action to suppress unfavorable reports, including accounts of Jackson's many incivilities and gaffes. The Jacksonites did not invent collusion between politicians and journalists, but they did create the integrated approach to media that made mass politics possible and continues to this day.

Our American Israel: The Story of an Entangled Alliance
BY AMY KAPLAN. Harvard University Press, 2018, 368 pp.

Kaplan's perspective as a scholar of American studies provides the key insight of this book: that the United States' affinity for Israel has less to do with American Jewish activism than with deep cultural forces that have manifested themselves on both the left and the right over the years. In the 1940s and 1950s, for example, the left was the source of Israel's most vocal U.S. support. Kaplan's sympathies lie not just with the left in general but also with the pro-Palestinian trend that has supplanted the left's earlier Zionism, and perhaps as a result, the book is better at analyzing the myths and assumptions behind right-wing pro-Israel sentiment today than at examining the equally fascinating mythmaking behind contemporary left-wing views. Kaplan largely ignores the international context of views on Israel, apparently forgetting that the European left was even more pro-Israel than the U.S. left until the 1967 Arab-Israeli war, and so her otherwise keen analysis misses some important detail. Even so, Kaplan's approach is so fresh, her command of the sources so solid, and her prose so engaging that both casual readers and experts will find new insights in the book.

Tailspin: The People and Forces Behind America's Fifty-Year Fall—and Those Fighting to Reverse It
BY STEVEN BRILL. Knopf, 2018, 464 pp.

Brill blends journalism and history to tell a complex but vital story: how the stable world of postwar U.S. capitalism

transformed into the volatile and often ruthless economic system of today. There is no single culprit in Brill's account. He shows how a series of apparently unrelated developments in law, finance, corporate management, and campaign funding combined to cause a dramatic decline in the fairness, decency, and prosperity of the United States. Perhaps the most interesting theme is how often liberal reforms led to massive, unforeseen problems later on. Brill blames the catastrophic fall in U.S. social mobility, for example, on the shift to meritocratic college admissions policies in the 1960s. The Supreme Court's Citizens United decision, which opened the floodgates to corporate money in politics, began with a lawsuit filed by the Green Party presidential candidate Ralph Nader. Brill offers a rare thing: an intelligible summary of the political and policy changes that transformed American life in the last 50 years. But one is left wondering why, as Brill describes the havoc wreaked by the unforeseen consequences of one liberal reform after another, he is so confident that one more round of liberal reforms will set the country right.

Western Europe

Andrew Moravcsik

Journey Into Europe: Islam, Immigration, and Identity
BY AKBAR AHMED. Brookings Institution Press, 2018, 592 pp.

This sprawling book by a Pakistani diplomat and anthropologist examines why relations between Muslims and non-Muslims in Europe are so contentious—and what might be done about it. The author and his research team spent four years interviewing Muslims in Europe, including many religious and community leaders. Their troubling, if unsurprising, finding: Muslims feel disadvantaged, stereotyped, and marginalized. Sadly, the book has little to say about the roots of these perceptions. Ahmed seems more interested in his policy prescription: to override Muslim extremists and white nationalists alike in favor of a more tolerant and pluralistic European culture. That is a laudable goal, but Ahmed's vague proposal—to reform modern Europe along the lines of medieval Muslim Spain—seems far-fetched and inappropriate, not least because medieval tolerance was a strategy designed to accommodate a popular majority. Even if Ahmed's project were feasible and desirable, the rest of his vision is too hazy to resolve the everyday disputes that would still arise over how people dress, whom they marry, and what political ideals they favor.

Rescue Board: The Untold Story of America's Efforts to Save the Jews of Europe
BY REBECCA ERBELDING. Doubleday, 2018, 384 pp.

Conventional wisdom holds that the United States did too little, too late, to stop the Holocaust. It did not bomb Auschwitz or the railroads leading to it, for example. Fearing public opposition, the Roosevelt administration admitted few Jewish refugees. And the State Department deliberately suppressed information about the murder of Jews. This sober, well-documented book by an archivist at the U.S. Holocaust

Memorial Museum acknowledges these basic facts but advances a more nuanced view. It describes how in early 1944, American Jewish leaders finally managed to convince President Franklin Roosevelt to create the War Refugee Board, which was tasked with coordinating U.S. efforts to rescue Jews and other persecuted minorities. In its 19-month existence, the board engaged in ransom negotiations, organized the rescue of the Swedish businessman Raoul Wallenberg and others in Budapest, evacuated Jews to peaceful parts of Europe and to Palestine, established a refugee camp in upstate New York, and helped deliver 300,000 food parcels to prisoners in Europe. Almost all writing on the Holocaust triggers controversy, as this book already has. Yet Erbelding's book shows that governments do sometimes act for humanitarian purposes, even in the midst of war.

Complexity's Embrace: The International Law Implications of Brexit
EDITED BY OONAGH E. FITZGERALD AND EVA LEIN. CIGI Press, 2018, 352 pp.

To understand what Brexit really means, throw away your newspapers and podcasts and read this book instead. Pro-Brexit pundits and populist politicians proclaim that the situation is simple. Two years ago, they told British referendum voters that Brexit was about reclaiming democracy, sovereignty, and identity. Yet the British government's effort to implement the voters' will has revealed the opposite: Brexit has created an almost unfathomable amount of complexity. Millions of EU rules and regulations govern industrial trade, farming, banking, intellectual property, consumer safety, the environment, human rights, energy, and much else. Brexit means the United Kingdom must first rewrite all these rules and then realign them with those of the EU and 180 countries across the globe in order to maintain economic relations with them. In this book, a group of European legal specialists examine the practical issues the British are up against, covering topics as varied as what regional electrical grids are permissible under EU law, how to manage bankruptcies of multinational companies, and which types of parody the EU's intellectual property rules allow.

Scots and Catalans: Union and Disunion
BY J. H. ELLIOTT. Yale University Press, 2018, 360 pp.

In this erudite and engaging book, Elliott, one of the most distinguished historians of early modern Spain, explores the similarities and differences between Scottish and Catalan nationalism. The two movements' histories run in striking parallel, starting with the construction of their founding myths five centuries ago and moving through common stages of rebellion, dynastic union, nation-statehood, home rule, and, finally, the clamor for independence. Despite the book's magisterial scope and subtle detail, however, a lack of method hampers the analysis. Elliott is an old-school historian; for him, great men, wars, and national interests drive policy. He is less interested in analyzing the masses, something that requires a firm grasp of popular psychology, social change, and ground-level politics. Ignoring these factors leaves him perplexed about why separatism is rising in both places. "There seems no good reason," he says. Nor can he sort

out why Catalan nationalists appear more fervent than their Scottish counterparts. Is it their distinct language, the potential economic gains of independence, their sometimes more repressive central government, failures of imagination by Scottish leaders, indoctrination by pro-independence Catalan governments, or some combination of these factors? Or is it just chance? Elliott cannot say.

The Grand Strategy of the Habsburg Empire
BY A. WESS MITCHELL. Princeton University Press, 2018, 416 pp.

In 1914, the Habsburg empire's fatal combination of belligerence and weakness triggered World War I and, four years later, the empire's own dissolution. This graceful account of Habsburg diplomacy from 1700 to that fateful moment explains how the empire survived so long: its diplomats dampened threats through minor acts of appeasement, always playing for time. The most celebrated case of this strategy came after the Napoleonic Wars, when Prince Metternich, the empire's chancellor, constructed the Concert of Europe, a system for preserving the balance of power and deflecting the hostility of the Habsburgs' stronger neighbors: the Russian, German, and Ottoman empires. Mitchell synthesizes rather than challenges existing interpretations, and his portrait of unitary states managing the military balance is a bit archaic. But the book deserves attention for other reasons. Mitchell currently serves as U.S. assistant secretary of state for European and Eurasian affairs and seeks to identify lessons for today's U.S. policymakers from the Habsburgs' experience. He convincingly criticizes the Habsburg empire for rampant "anti-intellectualism" in its foreign policy; for provoking and ultimately empowering, rather than subtly deflecting, its enemies; for overspending on its military; and, most important, for alienating its allies through "self-isolation." The Trump administration ought to keep these lessons in mind.

Fryderyk Chopin: A Life and Times
BY ALAN WALKER. Farrar, Strauss and Giroux, 2018, 768 pp.

Fryderyk Chopin's music is one of Europe's great cultural legacies. Many of his compositions were based on Polish folk tunes and reflected Chopin's nostalgia for a homeland that he left early and to which he never returned. Chopin did not live long: he was born in 1810 and died in 1849. Yet those 39 years were extraordinary, and not one paragraph of this meticulously researched and often poignant account is wasted. Chopin began composing memorable works at the age of seven; a few years later, he dismissed his only piano teacher. Despite his virtuoso talent, he hated playing in public so much that he did so less than two dozen times as an adult, in part because his uniquely delicate tone could not fill large spaces. Chopin's music often seems improvised, yet he was a dogged perfectionist, drafting and redrafting even his shortest pieces. He was a fastidiously polite, almost aristocratic figure. Yet for a decade, he scandalized society by living with the cross-dressing author George Sand. Chopin suffered from tuberculosis for nearly 20 years, sometimes coughing up bowls full of blood, until it finally killed him. Yet throughout, he found ways to

sublimate longing, frustration, and pain into transcendent masterpieces.

Western Hemisphere

Richard Feinberg

Our Woman in Havana: A Diplomat's Chronicle of America's Long Struggle With Castro's Cuba
BY VICKI HUDDLESTON. Overlook Press, 2018, 304 pp.

This candid memoir features many revealing and entertaining anecdotes from Huddleston's time as head of the U.S. mission in Havana, a position she held from 1999 to 2002. (Without an embassy of their own, U.S. diplomats used the Swiss one instead.) When Huddleston first met Cuban President Fidel Castro, she introduced herself as "the director of Cuban affairs"; Castro boomed back, "Oh? I thought I was!" Huddleston also discusses the political pressures under which she operated. U.S. policy toward Cuba was driven largely by militant anti-Castro Cuban exiles in Miami, whose leadership Huddleston paints as vengeful and delusional. As a result, U.S. diplomats concentrated on connecting with dissident activists on the island, even though they did not pose "the slightest threat to Castro's rule." Later, in 2006, when Raúl Castro assumed power, the U.S. mission, still focusing on the wrong things, failed to fully brief Washington on Raúl's reforms and the opportunities they presented for better relations. By the time the Obama administration engaged with Cuba, in late 2014, it was too late to make the new, warmer relationship politically irreversible—to the eventual delight of anti-Castro Cuban Americans in Miami and U.S. President Donald Trump, who has undone much of the progress Barack Obama made.

Electoral Rules and Democracy in Latin America
BY CYNTHIA McCLINTOCK. Oxford University Press, 2018, 334 pp.

The durability of democracies can depend on the electoral rules they adopt. In this richly documented study, McClintock finds that democracies where presidential candidates need only a plurality of the vote to triumph are in serious danger of losing their popular legitimacy and eventually falling victim to tyranny. In support of her thesis, she highlights the democratic breakdowns of Nicaragua and Venezuela, both of which allow plurality winners. Aware of the risks, 75 percent of Latin American countries have adopted second-round runoffs between the top two contenders. Runoff systems are more likely to sustain popular support, McClintock finds, and also create more opportunities for third parties, thus injecting new blood into the political arena and avoiding the danger of spoilers. Turning to the United States, whose electoral rules she calls "anachronistic, sclerotic relics," McClintock urges Americans to stop revering their constitution as a "quasi-biblical revelation" and learn from innovative Latin American democratic engineering.

Military Missions in Democratic Latin America
BY DAVID PION-BERLIN. Palgrave Macmillan, 2016, 218 pp.

During the Cold War, Latin American generals often invoked the specter of national security to seize political power, enrich themselves, and violate human rights. That left the region's governments distrustful of men in uniforms. But things have changed. Pion-Berlin persuasively argues that democratic regimes can now safely turn to their armed forces to perform important tasks, such as fighting criminal gangs, providing disaster relief, and expanding access to social programs, without compromising civilian control of the military. The decision to deploy soldiers, he writes, should be based on how bad the problem is, how much the military can do to help, and what alternative solutions are available. To mitigate the risks, governments need firm mechanisms to ensure civilian control. Pion-Berlin draws on careful case studies to present other caveats, as well. Mexico's military operations against cartel kingpins were largely successful, but patrols in urban areas lacked adequate safeguards. And the large-scale social programs undertaken by Venezuela's military lasted too long and had too little oversight, leading to corruption within the ranks and the politicization of the armed forces. But overall, well-structured military missions can strengthen popular support for democracy by demonstrating that democratic governments can deliver public goods.

The Tango War: The Struggle for the Hearts, Minds, and Riches of Latin America During World War II
BY MARY JO McCONAHAY. St. Martin's Press, 2018, 336 pp.

During World War II, the United States urged Latin America to join the struggle. Washington aimed to deny Germany and Italy access to vital raw materials from the continent, disrupt fascist spy networks there, and protect transatlantic sea-lanes. The U.S. war machine relied on Mexican oil and Brazilian rubber; Mexicans replaced American farm workers diverted to military service; and a Brazilian expeditionary force fought bravely in the invasion of Italy. These facts have been well recorded elsewhere, but McConahay, a seasoned journalist, enriches her dramatic account of the period with sympathetic interviews of survivors whose lives were scarred by wartime disruptions. She reminds readers that U.S. behavior was not always noble. People of German and Japanese origin living in Latin America were kidnapped, shipped to remote prison camps in the United States, and sometimes bartered for American prisoners of war. And opportunistic U.S. firms seized market shares from their excluded Axis competitors. Distrustful of U.S. power, some Latin American countries leaned toward neutrality or even the Axis, but McConahay reveals the essential truth that, in a time of great peril, the United States and most of Latin America found common cause against a shared enemy.

Empire by Invitation: William Walker and Manifest Destiny in Central America
BY MICHEL GOBAT. Harvard University Press, 2018, 384 pp.

This account of the life and times of the American adventurer William Walker, who briefly seized the presidency of Nicaragua in the 1850s, defies the conventional wisdom, which holds that Walker was bent on adding new slave states to the United States. Gobat paints him instead as a private standard-bearer of American democracy, entrepreneurialism, and technological progress. Far from being an aberrant mercenary, Gobat suggests, Walker marched in step with the idea of manifest destiny and the Monroe Doctrine, which, taken together, legitimized U.S. military intervention in the Caribbean. Walker's escapades followed the U.S. occupation of Mexican territories and the subsequent California gold rush and anticipated U.S. efforts in the twentieth century to project power in Latin America and around the globe. But his was not just a story of U.S. imperialism. One of the sides in Nicaragua's civil war contracted with Walker and his mercenaries to advance their cause and in the hope that the United States would select their country to build a canal between the Atlantic and Pacific Oceans. In the event, Walker behaved miserably, wantonly razing the old colonial city of Granada. Meanwhile, the canal was eventually dug—in Panama. Gobat concludes that U.S. liberal imperialism represented an "extraordinary threat *and* promise . . . to peoples outside the United States."

Eastern Europe and Former Soviet Republics

Robert Legvold

The Dawn of Eurasia: On the Trail of the New World Order
BY BRUNO MAÇÃES. Yale University Press, 2018, 304 pp.

For six months, Maçães traveled across a portion of Eurasia to see how the world is changing. The future, he argues in this startlingly original assessment, will be dominated by an emerging Eurasian "supercontinent," shaped by China's, Russia's, and the EU's competing visions. The Arctic will become one of its superhighways, and the roads and railways envisaged in China's vast Belt and Road Initiative will tie it together. The fusing of Europe and Asia, he contends, is already far more advanced than most realize. The drama is over what form this integration will take, but he is confident that it will be different from the political and economic models familiar in the West. In the second part of the book, Maçães gives texture and immediacy to his broader argument by sharing images and discoveries he made during his many diversions from familiar paths, skillfully integrating his travel stories into the larger trends he discusses: trade flows, megaprojects, changing lifestyles, new transport links, and the visions of those designing the future in Beijing and Moscow.

A Sacred Space Is Never Empty: A History of Soviet Atheism
BY VICTORIA SMOLKIN. Princeton University Press, 2018, 360 pp.

Much has been written about the Soviet Union's war on religion and its vigorous efforts to set up atheism and the Bolshevik revolutionary project as a new faith. Most such accounts treat religion and atheism as simple opposites. Smolkin describes a more nuanced and variable relationship between them. She lays out three main "oppositions" at the heart of the contest: one political, between communist ideological purity and effective governance; one ideological, between superstition and science; and one spiritual, between "emptiness and indifference and fullness and conviction." How the regime managed the balance in each case changed radically over time. It began with a wholesale assault on religion as a threat to the communist project, moved toward tolerance during World War II in order to rally national unity, then renewed the assault under Nikita Khrushchev in the 1950s and 1960s, and, in the Soviet Union's later years, reached a kind of coexistence that recognized the need for atheism to create a spirituality that could match that offered by religion.

The Code of Putinism
BY BRIAN D. TAYLOR. Oxford University Press, 2018, 264 pp.

"Putin is Russia, and Russia is Putin," the Russian politician Vyacheslav Volodin famously commented in 2014. Most Americans believe the same thing, although they do not mean it as a compliment. Taylor argues that this misses Russian President Vladimir Putin's role as the centerpiece of something more complex: "Putinism," a "solar system" of interlocking and often competing clans. To understand how these informal networks govern the country and carry out foreign policy, one needs to know the "code" that guides them, which Taylor says includes ideas, habits, and emotions. The key ideas behind Putinism are the need for a strong state, anti-Westernism, and conservatism. Putinism's habits express themselves in preferences for control, unity, loyalty, and "hypermasculinity." And its emotions come out in its preoccupation with respect, resentment, and fear. The code, Taylor argues, explains Russia's drift toward authoritarianism and its aggressive foreign policy. He concludes that Putinism has created a domestic political order that can be controlled but not easily modernized and that Russian foreign policy is "overambitious" and ultimately counterproductive. The political system is likely doomed to "a slow muddling down," although he does not see Putinism ending anytime soon.

Rich Russians: From Oligarchs to Bourgeoisie
BY ELISABETH SCHIMPFÖSSL. Oxford University Press, 2018, 248 pp.

The term "Russian oligarch" suggests ostentatious wealth and gangster-like behavior. But Schimpfössl argues that is an outdated image, more suited to the 1990s than today. Russia's current superrich are less interested in flaunting their wealth than in the quest for social respectability and an image of refinement, even moral probity. Like the very wealthy elsewhere, they see their good fortune as the product of their talents and superior

qualities, which they often attribute to their genetic heritage. Their sense of superiority, desire to separate themselves from "the tasteless rich," and pursuit of legitimacy have led them to give to charity, support the arts, and help foster civil society. Schimpfössl's book benefits from the long parade of interviews she has conducted with nearly 100 of these millionaires and billionaires, their families, and their associates, which put a human face on her analysis.

Tito and His Comrades
BY JOZE PIRJEVEC. University of Wisconsin Press, 2018, 552 pp.

Josip Broz, later known as Marshal Tito, was born in 1892 and died in 1980; he lived for almost twice as long as the country that he led as president existed. His biography has been picked over many times. Early treatments of his life tended to be official hagiographies; more recent ones, written after Yugoslavia's collapse, have often demonized him. Even the best of them, as the historian Emily Greble writes in the foreword to this book, aimed "to investigate Yugoslavia's place in the global history of the Second World War and the Cold War rather than to understand the country's leader." Pirjevec fills this gap with a dispassionate and meticulously detailed account of Tito's life from his birth into grueling peasant poverty, to his struggles as a member of the nascent Yugoslav Communist Party in Moscow during Stalin's Great Purge, and finally to his complex relationships with key comrades across the tumultuous decades that followed. It is no small feat to capture the essence of a figure in whom courage, stalwartness, and even compassion mixed with cunning, ego, and brutality—for example, he never confessed to second thoughts about ordering the massacre of over 100,000 "collaborationists" at the end of World War II—but Pirjevec succeeds handsomely.

Communists and Their Victims: The Quest for Justice in the Czech Republic
BY ROMAN DAVID. University of Pennsylvania Press, 2018, 280 pp.

After the fall of an authoritarian regime, countries often spend years trying to come to terms with the past and find justice for the victims of state oppression. Those working in this area call these efforts "transitional justice," but David believes the label is too imprecise. He takes the example of the Czech Republic, which has employed an array of mechanisms meant to deliver justice for its communist past. He identifies four main types: "retributive" (punishing the perpetrators), "reparatory" (compensating the victims), "revelatory" (exposing the guilty and their abuses), and "reconciliatory" (offering apologies). The results depend on who is being targeted—those once loyal to the system, those who suffered, or society at large. David employs a variety of survey data to conclude that the ambitious Czech effort has largely failed. Neither punishing the perpetrators nor compensating the victims is enough, unless the former repudiate the system of which they were a part.

Middle East

John Waterbury

State of Repression: Iraq Under Saddam Hussein
BY LISA BLAYDES. Princeton University Press, 2018, 376 pp.

In 1989, the Iraqi dissident Kanan Makiya published *Republic of Fear*, a terrifying look at Iraq under Saddam Hussein's violent, totalitarian rule. Ever since, the world has recognized that Saddam was no run-of-the-mill autocrat. In this carefully structured analysis, Blaydes draws on Iraqi secret police files to argue that Saddam, brutal as he was, was trapped by Iraq's unique characteristics into adopting repressive but self-destructive policies. The key problem, Blaydes suggests, was that language, geography, and other barriers made it difficult for the regime to "read" some groups within Iraqi society. The authorities knew the least about the Shiites and the Kurds. Those groups were subjected to collective punishment, resulting in collective resistance. Repression was more finely targeted when it came to the Sunnis. Those closest to Saddam's birthplace of Tikrit were rewarded, whereas more peripheral Sunnis were deprived and grew resentful as a result. Yet the idea that Saddam's exceptional brutishness resulted from Iraq's exceptional complexity is not entirely convincing. Iran, Lebanon, and Syria are just as complex as Iraq, after all, but have vastly different regimes.

Salman's Legacy: The Dilemmas of a New Era in Saudi Arabia
EDITED BY MADAWI AL-RASHEED. Oxford University Press, 2018, 320 pp.

The merit of this collection of essays comes from the critical stance it takes toward the Saudi ruling family. In her contribution, Rasheed argues that the top-down, arbitrary power acquired by the royal family over the past several decades cannot be explained by looking at the rational interests of the rulers and the ruled; rather, it involves religious and mystical factors. She and other contributors suggest that Crown Prince Mohammed bin Salman's plans to distance the regime from Wahhabism, the fundamentalist religious sect, may severely weaken the dynasty. A brief contribution by the analyst Cole Bunzel reveals the deep reserves of respect that most senior members of the House of Saud still have for extremist Wahhabi leaders. All the contributors accept that there are direct links between Wahhabism and violent jihadism, but as Rasheed points out, many, including the United States, have often chosen to overlook them. In the only chapter on the kingdom's economy, the political scientist Steffen Hertog explores the structural difficulties that the crown prince's proposed reforms will encounter, pointing out that Saudi Arabia suffers from a combination of high costs and low productivity.

Into the Hands of the Soldiers: Freedom and Chaos in Egypt and the Middle East
BY DAVID D. KIRKPATRICK. Viking, 2018, 384 pp.

There are many accounts of the Egyptian revolution of 2011, the country's first

free elections the next year, and the subsequent military coup that deposed the new president, Mohamed Morsi, but this book offers the best retelling yet. Kirkpatrick was present for many of the main events, including the massacre of hundreds of members of the Muslim Brotherhood by the Egyptian security forces in August 2013. Kirkpatrick's account makes clear that for him, there were few good guys and one overwhelmingly bad guy: Egypt's "deep state." The United States, meanwhile, comes across as ignorant and confused. U.S. President Barack Obama and his ambassador to Egypt, Anne Patterson, were lonely voices arguing that the U.S. government should respect the electoral process. John Kerry, U.S. secretary of state; Chuck Hagel, U.S. secretary of defense; James Mattis, the head of U.S. Central Command; and Michael Flynn, the director of the U.S. Defense Intelligence Agency, all supported the military, whatever the cost, as an asset in the fight against Islamic extremism. They won the argument, and Egypt's current president, Abdel Fattah el-Sisi, has since cracked down on human rights to an extent that would have made his predecessors blush.

The Political Economy of Reforms in Egypt: Issues and Policymaking Since 1952
BY KHALID IKRAM. American University in Cairo Press, 2018, 384 pp.

This outstanding book puts Egypt's economic history in the context of those of other developing countries, comparing it to such histories in East Asia and Latin America. Ikram skillfully weaves economic theory into his account of Egyptian economic policies over the last half century and assesses the role and effectiveness of foreign aid. He shows that even if Egypt implemented the right policies, it likely could not replicate the success enjoyed by East Asian countries. Major attempts at reform in 1977 and 1991 failed to create a sustainable, healthy economy. Egypt saves and invests too little and suffers from low productivity, and government spending and borrowing are both high. Successive governments have filled the gaps in their budgets by relying on oil money, funding from allies such as the United States, and remittances from workers abroad. Ikram does not offer a path forward other than recommending that Egypt overhaul its institutions and improve its productivity. Egypt today has over 100 million inhabitants, who by and large live much better than their predecessors did 50 years ago. As Ikram rightly says, "One must not underestimate the country's resilience."

Tunisia: An Arab Anomaly
BY SAFWAN M. MASRI. Columbia University Press, 2017, 416 pp.

Tunisia is the only Arab state to remain on the path to democracy after the Arab Spring. Masri tries to explain why. Tunisia has existed in one form or another within more or less its current borders for millennia. It underwent a long series of basic reforms in the mid-nineteenth century that led to a progressive definition of women's rights, tolerance of religious minorities, and, eventually, state secularism. That history makes Tunisia unique, Masri notes, and means that the rest of the Arab world is unlikely to follow its path to democracy. Masri pays particular attention to the country's educational system, contrasting it with

the dismal conditions elsewhere in the region. Masri's rendering of Tunisia does not offer much new information; it is his conclusion, in which he worries that the country's nasty neighborhood will ultimately devour this promising experiment in democracy, that makes the book so noteworthy.

Asia and Pacific

Andrew J. Nathan

Censored: Distraction and Diversion Inside China's Great Firewall
BY MARGARET E. ROBERTS. Princeton University Press, 2018, 288 pp.

Roberts disputes the conventional wisdom that the Chinese government exerts near-total control over the Internet. Instead, she shows that Beijing uses "porous censorship," accomplished by techniques she labels "fear, friction, and flooding." The first consists of threats and punishments aimed at deterring the most vocal critics from posting online. The second consists of blocks that make it difficult, but not impossible, for ordinary users to access undesirable content. The third involves inundating the Internet with information the government wants people to see. Using some innovative research techniques, Roberts shows that most users, having only limited time and energy, settle for the information they can readily get. She argues that porous control is more effective than total control, because it is less conspicuous and arouses little opposition. Roberts focuses on the Internet, but her argument also applies to what China does in print and broadcast media. And as she points out, similar techniques are popping up elsewhere in the world, as well, including in democracies, where governments promote or hide information and Internet providers tweak algorithms to influence what users see.

Political Corruption and Scandals in Japan
BY MATTHEW M. CARLSON AND STEVEN R. REED. Cornell University Press, 2018, 204 pp.

Japan has had some spectacular cases of corruption, such as the 1976 Lockheed scandal, in which politicians took bribes to buy airplanes, and the 1988 Recruit scandal, in which a Japanese company sold shares to politicians at artificially low prices. It has also seen a steady stream of garden-variety bureaucratic corruption, campaign law violations, and sex scandals. But this book avoids gossip in favor of analysis. The authors identify three types of corruption—bad-apple corruption, standard-operating-procedure corruption, and systemic corruption—and assess what kinds of reforms have been effective in reducing each. The biggest improvement came after reforms to the electoral system in 1994, which shifted the electoral system for the lower house from one of multimember districts to one of single-member districts (plus additional seats allocated proportionally) and thus reduced the prevalence of patronage politics. Rules mandating transparency have also helped. Carlson and Reed conclude that reform has made Japanese democracy healthier but that nothing can completely eliminate misbehavior by politicians.

Human Rights in Thailand
BY DON F. SELBY. University of Pennsylvania Press, 2018, 256 pp.

In 1997, during a democratic phase, Thailand established the National Human Rights Commission. (The commission still exists, although its work has suffered since the most recent military coup, in 2014.) Selby observed the commission's staff and activist lawyers over several years as they worked to improve the way the Thai police treated Burmese migrant workers and to help victims of land seizures. His observations led him to reject the "Asian values" thesis, the idea that human rights are a foreign transplant that Asian societies commonly reject. Thai practitioners, he notes, built their concept of rights out of local ideas, such as Buddhist compassion, and advocated on behalf of victims in ways that drew on local norms, such as saving face and honoring mothers. The point is well taken, but Selby understates the cosmopolitan aspects of the Thai human rights movement. Thai nongovernmental organizations rely on foreign funding, advocates use international human rights law as a benchmark for pressuring the government, and the very idea of establishing national human rights institutions originally came from a 1993 UN General Assembly resolution.

China, the United States, and the Future of Latin America
EDITED BY DAVID B. H. DENOON. New York University Press, 2017, 432 pp.

The Red Star and the Crescent: China and the Middle East
EDITED BY JAMES REARDON-ANDERSON. Oxford University Press, 2018, 288 pp.

China's influence is growing in different ways in different regions with different implications for U.S. interests. In two previous volumes in Denoon's informative series on U.S.-Chinese relations, the focus was on Central Asia, where Beijing's goals are predominantly economic and the United States is concerned chiefly with the war in Afghanistan, and on the contrasting situation in Southeast Asia, where China and the United States are engaged in a multifaceted economic and strategic competition. This third volume, dealing with Latin America and the Caribbean, presents a complex picture that lies somewhere between the previous two. Denoon and the other contributors describe China's rapidly growing presence as a buyer of raw materials, supplier of manufactured goods, builder of infrastructure, investor, and donor. Some of the contributors believe that China is also pursuing greater military and ideological influence in Latin America, especially with regimes that are in economic trouble or at odds with the United States, such as the one in Venezuela. With Washington doing little to shore up its position on the continent and Beijing accumulating more interests to protect, a serious challenge to U.S. preeminence in the region may not be inevitable, but it is no longer unthinkable.

The Middle East presents yet another pattern of growing Chinese influence, according to Reardon-Anderson and his contributors. Here, too, China has acquired major economic interests; it buys large volumes of oil, sells manufactured goods, and builds a growing proportion of the region's infrastructure. But it lacks the capability to defend these interests militarily and so relies on the United States to preserve regional stability and protect the crucial sea-lanes over which tankers carry oil to China. The funding China offers through its Belt and Road Initiative is less useful to wealthy Gulf states than it is to countries in other parts of the world, and Beijing's mistreatment of its Muslim Uighur minority creates friction with Iran, Saudi Arabia, and Turkey. Instead of challenging the United States, China often acts as a tacit ally—for example, in pressing Iran to halt its nuclear weapons program and helping rehabilitate the Iraqi oil industry. This book breaks new ground on Chinese military diplomacy in the Middle East, Chinese mediation in the negotiations over Iran's nuclear program, and the history of religious ties between China and the Middle East.

Blessings From Beijing: Inside China's Soft-Power War on Tibet
BY GREG C. BRUNO. University Press of New England, 2018, 240 pp.

The title of this book alludes to a sarcastic comment made by the Dalai Lama in 2009 about Chinese efforts to suppress the Tibetan diaspora. "Totalitarian regimes sort of pressure everywhere, even in the United States," he said. "I think India and Nepal are receiving some special blessing from Peking." There are about 130,000 Tibetan exiles living in the Indian city of Dharamsala (the site of the Central Tibetan Administration's headquarters) and elsewhere in South Asia, Europe, and the United States. China has directed relentless, if not very successful, propaganda at the exiled community, has used its economic leverage over Nepal to block the traditional route for emigration from Tibet to India, and has played diplomatic hardball in its efforts to isolate the Dalai Lama internationally. Yet internal divisions among Tibetan exiles are even more threatening than China's repression. Young Tibetans who move to the West identify less strongly with Tibet, many exiles and residents of Tibet are growing impatient with the Dalai Lama's peaceful "middle way," and the community has no visible succession plan that could keep it together after its leader's passing. The Dalai Lama's host, India, wants to avoid unduly antagonizing China, so it gives the Tibetans a temporary status that is less secure than refugee status or citizenship, heightening the exiles' sense of insecurity.

What Is China? Territory, Ethnicity, Culture, and History
BY GE ZHAOGUANG. TRANSLATED BY MICHAEL GIBBS HILL. Belknap Press, 2018, 224 pp.

This erudite polemic targets the aggressive nationalism that is widespread in China today. The author draws on a wide range of Chinese and foreign sources to describe how the majority Han ethnic group was forged, how it negotiated relations with surrounding peoples, and how China's borders grew and shrank and grew again

over time. He accepts that China has a distinct Han culture, characterized by a belief in an orderly moral hierarchy flowing from nature through the state, society, and family to the individual. But he denies that this culture is eternally fixed, essentially benevolent, or inherently superior, or that it can speak for China's other ethnic groups. In a similar way, he sees China's current borders as a product of history, not cosmically mandated or, as the Chinese government claims when speaking of Tibet, unaltered "since ancient times." Only in the final chapter does he explicitly address what he calls "practical questions," drawing together the threads of his argument to criticize those who use a mythicized version of history to justify a China-centric world order.

Africa

Nicolas van de Walle

Food Aid in Sudan: A History of Power, Politics, and Profit
BY SUSANNE JASPARS. Zed Books, 2018, 252 pp.

Jaspars begins this lively history of international food aid in Sudan by noting that the country has received foreign assistance for over 50 years and yet much of its population still has barely enough to eat. According to UN estimates, over six million Sudanese needed emergency help in 2016. Jaspars documents how ideas about food aid have changed over the decades but shows that successive reforms have failed to address key problems. She is particularly scathing about what she describes as the "medicalization" of food aid, under which programs no longer aim to ensure broad, self-sustaining access to food; they are designed merely to help people grow more resilient so that they can survive despite chronic insecurity. Jaspars concedes that donors, aid workers, and governments in Sudan and abroad have learned a lot about how to deliver food aid over the last half century, but she argues that this expertise is often ill used. Much of the food does not go to the most needy because the Sudanese government allows politics to dictate who gets what and donors either acquiesce or partly withdraw from the country in the face of political meddling.

Blood Papa: Rwanda's New Generation
BY JEAN HATZFELD. TRANSLATED BY JOSHUA DAVID JORDAN. Farrar, Straus and Giroux, 2018, 240 pp.

This is Hatzfeld's fourth book on the Rwandan genocide. As in his previous work, he investigates the topic with remarkable empathy by allowing both Hutu and Tutsi people to recount their experiences in their own voices as they try to make sense of the events of 1994 and their legacy. In this book, Hatzfeld focuses on young Rwandans who were born either right before or right after the genocide. His Hutu subjects confront the mind-boggling crimes of their parents and ponder their own communal guilt. Young Tutsis, meanwhile, reflect on the violence that befell their relatives. Both sides wonder about the memories and qualities of the other, not always with much generosity. What emerges from the book is that a vast gulf continues

to divide Hutus and Tutsis, even as both understand that they need to figure out how to live together. In its descriptions of everyday life, the book makes clear that the genocide and the prosecution of Hutu participants shape Rwandan society to this day. Yet the youthful voices of Hatzfeld's subjects, preoccupied with romance, academic ambition, and idealism, also deliver some grounds for optimism.

The Politics of Deforestation in Africa: Madagascar, Tanzania, and Uganda
BY NADIA RABESAHALA HORNING. Palgrave Macmillan, 2018, 183 pp.

In recent years, officials have lavished much attention on Africa's forests and launched many expensive programs meant to preserve them. But the pace of deforestation on the continent does not appear to have slowed. To explain why, Horning relies on careful fieldwork in Madagascar, Tanzania, and Uganda. She argues that donor programs often garner only rhetorical support from local communities, which are usually driven by their own economic interests and the cultural and religious meanings they attach to the forests but find it convenient to keep the donations flowing. At the local level, moreover, people have their own material and political concerns and may not buy in to the policies of the national government and foreign donors. The value of Horning's book comes from its linking of the local, national, and international levels of policy, showing that the three must be properly integrated for ecological efforts to work. Horning argues persuasively that people who live closest to natural resources must take full ownership of environmental programs.

Epidemic: Ebola and the Global Scramble to Prevent the Next Killer Outbreak
BY REID WILSON. Brookings Institution Press, 2018, 300 pp.

The 2013 Ebola outbreak in West Africa killed at least 11,000 people, mostly in Guinea, Liberia, and Sierra Leone. As this excellent book shows, the international health community was woefully unprepared to address the epidemic. West Africa suffered from weak health-care infrastructure, particularly in the three worst-hit countries, which had each recently been ravaged by civil war or political turmoil. In some cases, individual acts of heroism by health-care workers, some of whom lost their lives, mitigated the institutional weakness. But as the epidemic widened and panic spread around the globe, the World Health Organization, which was designed to lead the international response to such a catastrophe, proved dysfunctional. Much of the action in Wilson's book takes place in the United States, where the Obama administration led the effort to better understand and contain the epidemic. He also shows how nongovernmental organizations, such as Doctors Without Borders, played key roles on the ground in West Africa. Wilson offers many lessons to help everyone involved prepare for the inevitable next outbreak.

African Actors in International Security: Shaping Contemporary Norms
EDITED BY KATHARINA P. COLEMAN AND THOMAS K. TIEKU. Lynne Rienner, 2018, 308 pp.

This collection of essays argues that most commentators underestimate the extent to which Africans help shape contemporary norms about international peace and security. Based on a number of excellent case studies, the contributors make a strong case that African publics, governments, and intergovernmental organizations have played key roles in the development of norms regarding conflict diamonds, humanitarian interventions, peace negotiations, and the trade in small arms. The essays identify several areas in which distinctively African norms have emerged, such as the reliance on retired African heads of state to mediate between different sides in a conflict.

FOR THE RECORD

The review essay "Muslim Brothers" (September/October 2018) misidentified the year Sayyid Qutb joined the Muslim Brotherhood. It was 1953, not 1954.

The review essay "Good Fences Make Good Politics" (September/October 2018) misstated the context of a quote from the book under review. The book's author, Sasha Polakow-Suransky, was commenting on the work of the French writer Renaud Camus, not an interview he conducted with him.

Foreign Affairs (ISSN 00157120), November/December 2018, Volume 97, Number 6. Published six times annually (January, March, May, July, September, November) at 58 East 68th Street, New York, NY 10065. Print subscriptions: U.S., $54.95; Canada, $66.95; other countries via air, $89.95 per year. Canadian Publication Mail–Mail # 1572121. Periodicals postage paid in New York, NY, and at additional mailing offices. POSTMASTER: Send address changes to *Foreign Affairs*, P.O. Box 60001, Tampa, FL 33662-0001. From time to time, we permit certain carefully screened companies to send our subscribers information about products or services that we believe will be of interest. If you prefer not to receive such information, please contact us at the Tampa, FL, address indicated above.

U.S. Postal Service Statement of Ownership, Management & Circulation (Required by 39 USC 3685)

1. Publication Title: FOREIGN AFFAIRS
2. Publication No: 204-580
3. Filing Date: 10/1/18
4. Issue Frequency: Bimonthly
5. No. of issues Published Annually: Six
6. Annual Subscription $49.95
7. Complete Mailing Address of Known Office of Publication (Street, City, Country, State & Zip + 4) (Not Printer): FOREIGN AFFAIRS, 58 East 68th Street, New York, NY 10065
8. Complete Mailing Address of Headquarters or General Business Office of the Publisher (Not Printer): FOREIGN AFFAIRS, 58 East 68th Street, New York, NY 10065
9. Full Names and Complete Mailing Addresses of the Publisher, Editor & Managing Editor:

Publisher:	Editor:	Managing Editor:
Stephanie Solomon	Gideon Rose	Daniel Kurtz-Phelan
FOREIGN AFFAIRS	FOREIGN AFFAIRS	FOREIGN AFFAIRS
58 East 68th Street	58 East 68th Street	58 East 68th Street
New York, NY 10065	New York, NY 10065	New York, NY 10065

10. Owner (If owned by a corporation, give the name and address of the corporation immediately followed by the names and addresses of all stockholders owning or holding 1 percent or more of the total amount of stock. If not owned by a corporation, give the names and addresses of the individual owners. If owned by a partnership or other unincorporated firm, give its name and address as well as those of each individual owner. If publication is owned by a nonprofit organization give its name and address):

The Council on Foreign Relations, Inc.
FOREIGN AFFAIRS
58 East 68th Street
New York, NY 10065

11. Known Bondholders, Mortgages, and Other Security Holders OWNING OR Holding 1 percent or more of Total Amount of Bonds, Mortgages, or Other Securities: None.
12. For completion by nonprofit organizations authorized to mail at special rates: The purpose, function and nonprofit status of this organization and the exempt status for Federal income tax purposes has not changed during the preceding 12 months.
13. Publication Name: FOREIGN AFFAIRS
14. Issue Date for Circulation Data Below: Jul/Aug 2018

15. Extent and Nature of Circulation:

	Average No. Copies Each Issue During Preceding Twelve Months	Actual No.Of. Copies Issue Published Nearest to Filing Date
A. Total Number of Copies (net press run)	226,167	216,200
B. Paid Circulation (By Mail and Outside the Mail)		
1. Mailed Outside-County Paid Subscriptions Stated on PS Form 3541 (Included paid Distribution above nominal rate, advertisers proof copies, and exchange copies)	126,342	120,301
2. Mailed In-county Paid Subscriptions Stated on PS Form 3541 (Included paid Distribution above nominal rate, advertisers proof copies, and exchange copies)	0	0
3. Paid Distribution Outside the Mails Including Sales Through Dealers and Carriers, Street Vendors, Counter Sales, and Other Paid Distribution Outside USPS	24,479	24,435
4. Paid Distribution by Other Classes of Mail Through the USPS (e.g First-Class)	17,120	16,450
C. Total Paid Distribution (Sum of 15b (1), (2), (3), and (4))	167,941	161,186
D. Free or Nominal Rate Distribution (By Mail and Outside the Mail)		
1. Free or Nominal Rate Outside –County Copies Included on PS Form 3541	1,316	440
2. Free or Nominal Rate In -County Copies Included on PS Form 3541	0	0
3. Free or Nominal Rate Copies Mailed at Other Classes Through the USPS (e.g. First-Class Mail)	0	0
4. Free or Nominal Rate Distribution Outside the Mail (carriers or other means)	5,398	5,234
E. Total Free or Nominal Rate Distribution (Sum of 15d (1), (2), (3) and (4))	6,714	5,674
F. Total Distribution (Sum of 15c. and 15e.)	174,655	166,860
G. Copies not Distributed (See Instructions to Publishers #4 (page 3)	51,512	49,340
H. Total (Sum of 15f and g)	226,167	216,200
I. Percent Paid (15c divided by 15f times 100)	96.2%	96.6%

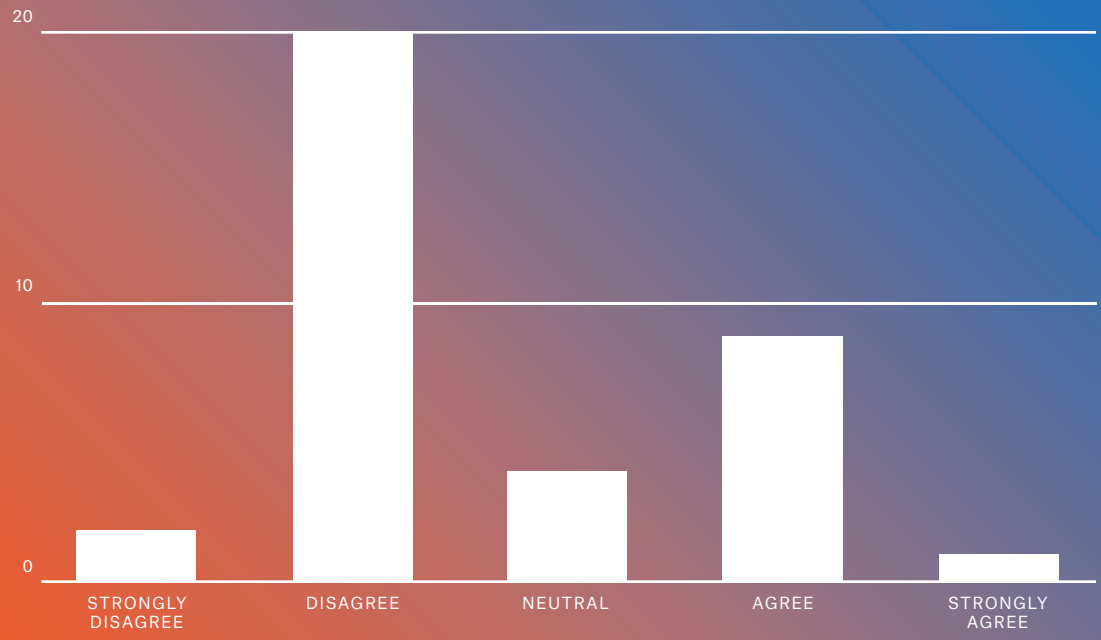
16. This Statement of Ownership will be printed in the November/December 2018 issue of this publication.
17. I certify that all information on this form is true and complete. I understand that anyone who furnishes false or misleading information on this form or who omits material or information requested on the form may be subject to criminal sanctions (including fines and imprisonment) and/or civil sanctions (including civil penalties).

—Stephanie Solomon, Chief Revenue Officer

A Broken Alliance?

Foreign Affairs Brain Trust

We asked dozens of experts whether they agreed or disagreed that the transatlantic alliance has been irreparably damaged. The results from those who responded are below.



DISAGREE, CONFIDENCE LEVEL 7

David Miliband

President and CEO,
International Rescue Committee

"The Trump administration has been a wake-up call for the European Union. But the United States still represents the EU's best hope for a convergence of interests and values. So damage? Yes. Irreparable? No."

AGREE, CONFIDENCE LEVEL 6

Amanda Sloat

Robert Bosch Senior Fellow in the Center on the United States and Europe,
Brookings Institution

"Although transatlantic relations have been strained before, the current crisis is qualitatively different given the erosion of trust."

→See the full responses at ForeignAffairs.com/TransatlanticAlliance


The energy to see
and the energy to do.
Our energy has been traveling around
5 continents for over 60 years.
Thanks to the work of all our hands.
eni
eni.com

STARR

INSURANCE COMPANIES

1919 100 2019

百年华诞

Global Leaders in Insurance
(and Doing Business in China)

Starr Insurance Companies is proud to celebrate 100 years of operation in China, and a century of providing tailored insurance solutions to almost every imaginable business and industry in virtually every part of the world.

Starr is expert at helping companies from around the world do business in China. As the first 100% foreign-owned commercial insurer licensed in China, we offer a full range of property-casualty and specialty lines solutions and loss prevention services to address our clients' complex risks and infrastructure needs. And clients can leverage our long-standing relationships and local knowledge to navigate the nuances and make the right connections to succeed in one of the world's most dynamic, growing economies.

To learn more about our perspectives on China, contact Jerry Komisar (jerry.komisar@starrcompanies.com) to request a copy of our One Belt, One Road Executive Intelligence report.

Property / Casualty / Accident / Aviation / Marine

STARRCOMPANIES.COM