### 1NC T Resnik

#### Interpretation – economic engagement is increasing economic contacts and interdependence in multiple areas to influence the political behavior of a state – they violate this

Resnick 1 – Dr. Evan Resnick, Ph.D. in Political Science from Columbia University, Assistant Professor of Political Science at Yeshiva University, “Defining Engagement”, Journal of International Affairs, Spring, 54(2), Ebsco

A REFINED DEFINITION OF ENGAGEMENT

In order to establish a more effective framework for dealing with unsavory regimes, I propose that we define engagement as the attempt to influence the political behavior of a target state through the comprehensive establishment and enhancement of contacts with that state across multiple issue-areas (i.e. diplomatic, military, economic, cultural). The following is a brief list of the specific forms that such contacts might include: DIPLOMATIC CONTACTS Extension of diplomatic recognition; normalization of diplomatic relations Promotion of target-state membership in international institutions and regimes Summit meetings and other visits by the head of state and other senior government officials of sender state to target state and vice-versa MILITARY CONTACTS Visits of senior military officials of the sender state to the target state and vice-versa Arms transfers Military aid and cooperation Military exchange and training programs Confidence and security-building measures Intelligence sharing ECONOMIC CONTACTS Trade agreements and promotion Foreign economic and humanitarian aid in the form of loans and/or grants CULTURAL CONTACTS Cultural treaties Inauguration of travel and tourism links Sport, artistic and academic exchanges (n25) Engagement is an iterated process in which the sender and target state develop a relationship of increasing interdependence, culminating in the endpoint of "normalized relations" characterized by a high level of interactions across multiple domains. Engagement is a quintessential exchange relationship: the target state wants the prestige and material resources that would accrue to it from increased contacts with the sender state, while the sender state seeks to modify the domestic and/or foreign policy behavior of the target state. This deductive logic could adopt a number of different forms or strategies when deployed in practice.(n26) For instance, individual contacts can be established by the sender state at either a low or a high level of conditionality.(n27) Additionally, the sender state can achieve its objectives using engagement through any one of the following causal processes: by directly modifying the behavior of the target regime; by manipulating or reinforcing the target states' domestic balance of political power between competing factions that advocate divergent policies; or by shifting preferences at the grassroots level in the hope that this will precipitate political change from below within the target state. This definition implies that three necessary conditions must hold for engagement to constitute an effective foreign policy instrument. First, the overall magnitude of contacts between the sender and target states must initially be low. If two states are already bound by dense contacts in multiple domains (i.e., are already in a highly interdependent relationship), engagement loses its impact as an effective policy tool. Hence, one could not reasonably invoke the possibility of the US engaging Canada or Japan in order to effect a change in either country's political behavior. Second, the material or prestige needs of the target state must be significant, as engagement derives its power from the promise that it can fulfill those needs. The greater the needs of the target state, the more amenable to engagement it is likely to be. For example, North Korea's receptivity to engagement by the US dramatically increased in the wake of the demise of its chief patron, the Soviet Union, and the near-total collapse of its national economy.(n28) Third, the target state must perceive the engager and the international order it represents as a potential source of the material or prestige resources it desires. This means that autarkic, revolutionary and unlimited regimes which eschew the norms and institutions of the prevailing order, such as Stalin's Soviet Union or Hitler's Germany, will not be seduced by the potential benefits of engagement. This reformulated conceptualization avoids the pitfalls of prevailing scholarly conceptions of engagement. It considers the policy as a set of means rather than ends, does not delimit the types of states that can either engage or be engaged, explicitly encompasses contacts in multiple issue-areas, allows for the existence of multiple objectives in any given instance of engagement and, as will be shown below, permits the elucidation of multiple types of positive sanctions.

#### Vote negative because the plan doesn’t meet the best definition of “engagement” — key to precise limits and predictable ground. Broad definitions *over-generalize*, undermining conceptual clarity—effects topicality unlimits and destroys topic education

### 1NC PTX

**Obama has the upper hand on debt ceiling debate now**

**Easley 9/18** (Jason, 9/18/2013, “Obama’s Genius Labeling of GOP Demands Extortion Has Already Won The Debt Ceiling Fight,” [http://www.politicususa.com/2013/09/18/obamas-genius-labeling-gop-demands-extortion-won-debt-ceiling-fight.html)](http://www.politicususa.com/2013/09/18/obamas-genius-labeling-gop-demands-extortion-won-debt-ceiling-fight.html%29))

Obama use of the term extortion to describe the House Republican debt ceiling demands was a step forward in a strategy that has already made it a near certainty that **he will win this standoff**.

President Obama effectively ended any Republican hopes of getting a political victory on the debt ceiling when he called their demands extortion. Nobody likes being extorted. The American people don’t like feeling like they are being shaken down. The White House knows this, which is why they are using such strong language to criticize the Republicans. Obama is doing the same thing to House Republicans that he has been doing to the entire party for the last few years. The president is defining them before they can define themselves.

Obama is taking the same tactics that he used to define Mitt Romney in the summer of 2012 and applying them to John Boehner and his House Republicans. While Republicans are fighting among themselves and gearing up for another pointless run at defunding Obamacare, **the president is already winning the political battle over the debt ceiling**. His comments today were a masterstroke of strategy that will pay political dividends now and in the future. If the president is successful anytime a Republican talks about defunding Obamacare, the American people will think extortion. Republicans keep insisting on unconstitutional plots to kill Obamacare, and the president is calling them out on it.

Republicans haven’t realized it yet, but while they are chasing the fool’s gold of defunding Obamacare they have already lost on the debt ceiling. By caving to the lunatic fringe in his party, John Boehner may have handed control of the House of Representatives back to Democrats on a silver platter.

While Republicans posture on Obamacare, Obama is routing them on the debt ceiling.

**Calling in a favor for the plan burns up Obama’s limited leverage with House GOP**

**Moore 9/10**

Guardian's US finance and economics editor (Heidi, 9/10/2013, “Syria: the great distraction; Obama is focused on a conflict abroad, but the fight he should be gearing up for is with Congress on America's economic security,” [http://www.theguardian.com/commentisfree/2013/sep/10/obama-syria-what-about-sequester)](http://www.theguardian.com/commentisfree/2013/sep/10/obama-syria-what-about-sequester%29))

Before President Obama speaks to the nation about Syria tonight, take a look at what this fall will look like inside America. There are 49 million people in the country who suffered inadequate access to food in 2012, leaving the percentage of "food-insecure" Americans at about one-sixth of the US population. At the same time, Congress refused to pass food-stamp legislation this summer, pushing it off again and threatening draconian cuts. The country will crash into the debt ceiling in mid-October, which would be an **economic disaster**, especially with a government shutdown looming at the same time. These are deadlines that Congress already learned two years ago **not to toy with**, but memories appear to be preciously short. The Federal Reserve needs a new chief in three months, someone who will help the country confront its raging unemployment crisis that has left 12 million people without jobs. The president has promised to choose a warm body within the next three weeks, despite the fact that his top pick, Larry Summers, would likely spark an ugly confirmation battle – the "fight of the century," according to some – with a Congress already unwilling to do the President's bidding. Congress was supposed to pass a farm bill this summer, but declined to do so even though the task is already two years late. As a result, the country has no farm bill, leaving agricultural subsidies up in the air, farmers uncertain about what their financial picture looks like, and a potential food crisis on the horizon. The two main housing agencies, Fannie Mae and Freddie Mac, have been in limbo for four years and are desperately in need of reform that should start this fall, but there is scant attention to the problem. These are the problems going unattended by the Obama administration while his aides and cabinet members have been wasting the nation's time making the rounds on television and Capitol Hill stumping for a profoundly unpopular war. The fact that all this chest-beating was for naught, and an easy solution seems on the horizon, belies the single-minded intensity that the Obama White House brought to its insistence on bombing Syria. More than one wag has suggested, with the utmost reason, that if Obama had brought this kind of passion to domestic initiatives, the country would be in better condition right now. As it is, public policy is embarrassingly in shambles at home while the administration throws all of its resources and political capital behind a widely hated plan to get involved in a civil war overseas. The upshot for the president may be that it's easier to wage war with a foreign power than go head-to-head with the US Congress, even as America suffers from neglect. This is the paradox that President Obama is facing this fall, as he appears to turn his back on a number of crucial and urgent domestic initiatives in order to spend all of his meager political capital on striking Syria. Syria does present a significant humanitarian crisis, which has been true for the past two years that the Obama administration has completely ignored the atrocities of Bashar al-Assad. Two years is also roughly the same amount of time that key domestic initiatives have also gone ignored as Obama and Congress engage in petty battles for dominance and leave the country to run itself on a starvation diet imposed by sequestration cuts. Leon Panetta tells the story of how he tried to lobby against sequestration only to be told: Leon, you don't understand. The Congress is resigned to failure. Similarly, those on Wall Street, the Federal Reserve, those working at government agencies, and voters themselves have become all too practiced at ignoring the determined incompetence of those in Washington. Political capital – the ability to horse-trade and win political favors from a receptive audience – is a **finite resource** in Washington. Pursuing **misguided policies takes up time**, but it also **eats up credibility in asking for the next favor**. It's fair to say that congressional Republicans, particularly in the House, have no love for Obama and are likely to oppose anything he supports. That's exactly the reason the White House should stop proposing policies as if it is scattering buckshot and **focus with intensity on the domestic tasks** it wants to accomplish, **one at a time**.The president is scheduled to speak six times this week, mostly about Syria. That includes evening news interviews, an address to the nation, and numerous other speeches. Behind the scenes, he is calling members of Congress to get them to fall into line. Secretary of State John Kerry is omnipresent, so ubiquitous on TV that it may be easier just to get him his own talk show called Syria Today. It would be a treat to see White House aides lobbying as aggressively – and on as many talk shows – for a better food stamp bill, an end to the debt-ceiling drama, or a solution to the senseless sequestration cuts, as it is on what is clearly a useless boondoggle in Syria. There's no reason to believe that Congress can have **an all-consuming debate** about Syria and then, somehow refreshed, return to a domestic agenda that has been as chaotic and urgent as any in recent memory. The President should have judged his options better. As it is, he should now judge his actions better.

**Entertaining GOP negotiating demands will drag the process out and trigger economic collapse**

**Lobello 8/27**

(Business editor at TheWeek.com (Carmel, 8/27/2013, “How the looming debt ceiling fight could screw up the U.S. economy; Yup, this is happening — again,” [http://theweek.com/article/index/248775/how-the-looming-debt-ceiling-fight-could-screw-up-the-us-economy)](http://theweek.com/article/index/248775/how-the-looming-debt-ceiling-fight-could-screw-up-the-us-economy%29))

Ready for more debt-ceiling drama? The Treasury Department said Monday it would hit its borrowing limit in mid-October, which means that Congress will need to raise its $16.7 trillion debt ceiling to pay the nation's bills. The sooner-than-expected deadline comes at an inconvenient moment, because Congress is already facing a budget deadline for the stopgap "continuing resolution" that finances the federal government, which is set to run out September 30. Failure to come to an agreement would trigger a government shutdown. Having two big deadlines fall two weeks apart could be a recipe for disaster. Republicans, led by Speaker John Boehner (R-Ohio), have been musing about the possibility of using the debt ceiling, instead of a government shutdown, as leverage to delay the implementation of ObamaCare. But as Ezra Klein put it in The Washington Post, "Trading a government shutdown for a debt-ceiling breach is like trading the flu for septic shock": Anything Republicans might fear about a government shutdown is far more terrifying amidst a debt-ceiling breach. The former is an inconvenience. The latter is a **global financial crisis**. It’s the difference between what happened in 1995, when the government did shutdown, and what happened in 2008, when global markets realized a bedrock investment they thought was safe (housing in that case, U.S. treasuries in this one) was full of risk. [The Washington Post] Indeed, a debt ceiling debate in 2011 that **went on to the last possible minute** had **real economic consequences**, leading Standard & Poor's to downgrade the **U**nited **S**tates' credit rating. The move "left a clear and deep dent in US economic and market data," said Matt Phillips at Quartz. Investors pulled huge amounts of cash from the stock market, and consumer confidence was hurt as well. When the same problem cropped up again in May 2012, because Congress failed to reach a long-term deal, Betsey Stevenson and Justin Wolfers in Bloomberg explained how confidence plummeted the first time around: [Confidence] went into freefall as the political stalemate worsened through July. Over the entire episode, confidence declined more than it did following the collapse of Lehman Brothers Holdings Inc. in 2008. After July 31, when the deal to break the impasse was announced, consumer confidence stabilized and began a long, slow climb that brought it back to its starting point almost a year later. [Bloomberg] This morning, Wolfers had this to say: Treasury Secretary Jack Lew visited CNBC Tuesday morning to reiterate President Obama's promise not to go down he same road. "The president has made it clear: We're not going to negotiate over the debt limit," Lew said. He also explained why in a letter to Boehner Monday morning. "Protecting the full faith and credit of the United States is the responsibility of Congress, because only Congress can extend the nation's borrowing authority," he wrote. "Failure to meet that responsibility would cause irreparable harm to the American economy."

**This will destroy the US and global economy and collapse trade**

**Davidson 9/10**

(Adam - co-founder of NPR’s “Planet Money” 9/10/2013, “Our Debt to Society,” <http://www.nytimes.com/2013/09/15/magazine/our-debt-to-society.html?pagewanted=all&_r=0)>)

This is the definition of a deficit, and it illustrates why the government needs to borrow money almost every day to pay its bills. Of course, all that daily borrowing adds up, and we are rapidly approaching what is called the X-Date — the day, somewhere in the next six weeks, when the government, by law, cannot borrow another penny. Congress has imposed a strict limit on how much debt the federal government can accumulate, but for nearly 90 years, it has raised the ceiling well before it was reached. But since a large number of Tea Party-aligned Republicans entered the House of Representatives, in 2011, raising that debt ceiling has become a matter of **fierce debate**. This summer, House Republicans have promised, in Speaker John Boehner’s words, “a whale of a fight” before they raise the debt ceiling — if they even raise it at all.If the debt ceiling isn’t lifted again this fall, some serious financial decisions will have to be made. Perhaps the government can skimp on its foreign aid or furlough all of NASA, but eventually the big-ticket items, like Social Security and Medicare, will have to be cut. At some point, the government won’t be able to pay interest on its bonds and will enter what’s known as sovereign default, the ultimate national financial disaster achieved by countries like Zimbabwe, Ecuador and Argentina (and now Greece). In the case of the United States, though, it won’t be an isolated national crisis. If the American government can’t stand behind the dollar, the world’s benchmark currency, then the global financial system will very likely enter a new era in which **there is much less trade and much less economic growth**. It would be, by most accounts, **the largest self-imposed financial disaster in history**. Nearly everyone involved predicts that someone will blink before this disaster occurs. Yet a small number of House Republicans (one political analyst told me it’s no more than 20) appear willing to see what happens if the debt ceiling isn’t raised — at least for a bit. This could be used as leverage to force Democrats to drastically cut government spending and eliminate President Obama’s signature health-care-reform plan. In fact, Representative Tom Price, a Georgia Republican, told me that the whole problem could be avoided if the president agreed to drastically cut spending and lower taxes. Still, it is hard to put this act of game theory into historic context. Plenty of countries — and some cities, like Detroit — have defaulted on their financial obligations, but only because their governments ran out of money to pay their bills. No wealthy country has ever voluntarily decided — in the middle of an economic recovery, no less — to default. And there’s certainly no record of that happening to the country that controls the global reserve currency. Like many, I assumed a self-imposed U.S. debt crisis might unfold like most involuntary ones. If the debt ceiling isn’t raised by X-Day, I figured, the world’s investors would begin to see America as an unstable investment and rush to sell their Treasury bonds. The U.S. government, desperate to hold on to investment, would then raise interest rates far higher, hurtling up rates on credit cards, student loans, mortgages and corporate borrowing — which would effectively put a clamp on all trade and spending. The U.S. economy would collapse far worse than anything we’ve seen in the past several years. Instead, Robert Auwaerter, head of bond investing for Vanguard, the world’s largest mutual-fund company, told me that the collapse might be more insidious. “You know what happens when the market gets upset?” he said. “There’s a flight to quality. Investors buy Treasury bonds. It’s a bit perverse.” In other words, if the U.S. comes within shouting distance of a default (which Auwaerter is confident won’t happen), the world’s investors — absent a safer alternative, given the recent fates of the euro and the yen — might actually buy even more Treasury bonds. Indeed, interest rates would fall and the bond markets would soar. While this possibility might not sound so bad, it’s really **far more damaging** than the apocalyptic one I imagined. Rather than resulting in a sudden crisis, failure to raise the debt ceiling would lead to a slow bleed. Scott Mather, head of the global portfolio at Pimco, the world’s largest private bond fund, explained that while governments and institutions might go on a U.S.-bond buying frenzy in the wake of a debt-ceiling panic, they would eventually recognize that the U.S. government was not going through an odd, temporary bit of insanity. They would eventually conclude that it had become permanently less reliable. Mather imagines institutional investors and governments turning to a basket of currencies, putting their savings in a mix of U.S., European, Canadian, Australian and Japanese bonds. Over the course of decades, **the U.S. would lose its unique role in the global economy**.The U.S. benefits enormously from its status as global reserve currency and safe haven. Our interest and mortgage rates are lower; companies are able to borrow money to finance their new products more cheaply. As a result, there is much more economic activity and more wealth in America than there would be otherwise. If that status erodes, the U.S. economy’s peaks will be lower and **recessions deeper**; future generations will have fewer job opportunities and suffer more when the economy falters. And, Mather points out, no other country would benefit from America’s diminished status. When you make the base risk-free asset more risky, the entire global economy becomes riskier and costlier.

**The impact is global nuclear war**

**Freidberg & Schonfeld 08**

\*Professor of Politics and IR at Princeton’s Woodrow Wilson School, AND \*\*senior editor of Commentary and a visiting scholar at the Witherspoon Institute in Princeton (10/21/2008, Aaron and Gabriel, “The Dangers of a Diminished America”, Wall Street Journal, http://online.wsj.com/article/SB122455074012352571.html?mod=googlenews\_wsj)

With the global financial system in serious trouble, is America's geostrategic dominance likely to diminish? If so, what would that mean? One immediate implication of the crisis that began on Wall Street and spread across the world is that the primary instruments of U.S. foreign policy will be crimped. The next president will face an entirely new and adverse fiscal position. Estimates of this year's federal budget deficit already show that it has jumped $237 billion from last year, to $407 billion. With families and businesses hurting, there will be calls for various and expensive domestic relief programs. In the face of this onrushing river of red ink, both Barack Obama and John McCain have been reluctant to lay out what portions of their programmatic wish list they might defer or delete. Only Joe Biden has suggested a possible reduction -- foreign aid. This would be one of the few popular cuts, but in budgetary terms it is a mere grain of sand. Still, Sen. Biden's comment hints at where we may be headed: toward a **major reduction in America's world role**, and perhaps even a new era of financially-induced isolationism. Pressures to cut defense spending, and to dodge the cost of waging two wars, already intense before this crisis, are likely to mount. Despite the success of the surge, the war in Iraq remains deeply unpopular. Precipitous withdrawal -- attractive to a sizable swath of the electorate before the financial implosion -- might well become even more popular with annual war bills running in the hundreds of billions. Protectionist sentiments are sure to grow stronger as jobs disappear in the coming slowdown. Even before our current woes, calls to save jobs by restricting imports had begun to gather support among many Democrats and some Republicans. In a prolonged recession, gale-force winds of protectionism will blow. Then there are the dolorous consequences of a potential collapse of the world's financial architecture. For decades now, Americans have enjoyed the advantages of being at the center of that system. The worldwide use of the dollar, and the stability of our economy, among other things, made it easier for us to run huge budget deficits, as we counted on foreigners to pick up the tab by buying dollar-denominated assets as a safe haven. Will this be possible in the future? Meanwhile, traditional foreign-policy challenges are multiplying. The threat from al Qaeda and Islamic terrorist affiliates has not been extinguished. Iran and North Korea are continuing on their bellicose paths, while Pakistan and Afghanistan are progressing smartly down the road to chaos. Russia's new militancy and China's seemingly relentless rise also give cause for concern. If America now tries to pull back from the world stage, it will leave a dangerous power vacuum. The stabilizing effects of our presence in Asia, our continuing commitment to Europe, and our position as defender of last resort for Middle East energy sources and supply lines could all be placed at risk. In such a scenario there are shades of the 1930s, when global trade and finance ground nearly to a halt, the peaceful democracies failed to cooperate, and aggressive powers led by the remorseless fanatics who rose up on the crest of economic disaster exploited their divisions. Today we run the risk that rogue states may choose to become ever more **reckless with their nuclear toys**, just at our moment of maximum vulnerability. The aftershocks of the financial crisis will almost certainly rock our principal strategic competitors even harder than they will rock us. The dramatic free fall of the Russian stock market has demonstrated the fragility of a state whose economic performance hinges on high oil prices, now driven down by the global slowdown. China is perhaps even more fragile, its economic growth depending heavily on foreign investment and access to foreign markets. Both will now be constricted, inflicting economic pain and perhaps even sparking unrest in a country where political legitimacy rests on progress in the long march to prosperity. None of this is good news if the authoritarian leaders of these countries seek to divert attention from internal travails with external adventures. As for our democratic friends, the present crisis comes when many European nations are struggling to deal with decades of anemic growth, sclerotic governance and an impending demographic crisis. Despite its past dynamism, Japan faces similar challenges. India is still in the early stages of its emergence as a world economic and geopolitical power. What does this all mean? There is no substitute for America on the world stage. The choice we have before us is between the potentially disastrous effects of disengagement and the stiff price tag of continued American leadership.

### 1NC Pink Tide

#### Ending the embargo kills US credibility

**Brookes 9** Peter Brookes4/16/2009 (heritage council, Senior Fellow, Brookes is serving his third term as a congressionally appointed member of the U.S.-China Economic and Security Review Commission. He previously served in the administration of President George W. Bush as deputy assistant secretary of defense for Asian and Pacific affairs. In this post, he was responsible for U.S. defense policy for 38 countries and five bilateral defense alliances in Asia, Brookes was a professional staff member with the House International Relations Committee. He also served with the CIA and the State Department at the United Nations. In the private sector, he worked in the defense and intelligence industries.

A decorated Navy veteran, Brookes served on active duty in Latin America, Asia and the Middle East in aviation and intelligence billets, Brookes, now a retired Navy commander, served as a reservist with the National Security Agency, Defense Intelligence Agency, Naval Intelligence, the Joint Chiefs of Staff and the Office of the Vice President, Brookes is pursuing a doctorate at Georgetown University. He is a graduate of the U.S. Naval Academy (B.S.); the Defense Language Institute (Russian); the Naval War College; and the Johns Hopkins University (M.A.). He also has taught at the National Defense University and studied German and Polish, National Security Affairs, “Keep the Embargo, O” <http://www.heritage.org/research/commentary/2009/04/keep-the-embargo-o>)

Lifting the embargo won't normalize relations, but instead legitimize -- and wave the white flag to -- Fidel's 50-year fight against the Yanquis, further lionizing the dictator and encouraging the Latin American Left.¶ Because the economy is nationalized, trade will pour plenty of cash into the Cuban national coffers -- allowing Havana to suppress dissent at home and bolster its communist agenda abroad.¶ The last thing we should do is to fill the pockets of a regime that'll use those profits to keep a jackboot on the neck of the Cuban people. The political and human-rights situation in Cuba is grim enough already.¶ The police state controls the lives of 11 million Cubans in what has become an island prison. The people enjoy none of the basic civil liberties -- no freedom of speech, press, assembly or association.¶ Security types monitor foreign journalists, restrict Internet access and foreign news and censor the domestic media. The regime holds more than 200 political dissidents in jails that rats won't live in.¶ We also don't need a pumped-up Cuba that could become a serious menace to US interests in Latin America, the Caribbean -- or beyond. (The likes of China, Russia and Iran might also look to partner with a revitalized Cuba.)¶ With an influx of resources, the Cuban regime would surely team up with the rulers of nations like Venezuela, Nicaragua and Bolivia to advance socialism and anti-Americanism in the Western Hemisphere.¶ The embargo has stifled Havana's ambitions ever since the Castros lost their Soviet sponsorship in the early 1990s. Anyone noticed the lack of trouble Cuba has caused internationally since then? Contrast that with the 1980s some time.¶ Regrettably, 110 years after independence from Spain (courtesy of Uncle Sam), Cuba still isn't free. Instead of utopia, it has become a dystopia at the hands of the Castro brothers.¶ The US embargo remains a matter of principle -- and an appropriate response to Cuba's brutal repression of its people. Giving in to evil only begets more of it. Haven't we learned that yet?¶ Until we see progress in loosing the Cuban people from the yoke of the communist regime, we should hold firm onto the leverage the embargo provides.

#### Obama weakness causes global conflict

Coes 11 – Ben Coes 11, Visiting Fellow at Harvard University’s John F. Kennedy School of Government. A graduate of Columbia College, where he won the prestigious Bennett Cerf Memorial Prize “The disease of a weak president”, The Daily Caller, http://dailycaller.com/2011/09/30/the-disease-of-a-weak-president/

The disease of a weak president usually begins with the Achilles’ heel all politicians are born with — the desire to be popular. It leads to pandering to different audiences, people and countries and creates a sloppy, incoherent set of policies. Ironically, it ultimately results in that very politician losing the trust and respect of friends and foes alike.¶ In the case of Israel, those of us who are strong supporters can at least take comfort in the knowledge that Tel Aviv will do whatever is necessary to protect itself from potential threats from its unfriendly neighbors. While it would be preferable for the Israelis to be able to count on the United States, in both word and deed, the fact is right now they stand alone. Obama and his foreign policy team have undercut the Israelis in a multitude of ways. Despite this, I wouldn’t bet against the soldiers of Shin Bet, Shayetet 13 and the Israeli Defense Forces.¶ But Obama’s weakness could — in other places — have implications far, far worse than anything that might ultimately occur in Israel. The triangular plot of land that connects Pakistan, India and China is held together with much more fragility and is built upon a truly foreboding foundation of religious hatreds, radicalism, resource envy and nuclear weapons.¶ If you can only worry about preventing one foreign policy disaster, worry about this one. Here are a few unsettling facts to think about:¶ First, Pakistan and India have fought three wars since the British de-colonized and left the region in 1947. All three wars occurred before the two countries had nuclear weapons. Both countries now possess hundreds of nuclear weapons, enough to wipe each other off the map many times over.¶ Second, Pakistan is 97% Muslim. It is a question of when — not if — Pakistan elects a radical Islamist in the mold of Ayatollah Khomeini as its president. Make no mistake, it will happen, and when it does the world will have a far greater concern than Ali Khamenei or Mahmoud Ahmadinejad and a single nuclear device.¶ Third, China sits at the northern border of both India and Pakistan. China is strategically aligned with Pakistan. Most concerning, China covets India’s natural resources. Over the years, it has slowly inched its way into the northern tier of India-controlled Kashmir Territory, appropriating land and resources and drawing little notice from the outside world.¶ In my book, Coup D’Etat, I consider this tinderbox of colliding forces in Pakistan, India and China as a thriller writer. But thriller writers have the luxury of solving problems by imagining solutions on the page. In my book, when Pakistan elects a radical Islamist who then starts a war with India and introduces nuclear weapons to the theater, America steps in and removes the Pakistani leader through a coup d’état.¶ I wish it was that simple.¶ The more complicated and difficult truth is that we, as Americans, must take sides. We must be willing to be unpopular in certain places. Most important, we must be ready and willing to threaten our military might on behalf of our allies. And our allies are Israel and India.¶ There are many threats out there — Islamic radicalism, Chinese technology espionage, global debt and half a dozen other things that smarter people than me are no doubt worrying about. But the single greatest threat to America is none of these. The single greatest threat facing America and our allies is a weak U.S. president. It doesn’t have to be this way. President Obama could — if he chose — develop a backbone and lead. Alternatively, America could elect a new president. It has to be one or the other. The status quo is simply not an option.

### 1NC Neolib Best (Short)

#### Engagement with Latin America is a tool of the neoliberal machine - causes environmental collapse, poverty, and inequality – moral obligation to prioritize the impacts of Western hypocrisy

**Makwana 6** (Rajesh, STWR, 23rd November 06, <http://www.stwr.org/globalization/neoliberalism-and-economic-globalization.html>, ZBurdette)

Neoliberalism and Economic Globalization The goal of neoliberal economic globalization is the removal of all barriers to commerce, and the privatization of all available resources and services. In this scenario, public life will be at the mercy of market forces, as the extracted profits benefit the few, writes Rajesh Makwana. The thrust of international policy behind the phenomenon of economic globalization is neoliberal in nature. Being hugely profitable to corporations and the wealthy elite, neoliberal polices are propagated through the IMF, World Bank and WTO. Neoliberalism favours the free-market as the most efficient method of global resource allocation. Consequently it favours large-scale, corporate commerce and the privatization of resources. There has been much international attention recently on neoliberalism. Its ideologies have been rejected by influential countries in Latin America and its moral basis is now widely questioned. Recent protests against the WTO, IMF and World Bank were essentially protests against the neoliberal policies that these organizations implement, particularly in low-income countries. The neoliberal experiment has failed to combat extreme poverty, has exacerbated global inequality, and is hampering international aid and development efforts. This article presents an overview of neoliberalism and its effect on low income countries. Introduction After the Second World War, corporate enterprises helped to create a wealthy class in society which enjoyed excessive political influence on their government in the US and Europe. Neoliberalism surfaced as a reaction by these wealthy elites to counteract post-war policies that favoured the working class and strengthened the welfare state. Neoliberal policies advocate market forces and commercial activity as the most efficient methods for producing and supplying goods and services. At the same time they shun the role of the state and discourage government intervention into economic, financial and even social affairs. The process of economic globalization is driven by this ideology; removing borders and barriers between nations so that market forces can drive the global economy. The policies were readily taken up by governments and still continue to pervade classical economic thought, allowing corporations and affluent countries to secure their financial advantage within the world economy. The policies were most ardently enforced in the US and Europe in the1980s during the Regan–Thatcher–Kohl era. These leaders believed that expanding the free-market and private ownership would create greater economic efficiency and social well-being. The resulting deregulation, privatization and the removal of border restrictions provided fertile ground for corporate activity, and over the next 25 years corporations grew rapidly in size and influence. Corporations are now the most productive economic units in the world, more so than most countries. With their huge financial, economic and political leverage, they continue to further their neoliberal objectives. There is a consensus between the financial elite, neoclassical economists and the political classes in most countries that neoliberal policies will create global prosperity. So entrenched is their position that this view determines the policies of the international agencies (IMF, World Bank and WTO), and through them dictates the functioning of the global economy. Despite reservations from within many UN agencies, neoliberal policies are accepted by most development agencies as the most likely means of reducing poverty and inequality in the poorest regions. There is a huge discrepancy between the measurable result of economic globalization and its proposed benefits. Neoliberal policies have unarguably generated massive wealth for some people, but most crucially, they have been unable to benefit those living in extreme poverty who are most in need of financial aid. Excluding China, annual economic growth in developing countries between 1960 and 1980 was 3.2%. This dropped drastically between 1980 and 2000 to a mere 0.7 %. This second period is when neoliberalism was most prevalent in global economic policy. (Interestingly, China was not following the neoliberal model during these periods, and its economic growth per capita grew to over 8% between 1980 and 2000.) Neoliberalism has also been unable to address growing levels of global inequality. Over the last 25 years, the income inequalities have increased dramatically, both within and between countries. Between 1980 and 1998, the income of richest 10% as share of poorest 10% became 19% more unequal; and the income of richest 1% as share of poorest 1% became 77% more unequal (again, not including China). The shortcomings of neoliberal policy are also apparent in the well documented economic disasters suffered by countries in Latin America and South Asia in the 1990s. These countries were left with no choice but to follow the neoliberal model of privatization and deregulation, due to their financial problems and pressure from the IMF. Countries such as Venezuela, Cuba, Argentina and Bolivia have since rejected foreign corporate control and the advice of the IMF and World Bank. Instead they have favoured a redistribution of wealth, the re-nationalization of industry and have prioritized the provision of healthcare and education. They are also sharing resources such as oil and medical expertise throughout the region and with other countries around the world. The dramatic economic and social improvement seen in these countries has not stopped them from being demonized by the US. Cuba is a well known example of this propaganda. Deemed to be a danger to ‘freedom and the American way of life’, Cuba has been subject to intense US political, economic and military pressure in order to tow the neoliberal line. Washington and the mainstream media in the US have recently embarked on a similar propaganda exercise aimed at Venezuela’s president Chavez. This over-reaction by Washington to ‘economic nationalism’ is consistent with their foreign policy objectives which have not changed significantly for the past 150 years. Securing resources and economic dominance has been and continues to be the USA’s main economic objective. According to Maria Páez Victor: “Since 1846 the United States has carried out no fewer than 50 military invasions and destabilizing operations involving 12 different Latin American countries. Yet, none of these countries has ever had the capacity to threaten US security in any significant way. The US intervened because of perceived threats to its economic control and expansion. For this reason it has also supported some of the region’s most vicious dictators such as Batista, Somoza, Trujillo, and Pinochet.” As a result of corporate and US influence, the key international bodies that developing countries are forced to turn to for assistance, such as the World Bank and IMF, are major exponents of the neoliberal agenda. The WTO openly asserts its intention to improve global business opportunities; the IMF is heavily influenced by the Wall Street and private financiers, and the World Bank ensures corporations benefit from development project contracts. They all gain considerably from the neo-liberal model. So influential are corporations at this time that many of the worst violators of human rights have even entered a Global Compact with the United Nations, the world’s foremost humanitarian body. Due to this international convergence of economic ideology, it is no coincidence that the assumptions that are key to increasing corporate welfare and growth are the same assumptions that form the thrust of mainstream global economic policy. However, there are huge differences between the neoliberal dogma that the US and EU dictate to the world and the policies that they themselves adopt. Whilst fiercely advocating the removal of barriers to trade, investment and employment, The US economy remains one of the most protected in the world. Industrialized nations only reached their state of economic development by fiercely protecting their industries from foreign markets and investment. For economic growth to benefit developing countries, the international community must be allowed to nurture their infant industries. Instead economically dominant countries are ‘kicking away the ladder’ to achieving development by imposing an ideology that suits their own economic needs. The US and EU also provide huge subsidies to many sectors of industry. These devastate small industries in developing countries, particularly farmers who cannot compete with the price of subsidized goods in international markets. Despite their neoliberal rhetoric, most ‘capitalist’ countries have increased their levels of state intervention over the past 25 years, and the size of their government has increased. The requirement is to ‘do as I say, not as I do’. Given the tiny proportion of individuals that benefit from neoliberal policies, the chasm between what is good for the economy and what serves the public good is growing fast. Decisions to follow these policies are out of the hands of the public, and the national sovereignty of many developing countries continues to be violated, preventing them from prioritizing urgent national needs. Below we examine the false assumptions of neoliberal policies and their effect on the global economy. Economic Growth Economic growth, as measured in GDP, is the yardstick of economic globalization which is fiercely pursued by multinationals and countries alike. It is the commercial activity of the tiny portion of multinational corporations that drives economic growth in industrialized nations. Two hundred corporations account for a third of global economic growth. Corporate trade currently accounts for over 50% of global economic growth and as much as 75% of GDP in the EU. The proportion of trade to GDP continues to grow, highlighting the belief that economic growth is the only way to prosper a country and reduce poverty. Logically, however, a model for continual financial growth is unsustainable. Corporations have to go to extraordinary lengths in order to reflect endless growth in their accounting books. As a result, finite resources are wasted and the environment is dangerously neglected. The equivalent of two football fields of natural forest is cleared each second by profit hungry corporations. Economic growth is also used by the World Bank and government economists to measure progress in developing countries. But, whilst economic growth clearly does have benefits, the evidence strongly suggests that these benefits do not trickle down to the 986 million people living in extreme poverty, representing 18 percent of the world population (World Bank, 2007). Nor has economic growth addressed inequality and income distribution. In addition, accurate assessments of both poverty levels and the overall benefits of economic growth have proved impossible due to the inadequacy of the statistical measures employed. The mandate for economic growth is the perfect platform for corporations which, as a result, have grown rapidly in their economic activity, profitability and political influence. Yet this very model is also the cause of the growing inequalities seen across the globe. The privatization of resources and profits by the few at the expense of the many, and the inability of the poorest people to afford market prices, are both likely causes. Free Trade Free trade is the foremost demand of neoliberal globalization. In its current form, it simply translates as greater access to emerging markets for corporations and their host nations. These demands are contrary to the original assumptions of free trade as affluent countries adopt and maintain protectionist measures. Protectionism allows a nation to strengthen its industries by levying taxes and quotas on imports, thus increasing their own industrial capacity, output and revenue. Subsidies in the US and EU allow corporations to keep their prices low, effectively pushing smaller producers in developing countries out of the market and impeding development. With this self interest driving globalization, economically powerful nations have created a global trading regime with which they can determine the terms of trade. The North American Free Trade Agreement (NAFTA) between the US, Canada, and Mexico is an example of free-market fundamentalism that gives corporations legal rights at the expense of national sovereignty. Since its implementation it has caused job loss, undermined labour rights, privatized essential services, increased inequality and caused environmental destruction. In Europe only 5% of EU citizens work in agriculture, generating just 1.6% of EU GDP compared to more than 50% of citizens in developing countries. However, the European Common Agricultural Policy (CAP) provides subsidies to EU farmers to the tune of £30 billion, 80% of which goes to only 20% of farmers to guarantee their viability, however inefficient this may be. The General Agreement on Trade and Services (GATS) was agreed at the World Trade Organization (WTO) in 1994. Its aim is to remove any restrictions and internal government regulations that are considered to be "barriers to trade". The agreement effectively abolishes a government’s sovereign right to regulate subsidies and provide essential national services on behalf of its citizens. The Trade Related agreement on International Property Rights (TRIPS) forces developing countries to extend property rights to seeds and plant varieties. Control over these resources and services are instead granted to corporate interests through the GATS and TRIPS framework. These examples represent modern free trade which is clearly biased in its approach. It fosters corporate globalization at the expense of local economies, the environment, democracy and human rights. The primary beneficiaries of international trade are large, multinational corporations who fiercely lobby at all levels of national and global governance to further the free trade agenda. Liberalization The World Bank, IMF and WTO have been the main portals for implementing the neoliberal agenda on a global scale. Unlike the United Nations, these institutions are over-funded, continuously lobbied by corporations, and are politically and financially dominated by Washington, Wall Street, corporations and their agencies. As a result, the key governance structures of the global economy have been primed to serve the interests of this group, and market liberalization has been another of their key policies. According to neoliberal ideology, in order for international trade to be ‘free’ all markets should be open to competition, and market forces should determine economic relationships. But the overall result of a completely open and free market is of course market dominance by corporate heavy-weights. The playing field is not even; all developing countries are at a great financial and economic disadvantage and simply cannot compete. Liberalization, through Structural Adjustment Programs, forces poorer countries to open their markets to foreign products which largely destroys local industries. It creates dependency upon commodities which have artificially low prices as they are heavily subsidized by economically dominant nations. Financial liberalization removes barriers to currency speculation from abroad. The resulting rapid inflow and outflow of currencies is often responsible for acute financial and economic crisis in many developing countries. At the same time, foreign speculators and large financial firms make huge gains. Market liberalization poses a clear economic risk; hence the EU and US heavily protect their own markets. A liberalized global market provides corporations with new resources to capitalize and new markets to exploit. Neoliberal dominance over global governance structures has enforced access to these markets. Under WTO agreements, a sovereign country cannot interfere with a corporation’s intentions to trade even if their operations go against domestic environmental and employment guidelines. Those governments that do stand up for their sovereign rights are frequently sued by corporations for loss of profit, and even loss of potential profit. Without this pressure they would have been able to stimulate domestic industry and self sufficiency, thereby reducing poverty. They would then be in a better position to compete in international markets.

#### Vote negative to interrogate the assumptions of the 1AC to create space for alternatives to neoliberal engagement

**Munck**, professor of Globalization and Social Exclusion, **3** (Ronaldo, Department of Sociology, Social Policy & Social Work Studies and Globalisation and Social Exclusion Unit, University of Liverpool, “Neoliberalism, necessitarianism and alternatives in Latin America: there is no alternative (TINA)?”, Third World Quarterly, Vol 24, No 3, pp 495–511, 2003, [http://www-e.uni-magdeburg.de/evans/Journal%20Library/Trade%20and%20Countries/Neoliberalism,%20necessitarianism%20and%20alternatives%20in%20Latin%20America.pdf](http://www-e.uni-magdeburg.de/evans/Journal%20Library/Trade%20and%20Countries/Neoliberalism%2C%20necessitarianism%20and%20alternatives%20in%20Latin%20America.pdf), ZBurdette)

Taking as its point of departure the position that there are or must be alternatives to neoliberalism, this article explores the issue in relation to some examples from Latin America. The 2001–02 virtual collapse of the economy of Argentina and the recent victory of Workers Party candidate, Lula, in Brazil highlight, in very different ways, the need for a viable alternative democratic economic strategy for Latin America. Many progressive analysts seem to be paralysed by a false ‘necessitarianism’ which grants more coherence an d solidity to the neoliberal project than it merits. Argentina puts paid to that illusion. Will the exciting experience of Porto Alegre’s ‘participatory budget’ in Brazil now be scaled up to the national level or does ‘globalisation’ block this option? Do the old questions of imperialism and dependency now come to the fore again after being left dormant under the spell of globalisation? We may not have all the answers yet but Latin America is back in the foreground of thinking and practice around alternative economic theories.

There is no alternative (TINA) was an oft-repeated expression of Margaret Thatcher’s, used to dismiss any plausible alternatives to her brand of hard-nosed neoliberalism. One imagines that her friend General Pinochet, with whom she shared tea during his enforced stay in London, would agree with her. What is more surprising is the influence the TINA philosophy has had on social science analysis of neoliberalism in Latin America since Pinochet. What I propose is a radically anti-necessitarian approach to neoliberalism, inspired by the work of Roberto Mangabeira Unger. Things are not always how they are because they have to be so. There is life beyond neoliberalism. There are alternatives taking shape all the time at all levels of society in Latin America. The so-called Washington Consensus is no longer so consensual even in Washington and there is growing recognition that globalisation requires global governance. We therefore need to return to the rise of neoliberalism and globalisation in a nonnecessitarian spirit and examine the whole horizon of possibilities that is now opening up in Latin America as elsewhere. If the virtual collapse of Argentina in 2001–02 shows that ‘actually existing’ neoliberalism simply does not work even on its own terms, the exciting

### 1NC Transition

Turn – Castro Cred

#### **Economic reforms are coming now in Cuba – causes long term stability**

Sweig and Rockefeller, 2013 (Julia E. Sweig, Nelson and David Rockefeller Senior Fellow for Latin America Studies and Director for Latin America Studies, and Michael Bustamante “Cuba After Communism The Economic Reforms That Are Transforming the Island” <http://www.cfr.org/cuba/cuba-after-communism/p30991>)

#### Small-time diaspora capital may prove easier to regulate and rely on than funds from multinational corporations driven strictly by profits. Under the repatriation provisions of the island's new migration law, some Cubans may even retire to the island with their pensions and savings after decades of working abroad. Yet opening the doors for more young citizens to leave could prove risky for a quickly aging, low-birthrate society that has been suffering from a brain drain for some time. Besides, along with remittance dollars, Cuba urgently needs both medium and large investors. Ultimately, only larger outlays can help fix Cuba's most fundamental economic problem: its depleted productive base. Castro appears to recognize that attracting foreign investment, decentralizing the government, and further expanding the private sector are the only ways to tackle this long-term predicament. The government is unlikely to proceed with anything but caution, however. Officials are wary of rocking the domestic political boat, and citizens and party leaders alike recoil from the prospect of more radical shock therapy. Rising public protests in China and Vietnam against inequality and rampant corruption have only reinforced the Cuban government's preference for gradualism. Striking an adequate balance will be no easy task. In late 2012, Havana legalized the creation of transportation cooperatives -- private, profit-sharing entities owned and manage by their members -- to fix bottlenecks in agricultural distribution. Meanwhile, 100 state enterprises are now running their finances completely autonomously as part of a yearlong pilot program. The government is also reportedly considering ways to offer a wider array of potential foreign partners more advantageous terms for joint ventures. But the Communist Party is working through numerous contradictions -- recognizing a place for market economics, challenging old biases against entrepreneurs, and hinting at decentralizing the budget while incongruously insisting, in the words of its official 2011 guidelines, that "central planning, and not the market, will take precedence."¶ EASING OFF THE DADDY STATE¶ Curtailing the state's economic role while preserving political continuity requires threading a delicate ideological needle. Although the government expects to continue providing Cubans with key social services, such as health care and education, party leaders have reprimanded the island's citizens for otherwise depending too heavily on what one prominent official a few years ago called the "daddy state." In the eyes of many Cubans, this is deeply ironic. Cuba's revolutionary founders, who built up a paternalistic state in the service of equality, are now calling for that state's partial dismantlement. What's more, most Cubans already need to resort to the black market or assistance from family abroad to acquire many daily necessities.

#### **The plan creates a political whirlwind that kills reforms and causes instability**

Hernandez, 2012 (Cuba’s Leading Social Sciences professor and researcher at the University of Havana and the High Institute of International Relations; Director of U.S. studies at the Centro de Estudios sobre America; and a Senior Research Fellow at the Instituto cubano de Investigacion Cultural “Juan Marinello” in Havana. “Debating U.S-Cuban Relations”)

#### As far as costs are concerned, although many Cubans favor detente and appreciate its economic benefits, they also remain worried about its political and ideological effects. These could affect the national consensus in a period during which social and political cohesion is of strategic value. A wave of U.S. capital flooding a Cuban economy that has not completed its reform process could have some counter­productive effects. The U.S. government could try to steer the flow of capital to favor its political goals. Various groups— Cuban-American organizations, NGOs, other institutions, and the U.S. ideological apparatuses—would have more avenues to influence the Cuban domestic context.¶ Given the fundamental asymmetry of power between the two sides, once the words "let's play cards" are spoken, the "hands" will be quite unequal. If the United States were to reverse its policy and begin to "make concessions" in return for "equivalent Cuban responses," the government of the Island would find itself in an unprecedented tactical arid strategic situation. This won't be one more round but, rather, a whole new rule book. In other words, with any increased chance of an alternative form of relations, the risk profile of quid pro quo increases. For Cuba, to take on this challenge could mean to adopt a conservative line and play defensively only; or it could mean to invent a new proactive strategy for the game. Within such a new approach, the ability to realign the available resources of political power would be decisive. Classically, the sources of political power in a situation of asymmetric confrontation lie in alliances and in consensus. This issue is complex both for Cuba and for the United States. Besides allied powers, affinities within the international system, and sympathetic ideological currents, the dynamic of rapprochement not only highlights and energizes the role of "rivals" or "opponents" but also that of" allies" within the "enemy's" own camp. The identities of such allies of the United States in the region, in Europe, and also on the Island are obvious. The allies of Cuba are also well known, paradoxically including novel ones such as many business executives and military officials who had classically been the "tips of the imperialist spear."¶ In a scenario of re-encounter between the United States and Cuba, both governments face the challenge of overcoming old dogmas, dealing with changes in the respective political consensus of each, trying to reshape those and restructure their alliances. The main weakness Cuba must overcome is not its lesser military or physical power but its siege mentality. That of the United States is not its ineptitude in dealing effectively with "communist regimes" but its sense of superpower omnipotence..

#### No solvency—other U.S. policies crush credibility

Greenwald 12—Glenn Greenwald is an American political journalist, lawyer, columnist, blogger, and author [June 25, 2012, “Collapsing U.S. credibility,” http://www.salon.com/2012/06/25/collapsing\_u\_s\_credibility/]

Two Op-Eds in The New York Times this morning both warn of the precipitous decline of American credibility on matters of human rights and peace ushered in by the Obama presidency. Taken together, they explain much of why I’ve been writing what I’ve been writing over the last three years. The first is from Columbia Professor and cyber expert Misha Glenny, who explains the significance of the first ever deployment of cyberwarfare — by the U.S. (first under Bush and accelerated under Obama), along with Israel, against Iran: THE decision by the United States and Israel to develop and then deploy the Stuxnet computer worm against an Iranian nuclear facility late in George W. Bush’s presidency marked a significant and dangerous turning point in the gradual militarization of the Internet. Washington has begun to cross the Rubicon. If it continues, contemporary warfare will change fundamentally as we move into hazardous and uncharted territory. It is one thing to write viruses and lock them away safely for future use should circumstances dictate it. It is quite another to deploy them in peacetime. Stuxnet has effectively fired the starting gun in a new arms race that is very likely to lead to the spread of similar and still more powerful offensive cyberweaponry across the Internet. Unlike nuclear or chemical weapons, however, countries are developing cyberweapons outside any regulatory framework. . . . Stuxnet was originally deployed with the specific aim of infecting the Natanz uranium enrichment facility in Iran. This required sneaking a memory stick into the plant to introduce the virus to its private and secure “offline” network. But despite Natanz’s isolation, Stuxnet somehow escaped into the cyberwild, eventually affecting hundreds of thousands of systems worldwide. This is one of the frightening dangers of an uncontrolled arms race in cyberspace; once released, virus developers generally lose control of their inventions, which will inevitably seek out and attack the networks of innocent parties. Moreover, all countries that possess an offensive cyber capability will be tempted to use it now that the first shot has been fired. . . . The United States has long been a commendable leader in combating the spread of malicious computer code, known as malware, that pranksters, criminals, intelligence services and terrorist organizations have been using to further their own ends. But by introducing such pernicious viruses as Stuxnet and Flame, America has severely undermined its moral and political credibility. He also explains that the Obama administration opposes any treaties to regulate all of this in part because it “might undermine its presumed superiority in the field of cyberweaponry and robotics,” and because it claims Russia and China (but not, of course, the U.S.) would attempt to exploit such treaties to control the Internet. In case anyone thinks he’s being melodramatic in his warnings, the original New York Times article by David Sanger that confirmed U.S. responsibility for the cyber attack included this passage: “Mr. Obama, according to participants in the many Situation Room meetings on Olympic Games, was acutely aware that with every attack he was pushing the United States into new territory, much as his predecessors had with the first use of atomic weapons in the 1940s, of intercontinental missiles in the 1950s and of drones in the past decade.” It also explained that America’s maiden use of this new form of warfare “could enable other countries, terrorists or hackers to justify their own attacks.” The second is from former U.S. President Jimmy Carter, an actually meritorious Nobel Peace Prize winner, who describes the record of his fellow Nobel laureate, the current President, in an Op-Ed entitled “A Cruel and Unusual Record“: Revelations that top officials are targeting people to be assassinated abroad, including American citizens, are only the most recent, disturbing proof of how far our nation’s violation of human rights has extended. This development began after the terrorist attacks of Sept. 11, 2001, and has been sanctioned and escalated by bipartisan executive and legislative actions, without dissent from the general public. As a result, our country can no longer speak with moral authority on these critical issues. . . . . It is disturbing that, instead of strengthening these principles, our government’s counterterrorism policies are now clearly violating at least 10 of the [Declaration on Human Rights'] 30 articles, including the prohibition against “cruel, inhuman or degrading treatment or punishment.” Recent legislation has made legal the president’s right to detain a person indefinitely on suspicion of affiliation with terrorist organizations or “associated forces,” a broad, vague power that can be abused without meaningful oversight from the courts or Congress (the law is currently being blocked by a federal judge). This law violates the right to freedom of expression and to be presumed innocent until proved guilty, two other rights enshrined in the declaration. In addition to American citizens’ being targeted for assassination or indefinite detention, recent laws have canceled the restraints in the Foreign Intelligence Surveillance Act of 1978 to allow unprecedented violations of our rights to privacy through warrantless wiretapping and government mining of our electronic communications. . . . Despite an arbitrary rule that any man killed by drones is declared an enemy terrorist, the death of nearby innocent women and children is accepted as inevitable. After more than 30 airstrikes on civilian homes this year in Afghanistan, President Hamid Karzai has demanded that such attacks end, but the practice continues in areas of Pakistan, Somalia and Yemen that are not in any war zone. We don’t know how many hundreds of innocent civilians have been killed in these attacks, each one approved by the highest authorities in Washington. This would have been unthinkable in previous times. These policies clearly affect American foreign policy. Top intelligence and military officials, as well as rights defenders in targeted areas, affirm that the great escalation in drone attacks has turned aggrieved families toward terrorist organizations, aroused civilian populations against us and permitted repressive governments to cite such actions to justify their own despotic behavior. . . . At a time when popular revolutions are sweeping the globe, the United States should be strengthening, not weakening, basic rules of law and principles of justice enumerated in the Universal Declaration of Human Rights. But instead of making the world safer, America’s violation of international human rights abets our enemies and alienates our friends. One can reasonably object to Carter’s Op-Ed on the ground that it romanticizes a non-existent American past (systematic human rights abuses are hardly a new development in the post-9/11 world), but what cannot be reasonably disputed is the trend he denounces. Note that the most egregious examples he cites — assassinating U.S. citizens without due process, civilian-killing drone attacks, the indefinite detention provisions of the NDAA — had some genesis under Bush but are hallmarks of Obama policy (his other example, the rapid erosion of constraints on government domestic surveillance, took place under both, with the full support of Obama). It’s a remarkably scathing denunciation of the record of his own political party and its current leader.

#### No Impact to Credibility-It doesn’t spill over to other issues

MacDonald and Parent 11—Former Research Fellow, International Security Program [Spring 2011, Paul K. MacDonald and Joseph M. Parent, Belfer Center at Harvard, “Graceful Decline? The Surprising Success of Great Power Retrenchment” *International Security*, volume 35, issue 4, pages 7-44, http://belfercenter.ksg.harvard.edu/files/ISEC\_a\_00034-MacDonald\_proof2.pdf]

These arguments have a number of limitations. First, opponents of retrenchment exaggerate the importance of credibility in the defense of commitments. Just because a state has signaled a willingness to retreat from one commitment does not mean it will retreat from others. Studies of reputation, for example, have demonstrated a tenuous link between past behavior and current reputation. 22 The capacity to defend a commitment is as important as credibility in determining the strength of a commitment. Quantitative studies have likewise found a mixed link between previous concessions and deterrence failure. 23 The balance of power between the challenger and the defender, in contrast, is often decisive. For instance, after a series of crises over Berlin and Cuba, British Prime Minister Harold Macmillan observed to his cabinet, "The fact that the Soviet Government had agreed to withdraw their missiles and their aircraft from Cuba was not evidence of weakness but of realism. . . . But Berlin was an entirely different question; not only was it of vital importance to the Soviet Government but the Russians had overwhelming conventional superiority in the area." 24 This finding supports the basic insight of retrenchment: by concentrating scarce resources, a policy of retrenchment exchanges a diffuse reputation for toughness for a concentrated capability at key points of challenge. Second, pessimists overstate the extent to which a policy of retrenchment can damage a great power's capabilities or prestige. Gilpin, in particular, assumes that a great power's commitments are on equal footing and interdependent. In practice, however, great powers make commitments of varying degrees that are functionally independent of one another. Concession in one area need not be seen as influencing a commitment in another area. 25 Far from being perceived as interdependent, great power commitments are often seen as being rivalrous, so that abandoning commitments in one area may actually bolster the strength of a commitment in another area. During the Korean War, for instance, President Harry Truman's administration explicitly backed away from total victory on the peninsula to strengthen deterrence in Europe. 26 Retreat in an area of lesser importance freed up resources and signaled a strong commitment to an area of greater significance.

**No terrorism**

**Gerges 12** 1/3—Prof of IR @ London School of Economics (“The Rise and Fall of Al-Qaeda: Debunking the Terrorism Narrative”, http://www.huffingtonpost.com/fawaz-gerges/the-rise-and-fall-of-alqa\_b\_1182003.html, CMR)

The popular uprisings in Tunisia, Egypt, Libya, Syria, Yemen and Bahrain have not only shaken the foundation of the authoritarian order in the Middle East, but they have also hammered **a deadly nail** in the coffin of a terrorism narrative which has painted Al-Qaeda as the West's greatest threat. At least, they should have. Yet despite Osama bin Laden's killing in May, the dwindling of his group to the palest shadow of its former self and the protest of millions across the Arab world for whom the group never represented, Al-Qaeda holds a grasp on the Western **imagination**. Few Americans and Westerners realize the degree to which their fear of terrorism is misplaced, making closure over to the costly War on Terror difficult, if not impossible. Shrouded in myth and **inflated** by **a self-sustaining industry of** so-called **terrorism "experts"** and a well-funded national security industrial complex whose numbers swelled to nearly one million, the power of Al-Qaeda can only be eradicated when the fantasies around the group are laid to rest. Myth 1: Al-Qaeda has been operational for more than two decades Contrary to the conventional terrorism narrative, Al-Qaeda has not been a functional organization with the goal of targeting the West for the past 20 years. By the time the American forces expelled bin Laden and his associates from their base in Afghanistan at the end of 2001, Al-Qaeda, as we know it today, was only five years old. At the end of the Afghan war in 1989, none of the leading figures -- Sheikh Abdullah Azzam, Ayman al-Zawahiri, nor bin Laden -- called for targeting the United States or the West. Even after the catalyst for change in bin Laden's thinking -- the American military intervention in the Gulf in 1990 and its permanent stationing of troops in Saudi Arabia -- the group did not translate this hostility into concrete action. Rather, it was during bin Laden's time in Sudan in the mid-1990s where he combined business practices with ideological indoctrination. Myth 2: Al-Qaeda has lots of boots on the ground At its height of its power in the late 1990s, Al-Qaeda had between 1,000 and 3,000 members. Transnational jihadism of the Al-Qaeda variety has, in fact, **never had a large constituency**, nor a solid base of popular support: Al-Qaeda has never been a viable social movement, but truly a fringe group without mass appeal among Muslim opinion. Contrary to received wisdom, September 11 did not turn out to be Al-Qaeda's baptism by fire, a force multiplier, a game changer. There was no river of young recruits to rise up and join the fight against the head of kufr (impiety) -- the U.S. -- as had happened with the Soviet invasion of Afghanistan in the late 1970s. Western intelligence officials believe that there are **fewer than 200** surviving members of Al-Qaeda, based **mainly in Pakistan and Afghanistan** and mostly unskilled composed of cooks, drivers, bodyguards and food soldiers. Myth Three: Al Qaeda has the same philosophy as other militant Islamist organizations While distinctions are rarely made between domestic jihadis and transnational Al-Qaeda types, or between Al-Qaeda and politically based Islamists, such as the Muslim Brotherhood, Hamas or Hizbullah, Al-Qaeda, with deep historical roots in Muslim societies, is an ideological orphan within the military Islamist family, an ambitious venture founded and led by a small vanguard. Grouping all these organizations together glosses over a history of ideological struggles within militant Islamist groups and even among Al Qaeda's inner sanctum of leaders over the concept of transnational jihad. From its origins in the late 1950s until the mid-1990s, a period of almost forty years, the militant Islamist movement known as "jihadism" was inward-looking, obsessed with replacing "renegade" secular Muslim rulers with Qur'anic-based states or states governed by the sharia (Islamic law). In the 1990s bin Laden and Zawahiri twisted these ideologies to suit their purposes of fighting the 'far enemy' -- the U.S. and its close Western allies -- which they believed would attract enough followers to build an army and momentum enough for their nearer battles. Myth Four: While Al-Qaeda Central has suffered a defeat with the loss of bin Laden, local 'branches' of Al-Qaeda in Yemen, Iraq, Pakistan, Somalia and Indonesia will continue to try to attack the U.S. and the West The **material links** and connections between local branches and Al-Qaeda Central are **tenuous at best**: far from being an institutionally coherent social movement, Al-Qaeda is a loose collection of small groups and factions that tend to be guided by charismatic individuals and are **more local** **than transnational** in outlook. Most victims are therefore Muslim civilians. Further, these branches tend to be as much a liability for the long term strategic interests of Al-Qaeda Central as they are assets. Abu Musab Zarqawi, the emir of Al-Qaeda in Iraq, proved to be Al-Qaeda Central's worst enemy. He refused to take orders from bin Laden or Zawahiri and, in fact, acted against their wishes, according to his own desires. Like Zarqawi, local groups or franchises -- like Al-Qaeda in the Arabian Peninsula (AQAP) or Al-Qaeda of the Islamic Maghreb -- which the terrorism narrative often paints as being closely aligned and commanded by Al-Qaeda Central in fact have proven repeatedly that they run by their own local and contextualized agendas, not those set among the inner sanctum of Al-Qaeda Central. Myth Five: The War on Terror has made Americans safer and has decreased the likelihood of attacks on the country There is a clear causal link between incidences of homegrown terrorism in the West and the post-9/11 wars fought in Afghanistan and Iraq, and more recently in Pakistan and Yemen. Far from weeding out individual terrorists drone by drone to put an end to Al-Qaeda and its violence, the American offensive since 9/11 has fed into the Al-Qaeda narrative which paints the West as a Judeo-Christian crusader and, ironically, inspired a new generation of homegrown radicals. Despite their apparent tactical success, U.S. counterterrorism measures like drone attacks further fuel anti-American sentiments and calls for vengeance. Yet neither the U.S. national security apparatus nor terrorism experts acknowledge a link between the new phenomenon of bottom-up extremism and the U.S. War on Terror, particularly in Afghanistan-Pakistan. Further, despite the phenomenal expansion of the intelligence machine as part of the War on Terror, this machine has failed to detect the few serious attacks and plots against the U.S. homeland, such as the Fort Hood, Texas, shooting that left thirteen dead, the so-called underwear bomber plot, or the 2009 Christmas Day bomb attempt, which was thwarted not by one of the almost one million individuals with top-secret clearances employed to find lone terrorists but by an alert airline passenger who saw smoke coming from a seatmate. In the Times Square bombing, an alert vendor called the police after he saw smoke coming out of a parked SUV. Even when the U.S. pays more than $5 billion for 1 million employees with security clearances to hunt members of Al-Qaeda, absolutely security cannot exist. The security of the West is organically linked to that of the rest of the world. And U.S. leaders must think twice before pursuing counterterrorism measures which alienate Muslim public opinion and breed homegrown terrorists. \*\*\* **The war with Al-Qaeda is over**. Western leaders must level with their citizens: Al-Qaeda poses **only a security irritant**, not a serious threat. Terrorism cannot be eradicated with drone attacks or even massive military interventions, all of which are, in any case, costly. Rather than battling against a mythic foe, the U.S. and Western powers should expedite the withdrawal of soldiers from Muslim territories where their presence is a painful reminder of the European colonial legacy of domination and subjugation.

**No retaliation**

**Bremmer 4—**IR prof, Columbia. Faculty member at Stanford’s Hoover Institution. Senior Fellow, World Policy Institute. PhD in pol sci, Stanford (Ian, 11/13, Suppose a new 9/11 hit America . . ., http://www.newstatesman.com/200409130005, AG)

What would happen if there were a new terrorist attack inside the United States on 11 September 2004? How would it affect the presidential election campaign? The conventional wisdom is that Americans - their patriotic defiance aroused - would rally to President George W Bush and make him an all but certain winner in November. But consider the differences between the context of the original 9/11 and that of any attack which might occur this autumn. In 2001, the public reaction was one of disbelief and incomprehension. Many Americans realised for the first time that large-scale terrorist attacks on US soil were not only conceivable; they were, perhaps, inevitable. A majority focused for the first time on the threat from al-Qaeda, on the Taliban and on the extent to which Saudis were involved in terrorism. This time, the public response would move much more quickly from shock to anger; debate over how America should respond would begin immediately. Yet it is difficult to imagine how the Bush administration could focus its response on an external enemy. Should the US send 50,000 troops to the Afghan-Pakistani border to intensify the hunt for Osama Bin Laden and "step up" efforts to attack the heart of al-Qaeda? Many would wonder if that wasn't what the administration pledged to do after the attacks three years ago. The president would face intensified criticism from those who have argued all along that Iraq was a distraction from "the real war on terror". And what if a significant number of the terrorists responsible for the pre-election attack were again Saudis? The Bush administration could hardly take military action against the Saudi government at a time when crude-oil prices are already more than $45 a barrel and global supply is stretched to the limit. While the Saudi royal family might support a co-ordinated attack against terrorist camps, real or imagined, near the Yemeni border - where recent searches for al-Qaeda have concentrated - that would seem like a trivial, insufficient retaliation for an attack on the US mainland. Remember how the Republicans criticised Bill Clinton's administration for ineffectually "bouncing the rubble" in Afghanistan after the al-Qaeda attacks on the US embassies in Kenya and Tanzania in the 1990s. So what kind of response might be credible? Washington's concerns about Iran are rising. The 9/11 commission report noted evidence of co-operation between Iran and al-Qaeda operatives, if not direct Iranian advance knowledge of the 9/11 hijacking plot. Over the past few weeks, US officials have been more explicit, too, in declaring Iran's nuclear programme "unacceptable". However, in the absence of an official Iranian claim of responsibility for this hypothetical terrorist attack, the domestic opposition to such a war and the international outcry it would provoke would make quick action against Iran unthinkable.

#### Their impacts are exaggerated—terrorism isn’t an extinction risk

**Gerges ’11** [Fawaz A, Professor of Middle East Studies and International Relations at the London School of Economics, “The Rise and Fall of Al-Qaeda”, page number below, CMR]

Politically based violence and terrorism is a social plague no more or less destructive than other social ailments. Instead of investing politically based violence and terrorism with civilizational and existential meanings, it is important to understand what created the wave of transnational jihad, a wave that surged in the late 1990s and has recently broken into smaller and weaker ripples. While these ripples might remain dangerous, they will most likely scatter and dissipate.

As I have tried to argue, there is a substantial disconnect between the dominant terrorism narrative based on perception, which portrays al-Qaeda and others who subscribe to its ideology as a strategic, existential threat- and the reality of the threat, which is significantly smaller and primarily tactical. This divide between perception and reality foments unnecessary fear and lubricates a costly national security-industrial complex that includes nearly a million individuals with high security clearances. Furthermore, I argue that the perception many Americans and Westerners have of al-Qaeda has taken hold of the public imagination and is not likely to change anytime soon. Evidence and reality no longer matter in a world built on perception and illusion. Every plot and incident is viewed as an affirmation of al-Qaeda's invincibility and reach: to the American leadership bin Laden and his successors appear to be 100 feet tall. [end page 192]

**No WMD terrorism – they have no motivation and lack the capability – empirically the threat is overblown**

**Mueller ’11**. John Mueller, Professor and Woody Hayes Chair of National Security Studies, Mershon Center for International Security Studies and Department of Political Science, “The Truth About al Qaeda”, 8/2/2011, http://www.foreignaffairs.com/articles/68012/john-mueller/the-truth-about-al-qaeda?page=show, CMR

The chief lesson of 9/11 should have been that small bands of terrorists, using simple methods, can exploit loopholes in existing security systems. But instead, many preferred to engage in massive extrapolation: If 19 men could hijack four airplanes simultaneously, the thinking went, then surely al Qaeda would soon make an atomic bomb. As a misguided Turkish proverb holds, "If your enemy be an ant, imagine him to be an elephant." The new information unearthed in Osama bin Laden's hideout in Abbottabad, Pakistan, suggests that the United States has been doing so for a full decade. Whatever al Qaeda's threatening rhetoric and occasional nuclear fantasies, its potential as a menace, particularly as an atomic one, has been much inflated. The public has now endured a decade of dire warnings about the imminence of a terrorist atomic attack. In 2004, the former CIA spook Michael Scheuer proclaimed on television's 60 Minutes that it was "probably a near thing," and in 2007, the physicist Richard Garwin assessed the likelihood of a nuclear explosion in an American or a European city by terrorism or other means in the next ten years to be 87 percent. By 2008, Defense Secretary Robert Gates mused that what keeps every senior government leader awake at night is "the thought of a terrorist ending up with a weapon of mass destruction, especially nuclear." Few, it seems, found much solace in the fact that an al Qaeda computer seized in Afghanistan in 2001 indicated that the group's budget for research on weapons of mass destruction (almost all of it focused on primitive chemical weapons work) was some $2,000 to $4,000. In the wake of the killing of Osama bin Laden, officials now have more al Qaeda computers, which reportedly contain a wealth of information about the workings of the organization in the intervening decade. A multi-agency task force has completed its assessment, and according to first reports, it has found that al Qaeda members have primarily been engaged in dodging drone strikes and complaining about how cash-strapped they are. Some reports suggest they've also been looking at quite a bit of pornography. The full story is not out yet, but it seems **breathtakingly unlikely** that the miserable little group has had the time or inclination, let alone the money, to set up and staff a uranium-seizing operation, as well as a fancy, super-high-tech facility to fabricate a bomb. It is a process that requires trusting corrupted foreign collaborators and other criminals, obtaining and transporting highly guarded material, setting up a machine shop staffed with top scientists and technicians, and rolling the heavy, cumbersome, and untested finished product into position to be detonated by a skilled crew, all the while attracting no attention from outsiders. The documents also reveal that after fleeing Afghanistan, bin Laden maintained what one member of the task force calls an "obsession" with attacking the United States again, even though 9/11 was in many ways a disaster for the group. It led to a worldwide loss of support, a major attack on it and on its Taliban hosts, and a decade of furious and dedicated harassment. And indeed, bin Laden did repeatedly and publicly threaten an attack on the United States. He assured Americans in 2002 that "the youth of Islam are preparing things that will fill your hearts with fear"; and in 2006, he declared that his group had been able "to breach your security measures" and that "operations are under preparation, and you will see them on your own ground once they are finished." Al Qaeda's animated spokesman, Adam Gadahn, proclaimed in 2004 that "the streets of America shall run red with blood" and that "the next wave of attacks may come at any moment." The obsessive desire notwithstanding, such fulminations have clearly lacked substance. Although hundreds of millions of people enter the United States legally every year, and countless others illegally, no true al Qaeda cell has been found in the country since 9/11 and exceedingly few people have been uncovered who even have any sort of "link" to the organization. The closest effort at an al Qaeda operation within the country was a decidedly nonnuclear one by an Afghan-American, Najibullah Zazi, in 2009. Outraged at the U.S.-led war on his home country, Zazi attempted to join the Taliban but was persuaded by al Qaeda operatives in Pakistan to set off some bombs in the United States instead. Under surveillance from the start, he was soon arrested, and, however "radicalized," he has been talking to investigators ever since, turning traitor to his former colleagues. Whatever training Zazi received was inadequate; he repeatedly and desperately sought further instruction from his overseas instructors by phone. At one point, he purchased bomb material with a stolen credit card, guaranteeing that the purchase would attract attention and that security video recordings would be scrutinized. Apparently, his handlers were so strapped that they could not even advance him a bit of cash to purchase some hydrogen peroxide for making a bomb. For al Qaeda, then, the operation was a failure in every way -- except for the ego boost it got by inspiring the usual dire litany about the group's supposedly existential challenge to the United States, to the civilized world, to the modern state system. Indeed, no Muslim extremist has succeeded in detonating even a simple bomb in the United States in the last ten years, and except for the attacks on the London Underground in 2005, neither has any in the United Kingdom. It seems **wildly unlikely** that al Qaeda is remotely ready to go nuclear. Outside of war zones, the amount of killing carried out by al Qaeda and al Qaeda linkees, maybes, and wannabes throughout the entire world since 9/11 stands at perhaps a few hundred per year. That's a few hundred too many, of course, but it **scarcely presents an existential**, or elephantine**, threat**. And the likelihood that an American will be killed by a terrorist of any ilk stands at one in 3.5 million per year, even with 9/11 included. That probability will remain unchanged unless terrorists are able to increase their capabilities massively -- and obtaining nuclear weapons would allow them to do so. Although al Qaeda may have dreamed from time to time about getting such weapons, no other terrorist group has even gone so far as to indulge in such dreams, with the exception of the Japanese cult Aum Shinrikyo, which leased the mineral rights to an Australian sheep ranch that sat on uranium deposits, purchased some semi-relevant equipment, and tried to buy a finished bomb from the Russians. That experience, however, cannot be very encouraging to the would-be atomic terrorist. Even though it was flush with funds and undistracted by drone attacks (or even by much surveillance), Aum Shinrikyo abandoned its atomic efforts in frustration very early on. It then moved to biological weapons, another complete failure that inspired its leader to suggest that fears expressed in the United States of a biological attack were actually a ruse to tempt terrorist groups to pursue the weapons. The group did finally manage to release some sarin gas in a Tokyo subway that killed 13 and led to the group's terminal shutdown, as well as to 16 years (and counting) of pronouncements that WMD terrorism is the wave of the future. No elephants there, either.

### 1NC Multilateralsim

The world is moving to pluralism, not multipolarity – the US can still maintain unipolar leadership because most challengers are regional

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The theory that the world is moving from a unipolar order, dominated by the United States, to a multipolar distribution of power has led to a robust debate concerning the consequences of this change on the international order. However, the global power distribution is currently following a different pattern. Instead of what is conventionally addressed as a global unipolar to multipolar shift, in fact rising powers are mainly regional powers, not global ones, although they may have global reach. This pattern should be expected to continue in the near future and should be accounted for in order to make sound policy.

It follows that the movement away from a unipolar world should not be equated with one in which more global powers contend with each other; nor should it be equated with a world in which new powers take over from an old, declining power. Moreover, it should not be assumed that the world will be less ordered. Instead, to a significant extent, the change seems to be toward more regional autonomy, or increased devolution, and greater variety in the relationships between the United States and regional powers. These relationships may see regional powers serve as junior partners to the global power and assume some of the global power's regional responsibilities. Or these relationships may produce junior adversarial regional powers that seek greater relative regional control in defiance of the United States, but seek at most limited realignment of power on the global stage.

In the process of devolution, the increase in regional self-government and pluralism are much less challenging to the global power than [\*14] the redistribution of power implied by multipolarity. Indeed, as junior regional powers increasingly act as partners and assume regional responsibilities, they enable the global power to scale back its global commitments without losing much of its weight in international developments. Similarly, the desire for regional control among rising powers can be more readily accommodated than aspirations to challenge the United States as a global superpower.

It must be noted that the notion of devolution as used here is that of an ideal, n1 and as such there will be significant variation in its real-world instantiations. However, the process of devolution suggests a logical pattern of behavior for all actors involved, upon which various powers can construct a viable strategy.

While the movement from a uni- to a multipolar distribution of global power is considered by some to be "positive" and more supportive of international institutions, n2 others consider it as "negative" and likely to lead to confrontation between the declining power and the rising ones. n3 In truth, the move to a higher level of regional pluralism is a double-edged sword. The effect of the transformation depends on the particular accommodation pattern that develops between each regional power and the global power. As indicated previously, this pattern can vary from that of a junior partner to that of a regional antagonist.

Stated in other terms, if unipolarity is compared to hierarchy and multipolarity is compared to flat systems or networks, regional pluralism is analogous to increased subsidiarity.

Importantly, the accommodation pattern between the global superpower and regional powers is fundamentally different from the one between declining and rising global powers. In the former case, the regional powers do not seek to modify or replace the global rules or change the global distribution of public goods. Instead, they aim merely to gain local exemptions from the rules, variants in the ways they are applied, or increases in their share of distributed benefits. Superpowers may prove unwilling to accommodate such regional challenges and regional challengers may hold that they have been insufficiently accommodated. [\*15] However, such global/regional accommodations are, in general, easier to reach than the global/global accommodations between declining and rising global powers, and thus are less likely to lead to outright conflicts. With devolution, the central power yields, therefore risking much less when pluralism increases than when a transition from uni- to multipolarity takes place. This is one of the principle strengths of pluralism.

Unilateralism is what sustains primacy – other states bandwagon with the US for fear of other rising powers. Moving towards multilateralism makes it unsustainable

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Understanding which of these choices—soft balancing against the hegemon or alignment with the hegemon—is more prevalent among second-tier states has significant ramifications for the endurance of American hegemony. The record of the 2001–2009 period indicates that a wide range of second-tier states not only aligned with the United States, they strengthened their security cooperation in a manner that extended the reach of the us military at a time when American foreign policy was widely seen as unilateral. 3 In addition, they did so by incurring certain costs that helped to spread the burden of maintaining the American hegemonic system. This pattern of alignment with the United States has implications for the endurance of American hegemony because states aligned with the United States may have more at stake in the maintenance of American hegemony than the United States itself. A smaller American naval presence in the Asia Pacific region, for example, may be seen as a relatively minor shift in the United States with some beneficial budgetary savings. In Vietnam, Australia, or the Philippines, however, such a shift could prompt a wholesale reevaluation of national defense policy and have costly implications. Therefore, second-tier states have an incentive to participate in activities that extend the endurance of American hegemony, even if they do not receive a formal security guarantee for their efforts.

This may have implications for American foreign policy. There are distinct policy recommendations flowing from the logic of those scholars and policy professionals who argue that a more proactive and unilateral foreign policy speeds the decline of American hegemony. The most important of these is that the United States should practice a policy of self-restraint that defers to international organizations, which would alleviate concerns about the current preponderance of the United States in the international system. 4 A policy of self-restraint would signal that the United States is not a threat to other major powers and preclude attempts at balancing. This policy would also help to set a norm for the behavior of future great powers and recognize the emerging reality of a multipolar world. 5 Another policy implication from this line of reasoning is that the United States should reduce its global military presence that both encourages balancing behavior by other states and speeds hegemonic decline by draining financial resources. 6

Yet, this policy of restraint may be precisely what would cause second-tier states to question the utility of their security relationship with the United States and move away from policies that help to maintain American hegemony. This could at least partially explain the trend of states moving to establish closer security relationships with the United States in the 2001–2009 period, when it was at its most proactive and least deferential to international organizations. States may logically conclude that a hegemon willing to project power regardless of international opinion will be likely to use its power in the defense of the hegemony that is in the interest of second-tier states. Second-tier states might be far less willing to contribute to the maintenance of American hegemony if the United States behaves in a manner that raises doubts as to the durability of its commitments or its willingness to use its power in the international arena. Thus, what would trigger a serious decline in the cooperation that helps to sustain American hegemony would be a self-imposed reduction in the ability of the United States to project power and an increased reluctance to use its power in support of its national interests.

The plan is surrender – it emboldens global regimes and collapses US influence

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In another outreach to roguish regimes, the Obama administration on Monday announced the easing of some restrictions on Cuba. Team Bam hopes that a new face in the White House will heal old wounds. Fat chance. Sure, it's fine to allow separated families to see each other more than once every three years -- even though Cubanos aren't allowed to visit America. And permitting gifts to Cuban relatives could ease unnecessary poverty -- even though the regime will siphon off an estimated 20 percent of the money sent there. In the end, though, it's still Fidel Castro and his brother Raul who'll decide whether there'll be a thaw in ties with the United States -- or not. And in usual Castro-style, Fidel himself stood defiant in response to the White House proclamation, barely recognizing the US policy shift. Instead, and predictably, Fidel demanded an end to el bloqueo (the blockade) -- without any promises of change for the people who labor under the regime's hard-line policies. So much for the theory that if we're nice to them, they'll be nice to us. Many are concerned that the lack of love from Havana will lead Washington to make even more unilateral concessions to create an opening with Fidel and the gang. Of course, the big empanada is the US economic embargo against Cuba, in place since 1962, which undoubtedly is the thing Havana most wants done away with -- without any concessions on Cuba's part, of course. Lifting the embargo won't normalize relations, but instead legitimize -- and wave the white flag to -- Fidel's 50-year fight against the Yanquis, further lionizing the dictator and encouraging the Latin American Left. Because the economy is nationalized, trade will pour plenty of cash into the Cuban national coffers -- allowing Havana to suppress dissent at home and bolster its communist agenda abroad. The last thing we should do is to fill the pockets of a regime that'll use those profits to keep a jackboot on the neck of the Cuban people. The political and human-rights situation in Cuba is grim enough already. The police state controls the lives of 11 million Cubans in what has become an island prison. The people enjoy none of the basic civil liberties -- no freedom of speech, press, assembly or association. Security types monitor foreign journalists, restrict Internet access and foreign news and censor the domestic media. The regime holds more than 200 political dissidents in jails that rats won't live in. We also don't need a pumped-up Cuba that could become a serious menace to US interests in Latin America, the Caribbean -- or beyond. (The likes of China, Russia and Iran might also look to partner with a revitalized Cuba.) With an influx of resources, the Cuban regime would surely team up with the rulers of nations like Venezuela, Nicaragua and Bolivia to advance socialism and anti-Americanism in the Western Hemisphere. The embargo has stifled Havana's ambitions ever since the Castros lost their Soviet sponsorship in the early 1990s. Anyone noticed the lack of trouble Cuba has caused internationally since then? Contrast that with the 1980s some time. Regrettably, 110 years after independence from Spain (courtesy of Uncle Sam), Cuba still isn't free. Instead of utopia, it has become a dystopia at the hands of the Castro brothers. The US embargo remains a matter of principle -- and an appropriate response to Cuba's brutal repression of its people. Giving in to evil only begets more of it. Haven't we learned that yet? Until we see progress in loosing the Cuban people from the yoke of the communist regime, we should hold firm onto the leverage the embargo provides.

DON’T READ IF HEG IMPACT - US primacy prevents global conflict – diminishing power creates a vacuum that causes transition wars in multiple places

Brooks et al 13 [Stephen G. Brooks is Associate Professor of Government at Dartmouth College.G. John Ikenberry is the Albert G. Milbank Professor of Politics and International Affairs at Princeton University in the Department of Politics and the Woodrow Wilson School of Public and International Affairs. He is also a Global Eminence Scholar at Kyung Hee University.William C. Wohlforth is the Daniel Webster Professor in the Department of Government at Dartmouth College. “Don't Come Home, America: The Case against Retrenchment”, Winter 2013, Vol. 37, No. 3, Pages 7-51,[http://www.mitpressjournals.org/doi/abs/10.1162/ISEC\_a\_00107](http://www.mitpressjournals.org/doi/abs/10.1162/ISEC_a_00107%22%20%5Ct%20%22_blank), GDI File]

A core premise of deep engagement is that it prevents the emergence of a far more dangerous global security environment. For one thing, as noted above, the United States’ overseas presence gives it the leverage to restrain partners from taking provocative action. Perhaps more important, its core alliance commitments also deter states with aspirations to regional hegemony from contemplating expansion and make its partners more secure, reducing their incentive to adopt solutions to their security problems that threaten others and thus stoke security dilemmas. The contention that engaged U.S. power dampens the baleful effects of anarchy is consistent with influential variants of realist theory. Indeed, arguably the scariest portrayal of the war-prone world that would emerge absent the “American Pacifier” is provided in the works of John Mearsheimer, who forecasts dangerous multipolar regions replete with security competition, arms races, nuclear proliferation and associated preventive wartemptations, regional rivalries, and even runs at regional hegemony and full-scale great power war. 72 How do retrenchment advocates, the bulk of whom are realists, discount this benefit? Their arguments are complicated, but two capture most of the variation: (1) U.S. security guarantees are not necessary to prevent dangerous rivalries and conflict in Eurasia; or (2) prevention of rivalry and conflict in Eurasia is not a U.S. interest. Each response is connected to a different theory or set of theories, which makes sense given that the whole debate hinges on a complex future counterfactual (what would happen to Eurasia’s security setting if the United States truly disengaged?). Although a certain answer is impossible, each of these responses is nonetheless a weaker argument for retrenchment than advocates acknowledge. The first response flows from defensive realism as well as other international relations theories that discount the conflict-generating potential of anarchy under contemporary conditions. 73 Defensive realists maintain that the high expected costs of territorial conquest, defense dominance, and an array of policies and practices that can be used credibly to signal benign intent, mean that Eurasia’s major states could manage regional multipolarity peacefully without theAmerican pacifier. Retrenchment would be a bet on this scholarship, particularly in regions where the kinds of stabilizers that nonrealist theories point to—such as democratic governance or dense institutional linkages—are either absent or weakly present. There are three other major bodies of scholarship, however, that might give decisionmakers pause before making this bet. First is regional expertise. Needless to say, there is no consensus on the net security effects of U.S. withdrawal. Regarding each region, there are optimists and pessimists. Few experts expect a return of intense great power competition in a post-American Europe, but many doubt European governments will pay the political costs of increased EU defense cooperation and the budgetary costs of increasing military outlays. 74 The result might be a Europe that is incapable of securing itself from various threats that could be destabilizing within the region and beyond (e.g., a regional conflict akin to the 1990s Balkan wars), lacks capacity for global security missions in which U.S. leaders might want European participation, and is vulnerable to the influence of outside rising powers. What about the other parts of Eurasia where the United States has a substantial military presence? Regarding the Middle East, the balance begins toswing toward pessimists concerned that states currently backed by Washington— notably Israel, Egypt, and Saudi Arabia—might take actions upon U.S. retrenchment that would intensify security dilemmas. And concerning East Asia, pessimism regarding the region’s prospects without the American pacifier is pronounced. Arguably the principal concern expressed by area experts is that Japan and South Korea are likely to obtain a nuclear capacity and increase their military commitments, which could stoke a destabilizing reaction from China. It is notable that during the Cold War, both South Korea and Taiwan moved to obtain a nuclear weapons capacity and were only constrained from doing so by astill-engaged United States. 75 The second body of scholarship casting doubt on the bet on defensive realism’s sanguine portrayal is all of the research that undermines its conception of state preferences. Defensive realism’s optimism about what would happen if the United States retrenched is very much dependent on itsparticular—and highly restrictive—assumption about state preferences; once we relax this assumption, then much of its basis for optimism vanishes. Specifically, the prediction of post-American tranquility throughout Eurasia rests on the assumption that security is the only relevant state preference, with security defined narrowly in terms of protection from violent external attacks on the homeland. Under that assumption, the security problem is largely solved as soon as offense and defense are clearly distinguishable, and offense is extremely expensive relative to defense. Burgeoning research across the social and other sciences, however,undermines that core assumption: states have preferences not only for security but also for prestige, status, and other aims, and theyengage in trade-offs among the various objectives. 76 In addition, they define security not just in terms of territorial protection but in view of many and varied milieu goals. It follows that even states that are relatively secure may nevertheless engage in highly competitive behavior. Empirical studies show that this is indeed sometimes the case. 77 In sum, a bet on a benign postretrenchment Eurasia is a bet that leaders of major countries will never allow these nonsecurity preferences to influence their strategic choices. To the degree that these bodies of scholarly knowledge have predictive leverage, U.S. retrenchment would result in a significant deterioration in the security environment in at least some of the world’s key regions. We have already mentioned the third, even more alarming body of scholarship. Offensive realism predicts thatthe withdrawal of the American pacifier will yield either a competitive regional multipolarity complete with associated insecurity, arms racing, crisis instability, nuclear proliferation, and the like, or bids for regional hegemony, which may be beyond the capacity of local great powers to contain (and which in any case would generate intensely competitive behavior, possibly including regional great power war).