



Bluegrass Debate Coalition

BDC Evidence Packet

"Bringing Debate to the Bluegrass!"

Public Forum Debate – 2022 November/December Topic Area: Military Strategy

Resolved: The United States' strategy of Great Power Competition produces more benefits than harms.

The Bluegrass Debate Coalition (BDC) provides Public Forum debate evidence packets to support the Kentucky debate community, and provide supplemental research for BDC coaching, training, and competitions.

The BDC releases evidence packets for bi-monthly and monthly topics selected by the National Speech and Debate Association, a national honor society that provides our public forum debate topics. According to the NSDA, "The Public Forum Wording Committee has developed a variety of potential resolutions for the 2022-2023 season. Member students and one chapter advisor per active school may vote for each topic one week prior to the topic release date." 2022-23 topics are selected for the following areas:

- September/October – Topic Area: Environmental Infrastructure
- November/December – Topic Area: Military Strategy
- January – Topic Area: West Asia
- February – Topic Area: Economy
- March – Topic Area: South and Southeast Asia
- April – Topic Area: Technology
- National Tournament – Topic Area: Civics

Table of Contents

- BACKGROUND INFORMATION..... 4**
 - UNPACKING THE DEFINITION, HISTORY, AND APPLICATION OF “GREAT POWER COMPETITION’ 4
 - HOW “GREAT POWER COMPETITION” BEGAN, AND ITS REVITALIZATION IN RECENT US ADMINISTRATIONS..... 5
 - OFFICIAL US DEPARTMENT OF DEFENSE DOCUMENTS ARE REPLACING THE TERM “GREAT POWER COMPETITION” WITH “STRATEGIC COMPETITION” 5
- PRO ARGUMENTS..... 7**
 - THE US ECONOMY RELIES ON COMMERCIAL AND DIPLOMATIC POWER THAT CONTROL FLOWS OF TRADE - EXPANDING INTERNATIONAL MILITARY STRENGTH IS CRITICAL TO SECURING INFLUENCE 7
 - THE CHINESE FOREIGN ASSISTANCE AND INVESTMENTS HAVE INCREASED ITS GEOPOLITICAL GOALS IN SUB-SAHARAN AFRICA, SOUTHEAST ASIA, SOUTHERN ASIA 8
 - GPC LED TO A RENEWED EMPHASIS ON US DEFENSE PLANNING CAPABILITIES, HELPING THE US TO REGAIN SUPERIORITY IN CONVENTIONAL WEAPONRY. THE SHIFT EMPHASIZES CREATIVE INNOVATION THAT ACCELERATES MILITARY SERVICES WHILE SIDESTEPPING AN ARMS RACE. 9
 - GPC IS STRENGTHENING SUPPLY CHAIN SECURITY BY EMPHASIZING DIVERSITY IN CONTRACT SUPPLIERS, REDUCING THE RISK OF FRAGILITY IN THE AMERICAN SUPPLY CHAIN 10
 - EMPIRICALLY, THE US AND ALLIES WILL NEED TO MOBILIZE TO COUNTER RUSSIAN AND CHINESE REVISIONIST POLICIES 11
 - THE US CAN ENGAGE IN GPC THROUGH MEASURES THAT BENEFIT THE US AND COLLABORATE WITH OTHER COUNTRIES – BIDEN PROVES 11
 - GPC ENCOURAGES DEVELOPMENTS THAT SPILLOVER WORLDWIDE – INCLUDING VACCINE PRODUCTION AND CLIMATE LEADERSHIP 12
 - GPC IS CRITICAL TO PROTECTING GLOBAL DEMOCRACY AND PUSHING BACK AGAINST AUTHORITARIANISM 12
 - GREAT POWER COMPETITION IS A KEY STRATEGY TO CLOSING THE GAP BETWEEN THE US AND OTHER COUNTRIES – AMERICA HAS UNIQUE ADVANTAGES 14
 - THE US HAS SIGNIFICANT ADVANTAGES OVER COMPETITORS LIKE RUSSIA AND CHINA – FAILING TO TAKE ADVANTAGE OF THESE OPPORTUNITIES RISKS ALLOWING COMPETITORS TO DICTATE THE TERMS AND SENDS SIGNALS TO ALLIES THAT UNDERCUTS CONFIDENCE 15
 - GPC CAN BE SELECTIVE AND CONFIDENT RATHER THAN REACTIVE – THE PLAYBOOK IS CHANGING AND THE US CAN ADAPT 16
 - MILITARY TECHNOLOGICAL ADVANTAGES THROUGH GPC IS CRITICAL TO MAINTAINING THE US’ NETWORK OF ALLIES AND PARTNERS – THIS IS WHAT GIVES THE US IT’S COMPETITIVE ADVANTAGE..... 17
- CON ARGUMENTS..... 18**
 - CURRENT US GPC STRATEGY IS NOT AFFORDABLE, AND REQUIRES CUTS TO OTHER MILITARY ENDEAVORS THAT PUT THE US AND ALLIES AT RISK..... 18
 - GPC STRATEGY DOES NOT ACCURATELY ASSESS THE RISK OF EACH INDIVIDUAL NATION 18
 - GPC STRATEGY TRADES OFF WITH MORE PRESSING THREATS LIKE INTERNATIONAL DISASTERS WHILE CUTTING INTO DIPLOMATIC COOPERATION THAT IS KEY TO STOPPING THE THREATS 19
 - GPC PERPETUATES A DISTORTED AND MISLEADING VIEW OF INTERNATIONAL ORDER, RESULTING IN PERVASIVE ANXIETY THAT MIRRORS THE COLD WAR 20

GPC BUILDS FLAWED MILITARY STRATEGY THAT EMPHASIZES OVER-REACTIVE COMPETITION THAT IGNORES CONSEQUENCES FOR US INTERESTS, WHILE CROWDING OUT ALTERNATIVE STRATEGIES THAT ARE MORE SPECIFIC TO EXISTING GEOPOLITICAL REALITIES 21

GPC PORTRAYS COMPETITION IN AN AGGRESSIVE AND CONFRONTATIONAL LENS. THE “ALL OR NOTHING” NARRATIVE RISKS FULL OUT CONVENTIONAL – AND POTENTIALLY NUCLEAR WAR – IN ADDITION TO LOSS OF 4 DECADES OF DIPLOMACY, TRILLIONS OF DOLLARS, AND MORE..... 21

GPC ENCOURAGES AN INTENSE STATE OF RIVALRY, CREATING AN ANTAGONISTIC ENVIRONMENT THAT MAKES IT EASIER FOR OTHER POWERS TO CHALLENGE US LEADERSHIP 22

GPC IS NOT CONCRETE; IT CAN JUSTIFY ALMOST ANYTHING, ALLOWING POLITICIANS TO MANIPULATE THE CONCEPT TO PASS THEIR PREFERRED POLICY..... 23

COOPERATION – NOT COMPETITION – IS NEEDED TO ADDRESS GLOBAL EXISTENTIAL CHALLENGES, LIKE CLIMATE CHANGE AND NUCLEAR PROLIFERATION..... 24

GPC IS CONCEPTUALLY FLAWED, FAILING TO IDENTIFY WHO THE “GREAT POWERS” ARE..... 24

COMPETITION IS INTRINSIC TO STATE AFFAIRS – GPC ADDS NO VALUE TO POLITICAL DISCUSSIONS 25

GPC DOES NOT DESCRIBE STRATEGIC ENDS. COMPETITION FOR COMPETITION’S SAKE RESULTS IN UNCHECKED ESCALATION 25

GPC FOCUSES ON CHINESE/RUSSIAN INTERACTIONS WITH THE US, RESULTING IN A COSTLY AND DANGEROUS OVERSIMPLIFICATION OF GEOPOLITICS 25

GPC ADDS NO VALUE TO POLICY MAKERS DECISIONS, WHILE POTENTIALLY RISKING DANGER..... 26

AMERICA HAS RELIED ON GPC AS A POLITICAL STRATEGY IN REPLACEMENT OF DECLINING ECONOMIC POWER. EMPHASIS ON MILITARY DOMINANCE HAS INCENTIVIZED THE US TO ENGAGE OTHER COUNTRIES MILITARILY, UNDERMINING GLOBAL SECURITY AND RISKING A POWER VACUUM THAT CAUSES VIOLENCE AND CONFLICT 26

THE THREAT OF RUSSIA IS OVERSTATED AND A STRONG RUSSIA IS GOOD FOR GLOBAL SECURITY 28

CHINA’S THREAT IS LARGELY MINIMAL, AND THE US WILL CONTINUE TO REMAIN THE GLOBAL HEGEMON REGARDLESS 29

Background Information

Unpacking the definition, history, and application of “great power competition”

Michael J. Mazarr, 2022, Ph.D. in public policy, University of Maryland; MA in security studies, Georgetown University; BA in government, Georgetown University, “Understanding Competition Great Power Rivalry in a Changing International Order — Concepts and Theories”, RAND, March, 2022, <https://www.rand.org/pubs/perspectives/PEA1404-1.html>

Is the United States Facing a New Era of Great Power Competition? Another term that has become commonly used to describe the emerging competitive environment is great power competition. a This is yet another shorthand for a global contest of major powers. It might not, however, adequately describe the emerging environment. Like the term competition generally, the notion of great power competition does not have a strong grounding in theory. There is no accepted definition for what it is, apart from an abstract sense of rivalry among the great powers of the era. The term does not tell policymakers anything beyond the fact that multiple great powers are competing. All the critical questions about those competitions—how intense they are, what they are over, what tools the rivals use—are left unspoken. Some critics also worry that the term doubles down on the confusion between a situation in world politics and a strategy to deal with that situation. To say that a state is engaged in great power competition seems to imply that it has chosen a strategy when it has not—and thus foreclose debates about what the real strategy should be. Daniel Nexon, for example—while readily admitting that competition is a daily reality in the international system—worryes that, by distracting attention from debates over true interests, sensible goals, and optimal means, “a fixation on great-power competition is likely to undermine, rather than enhance, U.S. power and influence.”^b Indeed, there is good reason to question the degree to which the current situation is a great power competition as traditionally understood.^c **Classic European versions of that pattern involved a crowd of multiple great powers aligning and realigning with and against one another. Today’s international system, by contrast, is made up of a predominant core of industrial democracies and several challengers.** The term also traditionally referred to global contexts in which political-military power was dominant. Today, economic and informational influence are just as important, and the nuclear revolution has placed real constraints on military ambitions. A recent report from CNA helpfully suggests that **it may make more sense to view the current era as “one of great power relations” rather than of competition. “By making competition a ubiquitous descriptor,” the report argues, “we risk ignoring other important aspects of great power relations that account for opportunities for cooperation with adversaries when it is in the U.S. interest, and competition with other great powers if needed.”**^d This is an especially important correction because so many aspects of current great power relations, beyond the clashes among the rivals, work to the U.S. advantage, notably the commitment of many leading democracies to key elements of a rule-based order. **The term great power competition, then, is an imperfect concept to describe the emerging 21st-century reality. The United States needs statecraft to make the pattern of great power relations work for its interests to the highest degree possible and to compete with specific rivals where necessary.**

How “great power competition” began, and its revitalization in recent US administrations

Ronald O'Rourke 2022, Specialist in Naval Affairs, “Renewed Great Power Competition: Implications for Defense—Issues for Congress”, Congressional Research Service, March 10, 2022, <https://sgp.fas.org/crs/natsec/R43838.pdf>

The post-Cold War era of international relations—which began in the early 1990s, following the end of the Cold War between the United States and the Soviet Union, and which is sometimes referred to as the unipolar moment (with the United States as the unipolar power)—showed initial signs of fading in 2006-2008, and by 2014 **had given way to a fundamentally different situation of great power competition with China and Russia** and challenges by these two countries and others to elements of the U.S.-led international order that has operated since World War II.¹ **For some observers, the ending of the post-Cold War era and the shift to an era of great power competition and challenges by China and Russia to the post-World War II U.S.-led international order has been underscored by the increased strategic partnership** (some observers use terms such as alignment, convergence, or alliance) between China and Russia, particularly since the start of 2022, and by Russia’s invasion of Ukraine beginning in late February 2022.² **The renewal of great power competition was acknowledged alongside other considerations in the Obama Administration’s June 2015 National Military Strategy.**³ **It was placed at the center of the Trump Administration’s December 2017 National Security Strategy** (NSS)⁴ and January 2018 National Defense Strategy (NDS),⁵ which formally reoriented U.S. national security strategy and U.S. defense strategy toward an explicit primary focus on great power competition with China and Russia.

Official US Department of Defense documents are replacing the term “great power competition” with “strategic competition”

Michael J. Mazarr, 2022, Ph.D. in public policy, University of Maryland; MA in security studies, Georgetown University; BA in government, Georgetown University, “Understanding Competition Great Power Rivalry in a Changing International Order — Concepts and Theories”, RAND, March, 2022, <https://www.rand.org/pubs/perspectives/PEA1404-1.html>

Despite all this attention and the urgency of current events, there remains no clear understanding of what precisely the term competition means or what it implies for U.S. national security strategy. A review of official U.S. documents turns up dozens of different definitions and ways of understanding the concept. **Recently, the U.S. Department of Defense (DoD) issued formal clarification downplaying the use of the term great power competition in strategy documents in favor of strategic competition,**⁶ **but neither term was defined, and the import of this change was not immediately clear.** Other U.S. government officials have suggested that references to strategic competition apply only to the contest between the United States and China, that the United States faces one true strategic competition amid other challenges.⁷ Some observers have begun to employ other phrases: It has become common to term the U.S.-China contest as a new Cold War, even while some warn that the analogy is misleading.⁸ **Today, therefore, five years after it first appeared in official U.S. strategy documents, the idea of competition remains ill-defined in the minds of many U.S. national security practitioners and scholars.** **The term begs but does not answer the most important questions about national statecraft: the list of core U.S. vital interests, the baseline goals or objectives of U.S. foreign policy, and the means and ways used to pursue those objectives.** The answers to those questions might have been affected by the tragic war in Ukraine and Vladimir Putin’s apparent willingness. The invasion of Ukraine is also likely to have profound echo

effects through the international system, and the parallel rivalry between the United States and China, in ways that are not yet clear. 3 to take extreme risks, but the importance of answering them— understanding what sort of competition we face and what our objectives are—has become even more pressing. Recognizing that various competitions are underway, or issuing justified condemnations of aggressive action, gets us no closer to answering those questions—which remain worryingly underaddressed in recent U.S. strategic statements.

Pro Arguments

The US economy relies on commercial and diplomatic power that control flows of trade - expanding international military strength is critical to securing influence

Bruce Jones, 2022, Jones is a Director - Project on International Order and Strategy Senior Fellow - Foreign Policy, Center for East Asia Policy Studies, Strobe Talbott Center for Security, Strategy, and Technology, "Navigating great power competition – A serious planning start", Brookings, August 3rd, 2022, <https://www.brookings.edu/blog/order-from-chaos/2022/08/03/navigating-great-power-competition-a-serious-planning-start/>

The U.S. economy relies heavily on the global flow of goods — consumer, commercial, energy — across the ocean. That fact has been brought vividly to life by supply chain interruptions — in the Suez Canal and the Port of Long Beach — and their inflationary effects. True there are vital industries like finance and software that rely on the flow of data, not goods. **However, over 90% of all data in the world flows through undersea cables that line the ocean floor. There's no part of our prosperity that would not be adversely affected if ocean-based trade were impeded or slowed. Securing that flow of trade has long been a primary mission of the U.S. Navy.** Since the end of the Cold War the U.S. has enacted this mission largely alone, the only nation with a genuinely global navy. **This crucial function adds weight to American influence in the workings of globalization, which redounds to U.S. profit — literally as well as diplomatically.** COUNTERING COMPETITION ACROSS THE PACIFIC Enter the Chinese People's Liberation Army Navy (PLAN). Evolving from a semi-partner to the U.S. in securing trade against Indian Ocean and Malacca Straits piracy, as well as a regional claimant; then, a complicating regional player; to now, a regional powerhouse with increasingly assertive policy, and a global claimant of growing capability. The PLAN is the leading edge of Chinese militarization and feeds the development of the leading-edge technologies — like space-based communications — required for a blue water navy. For good reason: **The baseline geopolitical fact of our time is that the world's two most powerful countries are separated by thousands of miles of ocean — ocean waters that both sides want to dominate and secure, for commercial and strategic purposes. The core function of Chinese military modernization, as sagely assessed in a new U.S. Navy planning publication, is "... to reshape the security environment to its advantage by denying the United States military access to the western Pacific and beyond." The cost, if they succeed, will be a serious decline in American commercial and diplomatic power, and an equal loss of freedom of maneuver in strategic terms.** The 2022 Navigation Plan (NavPlan) lays out nothing short of an ambitious blueprint for preserving American maritime dominance. Other U.S. armed services — notably the Marines — have already laid out some of their own required transformations for deterrence and warfighting against powerful competitors. The Air Force and the Army lag in laying out a credible vision for their role in the current threat environment. This document, coming from the Navy, is crucial, as many of the key tasks ahead are uniquely naval functions. **The NavPlan lays down the two essential missions: fielding the capacity and readiness for warfighting in unnamed but obvious seas to deter China (as well as Russia); and global maritime dominance — both to keep the sea-lanes open for trade, and to give the U.S. military flexibility unavailable to its competitors.** This will require what the chief of naval operations (CNO) describes as a "combat-credible U.S. Navy — forward deployed and integrated with all elements of national power...". **This would allow the Navy to be consistently positioned in theater should conflict occur.** Among an ongoing debate on the value of forward presence, the CNO argues persuasively in favor of combat-credible forward deployment — not simply presence for presences' sake. **That's going to take a larger fleet. The United States faces the mounting challenge of PLAN assertiveness in the western**

Pacific, potential second-stage Russian aggression in the regions bordering the Baltic Sea or Arctic Ocean, and the continuing challenge of securing globalization. To tackle all of that, simply put, requires a larger navy than the U.S. currently maintains. The CNO's document lays down the design imperatives for such a fleet, setting out six needed elements: expanding the distance from which long-range precision fire can be launched, enhanced deception, hardened defenses, increased distribution, reliable delivery, and improved decisional advantage (involving naval information warfare). And, mindful of cost imperatives, argues that this can best be achieved in the context of a hybrid fleet, combining staffed, optionally staffed, and unstaffed ships — 500 of them, by the CNO's design; 350 staffed and 150 unstaffed. The document goes on to lay out a specific force design to accomplish the goals. One can quibble with precise numbers of this or that class of ship or boat but the overall picture of a force more reliant on submarines, smaller ships, and hybrid platforms is convincing.

The Chinese foreign assistance and investments have increased its geopolitical goals in sub-Saharan Africa, Southeast Asia, southern Asia

Conor Savoy and Janina Staguhn 2022, Conor M. Savoy Senior Fellow, Project on Prosperity and Development and Janina Staguhn Research Associate, Project on Prosperity and Development, "Global Development in an Era of Great Power Competition", Center For Strategic & International Studies, March 4th, 2022, <https://www.csis.org/analysis/global-development-era-great-power-competition>

The PRC has long provided foreign assistance to developing countries and, like the United States, uses that assistance to support its geostrategic goals. During the Cold War, the PRC supported "revolutionary" partners in Southeast Asia and sub-Saharan Africa. As a preview of its future policy, the PRC helped construct the TAZARA railway that linked Tanzania with Zambia in the 1970s. China's economy boomed in the late 1990s and early 2000s, which led to a steady increase in its use of foreign aid and official finance. Not unlike the United States, the PRC relies upon a fragmented system of agencies and departments to provide aid. Initially, much of the PRC's foreign aid came from the foreign aid department of the Ministry of Commerce, but this became the Chinese International Development Cooperation Agency in 2018. At the core of Chinese official finance is a variety of state-owned financial institutions, including the China Development Bank, Export-Import Bank of China, and China Export and Credit Insurance Corporation. **While China's financing is frequently referred to as "aid," it is inaccurate to characterize all of its financing as such. In fact, it is a mix of official development assistance (ODA), soft and concessional loans, export credits, and other sovereign financing.** Much of what China provides is better described as other official finance (OOF) and not ODA as defined by the Organization for Economic Cooperation and Development's Development Assistance Committee (OECD-DAC). **Using those definitions, China's \$4.8 billion in ODA is closer in volume to what the Nordic countries provide on a yearly basis.** On the OOF side, **the China Development Bank and China Export-Import Bank provided \$462 billion in sovereign financing commitments between 2008 and 2019. This represents nearly the same amount that the World Bank provided during the same period.** Figure 1 below shows a breakdown of Chinese external financing by type. **Officially, China does not present this as "foreign assistance" but rather as "south-to-south" cooperation and describes its assistance "in terms of two-way exchanges and two-sided cooperation."** China states that it provides financing with "no strings attached," in marked contrast to the West, which frequently imposes governance and economic reform conditions on its assistance. Despite this rhetoric, China does place two conditions on its financing: (1) a country cannot recognize Taiwan; and (2) construction contracts are very frequently or almost always awarded to Chinese state-owned enterprises (SOEs). **China's use of non-grant financing—export credits, soft and concessional loans, and other sovereign financing—has garnered criticism from the United States and others for potentially saddling countries with unsustainable debt.** Twenty years ago, when the United States and other lenders

undertook debt relief for developing countries (heavily indebted poor countries), most debt was held by members of the Paris Club and multilateral organizations (e.g., World Bank, the International Monetary Fund, and other international financial institutions). **While some have questioned the narrative of China's "debt-trap diplomacy," it is undeniable that the PRC provides a significant amount of external financing to countries in debt distress.** Today, most of the debt across developing countries is held either by China or by private investors who flocked to these countries in search of higher yields in the wake of the global financial crisis of 2009–2010. **The World Bank recently estimated that in 2022, one-third of debt service payments by the 74 poorest countries in the world are owed to China with another one-third to private investors. In both instances this amounts to just over \$13 billion. U.S. policymakers should acknowledge and understand that the PRC's approach to development finance is a clear strength. Developing countries need updated and expanded infrastructure, but they face a significant financing gap. The PRC, whatever its internal reasoning, correctly saw this as an opportunity and moved aggressively to provide financing.** While much can be made of "white elephant" projects—soccer stadiums, presidential palaces, and economically inefficient ports—the PRC has also constructed a significant number of roads, railroads, seaports, and other hard infrastructure that can support increased economic growth. Except for the multilateral development banks, this stands in marked contrast to the United States and other Western donors, who largely ceased funding hard infrastructure in favor of other social and economic development projects. Although the PRC's aid depends on recipients accepting its One China policy and frequent award of contracts to Chinese SOEs, few other conditions are attached to it, especially on the governance and political reform side. Chinese aid is also often seen as more efficient, in part because of the lack of standards required to obtain it in recipient countries, but also because of the lack of bureaucracy within China to authorize it. **These are issues that the United States and its partners and allies must grapple with as they confront the PRC.**

GPC led to a renewed emphasis on US defense planning capabilities, helping the US to regain superiority in conventional weaponry. The shift emphasizes creative innovation that accelerates military services while sidestepping an arms race.

Ronald O'Rourke 2022, Specialist in Naval Affairs, "Renewed Great Power Competition: Implications for Defense—Issues for Congress", Congressional Research Service, March 10, 2022, <https://sgp.fas.org/crs/natsec/R43838.pdf>

The renewal of great power competition has led to a renewed emphasis in U.S. defense planning on capabilities for conducting so-called high-end conventional warfare, meaning large-scale, high-intensity, technologically sophisticated conventional warfare against adversaries with similarly sophisticated military capabilities.⁶¹ Capabilities for high-end conventional warfare can differ, sometimes significantly, from capabilities required or optimized for the kinds of counterterrorism or counter-insurgency operations that were more at the center of U.S. defense planning and operations following the terrorist attacks of September 11, 2001. **Many current DOD acquisition programs, exercises, and warfighting experiments have been initiated, accelerated, increased in scope, given higher priority, or had their continuation justified as a consequence of the renewed U.S. emphasis on high-end conventional warfare. Weapon acquisition programs that can be linked to preparing for high-end warfare include** (to mention only a few examples) **those for procuring advanced aircraft such as the F-35 Joint Strike Fighter (JSF)⁶² and the next-generation long-range bomber,⁶³ highly capable warships such as the Virginia-class attack submarine⁶⁴ and DDG-51 class Aegis destroyer,⁶⁵ ballistic missile defense (BMD) capabilities,⁶⁶ longer-ranged land-attack and anti-ship weapons,⁶⁷ new types of weapons such as lasers,⁶⁸ new C4ISR (command, control, communications, computers, intelligence, surveillance, and reconnaissance) capabilities,⁶⁹ military space capabilities,⁷⁰ electronic warfare capabilities,⁷¹ military cyber capabilities,**

72 hypersonic weapons,⁷³ and the military uses of robotics and autonomous unmanned vehicles, quantum technology, and artificial intelligence (AI).⁷⁴ **Preparing for high-end conventional warfare could also involve making changes in U.S. military training and exercises⁷⁵ and reorienting the missions and training of U.S. special operations forces.**⁷⁶ Maintaining U.S. Superiority in Conventional Weapon Technologies **As part of the renewed emphasis on capabilities for high-end conventional warfare, DOD officials have expressed concern that U.S. superiority in conventional weapon technologies has narrowed or in some cases been eliminated by China and (in certain areas) Russia.** In response, **DOD has taken a number of actions in recent years that are intended to help maintain or regain U.S. superiority in conventional weapon technologies, including increased research and development funding for new militarily applicable technologies such as artificial intelligence (AI), autonomous unmanned weapons, hypersonic weapons, directed-energy weapons, biotechnology, and quantum technology.** A February 2, 2022, press report stated The Pentagon’s research and engineering chief is crafting a new strategy for investment in 14 critical technology areas, writing in a new memo that **“creative application” of emerging concepts is key to maintaining an edge over adversaries.** The Feb. 1 memo, first reported by Inside Defense, does not lay out a timeline for when the strategy will be complete, but notes the work will be informed by the 2022 National Defense Strategy and structured around three pillars: Mission focus, foundation building and succeeding through teamwork. **“Successful competition requires imagining our military capability as an ever-evolving collective, not a static inventory of weapons in development or sustainment,”** Undersecretary of Defense for Research and Engineering Heidi Shyu wrote in the memo, obtained by C4ISRNET. **“In many cases, effective competition benefits from sidestepping symmetric arms races and instead comes from the creative application of new concepts with emerging science and technology.”** The technologies identified in the memo ranges from “seed areas”—like quantum science, biotechnology, advanced materials and future-generation wireless technology—to commercially available capabilities such as artificial intelligence, space, microelectronics, integrated networks, renewable energy, human-machine interfaces and advanced computing and software. The memo also highlights technology needs that are specific to the Defense Department, including hypersonic weapons, directed energy, cyber and integrated sensing. **“By focusing efforts and investments into these 14 critical technology areas, the department will accelerate transitioning key capabilities to the military services and combatant commands,”** Shyu writes. “As the department’s strategy evolves and technologies change, the department will update its critical technology priorities.”⁷⁷

GPC is strengthening supply chain security by emphasizing diversity in contract suppliers, reducing the risk of fragility in the American supply chain

Ronald O'Rourke 2022, Specialist in Naval Affairs, “Renewed Great Power Competition: Implications for Defense—Issues for Congress”, Congressional Research Service, March 10, 2022, <https://sgp.fas.org/crs/natsec/R43838.pdf>

The renewal of great power competition, combined with the globalization of supply chains for many manufactured items, has led to an increased emphasis in U.S. defense planning on supply chain security, meaning (in this context) awareness and minimization of reliance in U.S. military systems on components, subcomponents, materials, and software from other countries, particularly China and Russia. An early example concerned the Russian-made RD-180 rocket engine, which was incorporated into certain U.S. space launch rockets, including rockets used by DOD to put military payloads into orbit.⁹¹ **More recent examples include the dependence of various U.S. military systems on rare earth elements from China, Chinese-made electronic components, software that may contain Chinese- or Russian-origin elements, DOD purchases of Chinese-made drones, and the use of Chinese-made surveillance cameras at U.S. military installations.** A November 5, 2019, press report, for example, states The US navy secretary

has warned that **the “fragile” American supply chain for military warships means the Pentagon is at risk of having to rely on adversaries such as Russia and China for critical components.** Richard Spencer, [who was then] the US navy’s top civilian, told the Financial Times he had ordered a review this year that found **many contractors were reliant on single suppliers for certain high-tech and high-precision parts, increasing the likelihood they would have to be procured from geostrategic rivals.** Mr Spencer said the US was engaged in “great power competition” with other global rivals and that several of them— “primarily Russia and China”—were “all of a sudden in your supply chain, [which is] not to the best interests of what you’re doing” through military procurement.⁹² The supply-chain impacts of Russia’s invasion of Ukraine beginning in late February 2022 have put an additional spotlight on the issue of supply chain security.⁹³ In response to concerns like those above, DOD officials have begun to focus more on actions to improve supply chain security. **On February 24, 2021, President Biden issued an executive order on strengthening the resilience of U.S. supply chains.** **The executive order directed a “complete a review of supply chain risks,” to be completed within 100 days of the date of the executive order, and several sectoral supply chain assessments to be submitted within one year of the date of the executive order, to be followed by reports “reviewing the actions taken over the previous year and making recommendations” for additional actions.**⁹⁴ In February 2022, the Biden Administration released a report on the results of the review.⁹⁵ For a list of articles and reports on this issue, see Appendix D.

Empirically, the US and allies will need to mobilize to counter Russian and Chinese revisionist policies

Dr. Markus Jaeger 2022, Jaeger is a Fellow at USA Strategy Group, “The Economics of Great Power Competition”, DGAP Policy Brief No 13, April 2022, 10 pp., <https://dgap.org/en/research/publications/economics-great-power-competition>

Without a sound economic foundation, political and military ambitions cannot be sustained. This also applies to the geopolitical competition between the United States and its rivals. So far, America and its allies are economically ahead of Russia and China. But where Russia’s long-term outlook is weak, China’s economic might is rapidly increasing. Despite the war in Ukraine, Washington will have to focus its resources on Asia. In Europe, Germany, with its large financial and economic base, should lead on military spending and enhanced security. **To counter Russian and Chinese revisionist policies, the United States and its allies will need to mobilize greater resources.** **Economic analysis strongly suggests that the bulk of additional US resources will have to be deployed in Asia.** As the United States continues its strategic shift toward Asia, **its European allies will have to shoulder a greater defense burden in view of Russian revisionist policies. European NATO countries are well-placed to counter Russia in terms of resources.** Germany can afford higher defense spending more easily than the other major European countries.

The US can engage in GPC through measures that benefit the US and collaborate with other countries – Biden proves

Fatih Oktay 2021, Fatih Oktay teaches Chinese economy and politics at Ozyegin University, Turkey and is the author of a widely acclaimed book, “China: Rise of a New World Power and Changing Global Balances” in Turkish., “Great Power Competition Doesn’t Have to Be Bad”, The Diplomat, July 13 2021, <https://thediplomat.com/2021/07/great-power-competition-doesnt-have-to-be-bad/>

Aiming to outdo China, the Biden administration’s announced programs and bipartisan initiatives that accompany them promise to rebuild the United States’ dilapidated infrastructure, enhance its

innovation and manufacturing capacity, and improve the lives of the “forgotten Americans” who voted Donald Trump into the presidency. This is likely to make the United States economically, technologically, and socially better off. Though less confrontational than Trump’s approach, **the Biden administration’s policies are likely to make life harder for China.** It is likely that the Biden administration, in time, will discontinue or modify such Trump era measures as additional tariffs on Chinese exports, the cost of which exceed the benefit to the United States. But **the Biden administration’s embrace, unlike the Trump administration, of cooperation with allies will make it more difficult for China to acquire technology and tools to develop its own technology.** Similarly, **the Biden administration’s willingness, unlike its predecessor, to give better play to international bodies such as World Trade Organization will make China’s state-led industrial and technological development policies much more difficult to implement.**

GPC encourages developments that spillover worldwide – including vaccine production and climate leadership

Fatih Oktay 2021, Fatih Oktay teaches Chinese economy and politics at Ozyegin University, Turkey and is the author of a widely acclaimed book, “China: Rise of a New World Power and Changing Global Balances” in Turkish., “Great Power Competition Doesn’t Have to Be Bad”, The Diplomat, July 13 2021, <https://thediplomat.com/2021/07/great-power-competition-doesnt-have-to-be-bad/>

China-U.S. competition is likely to be good for the rest of the world as well. The productive competition we are already witnessing in areas like infrastructure assistance and vaccine supply to the developing world is likely to intensify. The competition for climate leadership will also make the world much better off. However, the world may not stay on this track for long. As widely recognized, the fact that in spite of his catastrophic handling of the COVID-19 crisis Trump lost the 2020 election by a small margin shows that “Trumpism lives” in the United States. Toward the end of his days as president, Trump’s policies had turned toward a state of cold war with China. A Trumpist new administration would likely pick things up from there and push the world in that direction. The costs of a cold war need no elaboration. **A divided world would damage global welfare, democracy and freedom, scientific knowledge production, and the ability to deal with global problems. With the two top carbon emitters fighting for survival and deeply suspicious of each other’s intentions, cooperation needed to deal with global warming would likely not be forthcoming and the world would slide toward conditions unsupportive of human civilization.** A populist administration in the United States would make a hot war also more likely. In terms of military power, China is no match for the U.S. globally, being dwarfed in terms of expenditure and assets. But as is well known, the situation is different locally; China has developed a strong capability to degrade U.S. power projection capacity and fight a regional war. It is not taken as given anymore that the United States would win such a war. With such a local balance of power, and with seas around China and Taiwan fertile fields for frictions, misunderstandings, and miscalculations, armed conflict between the United States and China is always possible. A populist administration in the U.S., especially in a state of cold war, would significantly increase its likelihood. In all too many scenarios, such a conflict would lead to a world war, even a nuclear one.

GPC is critical to protecting global democracy and pushing back against authoritarianism

Thomas Wright 2018, Thomas Wright served as the director and as a senior of the Center on the United States and Europe at the Brookings Institution since 2017,” The return to great-power rivalry was

inevitable”, Brookings, September 12, 2018, <https://www.brookings.edu/opinions/the-return-to-great-power-rivalry-was-inevitable/>

It has now become clear that we are in the early stages of a dramatic change in world politics that necessitates a change in strategy. For several years now, geopolitical competition between the major powers has been intensifying. Russia became much more aggressive in Eastern Europe and the Middle East. China grew more assertive in East Asia. What we did not know, until very recently, was that this competition would also directly and negatively impact the lives of citizens in Western democracies. Examples abound: **Russia’s attack on American democracy. Cyberattacks on critical infrastructure, including the power grid. Chinese political interference, including pressure on American companies, especially in the media and social-media sector. The mass theft of intellectual property. The collection of private data by foreign powers. The strategic use of corruption to build networks of support. And backing for authoritarian movements in countries that were, until several years ago, stable democracies. These may seem like isolated or disconnected incidents. But they are not. They are deeply embedded in the logic of the emerging great-power competition, and they will only get worse.** To understand why, we need to look at how we got here. In the 1990s and 2000s, American leaders believed that Russia and China were converging with the West on basic questions of world order. Countries would work together on common challenges while old geopolitical rivalries would matter much less. The “era of convergence” came to an end because Russian and Chinese leaders concluded that if the liberal order succeeded globally, it would pose an existential threat to their regimes. Moscow and Beijing saw the spread of color revolutions, helped along by the press and nongovernmental organizations. They came to understand that Western governments will always face pressure to back democracy activists overseas at precisely the moment that authoritarians are most vulnerable, regardless of what assurances or cooperative relations existed beforehand. They saw how media organizations published material that destabilized their regimes, such as the 2012 New York Times investigation into corruption in China. They worried about Google and social-media companies aiding dissenters in their own societies. Crucially, they realized that these companies made their choices independent of Washington. **They were an intrinsic part of the liberal order. China and Russia assessed that Western liberalism and freedom undermine authoritarian rule. Indeed,** many Western policy makers saw this as a desirable side effect: It may be good news for the Chinese and Russian people, but it is bad news for their regimes. And so, China and Russia began to push back. While Moscow and Beijing correctly diagnosed the threat to their regimes, we were also correct in our refusal to accommodate them. **We are constantly told that the liberal order must adjust to make way for China and perhaps Russia, but that such an adjustment—the reallocation of voting weights at the International Monetary Fund, for example—would be largely cost free. But this is a fantasy: China and Russia want and need much more than that. True accommodation would have fundamentally and irrevocably changed the world for the worse.** Addressing Moscow’s fears over the color revolutions would have handed it a veto over democracy in other countries in its neighborhood. **It would mean, at best, turning a blind eye to a massive and coercive Chinese and Russian effort to pressure Western media outlets, NGOs, and even universities.** And it would have turned back the clock to an era when a few people carved the world up into spheres of influence, rather than a system where rules, values, and votes play a leading role. A deal—one that actually addressed their insecurities—would have been a devil’s bargain. **The return to rivalry was inevitable, if tragically so. It is rooted in a clash of social models—a free world and a neo-authoritarian world—that directly affects how people live. China and Russia are very different powers with different strategies, but they share the objective of targeting free and open societies to make the world a safer place for authoritarianism.** We are so interconnected and integrated after two decades of globalization that we, and they, are vulnerable to one another. Hence all of the recent activity from political interference and economic coercion to cyberattacks and other active measures, which they see as a necessary response to our actions. China, in particular, has an even more ambitious long-term agenda. Its investments in artificial intelligence (AI) and facial-recognition technology

appear to be giving Beijing the ability to monitor its entire population and make authoritarian rule efficient and effective. **It promises real social goods, such as massive reductions in crime, in exchange for much greater control over the population. These technologies are highly exportable and will undoubtedly appeal to authoritarians or wannabe authoritarians the world over.** These regimes will cooperate and share tactics and strategy, while working together to create a world that protects their interests. We would worry about these technologies anyway, but China's capability and intention make the AI challenge especially difficult. **In such a world, it makes little sense to argue that America's strategic objective should be promoting a liberal international order.** Since that term came into common usage, it implied that China and other non-Western powers would eventually be brought into the fold. **But unlike in the 1990s and 2000s, there is no prospect on the horizon of a universal liberal order. Instead, there is a free world competing with a neo-authoritarian world.** Yes, it's a bit more complicated than that. There are fissures and shades of gray on both sides, and a great deal of connection and shared interests across the divide. **But the contest is real. More importantly, framing the primary goal of American strategy as maintaining a liberal order completely misses the point. It sends a message to the American people that their job is to maintain the order far from home because otherwise it will encourage further aggression. This sounds rather abstract, particularly at a time when external powers threaten liberties at home and among America's closest democratic allies. Perhaps a stronger approach would be a "free world" strategy—one that preserves liberty at home and in other democracies. If you believe in a free and open society based on the rule of law, whether you are a constitutional conservative, a centrist, or a progressive, you cannot just mind your own business at home.** Your vital interests are directly threatened by this competition of models. **If you want to protect your democracy or a free press or the rule of law or an open internet or the integrity of critical infrastructure or nongovernmental organizations or countless other things, actions at home are necessary but not sufficient. You need to support a competitive foreign policy that pushes back against neo-authoritarianism.**

Great power competition is a key strategy to closing the gap between the US and other countries – America has unique advantages

Todd South 2022, Todd South has written about crime, courts, government and the military for multiple publications since 2004 and was named a 2014 Pulitzer finalist for a co-written project on witness intimidation," This author sees opportunity for US in competition with China, Russia", Military Times, October 25, 2022 <https://www.militarytimes.com/news/2022/10/25/this-author-sees-opportunity-for-us-in-competition-with-china-russia/>

Great Power Competition raises the specter of an end to the American moment and the rise of a new order built around China or, to a lesser degree, Russia. But one author has an optimistic take to beat back the doomsayers — **America is uniquely positioned to take advantage of its competitors' missteps. That advantage will come through revamping the promise of the U.S. system of government on the home front to pull together an unbeatable alliance of allies and partners abroad. But exploiting those opportunities means the U.S. must beat back the negativity and fatalism now circling conversations on Russia and China that see war as inevitable.** At the same time, leaders must avoid thinking that today's peer competition mirrors past conflicts against Japan, Germany and the Soviet Union and because America won then, it will surely win now. **The Great Power Competition framework has dominated conversations in government since at least 2017, when the administration of then-President Donald Trump released the National Security Strategy and the subsequent 2018 National Defense Strategy.** Ali Wyne works as a senior analyst for the Eurasia Group, a political risk consultancy firm, and he has served on the Council of Foreign Relations and as a security fellow with the Truman National Security Project. Wyne spoke with Military Times about his 2022 book, "America's Great-Power Opportunity: Revitalizing U.S. Foreign Policy

to Meet the Challenges of Strategic Competition.” In summary, Wyne, the son of Pakistani immigrants, portrays a fundamental optimism about how **the U.S. can manage and prevail in the new peer strategic competition with Russia and China. But the nation must re-establish its internal advantages such as an openness to people, ideas and partnerships. America must also engage across the globe more proactively rather than simply react to every move made by Russia and China.** *Editor’s note: This author Q&A has been edited for length and clarity. Q: Why did you decide to author this book? A: I was impressed that this construct was able to achieve such widespread traction, despite the level of ideological acrimony in Washington. What I discovered was that the more research I conducted, the more interviews the more I came to feel there was a gap between the ubiquity of the term, Great Power Competition, on the one hand and the under-specification of the term on the other hand. **It acknowledges the reality that interstate competition has been a feature of international relations for four centuries, and that U.S. is not as influential as it was at the turn of the century. That China and Russia are more willing to contest U.S. influence than they were 20 to 30 years ago. There’s less of a sense of the implications of Great Power Competition on foreign policy.** You often will hear that it implies that the U.S. is engaged in a long-term systemic struggle with China and Russia to determine nothing less than the contours of world order. The way Great Power Competition is used is so sweeping it doesn’t tell you what to do, but it tells you what not to do. I wanted to see if I could impart greater clarity on this term.

The US has significant advantages over competitors like Russia and China – failing to take advantage of these opportunities risks allowing competitors to dictate the terms and sends signals to allies that undercuts confidence

Todd South 2022, Todd South has written about crime, courts, government and the military for multiple publications since 2004 and was named a 2014 Pulitzer finalist for a co-written project on witness intimidation,” This author sees opportunity for US in competition with China, Russia”, Military Times, October 25, 2022 <https://www.militarytimes.com/news/2022/10/25/this-author-sees-opportunity-for-us-in-competition-with-china-russia/>

Q: The book’s title, “America’s Great-Power Opportunity,” hints at hopefulness for what lies ahead. What are the key features of the opportunity you see? A: **The U.S. must approach this with quiet confidence. The quiet part is because the U.S. isn’t as influential as it was in 1992. China and Russia can push back against U.S. influence. Today’s political environment is more congested, contested and competitive. And Russia and China will prove to be enduring competitors. The confidence comes from a look at history and America’s current standing.** The U.S. has escaped many prognostications of decline. **It retains singular advantages — geography, a network of allies and partners, the ability to project military power and the possessor of the world’s lone reserve currency. And the U.S. retains an unrivaled capacity to attract individuals from across the world. China and Russia, while they are serious, multi-faceted competitors, sometimes have their strategic acumen overstated. Both countries have undercut their strategic outlook significantly. There are opportunities for the U.S. to take advantage and make choices not predicated upon China and Russia’s moves.** For example, Russia possesses the largest arsenal of nuclear weapons and still wreaks havoc. We can see direct consequences in Ukraine, its weaponization of global energy markets and food markets. So, Russia matters. Moscow has offered a brutal corrective to such notions that Russia was fading into obscurity. But Russia has engaged in quite an extraordinary act of strategic self-sabotage. It is far more beholden to China than it was before the Ukraine invasion. Those actions have charged the United States’ European allies and given a new life to NATO. China is more integrated into the world economic system, and less risk-taking. But there is this false narrative that China can peer decades into the future while the U.S. can only look four years into the future due to election cycles. China has comported itself in such a fashion that virtually all its relations are far more strained than before the pandemic. **The**

U.S. is uniquely positioned to revitalize international alliances and norms to counter the strategic mistakes that China and Russia continue to present. The U.S. has room for a far more proactive, affirmative foreign policy than it might believe. And an affirmative foreign policy speaks as much to its aspirations as to its anxieties. I think it's important to push back against belief in America's decline and fatalism because psychology matters. If you believe you're in terminal decline, then you're liable to act in far more defensive ways. Q: In what ways might the U.S. get this opportunity wrong? A: Human fallibility is infinite and can manifest in different ways. **If the U.S. tethers its foreign policy too rigidly to the decisions of China and Russia, that will create more problems. The reason it's a risk is, it signals to our allies and partners that the US is unmoored strategically and has lost confidence in its regenerative capacity and that perhaps norms are in decline. It would allow China and Russia to dictate the terms of strategic competition.** It's incumbent upon the U.S. to find a balance between complacency and consternation. There's a risk of swinging too far in the direction of consternation and overstating the competitive acumen of China and Russia. **If you needlessly inflate the competitive ability of your competitors, then you're far more likely to miss competitive opportunities. A third way of squandering the opportunity would be to fail to recognize that one exists. That might be my greatest concern. I do think it would be a mistake to believe that no opportunity exists at all.**

GPC can be selective and confident rather than reactive – the playbook is changing and the US can adapt

Todd South 2022, Todd South has written about crime, courts, government and the military for multiple publications since 2004 and was named a 2014 Pulitzer finalist for a co-written project on witness intimidation," This author sees opportunity for US in competition with China, Russia", Military Times, October 25, 2022 <https://www.militarytimes.com/news/2022/10/25/this-author-sees-opportunity-for-us-in-competition-with-china-russia/>

Q: How does the U.S. get this opportunity right? A: **The U.S. can't and shouldn't construct foreign policy in a vacuum. Recognizing that a significant part of U.S. foreign policy is going to be responsive because we can't precisely anticipate what China and Russia are going to do. One way to counter this is to assess Chinese and Russian assertions of influence on a case-by-case and establish a sense of proportion and hierarchy. I think it will be particularly important for the U.S. to compete selectively and confidently as opposed to ubiquitously and anxiously. The U.S. must give itself the analytical breathing room it needs to envision what its foreign policy approach might look like without invoking competitors.** Another danger I would argue is Great Power Competition gives policymakers the sense that the U.S. can revisit a script it knows well. Imperialist Japan, Nazi Germany and the Soviet Union suffered great defeats in their competitions with the U.S. Great Power Competition reflects great strategic anxiety but also a sense of comfort, "hey, we've seen this movie before, and we know how it ends." **Rather than the U.S. saying aha! we have the script. Let's really say no. Let's take advantage of the competitive missteps that China and Russia are making.** Can the U.S. articulate and justify its purpose in the world without having to invoke its competitors? I think it's especially important that the U.S. address the nexus of domestic renewal and external competitiveness. If the U.S. is not able to invest in its intangible advantages, then external competition is moot. **The U.S. needs to demonstrate anew the capacity of its democracy to deliver on those vexing internal problems, such as managing socioeconomic challenges. In a more intangible way, it needs to demonstrate an openness to people, ideas, an openness to criticism.**

Military technological advantages through GPC is critical to maintaining the US' network of allies and partners – this is what gives the US it's competitive advantage

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Q: What's the military's role in all of this? A: **It's imperative for the U.S. to continue modernizing its military to maintain its military edge. The U.S. remains the only country in the world that can project military power to any corner of the globe. For anyone in the military community, it's important that the U.S. not succumb to fatalism in the prospect of war with China and or Russia.** The U.S. should not discount the possibility of war. One of the critical functions of the military and intelligence communities to envision those contingencies. **If you believe that war is inevitable, you're likely to conduct yourself in ways that make war. The reality is war is not inevitable, war has never been inevitable and it's not inevitable.** Even though there are structural forces that make wars more and more likely. War ultimately is a human decision. Q: What do you say to critics who say that Great Power Competition and the shift to Asia ignores ongoing hotspots in the Middle East, Africa and Europe? A: That claim is a straw man. **If you look at the level of security the U.S. has deployed to the Middle East and Europe since World War II, the notion that it would somehow, that it could somehow abandon those areas if it wanted, those notions are misguided. The U.S. couldn't exit if it wanted to.** We're talking about a reorientation. We need to make tradeoffs, recognizing security challenges will occur in the Middle East. **As competitive pressures grow, we need to be unapologetic in asking partners and allies to do more to safeguard their own defenses. America's principal competitive advantage is its network of allies and partners. The U.S. increasingly needs to think of military technological advantages not as unilateral but as a shared undertaking with allies and partners. If the U.S. can reinvigorate and repurpose and modernize the network of its allies and partners, it will be very difficult for China not only to overtake the U.S. in global preeminence but also in regional preeminence.**

Con Arguments

Current US GPC strategy is not affordable, and requires cuts to other military endeavors that put the US and allies at risk

Bruce Jones, 2022, Jones is a Director - Project on International Order and Strategy Senior Fellow - Foreign Policy, Center for East Asia Policy Studies, Strobe Talbott Center for Security, Strategy, and Technology, "Navigating great power competition – A serious planning start", Brookings, August 3rd, 2022, <https://www.brookings.edu/blog/order-from-chaos/2022/08/03/navigating-great-power-competition-a-serious-planning-start/>

A more difficult question is whether it's affordable. By the CNO's estimate, this fleet architecture will require spending of 3-5% above inflation in the coming years. By other estimates, it will take more than that, and abandoning the long-evolved norm of a three-way budget split between the major services. After 20 years of ground wars, the U.S. Navy is under-sized and under-equipped, and the U.S. can't correct for that without shifting spending priority towards the Navy's programs. Whether this document does enough to convince Congress of that imperative remains to be seen. But if fielding an adequate force to deter the PLAN isn't the central goal of current military spending, what is? In a more than \$773 billion annual defense budget, which tasks have greater priority? **Of course, the U.S. could reduce costs by choosing to have its navy focus narrowly on only the one mission, putting all its eggs in the basket of deterrence in the western Pacific. This, though, would leave U.S. and allied interests in Europe dangerously unguarded, and leave a major lacuna in the protection of global trade. The U.S. has recently experienced the steep costs of even minor interruptions to sea-based flows of good and energy; we are not prepared for larger, wider, longer interruptions.** **If America wants to deter China, and keep the global economy flowing, it needs a bigger navy. It's as simple as that. Another question, though, is: how fast? In an otherwise compelling document, there's one jarring note, on the by when issue.** This comes in the headline that marks the transition from strategy to planning. Before that headline, the document repeatedly — and convincingly — refers to "this critical decade" in the race to reshape capacity. But the section on force design and architecture is headlined by an effort to imagine the fleet in 2045. Twenty-plus years — more than double the time it took to wage the Spanish Civil War and World War II combined. The U.S. doesn't have that kind of time. Of course, the Navy leadership is aware of this; hence the tighter timeline in the rest of the text. Presumably the 2045 date is being used as a device to stimulate imagination, to break people out of current thinking. All well and good. But so is a sense of urgency. Perhaps best articulated in a recent speech by the chief of naval research, Rear Admiral Lorin Selby — whose clarion call for urgent imagination should be required listening for all Navy leaders. Congressional leaders as well, especially those who are in position to authorize increased and more predictable funding for an expanded shipbuilding program. **The CNO's document points to the importance of the shipbuilding, maintenance, and logistics components of fielding a larger navy, though perhaps not quite with the emphasis it deserves. At present, even huge congressional largesse couldn't produce the navy the United States needs — there simply isn't adequate shipbuilding capacity in the country.**

GPC strategy does not accurately assess the risk of each individual nation

Joseph Nye 2021, Joseph S. Nye, Jr. is a professor at Harvard University and author of *Do Morals Matter? Presidents and Foreign Policy from FDR to Trump* (Oxford University Press, 2019), "America's New Great-

Power Strategy”, Project Syndicate, August 3rd, 2021, <https://www.project-syndicate.org/commentary/us-china-new-great-power-strategy-by-joseph-s-nye-2021-08>

During the Cold War, US grand strategy focused on containing the power of the Soviet Union. **China's rise now requires America and its allies to develop a strategy that seeks not total victory over an existential threat, but rather managed competition that allows for both cooperation and rivalry within a rules-based system.** During the four decades of the Cold War, the United States had a grand strategy focused on containing the power of the Soviet Union. Yet by the 1990s, following the Soviet Union's collapse, America had been deprived of that pole star. After the September 11, 2001, terrorist attacks, US President George W. Bush's administration tried to fill the void with a strategy that it called a "global war on terror." But that approach provided nebulous guidance and led to long US-led wars in marginal places like Afghanistan and Iraq. **Since 2017, the US has returned to "great-power competition," this time with China.** As a grand US strategy, great-power competition has the advantage of focusing on major threats to America's security, economy, and values. While terrorism is a continuing problem that the US must treat seriously, it poses a lesser threat than rival great powers. Terrorism is like jujitsu, in which a weak adversary turns the power of a larger player against itself. While the 9/11 attacks killed more than 2,600 Americans, the "endless wars" that the US launched in response to them cost even more lives, as well as trillions of dollars. While President Barack Obama's administration tried to pivot to Asia — the fastest growing part of the world economy — the legacy of the global war on terror kept the US mired in the Middle East. **A strategy of great-power competition can help America refocus; but it has two problems. First, it lumps together very different types of states. Russia is a declining power and China a rising one. The US must appreciate the unique nature of the threat that Russia poses.** As the world sadly discovered in 1914, on the eve of World War I, a declining power (Austria-Hungary) can sometimes be the most risk-acceptant in a conflict. **Today, Russia is in demographic and economic decline, but retains enormous resources that it can employ as a spoiler in everything from nuclear-arms control and cyber conflict to the Middle East. The US therefore needs a Russia strategy that does not throw that country into China's arms.**

GPC strategy trades off with more pressing threats like international disasters while cutting into diplomatic cooperation that is key to stopping the threats

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A second problem is that the concept of great-power rivalry provides an insufficient alert to a new type of threat we face. National security and the global political agenda have changed since 1914 and 1945, but US strategy currently underappreciates new threats from ecological globalization. Global climate change will cost trillions of dollars and can cause damage on the scale of war; the COVID-19 pandemic has already killed more Americans than all the country's wars, combined, since 1945. Yet, the current US strategy results in a Pentagon budget that is more than 100 times that of the US Centers for Disease Control and Prevention, and 25 times that of the National Institutes of Health. Former US Treasury Secretary Lawrence H. Summers and other economists recently called for the establishment of a \$10 billion annual Global Health Threats Fund, which is “miniscule compared to the \$10 trillion that governments have already incurred in the COVID-19 crisis.” **Meanwhile, US policymakers are debating how to deal with China. Some politicians and analysts call the current situation a “new Cold War,” but squeezing China into this ideological framework misrepresents the real strategic challenge America faces.** The US and the Soviet Union had little bilateral commerce or social contact, whereas America and

its allies trade heavily with China and admit several hundred thousand Chinese students to their universities. Chinese President Xi Jinping is no Stalin, and the Chinese system is not Marxist-Leninist but “market Leninist” – a form of state capitalism based on a hybrid of public and private firms subservient to an authoritarian party elite. In addition, China is now the largest trade partner to more countries than the US is. **America can decouple security risks like Huawei from its 5G telecommunications network, but trying to curtail all trade with China would be too costly.** And even if breaking apart economic interdependence were possible, we cannot decouple the ecological interdependence that obeys the laws of biology and physics, not politics. **Since America cannot tackle climate change or pandemics by itself, it has to realize that some forms of power must be exercised with others. Addressing these global problems will require the US to work with China at the same time that it competes with its navy to defend freedom of navigation in the South China Sea.** If China links the issues and refuses to cooperate, it will hurt itself. A good great-power-competition strategy requires careful net assessment. Underestimation breeds complacency, while overestimation creates fear. Either can lead to miscalculation. China is the world’s second-largest economy, and its GDP (at market exchange rates) may surpass that of the US by the 2030s. But even if it does, China’s per capita income remains less than a quarter that of the US, and the country faces a number of economic, demographic, and political problems. Its economic growth rate is slowing, the size of its labor force peaked in 2011, and it has few political allies. If the US, Japan, and Europe coordinate their policies, they will still represent the largest part of the global economy and will have the capacity to organize a rules-based international order capable of shaping Chinese behavior. That alliance is at the heart of a strategy to manage China’s rise. As former Australian Prime Minister Kevin Rudd argues, **the objective for great-power competition with China is not total victory over an existential threat, but rather “managed strategic competition.”** That will require America and its allies to avoid demonizing China. They should instead see the relationship as a “cooperative rivalry” that requires equal attention to both sides of the description at the same time. On those terms, we can cope successfully, but only if we realize that this is not the great-power competition of the twentieth century.

GPC perpetuates a distorted and misleading view of international order, resulting in pervasive anxiety that mirrors the Cold War

Andrew **Latham, 2022.** Andrew Latham is a professor of international relations at Macalester College in Saint Paul, Minn, “‘Great-power competition’ is the wrong foreign policy framework. Here’s what should replace it, The Hill, September 29th, 2022, <https://thehill.com/opinion/national-security/3666777-great-power-competition-is-the-wrong-foreign-policy-framework-heres-what-should-replace-it/>

The concept of “great-power competition” (GPC) is now firmly entrenched at the heart of U.S. defense thinking. Indeed, what was an arcane academic term just a few years ago has now achieved the status once enjoyed by the term “containment.” It has become the key organizing principle around which foreign policy debates revolve and foreign policy itself is conducted. But **the frame of great-power competition is deeply problematic. First, as a description of the current international order, it distorts as much as it reveals. The GPC frame is in effect an amalgam of geopolitical assumptions and strategic prescriptions cobbled together out of the raw materials furnished by two supposedly analogous eras: the inter-war period and the Cold War.** From the 1930s, adherents to the GPC framework have derived the core belief that democratic recession, deglobalization and the disintegration of international order encouraged the emergence of authoritarian revisionists bent on overturning the existing international order. From the post-war era, they have smuggled in the view that the United States is once again able to renovate the institutional architecture of world order in ways that reflect its interests and values while addressing the unique challenges of the current moment. **And from the Cold War, they have inherited the belief that the U.S. is engaged in a full-spectrum, existential competition with a superpower adversary. The result is a**

kind of geopolitical pastiche — a picture of contemporary international order that combines the sense of existential dread associated with the interwar years with order-building hubris of the immediate post-war years and the pervasive anxiety that defined the Cold War. The fundamental problem with the GPC frame is that it takes an obvious truth — that great powers compete with each other under conditions of anarchy — and, through misanalogy, distorts that truth in ways that paint a profoundly misleading portrait of the contemporary international order.

GPC builds flawed military strategy that emphasizes over-reactive competition that ignores consequences for US interests, while crowding out alternative strategies that are more specific to existing geopolitical realities

Andrew **Latham, 2022**. Andrew Latham is a professor of international relations at Macalester College in Saint Paul, Minn, “‘Great-power competition’ is the wrong foreign policy framework. Here’s what should replace it, The Hill, September 29th, 2022, <https://thehill.com/opinion/national-security/3666777-great-power-competition-is-the-wrong-foreign-policy-framework-heres-what-should-replace-it/>

Second, as prescription, the GPC frame is not only misleading but dangerous. Building a grand strategy based on flawed analogies with the interwar years and the Cold War is destined to produce pathological policy outcomes, not the least of which is the prospect of limitless rivalry — open-ended, full-spectrum and overly reactive competition with Russia and China for power and influence, irrespective of the actual U.S. interests at stake. Such a totalizing approach to containing powers that are deemed to pose an existential threat to the U.S. and the U.S.-led international order is both unsustainable and ultimately corrosive of the American domestic order. It also crowds out alternative strategic visions that are more modest and better suited to the geopolitical realities of the current moment. And what are those alternative visions? What other grand strategies might be better suited to the realities of the current multipolar moment? Well, one such alternative — actually more a variation on the theme of GPC than a radical alternative to it — might be what I will call “differentiated competition.” Such an approach would accept the basic GPC premise that states compete for power and influence, but would reject the belief, inherited from the interwar years, that they can be definitively sorted into democracies that embrace the status quo and autocracies that seek to revise or overthrow the existing order. Similarly, while a grand strategy of differentiated competition would accept that China occupies a unique place in the new multipolar order — i.e. that it is a great power that is, or soon will be, in the same league as the United States — it would reject the Cold War assumption that this means that China must be “contained.”

GPC portrays competition in an aggressive and confrontational lens. The “all or nothing” narrative risks full out conventional — and potentially nuclear war — in addition to loss of 4 decades of diplomacy, trillions of dollars, and more

Emma **Ashford 2021**, Ashford is a senior fellow with the Reimagining U.S. Grand Strategy program at the Stimson Center, an adjunct assistant professor at Georgetown University, “Great-Power Competition Is a Recipe for Disaster”, Foreign Policy, April 1st, 2021, <https://foreignpolicy.com/2021/04/01/china-usa-great-power-competition-recipe-for-disaster/>

Indeed, if great-power competition is instead a means to an end, it’s not at all clear what those ends are. There’s rarely a concrete goal among those who proselytize in favor of a strategy of great-power competition. Consider how the topic is portrayed by former National Security Advisor H.R. McMaster in his

recent book. He opens by noting that “after the end of the Cold War, America and other free and open societies forgot that they had to compete to keep their freedom, security, and prosperity” **while later arguing that states must “compete thoroughly as the best means of avoiding confrontation.”** Confusingly, he **portrays competition as both an alternative to conflict and as a Manichean struggle between good and evil, with the United States beset by adversaries on all sides. It’s easy to dismiss this kind of rhetoric as silly, but it also carries substantial danger.** For one thing, the focus on competition masks a whole series of underlying assumptions about the international system and America’s role in it. **Washington’s policy community appears convinced that we are headed for a more dangerous world, one in which the United States must push back against the perceived aggression of states like China and Russia.** Though articles almost always include an obligatory aside—that cooperation with China on climate change is a must!—**the frame is almost uniformly confrontational. To be clear, there are good reasons for Washington’s strategic community to perceive an increasingly competitive world.** The gap between the United States and other countries is narrowing militarily; it has already closed by some economic measures. And pushback against U.S. foreign-policy choices among other states has increased in recent years, from Chinese attempts to revise maritime rules to Russia’s aggressive targeting of foreign elections. **But a more competitive world isn’t the same thing as an all-out struggle. Great-power competition is often portrayed as an all-or-nothing conflict, where revisionist autocracies are challenging the United States in every sphere. In reality, thus far China and Russia are only selectively revisionist, attempting to change the status quo where it suits their interests and to maintain it in other places. The last time the United States pursued a poorly thought-out slogan masquerading as a strategy, it ended up fighting a two-decade global war on terrorism, which it is still struggling to end. The risks of the all-or-nothing approach to global politics cannot be overstated.** As Fareed Zakaria put it recently, **“The United States risks squandering the hard-won gains from four decades of engagement with China, encouraging Beijing to adopt confrontational policies of its own, and leading the world’s two largest economies into a treacherous conflict of unknown scale and scope.”** Indeed, if one assumes—as much of the writing on great-power competition does—that China and Russia are implacable foes of the United States determined to destroy the existing order and overturn U.S. hegemony, then policies that would otherwise be unthinkable are suddenly on the table. **Military buildup in Europe and Asia becomes necessary, even if it raises the risk of open conflict with another nuclear power.** Economic decoupling seems vital to protect supply chains, though studies show that the costs to U.S. companies and workers would be extreme. **A recent report by the U.S. Chamber of Commerce’s China Center, for example, estimated that the U.S. economy could lose up to \$1 trillion in growth if tariffs were more broadly applied to all U.S.-China trade. Restrictions on tourism or on Chinese students studying in the United States would cost between \$15 billion and \$30 billion per year.** The bottom line is simple: It’s easy to make fun of great-power competition as a meaningless buzzword or as Washington’s foreign-policy elite rediscovering that other states get to have a say in world politics. But as the political scientist Robert Kagan wrote recently, **the biggest question of the coming decades may be whether countries can “confine the global competition to the economic and political realms and thus spare themselves and the world from the horrors of the next great war or even the still frightening confrontations of another cold war.” In that context, the blind pursuit of a strategy of great-power competition is irresponsible and shortsighted.**

GPC encourages an intense state of rivalry, creating an antagonistic environment that makes it easier for other powers to challenge US leadership

Daniel H. Nexon 2021, Professor in the Department of Government and at the Edmund A. Walsh School of Foreign Service at Georgetown University, “Against Great Power Competition”, Foreign Affairs, February 15, 2021, <https://www.foreignaffairs.com/articles/united-states/2021-02-15/against-great-power-competition>

But with Washington's unipolar status now on the wane, powers such as China and Russia find it easier than they once did to challenge U.S. leadership. Since states tend to consider overt antagonism a more attractive option when they expect to come out on top, there will inevitably be more competition among great powers as U.S. relative power declines. With Washington on the back foot, foreign leaders see a chance to gain economically, advance their security interests, and challenge existing norms, rules, or their position in the international pecking order. **It is one thing, though, for Washington to observe increasing competition among great powers and adjust to a world in which it enjoys less influence than it once did. It is another entirely to elevate competition itself to the guiding paradigm of U.S. foreign policy—as the Trump administration proposed and Biden may wind up doing. The mere fact of a more competitive international environment does not compel states to engage in unrelenting struggle. Instead, periods of intense interstate rivalry happen when great powers choose—sometimes as a matter of grand strategy, other times through the accretion of individual tactical decisions—to prioritize conflict over cooperation.** Nothing, for instance, requires the United States to push back against every peripheral challenge to its influence, status, or policy preferences. **Not every move by Moscow or Beijing constitutes a direct threat to Washington's national interests.**

GPC is not concrete; it can justify almost anything, allowing politicians to manipulate the concept to pass their preferred policy

Daniel H. Nexon 2021, Professor in the Department of Government and at the Edmund A. Walsh School of Foreign Service at Georgetown University, "Against Great Power Competition", Foreign Affairs, February 15, 2021, <https://www.foreignaffairs.com/articles/united-states/2021-02-15/against-great-power-competition>

These norms, rules, and institutions often complement power politics. They serve as both objects and instruments of great-power contestation. In the nineteenth century, for instance, the German statesman Otto von Bismarck appealed to shared norms in a successful effort to reduce European resistance to German unification. **Today, the United States draws much of its relative power from institutional arrangements—notably its unrivaled network of alliances and partnerships—that frequently reflect and derive legitimacy from liberal values. These relationships underscore a central problem with treating great-power competition as the organizing principle of foreign policy: it provides very little in the way of guidance to policymakers. There is no single grand strategy for eras of great-power competition. There are no instruments of statecraft that competition renders relevant or irrelevant.** Great-power competition doesn't even imply adopting a more antagonistic approach to rivals: as U.S. President Ronald Reagan and Soviet leader Mikhail Gorbachev realized by 1987, the best response to intensifying competition may be to dial tensions back through confidence-building measures and cooperation. **Such indeterminacy helps explain the concept's widespread appeal: one can use great-power competition to justify almost anything. In the 1990s, the United States needed enormous military budgets to prevent the emergence of new great-power competitors. Now it needs them to compete with existing ones. Liberals once called for major investments in infrastructure, education, and research to sustain American primacy. Now they call for them to keep the United States competitive in a multipolar world. Great-power competition might require strategic retrenchment, or offshore balancing, or deep engagement.** Perhaps it means that Washington must give up its liberal illusions and pursue unbridled and unilateral realpolitik. Or maybe the United States needs to commit to multilateralism and more equitable relationships with allies.

Cooperation – not competition – is needed to address global existential challenges, like climate change and nuclear proliferation

Daniel H. Nexon 2021, Professor in the Department of Government and at the Edmund A. Walsh School of Foreign Service at Georgetown University, “Against Great Power Competition”, Foreign Affairs, February 15, 2021, <https://www.foreignaffairs.com/articles/united-states/2021-02-15/against-great-power-competition>

The United States must adapt to a world in which China and Russia are growing stronger, both militarily and economically. But in many instances, cooperation—including with rivals—will advance U.S. security and prosperity far more effectively than competition. The world faces existential challenges such as climate change, ecosystem collapse, and nuclear proliferation that will only worsen if the United States, China, and others fail to collaborate. There are models for how to avoid this dark outcome, even during antagonistic moments in world politics. Despite the threat of nuclear annihilation during the Cold War, Washington and Moscow managed to collaborate on a range of common concerns, including smallpox vaccine research and, eventually, nuclear nonproliferation. Today, by contrast, the COVID-19 pandemic has frayed relations between the United States and China—which bodes poorly for the two countries’ ability to handle other transnational problems. Despite the extension of New START, the Cold War-era arms control regime between the United States and Russia also hangs on by a thread. No one is quite sure how China fits into this bleak picture: Beijing, along with the United States and Russia, is modernizing its nuclear inventory. Breakthroughs in potentially destabilizing technologies are looming. **All of these problems call for cooperative solutions, not unnecessarily deepening rivalries. When adopted as a foundational paradigm of foreign relations, great-power competition relegates collaboration to an afterthought or, worse, dismisses it as naive. Leaders in the Biden administration can better address the realities of contemporary great-power competition if they treat it as one possible way to advance specific goals, rather than the organizing principle of U.S. foreign policy.**

GPC is conceptually flawed, failing to identify who the “great powers” are

Matej Kandrik 2021, Kandrik is the Executive Director at the Adapt Institute, “The Case Against the Concept of Great Power Competition”, The Strategy Bridge, June 30, 2021, <https://thestrategybridge.org/the-bridge/2021/6/30/the-case-against-the-concept-of-great-power-competition>

Great power competition is a trendy concept that frames the current perception of international affairs held by many. As such, it deserves serious consideration.[1] **Arguably the most dominant conceptualization of great power competition is an objective status of international order characterized by an increased contest between great powers.**[2] To understand great power competition, we need to deconstruct it. **The underlying claim here is that great power competition is a hollow, unhelpful, and potentially dangerous concept.** The case against it is threefold. **First, it does not provide insight into who exactly are those great powers and how to differentiate them from medium or small powers. Most often, great power competition describes bilateral interactions between the U.S. and China. Sometimes Russia is added with a footnote that the Kremlin is not a true systemic competitor, but a regional power and major disruptor.**[3] **This uncertainty naturally leads to an important question about how the European Union, Japan, India, and other important, but arguably not first-league, players fit into the great power competition discussion.**

Competition is intrinsic to state affairs – GPC adds no value to political discussions

Matej **Kandrik 2021**, Kandrik is the Executive Director at the Adapt Institute, “The Case Against the Concept of Great Power Competition”, The Strategy Bridge, June 30, 2021, <https://thestrategybridge.org/the-bridge/2021/6/30/the-case-against-the-concept-of-great-power-competition>

Second, competition is a primary category of means the state employs to struggle over security and prosperity with other states. It describes the nature of interactions states engage in to proceed towards specific ends. It is part of a continuum between cooperation and conflict. A sense of rivalry is arguably a defining feature. This distinguishes it from adversarial interactions of conflict and cooperative interactions typical for coexistence. The takeaway point here is that international actors compete with each other all the time. Competition is nothing new and therefore, the concept of great power competition adds no value to this discussion. [4] IT IS TEMPTING TO MISJUDGE GREAT POWER COMPETITION AS AN END IN AND OF ITSELF AND NOT A MEANS.

GPC does not describe strategic ends. Competition for competition’s sake results in unchecked escalation

Matej **Kandrik 2021**, Kandrik is the Executive Director at the Adapt Institute, “The Case Against the Concept of Great Power Competition”, The Strategy Bridge, June 30, 2021, <https://thestrategybridge.org/the-bridge/2021/6/30/the-case-against-the-concept-of-great-power-competition>

Third, great power competition does not come with an inherent strategic end. We do not know what, exactly, it is that states should compete over. It is tempting to misjudge great power competition as an end in and of itself and not a means. This is potentially dangerous. If any specific goal does not limit competition, it can become an end in itself. Such competition for competition’s sake risks unchecked escalation.

GPC focuses on Chinese/Russian interactions with the US, resulting in a costly and dangerous oversimplification of geopolitics

Matej **Kandrik 2021**, Kandrik is the Executive Director at the Adapt Institute, “The Case Against the Concept of Great Power Competition”, The Strategy Bridge, June 30, 2021, <https://thestrategybridge.org/the-bridge/2021/6/30/the-case-against-the-concept-of-great-power-competition>

...LIMITING GREAT POWER COMPETITION TO U.S.-CHINA OR U.S.-CHINA-RUSSIA INTERACTIONS RISKS FALLING INTO COSTLY AND POTENTIALLY DANGEROUS OVERSIMPLIFICATIONS. Nevertheless, as the case of Russia clearly shows, one does not have to be a great power with global interests and reach to be an influential player in international relations. Policymakers should not simply put aside actors such as the European Union, India, Japan, and others. These states present an essential variable for Great Power Competition in several ways. Middle and small powers tend to become objects to be competed over, which is the most fundamental driver of classical geopolitics. Yet, they also have their own agency. Cunning leaders of middle or small states sometimes are able to walk the line between great powers, receiving favors from various sides. Their modes of interactions with so-called great powers can range

from non-alignment and neutrality to balancing, hedging, shelter-seeking, or bandwagoning. Furthermore, states like Ukraine, Turkey, Taiwan, Belarus, Iran, or North Korea are considered places of special interest to primary players due to their geopolitical position. That is why limiting Great Power Competition to U.S.-China or U.S.-China-Russia interactions risks falling into costly and potentially dangerous oversimplifications.

GPC adds no value to policy makers decisions, while potentially risking danger

Matej **Kandrik 2021**, Kandrik is the Executive Director at the Adapt Institute, “The Case Against the Concept of Great Power Competition”, The Strategy Bridge, June 30, 2021, <https://thestrategybridge.org/the-bridge/2021/6/30/the-case-against-the-concept-of-great-power-competition>

WHAT IS THE ADDED VALUE OF GREAT POWER COMPETITION? **The failure of great power competition as a concept is almost absolute. Great Power Competition exploits intuitive or implicit understanding of what great powers are, while it gives no solid clues on what actors should policy makers consider relevant and why. States compete all the time. Competition is something states naturally do in a quest for security, prosperity, and prestige. Still, competition is hardly a defining feature of how states seek to achieve or secure their interests. States employ unique blends of cooperative, competitive, and conflict interactions vis their partner, rivals, and adversaries. Great power competition provides close to zero helpful guidance on how decision-makers should act and, most importantly, what they should seek through competition with others. Based on this assessment, great power competition seems like a hollow, unhelpful, and even an eventually dangerous bumper sticker slogan.**

America has relied on GPC as a political strategy in replacement of declining economic power. Emphasis on military dominance has incentivized the US to engage other countries militarily, undermining global security and risking a power vacuum that causes violence and conflict

Cormac **Smith 2022**, Former strategic communication advisor to their foreign minister of Ukraine, former UK’s Cabinet Office as Deputy Director of Communication, and worked in government in the Welsh Assembly Government, The Northern Ireland Office, the Health and Social Care Service for Northern Ireland; and the Government Actuaries Department, “To What Extent Is ‘Great Power Competition’ A Threat to Global Security?”, E-International Relations, May 4, 2022, <https://www.e-ir.info/2022/05/04/to-what-extent-is-great-power-competition-a-threat-to-global-security/>

Firstly, the discussion around great power competition threatening global security must start with discussions around the world’s current, or now former, world hegemon — the United States (U.S.). The U.S. has been the sole world power since the fall of the Soviet Union in 1991 and has been a strong presence on the international scene, arguably, since the end of the First World War. Currently, the United States’ position no longer looks as solid as it has in previous decades, which invites other great powers to attempt to become the world hegemon, therefore threatening global security. **The primary factor in arguing for the U.S.’s decline causing great power competition with the other great powers, and therefore creating an unstable world, is the loss of the gigantic economic gap it has over other nations.** For many years the U.S. was the predominant economic power in the world, especially with the collapse of the Soviet Union; the U.S. and the world viewed American economic power as unstoppable (Grunberg, 2005). **However, with the emergence of China, the European Union, and India as possible economic**

rivals, the U.S.'s position is far from the one it had in the late 1990s. Kemp argues that due to the transfer of America's industries overseas, they became reliant on foreign powers and, therefore, diminished their position in the eyes of international powers. (Kemp, 1990). Kemp's analysis of the U.S. economic situation is, I believe, largely correct. For example, U.S. plastics manufacturing has largely moved into West Asia, especially China (China Briefing, 2011). **America's howling out of its manufacturing and industrial base diminishes its status as a world hegemon because, no longer having its industry in its national territory, this allows China to gain a better position over America.** The Sino-American industrial relationship is one of deceit and Machiavellian jostling due to the underhandedness of this dispute. **As long as America is the dominant power in this relationship, however, global security will be largely secure as China will not dare to challenge America's power in open confrontations; China will wait until America is no longer a world hegemon.** Finkelstein argues that, **unlike previous industrial revolutions that America has experienced, it will not be able to keep up with the 'Third Industrial Revolution' as he puts it. He argues that the U.S. will fail to grasp the opportunity to revolutionise its society and institutions in line with the technological innovations going on elsewhere: the invention of the computer, fibre optics, and improved missiles for example (Finkelstein, 1992).** Although Finkelstein's analysis is now out of date, he hits on a crucial point relating to the attitude of American economic policy. **Though America, unlike Finkelstein's viewpoint, maintained its position as a leader in technological development, it blundered the opportunity to limit other great powers in also improving their technological capabilities.** For example, Russia's recent development of the Tsirkon 3M22 Missile, a hypersonic missile, has caused large concern on the international scene (Cole, 2021). **This development of highly advanced military equipment is a by-product of America's failure to successfully maintain its technological dominance in the world. A decline of American technological hegemony is a large and consequential event for the concept of global security. Without its technological dominance, America will no longer be feared. The lack of fear, as seen in previous decades, allows other great powers, namely America's enemies, but also her allies, to challenge or subvert the world's peace in an attempt to profit from the existence of a power vacuum, which, therefore, threatens global security.** The economic, technological, and manufacturing situation of the United States is not hopeless, however; a declining nation is not a dead one, and recovery is always possible. In his book, *End This Depression Now!*, Krugman argues that strong and decisive economic stimuli must be made in order to pull America up from the depression it was in during the Obama administration (Krugman, 2013). If America manages to reverse its decline, then global security will be solidified. A stronger America would cause nations like China or Russia to not have the capabilities or desire to threaten global security without risking the reaction of America. Furthermore, the American web of alliances and military engagements has caused its 'empire' to experience imperial overstretch. In the *Rise and Fall of the Great Powers*, Kennedy argues that the term imperial overstretch is when the power in question has "a vast array of strategic commitments which had been made decades earlier" (Kennedy, 1988). This assessment of a great power being overwhelmed by its obligations fits with the current position of America very well. Since the Second World War, America has, either intentionally or otherwise, found itself with international commitments that have a global reach. This concept is echoed by Burbach and Tarbell who argue that America aims to spread the Neo-Liberal model to "less sophisticated" nations (Burbach & Tarbell, 2004). **This attempt to impose American ideology can be seen throughout the last century. The Vietnam War, military coups in South America, and U.S. military occupations in the Middle East are examples of this attempt to eradicate opposition to the American worldview. As a result of these incursions, America has worn its military capabilities too thin. If America's military might is stretched too thin across the world, or at the very least diminished, then the effects on the globe's security are significant as it leaves a power vacuum in less stable parts of the world where the U.S. has, depending on your attitude toward America, either occupied or liberated. This power vacuum will soon be occupied by another great power, causing conflict, disputes, and possible violence, which would cause global security to be in peril.**

The threat of Russia is overstated and a strong Russia is good for global security

Cormac Smith 2022, Former strategic communication advisor to their foreign minister of Ukraine, former UK's Cabinet Office as Deputy Director of Communication, and worked in government in the Welsh Assembly Government, The Northern Ireland Office, the Health and Social Care Service for Northern Ireland; and the Government Actuaries Department, "To What Extent Is 'Great Power Competition' A Threat to Global Security?", E-International Relations, May 4, 2022, <https://www.e-ir.info/2022/05/04/to-what-extent-is-great-power-competition-a-threat-to-global-security/>

Secondly, **the position of Russia must be considered when debating whether great power competition threatens global security.** Russia is an exceptionally traditional nation and has always, in my opinion, been separated from the powers of central and western Europe. **This feeling of separation has caused Russia to become distrustful of The West — it forever wants to be 'part of the gang' and but enjoying the independence being ostracised brings with it.** These two sides of Russia, Russia the West and Russia the mysterious, are the fundamental crux of its foreign policy, security tactics, and diplomatic actions. In his book, U.S. Regime Change and Great Power Assertiveness, Tsygankov argued that the position Russia currently takes on the West is an attempt to protect European values and assert its sovereign democratic rights (Tsygankov, 2016). He argues that **Russia views the world, and especially Europe, as a collection of independent states which have the right to govern themselves.** I would argue that this is a largely correct analysis of Russia's position. In the now-famous speech at the 2007 Munich Security Conference, **Putin fiercely defended Russia's right to maintain its sovereignty and argued that a unipolar world, the idea that world power stems from one state, was no longer feasible** (President of Russia, 2007). This idea of a multipolar world is a cause for concern for the concept of global security. **Without a strong and decisive centre of world power, the globe will descend into different nations acting in their interests, devoid of any supernational authority that can properly keep the world peace.** Also, **Russia's current position in Europe has been stronger than it has been in previous historical periods. The fall of the Soviet Union, in 1991, brought with it nine years of political struggle and uncertainty. However, under the leadership of Putin, Russia has managed to turn its fortune.** The new Russia should be a concern to the West, especially to the European Union. Lucas argues, quite correctly, that Russia's position in Europe is advantageous for its political and foreign policy, that being the upkeep of its democratic sovereignty, due to its strong oil and gas exports (Lucas, 2014, p. 213-217). The strong natural gas exports are mainly to Germany (Rystad Energy, 2020; Gazprom Export, 2021). This fact is significant, due to the broader ramifications between Russo-German relations, and to a greater extent, relations between Russia and the European Union. In a somewhat hypocritical move, Russia has managed to diminish the sovereignty of Germany, as well as many other oil and gas-dependent countries in Europe, to bolster its position on the world stage. In the context of great power competition threatening global security, an observer should not be surprised when dealing with hypocrisies in international relations. **Russia's stranglehold on Germany, and other states of the world, is a cause for concern for the security of the world, as it allows Russia to act without proper international backlash.** This could be seen in Germany's tepid response to Russia's incursions into Ukraine in 2013-14 (Spiegel, 2014). **Russia's position in having such a large natural resource to export to Europe is a symptom of a larger problem. If a sovereign state can dictate through force, coerce, or manipulate another sovereign state into either acting or not acting in their interests, it poses a threat to global security, as it allows a state to act separately from the global community.** If one great power can use Machiavellian tactics, such as manipulation and coercion, against another great power to achieve its strategic goals it causes a threat to global security. A state with all the power can wield significant damage to global security. **Overall, I would argue Russia's position is not one of massive international concern. The Russian threat, or what we Westerners perceive it to be, is not the massive bogeyman as it was in previous decades. With the Soviet Union dead, the Russian psyche must be one of defence first due to its massive loss of perceived friendly territory. And with NATO's expansion into what Russia could**

perceive as its sphere of influence, the West risks igniting tensions that shouldn't exist. Perhaps the duality that Russia seems to have only needs to be coaxed out to be a cooperative member of the European Community. A cooperative Russia would benefit not only peace in Europe but also global peace.

China's threat is largely minimal, and the US will continue to remain the global hegemon regardless

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Though China boasts, and can rightly do so, of being the second-largest economy in the world (Research FDI, 2021), its economic capabilities are not as impressive as first thought. With Chinese economic modernisation came, similarly to the United States, international obligations. As Li argues, China has become too interdependent and connected to the world economy to be a major threat to global security (Li, 2004). This is somewhat correct as a great power like China cannot invade or wage a war on another power, whether it is against a minor power bordering China or a great power overseas. Concerning Li and similarly the American industry, **China has developed an overreliance on the importation of minerals from Africa** (Devaland, 2009). **This overreliance on a foreign power's resources, in this case, minerals, is a large cause for concern as, like the ability of Russia to manipulate other European countries, China is influenced by another power.** Though China might not be able to threaten global security in the military sense, the great power jostling can be felt through diplomatic and financial means. China's attempts to wield soft power, to develop its position on the world stage, could be a cause for concern for global security. Dumbaugh (2008) is correct when arguing that China's infiltration of world organisations is an exercise in soft power. With China joining the World Trade Organisation in 2001 (WTO, 2001), and it is looking more likely that China will join The Trans-Pacific Trade pact (Reuters, 2021), just to name a few organisations, it suggests development in their soft power strategy. Its attempts at increasing its obligations, and therefore increasing the quantity of great power competition, have become more and more obvious. **However, though China has undoubtedly advanced its position since the fall of the Soviet Union, I would argue that the threat China poses to global security through its competition with great powers, is largely minimal — and will be confined to China's immediate proximity.** About Kissinger's argument, Hoo views Chinese foreign policy, during the Xi regime, as being fiercely China First (Hoo, 2018). This could be a problem for both global security and how other states interact with China, as a China that views whatever it does as infallible, it leaves no wiggle room to either compromise diplomatically, or avoid international crises: Therefore risking the escalation of conflict. Though China does not yet possess the title of world hegemon, I believe that its ambitions most definitely include that. The attempts, as Dumbaugh (2010) argues, to infiltrate world organisations is an attempt, like the United States, at spreading their influence to a greater extent than without these organisational groups being there. **But, as long as the U.S. is the world power, then that impedes China, or for that case Russia, from becoming the world hegemon.** Overall, China's ambitions to become the world hegemon are undoubtedly there. The incursions into the South China Sea and the rustlings of overtaking the United States as the largest economic power are indications of this desire. **Although, this desire will remain simply a dream as long as America remains top dog.** The world may see significant threats to its security in regional areas (Indian-Chinese border, South China Sea, Korean Peninsula) in China's bid to become number one, but as long as

the United States can maintain its position, global security will remain together. **In conclusion, the concept of great power competition threatening global security is undeniably obvious, the horrors of the 20th Century are simple reminders of this fact. However, with a world hegemon, those threats are far less significant, almost negligible. American power has and hopefully will, continue to bring order to the world.** Though China and Russia, and other great powers, may envy the U.S. and wish to replace her as world hegemon, it is unlikely they will do so. As long as America can be more Machiavellian than that the other powers and retain its national cohesion, global security will remain secure for the foreseeable future.