Negative: Overseas Contingency Operations

***Resolved: The United States federal government should considerably decrease its military commitments***

By Vance Trefethen

Affirmative cuts the budget of the OCO (Overseas Contingency Operations). This is a supplemental budget for the military above and beyond the Dept. of Defense normal budget. It funds war and combat operations overseas. It fluctuates a lot due to changes in conditions on the ground and sudden events involving US military intervention. Some believe it has been abused to hide the real cost of US war efforts away from the regular budget.

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The upcoming federal budget isn't a commitment because it doesn't exist yet. Biden hasn't announced anything, and even if he does, it could still be amended going forward 3

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Negative: Defense Budget Cuts

TOPICALITY

1. No "commitment"

The upcoming federal budget isn't a commitment because it doesn't exist yet. Biden hasn't announced anything, and even if he does, it could still be amended going forward

Deniece Peterson 2020. (MBA; Director of Federal Market Analysis for Deltek, a global business consulting firm) 21 Dec 2020 "Administration Transition and the FY 2022 Budget" https://iq.govwin.com/neo/marketAnalysis/view/Administration-Transition-and-the-FY-2022-Budget/4642?researchTypeId=1&researchMarket=

Typically, the outgoing administration leaves the budget submission responsibilities to the incoming administration. In both the outgoing Obama and Bush Administrations, for example, OMB directed agencies to prepare current services budgets, which provide estimates of the anticipated cost of continuing federal programs and activities at the current levels of service, without any policy changes. This leaves room for the incoming president to have some, though limited, influence on the budget request. For the current transition, the Trump Administration elected to proceed with the full, formal budget submission incorporating its own funding priorities. There are at least three approaches President-elect Biden can take with the FY 2022 budget: “Delay and Rebuild”, “Accept and Modify” or “Accept As-Is”.
Delay and Rebuild
In this scenario, President-elect Biden decides against submitting the budget left for him by the previous administration and pushes agencies to submit an entirely separate budget that represents his policy priorities.  [**END QUOTE**] The Trump Administration took this route for the FY 2018 budget (as did President Obama for the FY 2010); the President submitted first a “skinny” budget in March 2017 that provided a high-level blueprint of budget priorities, followed by a full budget request in May 2017. This provided the Trump Administration with the time to fully influence all components of its first budget request. One risk of this approach is that it requires decision-making during a time when incoming leadership is still learning about the organization. It also restricts the amount of time available to conduct research and risk analysis of any new initiatives.
[**SHE CONTINUES LATER IN THE CONTEXT, QUOTE:]** Accept and Modify
Biden could also choose to accept and submit the budget it will inherit from the Trump Administration, and request targeted modifications in the form of budget amendments (which can be submitted at any time). This approach would allow him to forego the lengthy and complex budget formulation process do-over and instead focus on modifying specific elements of the budget that are misaligned with his policy agenda, such as funding supporting healthcare, immigration and the border wall, and climate change R&D.
Accept As-Is
President-elect Biden could — but is highly unlikely to — accept the FY 2022 budget request left by the Trump Administration in full and shift focus on the FY 2023 budget, which will begin under the new Biden Administration in the spring of 2021.
A Look Ahead
The track the Biden Administration will take is not yet clear.

Definition of "COMMITMENT"

Merriam Webster online Dictionary copyright 2021. https://www.merriam-webster.com/dictionary/commitment

an agreement or pledge to do something in the future

Violation: Nothing agreed or pledged, so no commitment

Since Pres. Biden hasn't agreed nor pledged what the upcoming defense budget will be, nor has Congress voted on it … we can't reduce the commitment. You can't substantially reduce something that doesn't exist.

Impact: No Affirmative team means a Negative ballot

The Negative team advocates the Status Quo and the other team advocates modifying something that either doesn't exist or isn't a commitment. Nobody showed up in the debate round to actually affirm the resolution. Since there is no Affirmative team, no matter who wins, you should vote Negative.

2. Pot of money is not a military commitment

The OCO is simply an accounting tool that identifies a pot of money allocated by Congress. Abolishing the OCO wouldn't tell the government to change its military commitments, it would simply tell them to put them into a different line item in the federal budget. Once the plan is enacted, the OCO would not exist, but there would be nothing in the Plan to stop Congress from funding current military commitments out of the regular Defense Dept. budget. The budget label would change, but the military commitments would not.

OCO is just a budgetary pot of money

National Priorities Project at the Institute for Policy Studies 2015. (think tank started in 1963 and based in Washington) (Ethical Disclosure: Article is undated but references events in 2015) " Overseas Contingency Operations: The Pentagon Slush Fund" https://www.nationalpriorities.org/campaigns/overseas-contingency-operations/

The Overseas Contingency Operations (OCO) fund - sometimes referred to as war funds - is a**separate pot of funding** operated by the Department of Defense and the State Department, in addition to their "base" budgets (i.e., their regular peacetime budgets). Originally used to finance the Iraq and Afghanistan wars, the OCO continues to be a source of funding for the Pentagon, with [a fraction of the funds](https://www.nationalpriorities.org/blog/2014/07/03/give-peace-chance-what-federal-budget-tells-us-about-us-response-isis-and-iraq/) going to the State Department.

Changing budget labels doesn't reduce military commitments

AFF needs to prove with evidence what military commitments go away when this small budget gets moved into the general Defense budget. Until they do, there's no Affirmative team in this round because they haven't affirmed the resolution with their plan.

Impact: No Affirmative team means a Negative ballot

For all the same reasons as we gave in Topicality #1 earlier.

3. Goes beyond "military"

Link: Lots of OCO money is used for non-war activities

Brendan McGarry and Emily Morgenstern 2019 (McGarry - Analyst in US Defense Budget. Morgenstern - Analyst in Foreign Assistance and Foreign Policy. Both are with Congressional Research Service.) 6 Sept 2019 Overseas Contingency Operations Funding: Background and Status https://fas.org/sgp/crs/natsec/R44519.pdf (brackets added)

DOD [Dept of Defense] documents indicate the department has used OCO funding for activities viewed as unrelated to war in recent years. For example, the department’s FY2019 budget request estimates $358 billion in OCO funding from FY2015 through FY2019. Of that amount, DOD categorizes $68 billion (19%) for activities separate from operations in Afghanistan, Iraq, and Syria. [**END QUOTE**] These activities are described as “EDI/Non-War,” referring in part to the European Deterrence Initiative, and “Base-to-OCO,” referring to OCO funding used for base-budget requirements. Similarly, a DOD Cost of War report from June 2019 shows $1.8 trillion in war-related appropriations from FY2001 through FY2019 for operations primarily conducted in Afghanistan, Iraq, and Syria. Of that total, DOD categorizes $235 billion (13%) as other than “war funds.” These funds are described as “Classified,” “Modularity,” “Fuel (non-war),” “Noble Eagle (Base),” and “Non-War.” [**THEY GO ON LATER IN THE CONTEXT TO SAY QUOTE**:] International affairs agencies also began increasing the share of their budgets designated for OCO, and applying the designation to an increasing range of activities apparently unrelated to conflicts.

Long list of non-military items funded by OCO: Tsunami, earthquake, Ebola and Zika viruses, anti-narcotics aid

Brendan McGarry and Emily Morgenstern 2019 (McGarry - Analyst in US Defense Budget. Morgenstern - Analyst in Foreign Assistance and Foreign Policy. Both are with Congressional Research Service.) 6 Sept 2019 Overseas Contingency Operations Funding: Background and Status https://fas.org/sgp/crs/natsec/R44519.pdf

The estimated $162 billion in emergency and OCO appropriations enacted to date for State/USAID includes major non-war-related programs, such as aid for the 2004 tsunami along Indian Ocean coasts, 2010 earthquake in Haiti, 2013 Ebola outbreak in West Africa, and 2015 worldwide outbreak of the Zika virus; as well as diplomatic operations (e.g., paying staff, providing security, and building and maintaining embassies). OCO has also funded a variety of foreign aid programs, ranging from the Economic Support Fund to counter-narcotics in Afghanistan, Pakistan, and Iraq, among other activities in other countries.

Specific "non-military" examples of OCO budget items: US embassy and consulates in Iraq, foreign aid for Iraq reconstruction, training program for Iraqi police, economic aid to Afghanistan, bodyguards for US diplomats in Pakistan

Brendan McGarry and Emily Morgenstern 2019 (McGarry - Analyst in US Defense Budget. Morgenstern - Analyst in Foreign Assistance and Foreign Policy. Both are with Congressional Research Service.) 6 Sept 2019 Overseas Contingency Operations Funding: Background and Status https://fas.org/sgp/crs/natsec/R44519.pdf

The FY2012 foreign affairs OCO request included:
 for Iraq, funding for the U.S. Embassy in Baghdad, consulates throughout Iraq, security costs in light of the then-planned U.S. military withdrawal, a then-planned civilian-led Police Development and Criminal Justice Program, military and development assistance in Iraq, and oversight of U.S. foreign assistance through the Special Inspector General for Iraq Reconstruction;
 for Afghanistan, funding to strengthen the Afghan government and build institutional capacity, support State/USAID and other U.S. government agency civilians deployed in Afghanistan, provide short-term economic assistance to address counterinsurgency and stabilization efforts, and provide oversight of U.S. foreign assistance programs in Afghanistan through the Office of the Special Inspector General for Afghanistan Reconstruction; and
 for Pakistan, funding to support U.S. diplomatic presence and diplomatic security in Pakistan, provide Pakistan Counterinsurgency Capability Funds (PCCF) to train and equip Pakistani forces to eliminate insurgent sanctuaries and promote stability and security in neighboring Afghanistan and the region.

Link: OCO includes funding for the State Department plus lots of other non-war items

National Priorities Project at the Institute for Policy Studies 2015. (think tank started in 1963 and based in Washington) (Ethical Disclosure: Article is undated but references events in 2015) https://www.nationalpriorities.org/campaigns/overseas-contingency-operations/

Originally used to finance the Iraq and Afghanistan wars, the OCO continues to be a source of funding for the Pentagon, with [a fraction of the funds](https://www.nationalpriorities.org/blog/2014/07/03/give-peace-chance-what-federal-budget-tells-us-about-us-response-isis-and-iraq/) going to the State Department. Since the OCO fund has very little oversight and is not subject to the [sequestration](https://www.nationalpriorities.org/analysis/2014/history-us-federal-budget-2011-2013/)cuts that slashed every other part of the budget in 2013, many experts consider it a **“slush fund”** for the Pentagon. For example, Todd Harrison, senior fellow for defense studies at the Center for Strategic and Budgetary Assessments, found that the Pentagon was stashing an [estimated extra $20 billion](http://www.csbaonline.org/publications/2013/10/chaos-and-uncertainty-the-fy-14-defense-budget-and-beyond/) worth of non-war funding in the “operation and maintenance” accounts of its proposed 2014 war budget.

Impact: Enough is enough.

Negative teams shouldn’t have to debate things outside the resolution. This topic is already more than broad enough. Letting Affirmatives extend it out to the State Department, foreign aid, and other random federal spending is going too far and it's abusive to us and all Negative teams they debate this year. Teach them not to do this with a Negative ballot in today's debate round.

INHERENCY

1. Budget law expires in 2021

**Analysis: The major incentive for Congress to move money into OCO is to avoid spending caps placed by the Budget Control Act of 2011 (BCA). That's because OCO is exempt from spending limits that apply to the Defense Dept budget. But BCA expires at the end of the Fiscal Year 2021 (Sept 30, 2021). Once that happens, the incentive to misuse OCO goes away, so the problem goes away.**

Incentive for Congress to misuse OCO goes away in 2021 when the Budget Control Act expires

Seamus P. Daniels 2020. (associate fellow and associate director for Defense Budget Analysis in the Center for Strategic & International Studies International Security Program ) 18 Dec 2020 " Bad Idea: Eliminating, Rather Than Reforming, Overseas Contingency Operations Funding" https://defense360.csis.org/bad-idea-eliminating-rather-than-reforming-overseas-contingency-operations-funding/ (brackets added)

The availability of OCO funding also provides DoD with needed [flexibility](https://defense360.csis.org/bad-idea-blaming-oco-for-our-defense-budget-blunders/) to respond to unexpected needs that cannot always be forecasted in advance. Moreover, the BCA [Budget Control Act of 2011] budget caps imposed on discretionary spending expire after FY 2021. This reduces the incentive for both Congress and DoD to exploit OCO funding as a loophole.

MINOR REPAIR – Better regulation of OCO

Don't eliminate OCO. Instead, Congress should set rules regulating what items can be put into OCO

Seamus P. Daniels 2020. (associate fellow and associate director for Defense Budget Analysis in the Center for Strategic & International Studies International Security Program ) 18 Dec 2020 " Bad Idea: Eliminating, Rather Than Reforming, Overseas Contingency Operations Funding" https://defense360.csis.org/bad-idea-eliminating-rather-than-reforming-overseas-contingency-operations-funding/

While OCO funding should not be eliminated in its entirety, there are steps that can be taken to increase the account’s transparency. First, obvious activities that are not direct war requirements must be returned to the base budget. [**END QUOTE**] Despite the OCO gambit in its FY 2020 request, the Trump administration took critical steps to increase transparency by providing a [breakdown of war funding](https://comptroller.defense.gov/Portals/45/Documents/defbudget/fy2021/fy2021_Budget_Request_Overview_Book.pdf#page=66) in its FY 2021 request. Categories included: “Direct War Requirements,” “Enduring Requirements”, and “OCO for Base Requirements.” However, to maximize accountability over the cost of U.S. operations abroad, Congress and DoD must work together to clarify the definition of OCO. Yes, OCO funding falls on a spectrum between dollars that directly support war costs and those that trend toward enduring support and unrelated base budget costs. But a line must be drawn to distinguish what constitutes direct war requirements. [**HE GOES ON LATER IN THE CONTEXT TO SAY QUOTE:]** In 2010, the Office of Management and Budget developed [criteria](https://www.gao.gov/assets/690/682158.pdf#page=23) to define the activities OCO should include, but this was not legally binding and [failed to address](https://www.gao.gov/assets/690/682158.pdf) the full possible range of activities. Instead, Congress and DoD should reach an agreement to define OCO funding in statute — anything that does not fall within that definition cannot be exempted from any future budget caps or restrictions. To prevent any clever work-arounds to that law, Congress could also mandate that the DoD comptroller and services’ budget chiefs certify that all requested OCO funds fall under the legal definition. While this will limit both Congress and the Department’s ability to exploit any loopholes and grease the wheels in future budget deals, it will ultimately hold DoD more accountable in disclosing the true cost of operations abroad.

SOLVENCY

1. Won't put a dent into the federal deficit.

Link: The OCO budget is $69 billion

Seamus P. Daniels 2020. (associate fellow and associate director for Defense Budget Analysis in the Center for Strategic & International Studies International Security Program ) 18 Dec 2020 " Bad Idea: Eliminating, Rather Than Reforming, Overseas Contingency Operations Funding" https://defense360.csis.org/bad-idea-eliminating-rather-than-reforming-overseas-contingency-operations-funding/

Finally, contrary to the claims of some advocates of cutting the defense budget, eliminating OCO funding will not actually reduce defense spending on its own. Of the $69 billion in OCO funds requested for FY 2021, only $20.5 billion directly supports direct war requirements, which will go down (but not to zero) if all U.S. forces are withdrawn from Iraq and Afghanistan.

Link: The federal deficit is $966 billion

Kimberly Amadeo 2020 (over 20 years of senior-level corporate experience in economic analysis and business strategy; master's in management from the Sloan School of Business at MIT) 29 Oct 2020 U.S. Federal Budget Breakdown https://www.thebalance.com/u-s-federal-budget-breakdown-3305789

The [budget deficit](https://www.thebalance.com/current-u-s-federal-budget-deficit-3305783) is estimated at $966 billion. That's the difference between $3.863 trillion in revenue and $4.829 trillion in spending. This shortfall is added to the existing national debt.

Failure: Do the math.

The deficit goes down 7% (69 billion divided by 966 billion)… IF you assume that Congress doesn't fund the same programs out of a different budget instead of OCO after the AFF plan takes effect.

2. Won't achieve transparency

Abolishing OCO wouldn't increase transparency. It would just be hidden in the Dept of Defense (DoD) budget and reduce transparency

Seamus P. Daniels 2020. (associate fellow and associate director for Defense Budget Analysis in the Center for Strategic & International Studies International Security Program ) 18 Dec 2020 " Bad Idea: Eliminating, Rather Than Reforming, Overseas Contingency Operations Funding" https://defense360.csis.org/bad-idea-eliminating-rather-than-reforming-overseas-contingency-operations-funding/

However, for the many flaws of OCO funding (i.e. acting as a loophole to bypass Congressional legislation, distorting accurate accounting of the cost of the wars, disrupting proper programming and budgeting practices — the list goes on) eliminating the account in its entirety could actually do more harm to efforts for greater transparency and accountability. Categorizing OCO separately (if done accurately) is important to denote the true additional costs of U.S. operations in Afghanistan and Iraq. Folding all war costs back into the base DoD budget would limit transparency around those operations.

DISADVANTAGES

1. Masking DA: Worrying about OCO distracts us from bigger problems

Worrying about OCO distracts us from solving the bigger problems with Defense budgeting and accountability

Seamus P. Daniels 2020. (associate fellow and associate director for Defense Budget Analysis in the Center for Strategic & International Studies International Security Program ) 18 Dec 2020 " Bad Idea: Eliminating, Rather Than Reforming, Overseas Contingency Operations Funding" https://defense360.csis.org/bad-idea-eliminating-rather-than-reforming-overseas-contingency-operations-funding/

But ultimately, as my colleague Andrew Hunter [wrote in this series](https://defense360.csis.org/bad-idea-blaming-oco-for-our-defense-budget-blunders/) last year, eliminating OCO will not “force others in the budget process to improve their behavior.” Yes, OCO funding should be reformed to increase transparency and accountability around the true costs of war. But there are bigger steps that must be taken to improve the efficiency and effectiveness of the defense budgeting process and how the Department makes tradeoffs in allocating its resources. Responding to Covid-19, rebuilding the economy, and tackling the deficit will [further complicate](https://www.washingtonpost.com/business/2020/12/01/biden-stimulus-economic-team/) these challenges for Congress and the incoming Biden administration. Yet the debate over OCO should not obfuscate larger, more significant questions surrounding the United States’ strategic and budgetary priorities.

Impact: Turn the harms, they get worse after an AFF ballot.

If you're really worried about defense budget accountability, the best thing we could do would be to end this debate right now and work on the bigger issues. If not, the problems will get worse.

BIG LINKS TO DISADVANTAGES 2 and 3. AFF Plan = defense budget cuts = loss of US hegemony

Big Link: OCO is the only way to fund Defense in a way that adequately supports US national security, because it bypasses congressional Democrats' ability to cut the Defense budget

Brendan McGarry and Emily Morgenstern 2019 (McGarry - Analyst in US Defense Budget. Morgenstern - Analyst in Foreign Assistance and Foreign Policy. Both are with Congressional Research Service.) 6 Sept 2019 Overseas Contingency Operations Funding: Background and Status https://fas.org/sgp/crs/natsec/R44519.pdf

Russ Vought, acting director of OMB, described the Administration’s approach as part of an effort to increase defense spending while decreasing overall discretionary spending: “Fiscal conservatives may feel uncomfortable using OCO in this way. Yet, as long as Congressional Democrats insist on demanding more social spending in exchange for continuing to fund defense spending, expanding the use of OCO funds remains the administration’s only fiscally responsible option in meeting national security needs while avoiding yet another increase to the spending caps.”

Big Link: Russia & China are the main threats to international stability

Frederico Bartels 2020 (Senior Policy Analyst for Defense Budgeting at Heritage Foundation) 2 Nov 2020 Defense Budget Debates Should Start With Strategy, Not Dollars https://www.heritage.org/defense/commentary/defense-budget-debates-should-start-strategy-not-dollars

The current strategy was released in early 2018 and states that we are currently in “an increasingly complex global security environment, characterized by overt challenges to the free and open international order and the reemergence of long-term, strategic competition between nations.” The strategy states that Russia and China are the two main challenges to the free and open international order. The strategy has received praise from both sides of the aisle, and both parties seem to understand the challenges that Russia and China present to U.S. interests at home and abroad.

Big Link: High US military spending is what stops them from disrupting global stability, and we need to raise it even more

Frederico Bartels 2020 (Senior Policy Analyst for Defense Budgeting at Heritage Foundation) 2 Nov 2020 Defense Budget Debates Should Start With Strategy, Not Dollars https://www.heritage.org/defense/commentary/defense-budget-debates-should-start-strategy-not-dollars

Right now, this competition is mainly nonmilitary precisely because our military is currently unmatched in most areas and capable of deterring direct military action by imposing high enough costs on any adversary. America’s conventional and strategic deterrence has served to create and sustain an unprecedented period of global stability. In an era of great power competition, maintaining this equation requires that we build and maintain our military strength.
**[END QUOTE. HE GOES ON TO CONCLUDE LATER IN THE SAME CONTEXT, QUOTE:]**
The enormousness of these tasks is why the Congressional Bipartisan Commission that evaluated the defense strategy, as well as successive defense secretaries, have called for increases in the defense budget of 3-5% above inflation through 2023.

2. Loss of US hegemony #1 - Russia

Link: Military spending is key to protecting US interests. Brink: Resources are reducing and many threats emerging now

James Di Pane and Janae Diaz 2020 (DiPane - Research Associate, Center for National Defense, Heritage Foundation. Diaz - Fall 2020 member of the Young Leaders Program at The Heritage Foundation) https://www.heritage.org/defense/commentary/global-threats-are-high-now-not-the-time-shortchange-national-defense-budget

The American people trust their armed forces to protect U.S. interests at home and abroad from foreign adversaries. While the U.S. spends a great deal on its military, it also asks much of it—often expecting it to do more with less resources. Today, our military faces intense challenges from many global threats.

Link: Russia is a big threat and could lead to major conflict with USA

James Di Pane and Janae Diaz 2020 (DiPane - Research Associate, Center for National Defense, Heritage Foundation. Diaz - Fall 2020 member of the Young Leaders Program at The Heritage Foundation) https://www.heritage.org/defense/commentary/global-threats-are-high-now-not-the-time-shortchange-national-defense-budget

Russia stands as a significant possible opponent in the near future. With its advanced [conventional and nuclear capabilities](https://www.heritage.org/military-strength), Russia is the principal threat to American and allied priorities in Europe. There is good reason to suspect that, if the United States engages in a major conflict any time soon, Russia may be the reason we do so.

Link: Blocking Russia in the Middle East is key to maintaining US leadership as a great power

Steven A. Cook 2018 (senior fellow for Middle East and Africa studies at the Council on Foreign Relations ) 16 March 2018 FOREIGN POLICY “Russia Is in the Middle East to Stay” https://foreignpolicy.com/2018/03/16/the-middle-east-needs-a-steady-boyfriend/

If the United States is, as Secretary of Defense James Mattis averred in January, in a new era of great power competition, it is time the United States treated the situation as seriously as it is. Putin must be disabused of the notion that the Middle East is the most propitious place to begin weakening the West and the United States. Americans once before contained and rolled back Moscow’s influence in the region; there is no reason to believe that they cannot do it again — but only if they have the wisdom to recognize what is important in the world right now and the collective stomach to meet the challenge.

Impact: Apocalyptic consequences without US hegemony. Loss of peace, prosperity, democracy, world order

Brook Manville 2018 (principal of Brook Manville LLC, consulting on strategy and organization) 14 Oct 2018 “Why A Crumbling World Order Urgently Needs U.S. Leadership” FORBES <https://www.forbes.com/sites/brookmanville/2018/10/14/why-a-crumbling-world-order-urgently-needs-u-s-leadership/#2bb8912f2e61> (brackets added)

The botanical metaphor in [Brookings Institution Senior Fellow Robert] Kagan’s book title began our recent conversation. “We’ve been living in a tranquil garden of largely peaceful practices and liberal expectations across much of the world, ignoring the dark forces of jungle multiplying under the rocks. If we don’t defend civilization’s cultivation—especially American’s guarantee of peace and economic integration across the world—the toxic creatures and weeds will roar back.” Thus China’s determined military rise, Russia’s continuing aggressions, fiery authoritarians on the march in so many once democratic countries. [**END QUOTE**] As [Brookings Institution Senior Fellow Robert] Kagan continued, “Trump has been damaging the system—he too seems to have forgotten what good it has delivered—but actually America’s desire for maintaining the global order has been diminishing for years. After the dissolution of the Soviet empire in the 1990s, people talked about [‘the end of history”](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/The_End_of_History_and_the_Last_Man)—that America didn’t have to worry anymore about war or aggression. History doesn’t end, it simply paused. **[HE GOES ON TO SAY QUOTE:]** The ugliest aspects of human nature are surging again.”
**Vanishing Leadership, Vanishing Peace**
Kagan’s apocalyptic message, repeated in other recent writings, is lucid and terrifying, all the more devastating for its relentless use of history. It’s a footnoted plea that “we’ve seen this movie before.” He reminds us that Americans have frequently turned away from defending world order, with regrettably familiar outcomes: to be dragged in later at greater cost (e.g. helping to stop Hitler earlier might have prevented World War II); or, simply hoping that “the problem would go away,” to watch it get ten times worse (e.g. Obama’s policy in Syria). Kagan acknowledges that America has sometimes misstepped (e.g. Viet Nam, Iraq), but he still argues that overall our foreign engagement has produced more peace and prosperity than not. “History shows,” he summarized, “that world order has never been achieved without some constructive force to keep the peace. The relative harmony and fair play we’ve created in the modern world will vanish if the U.S. forsakes international leadership.”

3. Loss of US hegemony #2 - China

Link: China is growing its military, intends to become a challenger to American power, and not just in East Asia

Dr. Kim R. Holmes 2015 (PhD in history from Georgetown Univ.; formerly worked for the Defense Policy Board, the U.S. defense secretary’s primary resource for expert outside advice; and public member of the U.S. delegation to the Organization for Security and Cooperation in Europe) 3 June 2015 China prepping for regional hegemonyhttps://www.heritage.org/asia/commentary/china-prepping-regional-hegemony

Increases in defense spending have been outpacing GDP growth rates for years, and although China’s defense spending is still far below America’s, it is growing while the U.S. is cutting its defense expenditures. All of this adds up to a bold new role for China’s armed forces. Long thought to be content with the mere defense of its mainland territory, China is clearly staking a larger claim for itself. It is striving to become the dominant military power in East Asia for sure, but also, in the long run, a rival challenger to American military power.

Link: Military spending essential to block threat from China over next 20-30 years

James Di Pane and Janae Diaz 2020 (DiPane - Research Associate, Center for National Defense, Heritage Foundation. Diaz - Fall 2020 member of the Young Leaders Program at The Heritage Foundation) https://www.heritage.org/defense/commentary/global-threats-are-high-now-not-the-time-shortchange-national-defense-budget

Though already a formidable rival, the China of 20-30 years from now could present an even bigger problem. At our current rate of military investment, we may not be adequately to prepared to meet such a threat.

Link: China gaining Asian regional hegemony leads to gaining global hegemony, replacing USA

Min-Hyung Kim 2019 (Department of Political Science and International Relations, Kyung Hee University, South Korea) 4 Feb 2019 “A real driver of US–China trade conflict: The Sino–US competition for global hegemony and its implications for the future” https://www.emerald.com/insight/content/doi/10.1108/ITPD-02-2019-003/full/html

Although China repeatedly claims that it does not seek to replace US hegemony in the world, its behavior revealed by the initiatives of the BRI, the AIIB and Made in China 2015 illustrates that its ultimate goal is to be a global hegemon. This is not surprising because all the rising powers in history invariably sought to first dominate the region they are situated (Mearsheimer, 2011, 2014) and expand their power globally (Gilpin, 1981).

Impact: World peace & prosperity at risk. US hegemony is key to global peace & prosperity

Capt. M. V. Prato 2009 (United States Marine Corps,Command and Staff College, Marine Corps Combat Development Command,Marine Corps University) “The Need for American Hegemony” http://www.dtic.mil/dtic/tr/fulltext/u2/a508040.pdf

The world witnessed a vast shift in the polarity of geopolitics after the Cold War. The United States became the world’s greatest hegemon with an unequalled ability to globally project cultural, political, economic, and military power in a manner not seen since the days of the Roman Empire. **[END QUOTE]** Coined the “unipolar moment” by syndicated columnist Charles Krauthammer, the disparity of power between the U.S. and all other nations allows the U.S. to influence the world for the mutual benefit of all responsible states. Unfortunately, the United States is increasingly forced to act unilaterally as a result of both foreign and domestic resentment to U.S. dominance and the rise of liberal internationalism. [**HE GOES ON TO CONCLUDE QUOTE:]** The United States must exercise benevolent global hegemony, unilaterally if necessary, to ensure its security and maintain global peace and prosperity.