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TRUMPING NORMS: WHITHER THE INTERNATIONAL LIBERAL ORDER?

by

MAUREEN JONES

A master's thesis submitted to the Graduate Faculty in Liberal Studies in partial fulfillment of the requirements for the degree of Master of Arts, The City University of New York

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Maureen Jones

This manuscript has been read and accepted for the Graduate Faculty in Liberal Studies in satisfaction of the thesis requirement for the degree of Master of Arts.

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ABSTRACT

Trumping Norms: Whither the International Liberal Order?

By

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This paper's main objective is to develop potential theories on the future of American foreign policy within the Trump Administration. The paper will begin by evaluating the norm of statehood and will discuss the contributions of John Meyer to the statehood discourse. Through analysis of Meyer's work, this paper will develop a standardized structure of statehood within the global order. Furthermore, the paper will analyze the Westphalian international order and discuss the viability of this system leading up to 2017. The Westphalian international system has been the primary system for which nation-states aim to gain acceptance and its norms provide the basis for all nations. The norms of statehood and sovereignty are some of the fundamental elements of the system and they provide the constructs for the nation-state entity to function within the trade, politics, and cultural exchanges of Westphalian order. Sovereignty will be analyzed within this construct and will be developed based on Max Weber's work on the nation-state. This paper will then evaluate the norm life-cycle as proposed by Martha Finnemore and Kathryn Sikkink. It will then discuss some of the most pertinent norms in the international liberal order.

This paper will then evaluate the emergence of Donald Trump during the American election cycle and his eventual inauguration, including how his views on foreign policy will affect the legacy and future of American foreign policy. A discussion of isolationism and nationalism will frame the analysis of certain areas of foreign policy that he has already begun to address, such as American relations with China, North Korea, and Russia. Thorough analysis will be conducted on the speeches he has given, as well as the actions that he has taken thus far, i.e., his conversation with the President of Taiwan and the conversations of his advisers with Russian counterparts during the transition period. The Trump administration has illustrated and communicated that it intends to undertake severe departures from past foreign policy agendas. The dangerous tone of some of these departures have the potential to create turmoil within the current international order. This paper will evaluate and hypothesize about the potential impacts that a Trump foreign policy agenda will have on the world and how well the world's institutions might fare in this potentially chaotic time.

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Chapter 1: Introduction

Asked on MSNBC's "Morning Joe" who he talks with consistently about foreign policy, Trump responded, "I'm speaking with myself, number one, because I have a very good brain and I've said a lot of things."

"I know what I'm doing and I listen to a lot of people, I talk to a lot of people and at the appropriate time I'll tell you who the people are," Trump said. "But my primary consultant is myself and I have a good instinct for this stuff." (Collins, 2016).

The political emergence and eventual inauguration of Donald J. Trump as President of the United States of America has posed grave questions for the future of the country and international order. While many scholars, throughout the international relations field, have argued that the current world order has been experiencing a decline, Trump is poised to rapidly increase the onset of this transformation, to an unknown, new world order. America's dominance within the current system predetermines that any shift in its foreign policy stance and agenda, will likely produce a significant and lasting effect on the international system. President Trump's general lack of substantive discussion, debate, or policy publications since he began his campaign, has left the world scrambling to piece together potential new foreign policy aims and goals from his abundance of tweets and provocative statements. This is starkly evidenced by the above quote, in which he identifies himself, a person without any formal education or training in foreign affairs, as his primary source of information. Furthermore, in a very short period, President Trump has become notorious for contradicting himself and changing his stance on numerous matters of state. This has produced vast confusion amongst both America's global partners and its adversaries about how to regard U.S. foreign policy in this new era.

Despite this lack of coherence, a consensus has begun to form that a Trump foreign policy will be built upon diffusing nationalist and isolationist policies, aimed at transactional goals, despite isolated events in which Trump has engaged in actions that contradict his spoken stances.¹ This will be a severe departure from the agendas of the past thirteen presidencies, which were based on American global leadership. Since the presidency of Woodrow Wilson, U.S. foreign policy has stressed building America's global influence so that American ideals may be spread throughout the world. It also has led to the hegemonic status that America enjoys in global politics, which has enabled it to champion the spread of Western ideals, norms, and liberalism worldwide.

The foundation of the current world order is often traced to the Peace of Westphalia in 1648, which created the modern system of statehood and sovereignty. Since its emergence, the Westphalian system, has endured centuries of global change, with some of its foremost challenges emanating from decolonization and the creation of independent nation-states throughout Africa, Latin America, and Asia. Some of the more daunting challenges to the order came after World War I, as the U.S. altered its foreign policy stance from isolationism to internationalism. The end of World War II provided a platform for even greater influence for America in the world order, following the defeat of the Axis Powers, the implementation of the Marshall Plan, and the eventual breakup of the former Soviet Union.

The post-WWII era fostered the emergence and cascade of numerous international norms that still hold relevance today. These range from the norms of deterrence to nuclear non-proliferation to international human rights. The importance of these norms in structuring

¹ The cruise missile strike in Syria on April 4, 2017 in retaliation for a chemical strike on civilians contradicts the "America First" agenda that President Trump has often touted (Coll, 2017).

relations between governments is paramount. Despite the general deference to norms amongst most governments, Trump appears to be on a path to gravely undermine a vast number of norms. It will become the responsibility of the international system, through its institutions and individual actors, to protect the future and viability of these norms.

Despite the international system's ability to survive previous challenges during the 20th century and beginning of the 21st century, it remains to be seen if it can withstand the ensuing decline of the American hegemonic status coupled with the rise of non-Western ideal subscribing states and President Trump's steadfast determination to upend the status quo. Therefore, this paper will analyze the Westphalian system and the international liberal order leading up to the election of President Trump. It will then assess the role of international norms, including how they structure foreign policy agendas and diplomatic interactions between nation-states. Finally, it will (i) evaluate select critical foreign policy agenda items that stand to be transformed the most by the Trump administration and (ii) propose scenarios for safeguarding the future of the global order.

Chapter 2: The International Liberal Order

I. The Westphalian International Order

The modern international order was born out of the peace settlement that ended the Thirty Years War (1618 – 1648) in Europe. The causes of the Thirty Years War are largely traced to the decline of the Habsburg Empire and the Protestant Reformation (Farr, 2005). The Peace of Westphalia essentially ended the previous governing order of feudal principalities and created sovereign, territorially based nation-states that would seek autonomy and engage in interstate competition (Farr, 2005). Another key element of the Westphalian model is the state's monopoly over violence within its territorial boundaries (Kayaoglu, 2010).

In addition, The Peace of Westphalia greatly reduced the influence of the Papacy and aristocratic families in controlling territories and sought to end any future notions of a singular monarch ruling all of Europe. This decrease of religious interference within the new system essentially realigned the power structure. It eliminated any outside competing power structures within these new societies, as alliances to religious institutions were weakened. This weakening of religiosity was crucial, as it enabled these newly formed and secular nation-states to follow a more non-interference styled agenda (Kayaoglu, 2010). Religious tolerance and the respect for territorial borders were crucial for the establishment and success of this new state-centric order.

Furthermore, a consolidation of aristocratic power and wealth began during the construction of these new state models in Europe. The consolidation was the result of the aristocrats attempts to remain relevant and influential within the new state structure (Farr, 2005). This engendered some of the earliest building of national loyalty and identity. The embracing of this new order led to the emergence of state diplomatic ties, along with attempts to implement

policies of non-interference with the intent of national self-preservation. The principle of mutual respect amongst states within this model formed the foundation for the future development of international law (Kayaoglu, 2010).

The new nation-state based model quickly spread as colonization brought with it this novel framework. The Westphalian model is crucial to the discussion of international relations because its foundational elements of sovereign states and non-interference have withstood centuries of development, decolonization, violence and war, and global power transformations. It is vital to the understanding of how nation-states interact with each other on the global scale and how general order is maintained internationally. While the system has not prevented all wars since 1648, it is responsible for altering the pre-Westphalian calculus of religion-based wars to wars of ideology and balance of power (Farr, 2005).

The Westphalian model does have its critics, with Stephen Krasner and Benno Teschke providing some of the harshest criticisms. Krasner is dubious of the linear progression and relevance of state sovereignty from 1648 through today. He has described numerous cases of blatant infringements of sovereignty, both through treaties and the relinquishing of state power, in order to create blocs and communities since 1648 (Krasner, 1995). Lastly, Krasner points to the fact that the Holy Roman Empire did not collapse until after the Peace of Westphalia, as proof that sovereignty did not begin to exist following the Treaty (1995). Teschke's work published in 2003 went so far as to call the model a myth (Kayaoglu, 2010). According to Kayaoglu, most of Teschke's criticism of the Westphalian narrative, relies upon rejections of how and when our current understanding of sovereignty developed and the degree to which non-interference in a nation-state's internal affairs actually materialized (2010).

These criticisms are relevant to the discussion of the Westphalian model, but the evaluation of the viability of the model, should be based primarily on its foundational elements, instead of the timeframes in which the elements of the model materialized. Sovereign statehood is at the core of today's order and while different institutions and global treaties have been introduced and normalized, such as the Human Rights Discourse after the end of World War II and the recent Responsibility to Protect, sovereign borders are still the status quo. The Westphalian model has been able to absorb and adapt to the multitude of challenges it has faced and remains the general structure within which nations interact on a global scale.

II. *Sovereignty*

The principle of sovereignty within the Westphalian system can be defined as when “in a system of sovereign states, each recognizes the others as the final authorities within their given territories, and only they can be considered actors within the system” (Croxton, 1999). Daniel Philpott furthers the definition of sovereignty by explaining authority in sovereignty as “the right to command and correlatively, the right to be obeyed” (1995). Indeed, it is an agreement between the citizens of a state and the states' ruler that enables the ruler to exercise power within the territorially bound land.

Daniel Philpott describes sovereignty in Westphalia as having three faces. The three faces are, (i) the legitimacy of the political unit of the sovereign state, (ii) that the most basic attribute of a state's existence is the control of the territory, and (iii) that sovereignty removed all legitimate restrictions on a state's activities within its territory (1995). Philpott's analysis of the main elements of a sovereign state is essential to the understanding of how the international order functions. While not all states are equal within the international order, the principle of

sovereignty functions as a stabilizer for international political and economic transactions.

Sovereignty is critical for the international order to remain as it restricts territorial conquests. It must remain as a legitimate concept and as the foundation of order because it prevents anarchy and lawlessness from becoming the modus operandi, as was experienced in the pre-Westphalian world.

The seemingly impenetrable status of sovereignty as the basis of the international order has experienced some of its most significant challenges since the end of WWII. Some of the most critical challenges to the bastion of sovereignty were the establishment of the European Union and the United Nations. The governing body of the E.U. challenges the concept of final authority because when a nation becomes a member of the E.U., it authorizes the E.U. to act on its behalf, particularly within the foreign policy domain. Although E.U. member states have not formally relinquished sovereignty to the E.U., the organization exists as a supranational entity that negotiates and makes foreign policy decisions for its member states, such as free trade, labor regulations, and human rights agreements. The ability of the E.U. to negotiate for its member states increases the negotiating power for the continent but it does weaken the ultimate authority of rulers within the territorially bound nation-states.

Similarly, the United Nations has had constraining effects on the concept of sovereignty. The U.N.'s Universal Declaration of Human Rights makes clear inroads to the fundamental elements of non-interference and the totality with which a ruler can act within its borders. Therefore, the focus on activity within borders lessens the ultimate authority held by a ruler. While the Declaration does not provide for actionable efforts to thwart human rights offenses, it does alter the concept of sovereignty. The potential for action by outside actors in response to perceived human rights abuses limits the third face of Philpott's sovereignty, as abuses may

result in restrictions being placed on a state's activity by the international community or other invested stakeholders.

The challenges to sovereignty were furthered by the emergence of the norm of the Responsibility to Protect (R2P). R2P is defined by using three pillars:

Pillar One: Every state has the Responsibility to Protect its populations from four mass atrocity crimes: genocide, war crimes, crimes against humanity and ethnic cleansing.

Pillar Two: The wider international community has the responsibility to encourage and assist individual states in meeting that responsibility.

Pillar Three: If a state is manifestly failing to protect its populations, the international community must be prepared to take appropriate collective action, in a timely decisive manner and in accordance with the UN Charter (Globalr2p.org).

R2P clearly mandates that action be taken by outside actors when a population is at risk due to government action and/or inaction (Haass, 2017). However, a lack of written and ratified violation thresholds and methods of intervention have threatened the future of R2P. The international community has struggled to reach a consensus on how to proceed in conducting an intervention to halt a violation. Despite R2P's uncertain future, its overall mandate does aim to limit a ruler's authority within its sovereign land.

Although the absoluteness of sovereignty has been challenged, and as some would argue degraded, since its emergence as a norm, it has remained the crux of the international order. The norm of the sovereign nation-state standardizes and enables political and economic transactions to occur within the international system. While Trump campaigned on an "America First" agenda, that would allude to an adherence of the norm of sovereignty, his knowledge of sovereignty, based on statements has been concerning. In a statement during his campaign,

Trump indicated that he “hoped that Russian intelligence services had successfully hacked Hillary Clinton’s email” and encouraged Russia to publish the data (Parker & Sanger, 2016). Trump’s encouragement of a foreign adversary to engage in cyberespionage on a fellow Presidential candidate and American citizen, demonstrates a grave negligence with regard to sovereignty and his lack of knowledge about the norm. It is therefore critical that the norm and its supporters continue to maintain sovereignty’s primacy within the international order and that nations insist on preventing any further degradations.

III. What is a State?

The nation-state is the basic unit of function within the international system. Therefore, it is important to consider the constructs of a nation-state in order to have a greater understanding of how the international system operates. The article “World Society and the Nation-State” defines what a state is and how it functions within the system. According to Meyer, Boli, Thomas, and Ramirez (1997) a nation-state is:

...Defined as a fundamental and strongly legitimated unit of action...They claim all the features of the rational state actor: territorial boundaries and a demarcated population; sovereign authority; self-determination, and responsibility; standardized purposes like collective development, social justice, and the protection of individual rights; authoritative, law-based control systems; clear possession of resources such as natural and mineral wealth and a labor force; and policy technologies for the rational means-ends accomplishment of goals. (p. 153)

This definition concisely demonstrates the highly developed nature that a state must possess in order to be accepted into the international system. These units enable a networked type system

with the expectation that states will act in a rationalized manner, generally for their own political and economic gain. The authors also make an argument that most states act uniformly because of world-cultural principles. The uniformity with which states evolve throughout their life cycle demonstrates the interconnectedness and interdependence that exists in our international system. These principles have been developed over time and have made deviations from the nation-state expectation, detailed above, rare and difficult to maintain. The legitimate sovereign state entity is the crux of the current international system and remains the most powerful restraint within the modern system.

Chapter 3: Norms

I. *Normative Framework*

The concept of norms has existed in the study of political science for over two millennia, with references in the works of Aristotle and Plato (Finnemore & Sikkink, 1998). Leading contemporary norm theorists, Martha Finnemore and Kathryn Sikkink, define norms as “a standard of appropriate behavior for actors with a given identity” (Finnemore & Sikkink, 1998). They create boundaries for how an actor ought to react within a given context. In addition, they can provide constructs for how actors should behave when confronted with uncertain or unknown conditions. The constraining power of a norm lies in the perception and reaction of the rest of the actors of the system if a norm were to be violated. Moreover, it is the expectation that within a given system the actors will conform and conduct themselves in accordance with the established norms of that system.

Finnemore and Sikkink furthered the discussion by developing theories on the life cycle of a norm (1998). They explain that the life cycle of a norm occurs in three stages, beginning with norm emergence. A norm typically emerges from local or community level based agents desiring a specific behavioral change within their community. It was found that most norms emerged from situations of human agency, indeterminacy, chance occurrences, and favorable events (Finnemore & Sikkink, 1998). The successful emergence of a norm typically occurs through the work of norm entrepreneurs and collaborating organizations that possess a platform for the entrepreneurs to promote the norm. The emerging process of the norm is critical, as actors must be convinced of the need to alter their behavior.

This altering of behavior can be evidenced through the study of the changes in the global stance on nuclear weapons. Nuclear proliferation was the norm as countries vied for power on the global stage during the mid 20th century. Massive caches were developed by allies and adversaries during this time, as it was believed that quantity was the best method of deterrence and power posturing. Through the adherence by world leaders to this norm, there were over 70,000 nuclear weapons in the world by the end of the Cold War, but notably, not one country has deployed one since 1945 (Farrell, 2010).

Since the mid 20th century, the norm of nuclear proliferation has evolved to become one of nuclear nonproliferation, deterrence, and disarmament. This drastic change happened over a relatively short period within the context of global history and proves the efficacy of norms. The norm of nonproliferation would not have arisen without the work of norm entrepreneurs and their partnering organizations. Finnemore & Sikkink define norm entrepreneurs as agents who have strong notions about appropriate or desirable behavior in their community (1998). They are able to emerge norms because they have the ability to “call attention to issues or even “create” issues by using language that names, interprets, and dramatize them” (Finnemore & Sikkink, 1998). Norm entrepreneurs, combined with supporting organizations, strive to produce the requisite platforms for consensus building. In the rise of the nuclear nonproliferation norm, they were able to amend the global perception to one in which the lethality of the atomic bomb would not be accepted for deployment in standard military exercises.

One of the early nonproliferation norm entrepreneurs was President Truman, after the devastation and death toll of the atomic bombs in Japan was seven times that anticipated (Farrell, 2010). His refusal to utilize atomic bombs against the Soviet Union and his support for the Atomic Energy Act in 1946, clearly demonstrated the shift that had occurred about the use of

atomic weaponry (Farrell, 2010). Debates following the bombings of Hiroshima and Nagasaki, centered on the control of the nuclear weapon arsenal. The Army's Manhattan Project, which the weapons had first been developed under, evolved into the U.S. Atomic Energy Commission (AEC) (Lanouette, 2009). The AEC stipulated that the administration of the weapons would be placed under the control of a five-civilian member commission and would no longer remain administratively under the purview of the military. Civilian control over nuclear weapons has remained the status quo since Truman's decision seventy years ago.

The second step of the norm life cycle occurs when the norm cascades. According to Finnemore and Sikkink, a norm cascade transpires when a critical mass has been persuaded that the new behavior ought to be followed (1998). Finnemore and Sikkink found that the exercise of defining a critical mass to be quite fluid. They believe that a critical mass generally exists when approximately one third of the world's nations adhere to the norm. Additionally, they explain that critical nations supporting the issue that the norm seeks to address, can expedite the shift from emergence to cascade (1998). President Truman's relinquishing of power of atomic weapons to civilian control and reluctance to use nuclear weapons against the former Soviet Union demonstrated the effects that a critical state can have on a norm. His actions facilitated the cascade of the nuclear nonproliferation norm as they made a principled stance against nuclear weapon use and proliferation.

During the norm cascade, nations may adapt to the new norm without significant domestic pressure (Finnemore & Sikkink, 1998). As the global disposition changes towards a norm, many nations begin to engage in the institutionalization of the norm, both domestically and within international structures. The socialization process of the norm provides substantial pressure to nations to conform to the new behaviors and, as Finnemore and Sikkink describe,

once a critical mass has been reached, the cascade often happens at a rapid pace (1998). The socialization process finds its success through the manner by which states identify themselves. A nation's identity within the international system creates the ability for it to be susceptible to socialization. Scholars attribute the embracing of a cascading norm to factors of "legitimation, conformity, and esteem" (Finnemore & Sikkink, 1998). In this respect, nations behave similarly to individuals. Often, an individual's desire to avoid consequences for undesirable or rogue behavior, results in behavioral conformity to a group's normative patterns. In the international community, consequences can range from sanctions to a loss of trust and credibility (Finnemore & Sikkink, 1998).

Ultimately, a norm cascade will lead to internalization or institutionalization. This process brings about a uniformity of behavior amongst state actors. It also protects the norm from potentially altering influences, as the norm will become internalized in many facets of behavior, which can ultimately make it difficult to discern. This often leads to safeguarding of the norm because most will not realize that they are behaving in a certain manner as it has become thoroughly internalized (Finnemore & Sikkink, 1998). The authors identify some internalized norms in the international structure to be market exchange, sovereignty, and individualism (1998). As previously detailed, the norm of sovereignty is completely internalized within the international system, as it is a main pillar of the functioning of the system. As such, the norm of sovereignty provides the structure and boundaries for acceptable behavior of interactions between states within the international system. Often, states that fail to respect the norm of sovereignty are met with international condemnation and consequences, such as the international community's overwhelming response to Iraq's invasion of Kuwait in the Gulf War in 1991.

Finnemore and Sikkink's norm life cycle is a useful tool for understanding the mechanisms of the international system and how the different actors engage *inter se*. Their norm life cycle skillfully analyzes the process of incorporating a norm into standardized behavior and how it has affected past arenas of nonconformance amongst actors. One area of concern that Finnemore and Sikkink do not address is the possibility of norm erosion or death. This concept is important to consider, especially since the inauguration of the Trump Presidency.

Internalized norms are generally so deeply entrenched within the international system that they seem to be relatively immune to erosion by rogue actors or abnormal behavior. Despite this deep entrenchment, Trump does not appear to be easily convinced of adhering to acceptable behavior based on the typical motivating factors of legitimation, conformity, or esteem. He has egregiously infringed on both domestic and international norms causing the study of a norm's durability critical.

Moreover, the study of a norm's abolition or death is an area of international relations that lacks rigor and focus. Some prominent norms that have become extinct include the norms of slavery, colonization, and the proscription against forcible intervention (Panke & Petersohn, 2015). In an effort to illuminate the reasons and mechanisms for how and why norms die, Diana Panke and Ulrich Petersohn, evaluated six norms and proposed the three following hypotheses:

1. It is more likely that a norm will be challenged through re-negotiations, if the norm is embedded in an international organization or regime. By contrast, if the norm is not embedded in an international organization or regime, it is more likely that it will be challenged through practices of norm violation...
2. The group who can muster more relative power to facilitate its position is more likely to be successful...

3. If a norm is very precise, it will more likely be abolished than weakened. If a norm is vague, it is more likely that it will be weakened than abolished (Panke & Petersohn, 2015).

The second hypothesis about norm change has the most relevance to the Trump presidency. Hypothesis two describes the different effects that single actors can have on a norm's efficacy. The case studies illuminated that past alterations or deaths of a norm could be the result of "the relative strength of the norm challenger compared to the actors interested in maintaining the status quo" (Panke & Petersohn, 2015). This is crucial to understanding the threat that Trump poses to norms because of his role as leader of the hegemonic power, even if that power might be in decline. His leadership and power within the international system signify that he can cause great damage, degradation, and erosion to even some of the most internalized norms.

II. NATO

Throughout his presidential campaign, Trump repeatedly attacked the viability of the North Atlantic Treaty Organization (NATO), calling it obsolete (Mitchell, 2017). Trump has since altered his stance on NATO. He claimed that he had previously deemed NATO as obsolete during his campaign because he was unaware that NATO had a "focus on terrorism" (Mitchell, 2017). Furthermore, Trump was reluctant during meetings with NATO officials to follow the common practice of recommitting America to Article 5 of the NATO treaty. As a main pillar of the Alliance, Article 5 provides for the mutual defense of all members (NATO, 2017). Credible mutual defense is critical, as it is the most effective tool in guaranteeing the continued success and future of NATO. In practice, it deters potential adversaries from taking undesirable actions against the Alliance because of its military strength as a collective unit.

President Trump has since verbally recommitted the U.S. to Article 5 of NATO. His remarks in clear support of Article 5 only came after a meeting of NATO members in May 2017. They were made during a visit to the White House by the President of Romania (Mernoli, 2017). His averseness to recommitment undermines the essence and integrity of NATO and sows anxiety amongst the members. In addition, it weakens his eventual affirmation of Article 5, as he only decided to announce it days after the all-member meeting, and in a press conference at the White House. Confidence in his commitment will be wrought with the anxiety that he propagated.

Compounding his reluctance to recommit the U.S. to Article 5, Trump has repeatedly attacked NATO's members for not contributing the agreed upon two percent of their gross domestic products (GDPs) to NATO's budget. His persistent rhetoric on the transactional and fiscal aspects of NATO are both misinformed and degrading to the Alliance. The funding of the Alliance relies upon both direct and indirect contributions by member nations (NATO, 2017). In 2006, all members agreed upon a common funding arrangement, with the goal of all members committing two percent of their annual GDP to defense capabilities (NATO, 2017). While not all countries have met this target, reports conclude that countries are increasing their defense budgets to meet the target (Stoltenberg, 2017). Furthermore, in a meeting in 2014, the members recommitted themselves to the goal and set a deadline of 2024 (NATO, 2017). The deadline of 2024 further challenges Trump's statements about members owing funding to the U.S. and NATO for previous years of lack of funding.

President Trump's statements about the funding structure of NATO and his insistence that member countries owe money for previous years, clearly demonstrates that he does not understand the NATO funding structure or the benefits of the Alliance. This lack of

understanding is dangerous as he continues to attack the Alliance, with the likely effect of eroding its credibility and viability. Within these remarks, Trump exhibits a desire to retreat from the Alliance for nationalist and isolationist reasons. The misconceived notion that NATO members are “taking advantage” of America is demonstrably false (Gambino, 2017). The nationalist tones of Trump’s claims are a clear departure from his predecessor’s, and stem from the nationalist “America First” agenda that Trump rigorously campaigned. A posture of potential retreat from NATO is in stark contrast to the norm of treaty adherence and alliance building.

Combined, these occurrences create anxiety and fear amongst the other members of NATO. On his own, Trump has degraded America’s allies and has made possible the erosion of the vitality of NATO. The NATO members have refuted his claims of the alliance being obsolete and recommitted themselves to the treaty but the damage that the American president can wage on a norm because of his leadership is troubling. These episodes demonstrate the strength and damage that a single actor, even if the power of an American President is an exception, can have on a norm. This severely challenges the second hypothesis of Panke and Petersohn, as Trump is not a part of a coalition of NATO members, he is the sole actor in challenging NATO. While his power as the American leader in the international liberal order is dominant, his individual relative power risks devaluation because of his non-norm conforming behavior. It will be crucial that attacks on norms that Trump wages throughout his Presidency, even if they are later retracted or contradicted, are met with robust opposition and unison, and that he is unable to form a coalition of actors to erode a norm.

III. Multilateral Treaties, Agreements, & Partnerships

At the end of World War II, a consensus formed amongst world leaders about the optimal approach for preventing future wars. They believed that the best strategy to confront anarchy and other threats in international politics, would be to form alliances, make treaties, and establish international institutions. This tactical change led to the emergence of the norm of multilateralism in international relations. Multilateralism refers to “coordinating relations among three or more states in accordance with certain principles” (Ruggie, 1992). The concept of multilateral agreements and alliances was not to encroach on an individual nation’s sovereignty, but to provide the constructs by which to prevent future world wars. Within this framework, the norm of multilateralism has been successful. The post WWII era has witnessed a flourishing of multilateral agreements, alliances, and partnerships. Examples of multilateral institutions and agreements range from the United Nations, the World Trade Organization, the World Health Organization, World Bank, and UNICEF to the North American Free Trade Agreement (NAFTA) and Treaty of Rome. While this is not to claim that all multilateral efforts have surpassed or even met their goals, the global network of institutions, agreements, etc., have proven successful in the fundamental goal of stemming world war.

A critical part of the success of multilateral agreements is the role that the hegemonic power has in diffusing and supporting them. Since the end of WWII, America and its leaders have embraced this role and reinforced the norm. As George Sørensen details:

...liberal scholars overwhelmingly tend to agree with realists and Marxists as concerns the relationship between power and international institutions; it requires a hegemon, a dominant military and economic power, to create and develop an international order,

because in the absence of such a power, liberal rules cannot be enforced around the world... without hegemonic power, conflict is the order of the day. (2017)

The U.S. has immensely benefitted from the role of the hegemonic power. The hegemonic platform enabled the past thirteen U.S. presidents to promote American national interests throughout the world and diffuse its norms, laws, and values globally.

President Trump's rhetoric throughout his campaign and during his first six months in office, has sought to undermine the norm of multilateralism. He has frequently attacked multilateralism, as he views the world through a transactional, nationalist lens. Trump prefers to view the world economy as a zero-sum game, in which negotiations will result in a "winner" and "loser". His belief in zero-sum negotiations derives from his previous experience in the real estate business. Unfortunately, this outlook does not work in the multiparty international system, in which the ideals of community and cooperation, to burden-share and confront the world's problems in partnership, such as climate change, have become the norm.

The concept of a zero-sum game in regard to climate change is especially perilous. In negotiations to reduce emissions and protect the environment, there are no singular winners or losers. The failure to protect the environment will result in consequences and disasters for every country, regardless of which country made the most or least amount of concessions during treaty and agreement negotiations. Trump's insistence on conducting negotiations and reviewing previous agreements and treaties for areas in which to "win," suffers from a profound lack of understanding of the benefits of multilateralism and will prove highly unproductive, if not disastrous.

It is critical to challenge the conservative theory that multilateralism negatively impacts sovereignty and threatens democracy. This is important in the Trump Administration as many of

his advisors subscribe to conservative and other right-wing values. This belief among conservatives derives from the notion that multilateral treaties impede domestic law and American democracy by permitting foreigners to create binding laws (Kaye, 2013). The perceived adverse impact on American democracy fails to recognize the hegemonic power that America enjoys and its ability to frame treaties and agreements towards its interests. Furthermore, as Robert Keohane, Stephen Macedo, and Andrew Moravcsik discuss, multilateralism enables a pooling of democracy which permits:

...Democratic polities to achieve policy goals together that none could realize alone.

Without reciprocal cooperation, governments cannot reach domestic goals such as slowing global warming, liberalizing the international economy, integrating communication systems, combating terrorism, and regulating multinational corporations (2009).

With regard to multilateralism, Trump has hurled his harshest attacks at the United Nations and the Trans-Pacific Partnership (TPP). Trump has compared the U.N. to a political game and called it an underperformer (Parker, 2016) & (Nelson, 2017). Beyond his verbal attacks, Trump has proposed slashing American contributions to the U.N., with specific cuts designated for peacekeeping missions. These cuts would severely limit the U.N.'s and its agencies' abilities to fulfill their missions. Trump's recommendations came in the form of his budget proposal to Congress. In subsequent explanations, Trump stated that he believed the amount of funding that the U.S. contributes to the U.N. is "unfair", as U.S. contributions compose twenty-two percent of the U.N.'s core budget (Nichols, 2017). Despite the high percentage of overall funding, the number is based upon agreements in the U.N. General Assembly and are reflective of the U.S. economy. The U.N. is perhaps one of the most effective

venues that the U.S. has had in diffusing its norms and values. The notion of reducing staggering amounts of funding would severely limit the U.N.'s functional capacity and have the potential to wreak internal havoc, as budgetary measures would likely have to be renegotiated and the viability of the organization would be questioned. In the end, an organization that has served for decades as a proponent of numerous U.S. values and interests would be severely crippled, which could result in a highly unstable international order.

The TPP was a multilateral free trade agreement negotiated by the Obama Administration. Its principle aim was to “reduce trade and investment barriers among 12 Pacific Rim countries, including the United States” (Ikenson, 2016). By pushing for the TPP, the U.S. sought to reassert its presence in the Pacific. Indeed, the TPP would have overwhelmingly aligned with American norms and practices, especially with regard to trade. This was evidenced by some of the protections and restrictions that the TPP included, such as, intellectual property protections for American technologies, labor protections, protections for endangered wildlife, support for trade unions, and the elimination of harmful child labor practices (USTR.gov, 2016).

In addition, TPP would have provided a counter-balance to the rise of China's influence in political and economic arenas, especially within China's regional sphere. China's rise threatens the international liberal order as the PRC often does not follow established norms and practices. The TPP had enormous potential, as it would have forced China to loosen the protectionist measures it has on its markets and lead to further opening (Naughton, Kroeber, De Jonquieres, & Webster, 2015) Furthermore, the twelve-nation bloc would have had greater negotiating power in trade negotiations with China and the potential to force China to conform with additional trade norms.

The decision of Trump to walk away from the TPP is exceptionally ill-conceived. As Trump spoke of TPP throughout his campaign, he was unable to identify if China was even part of the TPP (Friedman, 2017). Trump's misinformed belief that he can negotiate a "better" trade deal with China bilaterally, than in aligning the U.S. under TPP, will likely lead to a lessened position of the U.S. vis-à-vis Asia, generally and with China specifically. The bargaining power of a single actor will rarely outweigh a twelve-bloc alliance, such as TPP. Trump's misbegotten calculus on TPP could prove a tragic retrenchment stemming from his woeful lack of understanding of the international liberal order, its norms, or value the necessity for the hegemonic power.

The norm of multilateralism has always held a critical role in the international liberal order. The threat that President Trump poses to that norm, could result in severe degradations of international institutions and organizations and established multilateral treaties, agreements, and partnerships. Trump's beliefs about the impacts of multilateralism on America are demonstrably facile and unfounded. America, especially as the hegemonic power that guarantees most international institutions and partnerships, often experiences the most gains from multilateralism.

Furthermore, Trump's departure from viewing the global order through lenses of cooperation and community to ones of transactional and nationalist stances, will, in the end, likely harm America and Americans most. The global loss of the hegemonic guarantor will result in a creation of space for a new hegemonic power to rise, potentially an American adversary. Finally, a rejection of multilateralism will likely result in lost opportunities and intentional avoidances of America. Allies and adversaries alike, will strive to create new multilateral agreements and alliances. They will seek opportunities with actors that they believe

will uphold agreements and have a serious interest in pursuing mutually beneficial multilateral accords.

IV. Implications

It is imperative that institutions and organizations that support norms, such as nuclear nonproliferation, sovereignty, human rights, treaty adherence, free trade, etc., prevent norms from becoming victims of the other two types of norm death that Panke and Petersohn described. Institutions must ensure that norm violators are identified and the practice halted, and that any renegotiations of a norm occur through rigorous dialogue and debate in their respective venues. Precise norms that are subject to being abolished must be protected and weak norms should be bolstered, as long as they maintain their relevance and importance to the international system. President Trump has depicted himself as a leader who does not often concern himself with both domestic and international customs, norms, and regulations. This poses a grave threat to the future of norms that he either does not find relevant or even concern himself with understanding.

Norms have been proven to be effective methods of structure and behavior for millennia. The current international system, based heavily on Westphalian ideals and steeped in Western norms, are facing a severe challenge from President Trump. His blatant disregard for various norms and the ensconced practices of his predecessors and allies, may have the ability to produce undesirable changes within the current system. It will be critical that institutions and actors identify norms violations perpetrated by President Trump, even if this results in a degradation of relationship with him. In addition, actors must defend the norms that our international system relies upon to prevent erosion from the single, powerful actor that is Trump. If Panke and Petersohn's hypotheses are correct, a single actor will generally be prevented from affecting

change on a norm, but the platform that Trump has as American President will provide a complex and unprecedented challenge to norms and their survival.

Chapter 4: President Trump's Foreign Policy First Forays

The first few weeks of Donald Trump's presidency have proven to be vastly disruptive to the status quo of American politics, both domestically and internationally. His entire campaign and post-election rhetoric has been one of change, ripe with challenges to the establishment. His charges against policies of past administrations are laden with right-wing populist undertones that lead academics, scholars, politicians, and American citizens grasping to understand where he intends to take the country. Of specific interest to this research is President Trump's foreign policy agenda, as it stands to challenge the current world order and make severe departures from previous administrations' stances, which sought to advance America's global preeminence.

Trump's foreign policy agenda has thus far been beset with nationalist tones that seek to limit involvement in global affairs that do not pertain directly to the "America First" agenda. Trump's 2018 budget proposal calls for vast cuts, including a 32% decrease in the State Department's budget, and an almost 9% increase in defense spending (Aisch & Parlapiano, 2017). His State Department cuts demonstrate his desire to reduce America's global footprint, especially in its soft power initiatives, such as diplomacy and development projects. The increase in the defense budget is a clear indicator that Trump intends on employing hard power tactics as matters of foreign policy arise during his presidency. The severity of his departure from previous foreign policy stances remains to be seen. Discussed below are areas of utmost importance to American foreign policy and how Trump's policies, actions, and pronouncements will affect them.

I. China

The contemporary American relationship with China is consistently challenging. It is also a critical relationship, especially as China's economy continues to grow. It is expected that China's economy will overtake America's within the next couple of decades (Shirk, 2017). This projected change in the dynamic of the international order, as well as within the Sino-American relationship, makes the status of the relationship an essential issue to American foreign policy. China has often proven itself to be a country that will not bow to American demands and/or pressure. This is evidenced by policies such as the "One China" policy, the territorial disputes in the South China Sea that are in direct violation of an international tribunal's ruling, and the alliance it has with North Korea, to name a few. With consideration for China's nationalist driven foreign policy decisions and agendas and its current global economic and political rise, it is imperative that Trump tread carefully in his diplomatic relations with China.

The rise of China has been a concern for multiple American administrations. The leadership of Mao Zedong and his communist party sought to disrupt and upend the international order in the 1950s through the 1970s (Feigenbaum, 2017). In more recent decades, China has moved away from its outright rejection of the Westernized international order and has sought acceptance into almost all major international institutions (Feigenbaum, 2017). China realized that participation with these institutions could lead to considerable gains, economically and politically, as well as in other areas. It has utilized these institutions to continue its rise with the aim of becoming a global superpower.

Moreover, China has invested heavily in developing its military, has the world's largest population, and has experienced great economic growth. In addition, it maintains trillions of dollars in foreign exchange reserves, as well as considerable amounts of U.S. debt, and is the

world's largest trader (Feigenbaum, 2017). These economic strengths empower China to greatly impact international treaties and institutions.

Regrettably, the practices that China has employed throughout its rise have led to great consternation throughout the Western world, especially for the United States. This is evidenced by the Chinese Government's utilization of discriminatory practices against foreign companies and investors in its territory to assist in the growth of national companies. Past American administrations have applied sanctions to combat certain areas of concern, such as national favoritism. These past efforts of soft diplomacy sought to persuade China to abide by international norms and customs. While China does not always meet the expectations and standards that the Western world has created, its role and future in the world economy and overall system are not to be downplayed or rebuffed.

One of the foremost issues for America in its relationship with China is managing the "One China" policy. The "One China" policy has shaped American diplomatic relations with the Chinese essentially since the end of World War II. The rise of Mao Zedong's party in China forced the previous leader, Chiang Kai Shek's army and party to flee to the island of Taiwan. The U.S. and many Western allies maintained formal relations with Chiang Kai-Shek's party, despite this uprooting from the mainland, until the 1970s. Alliance shifts during the 1950s and 1960s saw China's main adversary shift from the U.S. to the Soviet Union. This shift permitted the U.S. to begin to normalize relations with the regime in Beijing in the early 1970s. The normalization period of diplomatic relations consumed most of the decade, as the Americans and Mainland Chinese sorted through difficult matters, which included the question of Taiwan (Zissis, Alessi, & Albert). One of the key elements of this normalization is the continuity in agendas of both President Nixon and President Carter. Nixon first visited China in 1972 but it

was not until Carter's Presidency in the end of the 1970s that relations became formalized. In 1979, President Carter officially recognized the Beijing Government as the only party of the PRC and severed almost all significant diplomatic relations, except for certain informal ties, with the Taiwanese.

In addition, it is essential to consider the agendas of other nations during this normalization period in order to have a full understanding of the decision to change the status quo. The U.S. was China's main adversary throughout the 1950s and 1960s. Despite this tension, the rest of the world had begun altering its alliance with Chiang Kai-Shek's regime. Further, the decolonization period and creation of dozens of new nation-states changed the debate about China's leadership at the U.N. In 1971, the U.N. passed Resolution 2758, under which the body:

[...] Decide[d] to restore all of its rights to the People's Republic of China and to recognize the representative of its government as the only legitimate representatives of China to the United Nations, and to expel forthwith the representatives of Chiang-Kai-Shek from the place which they unlawfully occupy of the United Nations and in all organizations related to it. (Hsieh, 2009)

The passing of Resolution 2758 occurred prior to any real American consensus. This helped convince President Nixon to alter the American stance and begin establishing formal relations with Beijing and severing diplomatic ties to Taiwan. This was finalized through a Joint Communiqué of the U.S. and PRC in 1979 (Hsieh, 2009).

Since the passing of Resolution 2758, Beijing and the PRC party have remained the recognized government of China. The "One China" policy maintains that the island of Taiwan is a part of China. It is significant that while countries severed official ties with Taiwan following

the U.N.'s resolution, many, including the U.S., United Kingdom, and Japan did not accede to China's stance that Taiwan is a part of mainland China. This was done through specific word choices, which would acknowledge China's policy without confirming or denying it (Hsieh, 2009). The dispute over Taiwan's government still remains a critical issue in China's domestic affairs.

On December 2, 2016, the President of Taiwan called the U.S. President-elect. Trump, in a break from almost four decades of American foreign policy, answered the call and spoke for a reported ten minutes (Landler & Sanger, 2016). Trump's decision to accept a phone call, whether scheduled or unscheduled (which is still debated), from the Taiwanese leader is unprecedented. Trump defended this call by claiming that the leader simply wanted to congratulate him and that our military sales to Taiwan made such a call acceptable. Trump's lack of understanding of the magnitude of accepting a phone call from the leader of a contested government is of grave concern. Such a misstep jeopardizes the American-Sino relationship for little apparent policy gain.

As Trump should have been aware, the Beijing Government is extremely sensitive to any formal relations with Taiwan, as it believes that they undermine Beijing's legitimacy. Indeed, the Chinese reacted by lodging a formal complaint against the call. In addition, a popular state newspaper, *The Global Times*, published an op-ed piece, which offered a couple of reasons for the phone call (2016). The piece called into question President Trump's foreign policy knowledge and claimed that his ineptitude was at fault. In addition, it strongly criticized Taiwan's role in the matter and warned of severe repercussions, including military force, should Taiwan seek to alter the status quo (2016).

China's presence on the international stage has had ever increasing importance.

As noted above, recent American administrations have struggled to manage the growing power that is China, with its nationalist agenda and Communist party. The ability to direct China's growth and power into the democratic liberal order has remained elusive. As such, this became a rallying cry for supporters of Trump against the backlash of his phone call with the Taiwanese leader. Supporters pushed for it to be seen as a challenge to Chinese leadership and as evidence that Trump will not bow to the Chinese.

Challenging China on the question of Taiwan's independence is not an area that should be pursued. Harsh criticisms following his phone call caused Trump to realize that this was not a realistic course (The Independent, 2017). His musings that the island of Taiwan might become a negotiating tactic when dealing with China are inflammatory and reflect a distressing misunderstanding of internal PRC politics and their impact in the international arena. They are especially troublesome when only a few short months later, Trump, in a phone call with China's President reasserted American support of the "One China" policy (Independent, 2017). Thus, the American President, for no valid policy or reason picked a fight with China, and then soon thereafter was forced to abandon the tactic with no U.S. policy advancement.

Beyond the "One China" policy, the international system has experienced difficulty managing the islands in the East and South China Seas and which nation has rightful claims. The East and South China Seas contain major shipping routes, and certain areas within these territories have been found to be rich in hydrocarbons and natural gas. The dispute over which Asian nation has rightful claim to these resources has become highly contested. One of the most recent rulings in this dispute came from the Permanent Court of Arbitration in The Hague. The Court ruled unanimously in favor of the Philippines, which opposed China's actions in what the

Philippines deemed its sovereign, economic zone. China flatly rejected the Court's ruling and has continued to build in the territory without meaningful repercussions (Wyne, 2016).

The U.S. and the international order face significant instability if they continue to fail to resolve these disputes. The American stake in the resolution of the territorial claims is complex. The military treaties that the U.S. maintains in Asia, particularly with Japan and the Philippines, provide that if the disputes escalate to armed combat, the U.S. might have to become involved militarily.

Additionally, the motives of China's artificial buildup of islands in the South China Sea are becoming increasingly concerning as China's buildup appears more militarily based than civilian based (Dingli, et. al., 2017). A buildup of military installations in the South China Sea will expand the operational range of the Chinese military (Dingli, et. al., 2017). The possible increased operational capacity of one of the most powerful armed forces in the world can greatly shift the power dynamics in the region and even globally. This is especially alarming as China is still establishing itself within the international order and does not always prescribe to Western norms. This is clearly evidenced by China's rejection of The Permanent Court of Arbitration's ruling. The continued buildup of artificial islands violates the norm of sovereignty, as it infringes upon Filipino sovereignty, and has the potential to escalate into armed conflict. The possibility of escalation would violate the United Nations Convention on the Law of the Seas which, through its framework binds all signatories to resolve conflicts peacefully and through international tribunals, if necessary (U.N. Convention on the Law of the Sea, art. 186). China's blatant disregard for the ruling challenges the authority of both the Convention and the Permanent Court of Arbitration and engenders doubt for the international system. In addition, it

has the potential to set precedent for violations of established Conventions and International Courts to increase, as China remains undeterred in its buildup.

Beginning in 2015, the U.S. began to reassert its presence in the area. It has since completed naval exercises, called Freedom of Navigation Operations (FONOP) throughout the Seas in an effort to demonstrate that China's claims are seriously contested. Recent FONOPs have drawn harsh criticism from China and resulted in Chinese military drills (Ali & Stepalnick, 2016).

Lastly, as the American foreign policy agenda recently pivoted to Asia, the status of Asian countries has become increasingly important. The American pivot is aimed at trying to provide more balance to the region and to better manage China's expansion. The potential wealth and power for some smaller Asian countries that would come from the resolution of the territorial disputes, and the "check" that would happen if China were to have to retreat from these areas, would be substantial. It would provide a much-needed reprieve in China's expansive growth and restore credibility in the international system's authority.

The Trump Administration has sought to engage with the South China Sea issue through provocative statements. In January, Trump's Secretary of State, Rex Tillerson, and then White House Spokesman, Sean Spicer, began to severely change the dynamic in the Seas dispute. They both made complementary statements claiming that America could block China's access to the disputed artificial islands (Denyer, 2017). Their statements were made in the context of the America First Agenda, which would seek to protect American interests globally. Within this context, the comments appear contradictory. Trump's Agenda tout's nationalist and isolationist ideals, and a blockade in the Asia-Pacific, thousands of miles away from American shores, does not seem to align. Furthermore, any blockade-type action would have a probability of resulting

in a military conflict. Undoubtedly, despite the contradictory nature of these statements, they are extremely concerning for the stability of the region, particularly, because at this point in Trump's Presidency, it is impossible to know if these are empty warnings or serious threats.

China's Foreign Minister publicly contested the statements of both officials. He reiterated China's claim to the islands, reminded them that America is not directly involved in the dispute and should not insert itself, and to act cautiously (Denyer, 2017). China's media outlets more forcefully complained, warning of the risk of escalation to armed conflict. Additionally, one outlet commented that the remarks were "not worth taking seriously because they are a mishmash of naiveté, shortsightedness, worn-out prejudices, and unrealistic political fantasies" (Denyer, 2017).

The Chinese government and media reactions are alarming for the credibility of the young administration. Trump has proven himself as an outspoken leader and statements from him or his officials without backing or follow-through will weaken his credibility. The blustery nature of his comments, and those of his surrogates, will degrade the international community's confidence in him as a leader. This is not to say that inflammatory comments such as these should have led to fruitful action. Properly considered and executed American military challenges in the seas surrounding China could, depending on circumstances, lead to a relationship with China that advances U.S. interests, as well as those of its allies. But, empty challenges to a rising global power on the world stage will not further U.S. interests. Moreover, these statements continue to deepen the confusion in the international order about American foreign policy initiatives.

Finally, America and the Western liberal order need China's assistance in managing North Korea. China is North Korea's most important ally and is therefore vital to the stemming

of North Korea's nuclear threat. As evidence mounts about North Korea's ability to launch a nuclear attack, China's relationship with North Korea will become increasingly critical. The threat of North Korea will be discussed in greater detail below, but China's relationship is vital to the stability of the region and global system.

The Sino-American relationship is one of supreme importance. Managing the relationship has been and will continue to be one of the greatest challenges of American foreign policy. The continued unrestricted rise of China's economic and military strength will contest America's regional influence in Asia and its power in the international system. Therefore, the successful incorporation of China into the international system is critical. For now, China appears to be content with its membership in most international institutions and the benefits that these memberships provide. While the growth of China need not be contested on all fronts, the management of it is necessary for the U.S. and its foreign policy goals. Therefore, the Trump Administration must refrain from belligerent and provocative statements that gratuitously harm the relationship. The economic and political benefits of maintaining a peaceful and stable relationship with China far outweigh any potential gains from an ill-conceived trade war or military engagement with China, prompted by myopic U.S. domestic politics or ill-informed rhetoric.

II. North Korea

It has been reported that as the Obama Administration transitioned power to the Trump Administration, Obama warned that North Korea would be the top foreign policy priority for the new President (Seib, Solomon, & Lee, 2016). The continued development of North Korea's nuclear program is a destabilizing and increasingly credible threat to many nations. There have

been at least four nuclear tests by the North Koreans and it is conducting missile tests at regular intervals (Haass, 2017). These missile tests have proven that the North Korean missile technology is improving and its missiles can reach further targets, including U.S. territories (Griggs & Yourish, 2017). Halting North Korea's nuclear weapon capability will require deft diplomacy, Chinese assistance, and cooperation on the global scale. It does not yet appear that Trump has articulated a coherent strategy in managing North Korea despite Obama's warnings of it being a top priority. Productively confronting Kim Jong-Un will prove to be one of Trump's toughest foreign policy tasks.

The communist nation of North Korea has been a quandary for the U.S. since the presidency of Harry Truman. The agreement to divide the Korean peninsula along the 38th parallel after the defeat of Japan has provided decades of global instability, conflict, and diplomatic hazards. The Korean War Armistice, signed in 1953, sought to end all acts of armed conflict and create a pathway towards peace on the peninsula (Yoon, 2011). The Armistice has been fairly successful at preventing armed conflicts, despite a few flare-ups and retaliations, but its signatories remain unable to negotiate a peace settlement for the peninsula.

Nuclear weapons were first introduced to the Korean peninsula in 1958 by the U.S. During the 1950s, the U.S. was facing immense fiscal deficit (Jae-Bong, 2009). This required the U.S. to identify areas for drawdowns and cost saving measures. By deploying nuclear weapons to buttress the South Korean defense, the U.S. could drawdown on the costly levels of troops but still maintain enough deterrence to prevent a North Korean offensive across the 38th parallel (Jae-Bong, 2009). In addition, the presence of American nuclear weapons in South Korea provided the U.S. with a greater ability to target the Soviet Union due to geographical proximity. Nuclear weapons in South Korea also posed a constant threat to the survival of Kim

Il-Sung's regime. North Korea was already surrounded by the Soviet Union, China, and Japan, which by the 1960s all possessed nuclear weapons (Jae-Bong, 2009). As China and the Soviet Union's support for the nation dwindled, North Korea deemed it imperative to develop its own nuclear arsenal to guarantee its survival. Some of the first reporting of North Korea's attempts to develop nuclear weapons came in the 1980s (Jae-Bong, 2009). The eventual collapse of the Soviet Union and the opening of China to the international system resulted in further isolation of North Korea and intensified its pursuit of nuclear weapons.

The North Korean nuclear program developed slowly throughout the end of the 20th century. In the late 1980s, the North Koreans were able to build the Yongbyon Reactor (Seife, 2003). After receiving a small reactor from the Soviet Union, they were able to develop a larger Yongbyon Reactor, which has the capability of processing plutonium. Despite these actions, North Korea was a signatory to the Nuclear Nonproliferation Treaty (NPT). As a signatory, the country was required to admit inspectors from the International Atomic Energy Agency (IAEA) for sustained investigations of its nuclear reactor. Shortly after signing the treaty, North Korea expelled inspectors and announced its intent to withdraw from the treaty (Moore, 2008). Following this announcement, the Clinton Administration worked to develop the Agreed Framework, which was signed in 1994. The Agreed Framework provided for the freezing of North Korea's nuclear weapons program and the reintroduction of inspections by the IAEA. In exchange, the North Koreans would be provided with light water reactors and fuel oil for energy needs. The Framework also halted North Korea's withdrawal from the NPT (Moore, 2008).

The Agreed Framework broke down after George W. Bush became president in 2001 and ordered a complete review of the American policy towards North Korea. Following the attacks of September 11, 2001, the American focus shifted away from North Korea and East Asia. In

2002, a North Korean diplomat admitted to U.S. diplomat, James Kelly, that North Korea was pursuing a uranium enrichment program (Moore, 2008). This was in clear violation of the Agreed Framework and eventually led to the expulsion of the IAEA inspectors and North Korea's withdrawal from the NPT in 2003.

Chinese concerns over the breakdown of American relations with North Korea resulted in the 6 Party Talks (Moore, 2008). These negotiations continued without much success throughout the early to mid 2000s. In 2006, North Korea successfully conducted its first nuclear test. The nuclear tests and continued program development have culminated in the recently confirmed capability of North Korean weapons to strike U.S. territories.

The reasons for North Korea's continued development of its nuclear weapons program and often deemed "rogue" behavior is apparent, rational, and rather simple. The North Korean regime believes that it must engage in methods to ensure its survival against the threat of reunification by the Americans and South Koreans. Furthermore, Kim Jong Un's often seemingly erratic behavior, is actually quite calculated. The North Korean regime must engage in a consistent internal propaganda campaign, as most of the country faces poverty, human rights abuses, hard labor internments, high levels of censorship, electricity shortages, etc. The regime has a consistent message that North Korea must continue to build its military and develop nuclear weapons to confront the threat of the imperial Americans. As the New York Times reports, the regime devotes "more than a fifth of its meager national budget into defense" (Lee, 2017).

While the recent foremost U.S. goal has been denuclearizing North Korea, the U.S. has had a consistent foreign policy aim of unifying the Korean peninsula, as the Korean War ended in an armistice and not a peace agreement. Following the Armistice, North Korea's allies, the

Soviet Union and China, provided both aid to North Korea and military deterrence to South Korea and the United States. It was in the Soviet Union and China's interest to bolster the nation of North Korea to combat the American spread of liberal capitalism. China was expressly invested, as the collapse of North Korea would result in a unified Korea, which would have American economic and military support. Essentially, this would result in having American troops on its border, which increases security risks for China (Araral, 2017). Furthermore, the collapse of the North Korean regime would result in a large influx of refugees to China and instability on the peninsula. These risks continue to motivate China's support of North Korea. A stable North Korea, even a nuclear armed one, is much more favorable to China, which is why it continues to support North Korea and remain its ally.

During Trump's campaign, he announced that when he entered office he would change the course of America's stance on North Korea. As a candidate, Trump made clear that he believed that China had the power to force North Korea to halt its nuclear weapons program. In his opinion, China has "total control over North Korea... and that China should solve that problem" (Campbell, 2016). Trump continued by stating that the failure of China to quell the North Korean threat would result in trade complications with the U.S. (Campbell, 2016). Trump's naïve belief that China can simply "solve" the North Korean "problem" reveals a complete misunderstanding of the history and politics of the Korean peninsula. Furthermore, the strategic interests for the actors in the region complicate the denuclearization and unification of the Korean peninsula. By ignoring these realities and by threatening China, who remains the most influential actor with North Korea, Trump degrades his authority behind the threat. This incompetence, coupled with Trump's retreat from the TPP, erode America's influence in negotiating a viable solution. Instead of threatening China, Trump and his Administration

should be identifying areas of cooperation, to progress towards the denuclearization of North Korea for greater global stability. While China does have influence with North Korea due to its strategic economic and cultural partnerships, it does not have absolute power in the decisions of Kim Jong Un. Motivating China towards denuclearization should be a high priority of America's foreign policy agenda. Strategic assurances about the future for the Korean peninsula if the North Korean Government were to collapse, including the proximity of American bases to Chinese borders and the establishment of parameters and assistance in the massive rebuilding project of the society north of the 38th parallel that would be necessitated, would provide incentive for China to more actively engage (Araral, 2017).

Trump has repeatedly attacked President Obama for his stance of strategic patience with North Korea and called it a failed policy (Bayoumy, 2017). His rejection of the former policy has led to increased tensions with North Korea. Following a military parade and failed missile test in April, President Trump strongly condemned the attacks, and threatened the potential for a "major, major conflict" (Mullany, 2017). In addition, Trump claimed in an interview that an "armada" was on its way to the Sea of Japan as a deterrent (Landler & Schmitt, 2017). Trump's comments about a "major, major conflict" are concerning because they vastly reduce the diplomatic working space that the two nations and the interested parties may have. His too easy resort to threats of major conflict, and not a commitment to pursuing all possible peaceful resolutions, display a lack of serious political planning and an absence of interest in pursuing diplomatic solutions. If the comment was only meant to be a threat, Trump must exercise caution when engaging in blustery rhetoric. Trump's claim, that could have backed up his threat, of an armada, led by the *U.S.S. Carl Vinson*, was steaming towards North Korea, was disconcertingly wrong. As reported by the *NYTimes*, the *Vinson* was actually sailing in the

opposite direction at the time of Trump's threat to complete planned joint military drills with Australia (2017). This ineptitude severely threatens to degrade the reputation of President Trump and any potential future threats.

Significantly, Trump's careless rhetoric has done nothing to tamp down North Korea's progress toward enhanced nuclear capability. Trump's reputation with North Korea is being persistently tested as North Korea successfully deployed two intercontinental ballistic missiles (ICBMs) in the summer of 2017. Following their deployment, the U.N. unanimously passed tough sanctions on North Korea. The passing of the sanctions set off a war of threats between President Trump and North Korea, with each attempting to surpass each other in war readiness taunts. Trump's first threats against North Korean provocations specified "fire and fury and frankly power, the likes of which this world has never seen before" (Baker & Sang-Hun, 2017). Following those remarks, Secretary of State Rex Tillerson tried to alleviate some of the public's concerns about Trump's threats. Tillerson's remarks that contradicted Trump, exhibit the troubling lack of coordination within the Trump Administration. It presents a situation in which the public and foreign leaders can begin to question the credibility of Trump's verbal cues. As he continues to make claims across the foreign policy spectrum, it is critical that the Administration's officials also present the same information. The confusion that is created by a lack of unison quickly spirals into doubt in the effectiveness of the Trump Administration.

For the rest of second week in August 2017, Trump continued to escalate his threats, reiterating his "fire and fury" calls and increasing the dangerous rhetoric, despite his Secretary of State's efforts to walk back the war of words. North Korea responded to each escalating threat and threatened missile strikes against the American territory of Guam (Baker & Sang-Hun, 2017). Trump's escalations continued to sow doubt in his credibility, as his officials consistently

made claims refuting the potential for nuclear war. Foreign leaders expressed grave concern for the escalating verbal threats as they severely challenge the norm of nuanced diplomatic efforts, when engaging with North Korea (DeYoung, Wagner, and Johnson, 2017).

Trump provided no additional information beyond threats of “fire and fury” and the like. The failure to establish red lines, reasons and aims for the bellicose threats, or a new tactic in handling the ICBM armed North Korea, degrade the viability of his threats. This leads one to conclude that Trump engaged irresponsibly with Kim Jong Un in intensifying rhetoric. Irresponsible behavior towards an isolated nation, that is focused primarily on survival, can rapidly spiral into unintended consequences.

Ultimately, statements of de-escalation came from Kim Jong Un on the Monday of the third week in August. The fact that de-escalation came from Kim Jong Un and not President Trump contradicts the norm of Americans maintaining more calculated and sensible behavior in interactions with North Korea. In past scenarios, Trump’s predecessors have typically realized that the risks of escalation with the rogue nation far outweighed any potential political fallout from de-escalation. Trump’s rejection of the normal behavior will alter future interactions with him, as his unpredictable behavior can produce unintended consequences. This will prove problematic for future cooperation efforts with actors in the global order, as it will change their calculations in their dealings with Trump.

In addition, Trump’s threats were actually helpful to the North Korean leadership. The North Korean propaganda machine is reliant upon convincing North Korean citizens of a credible threat from the imperial Americans. Trump’s menacing statements and refusal to de-escalate are thus fodder for the North Korean Government. They provide proof for the North Korean citizens that America wants to destroy the tiny nation. This enables Kim Jong Un to

continue to develop his military and nuclear weaponry in order to protect the country, at the expense of North Korean livelihood. The oppressive behavior is reliant upon the construct of a credible threat, which Trump has now provided numerous times.

Foreign policy experts and scholars were quick to respond to the potential of a nuclear war with North Korea based on Trump's threats (Mendoza, 2017). It is here that it was critical to consider the concept of mutual deterrence and the parsing of each threat. As Frank Zagare (1985) describes, mutual deterrence is:

...basically an attempt by party A to prevent party B from undertaking a course of action which A regards as undesirable, by threatening to inflict unacceptable costs upon B in the event that action is taken... It is generally conceded that, for deterrence to work, the player making the threat must have the capability of carrying out the threat, the threat must be credible, and the threat must be stable – that is, it must not prompt the undesirable behavior (p. 156).

The concept of mutual deterrence is essential to understanding the viability of the threats. First, both North Korea and Trump indicated in their threats, that any armed conflict would be in response to an offensive attack. Both leaders maintained that while they were both committed to retaliation, that neither were willing to strike first. The ability to strike back in response for an offensive action on either side, prevents or deters, either actor from taking the first armed action.

Second, if Trump continues his rhetoric, he may soon encounter an issue with personal credibility. His inability to construct unified stances within his Administration and to present cohesive and accurate information, such as the direction an aircraft carrier is headed, will erode his credibility in the international system and in deterrence. While the credibility of an armed

response to a North Korean offensive strike still remains because of American military strength, the credibility of Trump as a leader, and any threats he may make, do risk deterioration.

The threat of North Korea remains a top foreign policy priority for the Trump Administration. The Administration has thus far failed to produce a cohesive strategy towards managing the nuclear threat that North Korea poses. It is essential that they develop and disseminate a coherent strategy that concisely defines their goals for the Korean peninsula. This is imperative as America will require the cooperation of its allies and China to achieve its goals in the region, and a coherent policy is requisite for consensus and coalition building. In addition, America is reliant upon the international community to enforce the recently passed U.N. sanctions.

Moreover, Trump should refrain from alienating actors through his use of unilateral threats that, thus far, have thankfully not erupted into war. The status quo of mutual deterrence strategy has proven most effective during the spate of recent escalations. While both the U.S. and North Korea understand the consequences of engaging in nuclear conflict, blustery, escalating threats should not become the norm. Overheated rhetoric, absence of clear policy objectives and a lack of understanding of the benefits of nuanced communications in diplomacy, only increase the risk that a misstep or miscommunication could quickly devolve into conflict. The scale must not be tipped to alter the calculation in which the consequences of war, especially nuclear war, no longer outweigh the risk. Restraint by Trump from inflammatory language and the establishment of a coherent policy, supported by unified communications and diplomatic discourse, are crucial first steps in preventing any such dangerous conflagrations.

III. Russia

Perhaps President Trump's most perplexing foreign policy behavior has been his reverence for, and flowery statements about, Russian President Vladimir Putin. Under Putin, Russia has been somewhat on the rise in the international community following the Soviet Union's epic collapse and dissolution at the end of the Cold War. Russia, in the 1990s, has been described by many as a catastrophe. It struggled to transform into a multiparty democracy, with democratic elections, after the collapse of its communist government (Shleifer & Treisman, 2005). There was vast corruption, mass poverty and unemployment, to the point where the country faced economic collapse. Putin was elected in 2000, succeeding Boris Yeltsin. In three years, "Russia's economy grew rapidly, helped by increases in oil prices and the continuing benefits of exchange rate depreciation" (Shleifer & Treisman, 2005). Russia managed to re-enter the world markets and investors returned.

Putin's success in the early 2000s has been attributed, in part, to Russia's vast natural resources, including oil and its price increases during that period. Putin was able to gain control over the TV stations, the gas industry, the oil industry, and divided regional areas (Kotkin, 2015). He deftly imposed a semi-authoritarian political model on the Russian population, which limited political freedoms but delivered on a promise to increase incomes (Kliment, 2017). The Russian population's embrace of this model enabled Putin to consolidate control and instill reforms that would bring Russia back from the brink of catastrophe of the 1990s.

As Putin was enacting economic and political policies to transform Russia, NATO was going through a phase of membership expansion. In 1999, the Czech Republic, Hungary, and Poland all agreed to join NATO. Five years later, Bulgaria, Latvia, Lithuania, Estonia, Romania, Slovakia, and Slovenia all became NATO members (Haass, 2017). The U.S. pursued NATO

expansion throughout Eastern Europe for various reasons, including the idea that it would stabilize former Soviet republics and provide greater security to the European continent. As Richard Haass explains, while the pure logic of NATO expansion might not be understood, the effect on Russia was clear. NATO expansion throughout Eastern Europe alienated Russia (2017).

The exclusionary expansion in Eastern Europe, coupled with a slowdown in economic gains in Russia during 2008-2009, resulted in a posture change in Putin. During this period, he pivoted from centering on economic growth to a vision of a resurgent Russian empire (Kliment, 2017). The new Russian foreign policy would seemingly put the protection of ethnic Russians above international law. This was evidenced by his intervention in Georgia and later annexation of Crimea. Putin's annexation of Crimea was overwhelmingly supported by Russians and lifted his national approval ratings (Kliment, 2017). While pursuit of geographic and economic gains of Putin's new doctrine will be limited, due to the proximity of the E.U. and NATO, the message is clear. Putin's Russia will continue to conduct foreign policy forays to confront the U.S. and reassert Russia's standing in the international community.

It is now irrefutable that Russia attempted to interfere with the 2016 American Presidential campaign, with seventeen U.S. intelligence agencies in agreement (Bump, 2017). Despite the overwhelming evidence of Russian interference, President Trump made numerous attempts to negate the intelligence community's conclusions and question the involvement of the Russians. U.S. intelligence agencies, in a declassified report, identified Russia's intent as to "harm Clinton's election prospects, fortify Donald Trump's," and "undermine public faith in the U.S. democratic process" (Osnos, Remnick, & Yaffa, 2017). President Trump's refusal to accept U.S. intelligence agencies' unequivocal findings enabled him to delay punishing Russia

for the interference, despite overwhelming public and congressional will to retaliate. He has continued to vociferously deny any potential impacts that the Russian meddling might have had on his electoral victory (Flegenheimer & Sanger, 2017).

Beyond the reluctance to respond to the meddling, Trump has been overwhelmingly complimentary of Putin, despite Putin's autocratic rule, land grabs, and penchant for physically punishing his opposition. Throughout his campaign and presidency, Trump has remarked favorably on Putin's "strong control" as a leader, stated numerous times that he would like a "good" relationship with him, and excused Putin's human rights record by comparing it to America's record of transgressions (Kaczynski, Massie, & McDermott). Trump's behavior clearly contradicts the recent norm of American presidents. Despite some of his predecessors stated desire to improve relations with Russia while in office, none have been effusive in their praise for the autocratic Putin.

Warmer relations with Russia have been sought after because of Russia's nuclear weapons arsenal, its vast natural resources, and a desire to secure the region and international liberal order. Russia's permanent membership on the U.N. Security Council is also a motivating factor. An improved relationship with Russia could result in greater cooperation on the Security Council and subsequent advancement of the American global agenda. The previous attempts of Trump's predecessors have had limited success due to a culmination of reasons including, "Russia's transactional approach to foreign policy, its claim to a sphere of influence, its deep insecurities about a yawning power gap between it and the United States, and its opposition to what it saw as Western encroachment" (Rumer, Sokolsky, & Weiss, 2017). Uncritical praise for the intelligent and shrewd leader that is Putin, will not likely produce the advancement of U.S. interests.

In July 2017, the Republican majority Senate passed new legislation imposing sanctions on Russia for its election interference, continuing military involvement in Ukraine, and human rights abuses. Critically, their sanctions provided a severe limit to President Trump's power in regard to the sanctions. Indeed, the legislation stipulated that any attempt to "waive, suspend, reduce, provide relief from, or otherwise limit the application of sanctions with respect to the Russian Federation" will require Congressional approval (S. 341, 2017). The power limiting nature of the sanctions clearly demonstrates a distrust in Trump and his motives with regard to Russia. The new sanctions were signed by President Trump, despite his objections that the sanctions would severely limit his diplomatic agenda of warming relations with Putin (Flegenheimer & Sanger, 2017).

In response to the sanctions, Putin seized two American diplomatic properties and ordered 755 personnel to be dismissed from U.S embassies in Russia. Astonishingly, Trump's only response was to praise the decision by Putin, stating that his removal of embassy staff would cut payroll costs and save money (Baker, 2017). Moreover, he stated that he would not refill those posts if Putin were to reverse his decision. The notion that the foreign dismissal of diplomatic staff would be a cost saving measure is false, as staff would be reassigned and remain on payroll (Baker, 2017). It also degrades the work that diplomats do and diminishes morale.

In addition to lauding Putin, Trump criticized Congress for causing a low point in the American – Russian relationship (Rupar, 2017). His misplaced blame effectively absolves Putin of any blame for difficult relations. Trump's flippant responses and harsh criticisms illustrate a misunderstanding of the American Government apparatus, as well as, Embassy work, including foreign intelligence gathering, which is critical to the U.S. intelligence agencies. Trump has thus begun to develop a new norm, in which he appears constitutionally incapable of criticizing Putin.

This refusal to criticize blatant, antagonistic actions by Putin, sow doubt about President Trump's ability and resolve to engage effectively with Putin.

Beyond the Russian meddling in American elections, it has been confirmed that Russia engaged in interference campaigns in European elections in 2016 and 2017 (Testimony on Russian Interference in European Elections, 2017). As former Ambassador R. Nicholas Burns describes in his testimony to the Senate Select Committee on Intelligence, "The Russian campaign on both sides of the Atlantic is directed towards one overarching goal – to undermine the democracies of the West, to divide Europe from America, and to weaken both NATO and the European Union" (2017). Putin's focus on attacking elections poses a daunting danger for western democracies. Democracies are founded on free and fair elections and a loss in their credibility in them would be severely undermining. Putin's interference is destabilizing and it is imperative that Trump abandon the perception that platitudes will result in warmer relations. Putin's brazen behavior will lead to much greater consequences for the future of the international liberal order if retaliatory measures are not multilaterally taken to change his calculation.

Additional episodes of norm altering behavior towards Russia plague the Trump Administration. It was reported that during the transition of power between the Obama and Trump Administrations, President Trump's son-in-law and advisor, Jared Kushner, attempted to establish a back channel with Russia (Nakashima, Entous, & Miller, 2017). According to *The Washington Post*, reports surfaced after Russian communications were intercepted as the Russian Ambassador was reporting back to Moscow. The Ambassador stated that Kushner had approached him about establishing secure connections between Trump's transition team and the Kremlin, with the intent of utilizing Russian facilities. It is important to note that the use of back channels is not abnormal, but the parameters in this situation are. The use of Russian facilities

would essentially prevent the U.S. intelligence community from monitoring the conversations (Nakashima, Entous, & Miller, 2017). The alleged meeting and request will undoubtedly be reviewed by the U.S. Special Counsel probe into Russian meddling. The desire to obscure operations from the U.S. intelligence community, through partnership with an adversary, would have severe implications of undermining the U.S. Government. In addition, it raised the possibility of providing leverage to Russian officials over Trump officials, as Russia would ultimately have an increased amount of intelligence unavailable to U.S. intelligence agencies.

A specific issue of leverage arose when Trump's first National Security Advisor, Michael Flynn, obscured the specifics of a meeting with Russian contacts. As former U.S. Attorney General, Sally Yates, identified, obscuring the meeting and then falsely presenting the contents to his superiors, made Flynn compromised and vulnerable to blackmail by the Russian Government who knew the exact particulars of the meeting (Entous, Nakashima, & Rucker, 2017) & (Russian Interference in the 2016 United States Election, 2017). Flynn, Kushner, and additional Trump Administration officials who engaged with Russians clandestinely, risk undermining the U.S. Government and its intelligence agencies.

Trump's most concise message about his foreign policy initiatives and behavior toward Putin convey that he believes Russian cooperation is essential to the success of his agenda. He believes that quelling global crises, namely the global terrorism threat of the Islamic State of Iraq and the Levant (ISIS) and the civil war in Syria will require Putin's assistance. His naive beliefs that platitudes and his reluctant refusal to criticize Putin will result in constructive cooperation are unfounded. As a former officer of the Russian security agency, the Komitet Gosudarstvennoy Bezopasnosti (KGB), Putin has proven himself to be a highly intelligent and capable agent. His success in the agency and subsequent rise within the Russian Government,

prove Putin of an intellectual level that would not be easily persuaded by transparent acts, such as platitudes and compliments. It is imperative that Trump begin to engage with Putin as the adversary that he has repeatedly proven himself to be. Failure to do so could result in more brazen forays by Putin, for example, in seeking to further destabilize Ukraine. Furthermore, Trump must develop a strategy to limit Russia's ability to spread its influence, both regionally and internationally, when it is contrary to U.S. interests. Collaboration with NATO allies and robust support for the E.U. are vital to achieving this goal. Cooperation with Putin on issues, including the Middle East would be ideal, but halting the growth of Russia's sphere of influence and desire to divide Europe is paramount. The previous behavior of Putin and Russia demonstrate a routine disregard for the constructs of the international liberal order and its norms and practices. Therefore, stemming the rise of Russia and the subsequent protection of the international order's norms must be of utmost importance to the Trump Administration. A failure to curtail the rise of Russia, namely the currently norm-indifferent Russia, has the potential to destabilize and erode the international liberal order.

Chapter 5: Conclusion

The principle aim of this paper was to analyze the future of American foreign policy in the Trump Age. The primary focus was to evaluate the viability of the current international liberal order in responding to challenges from the Trump Administration. It commenced with a study of the order's origins, namely the Peace of Westphalia and the structures to which a Westphalian order subscribes. Sovereignty, statehood, and additional norms and practices in the international system, have been, and are essential to its functioning and survival. A discussion of the life cycle of norms illustrated how norms emerge, cascade, and eventually became internalized. They often emerge based on a local level response to structural or behavioral concerns that have become unsustainable or undesirable. The norm entrepreneurs that support and diffuse a norm are some of the most critical actors in determining a norm's puissance and future. Norm entrepreneurs and norm defenders protect norms from violators and potential degradation.

President Trump, despite having been in office for less than a year, has already posed harsh challenges onto a range of both domestic and international norms. As President of the United States, he is in the unique position of not only leading the U.S., but, in addition, leading the hegemonic power that ensures the international liberal order and its norms. Trump's verbal assaults and behavior have engendered significant doubts about his comprehension and competence in dealing with norms and the international liberal order. His consistent degradations of norms, and ultimately the international system, have been a source of great consternation. These criticisms include some of his most egregious attacks on the norm of multilateralism and multilateral institutions and treaties, which underpin the entire international

liberal order. Often, Trump seems either indifferent to the existence and importance of norms or brazenly against them without offering any coherent alternative in the international sphere.

Trump's attacks on NATO, multilateralism and multilateral institutions, escalation of tensions with North Korea, and consistent embrace of Russian President Vladimir Putin, demonstrate his will to disregard even some of the most internalized norms and practices. Most concerning, his non-conforming behavior does not typically have any objective geared toward advancement of U.S. interests. His nationalistic and transaction-based criticisms about NATO and its members did not lead to any new funding structure or constructive dialogue. Its main purpose appears to have grown solely out of a desire to continue nationalistic campaign rhetoric and has produced fear, anxiety, and doubt about America's commitment to the Alliance's members. In addition, Trump has denounced most multilateral treaties and institutions, including the U.N., the W.T.O, NAFTA, etc., claiming that the U.S. is being taken advantage of financially. Indeed, the U.S. does contribute substantial amounts to the funding of these institutions, but the diffusion of American norms and values through the aid and work that the organizations engage in, provide significant benefits to the U.S. Similar to his attacks on NATO, Trump did not provide any semblance of policy or structural changes that he would expect to obtain in these institutions. This lack of agenda, plan, or policy has been consistent with his escalating threats against North Korea and his attempt to warm relations with President Putin. It was also evident in his precipitous decision to strike a Syrian air base in retaliation for a chemical attack on civilians within Syria's sovereign territory. The attack was not part of any U.S. diplomatic initiative nor any military program to assist allies. The vacuous lack of agenda or policy from the President has led to a lack of credibility in his statements and a loss of trust by his allies. As Trump identified in the introduction quote, he considers himself highly intelligent

and an individual who rarely requires the assistance or advice of others. The outcomes of his actions since he has assumed office and the requirements of his current position deem otherwise. Experts and advisors should be routinely consulted, especially with consideration for Trump's background, which is absent of any Government employment and experience. His disregard for experts and their expertise, demonstrates grave naiveté about the functions of his position and blatant disregard for norms and common practices.

In addition, the paper presented case studies of China, North Korea, and Russia to demonstrate the effects that some of Trump's earliest actions as leader of America and the international liberal order have caused, especially where Trump has, oftentimes blithely, contravened norms. While these case studies are certainly not comprehensive with regard to American foreign policy interests, they do address pertinent issues. Additional areas for exploration would include Syria, combating global terrorism, the American military interventions in Iraq and Afghanistan, the refugee/migrant crisis, the Iran nuclear agreement, and the turmoil in Venezuela, to name a few. As leader of the hegemonic power, Trump's statements and actions have lasting and heightened impacts on issues and conflicts in these areas. Furthermore, America has since WWII served as guarantor of the international liberal order and its norms. Trump's nationalist and isolationist statements thus severely threaten the system's future without offering any proposal to fill the inevitable void. The hegemonic power cannot retreat from the system that it helped create and support for over seventy years without causing severe degradation and, likely, adverse effects on U.S. interests.

Ultimately, as President Trump remains in office, it will be the responsibility of the subscribers to the international liberal order, especially influential actors, namely Japan, Germany, Australia, the European Union, etc., international institutions, and multilateral

alliances to protect the international system and its norms and practices. Domestically, it will be the responsibility of the U.S. Congress and American citizens to remain resolute in defending norms. The U.S. Congress demonstrated a willingness to defend norms in their passing of the sanctions against Russian meddling, but they must persist in the protection of both domestic and international norms. President Trump's platform and power as the leader of the hegemonic power, that guarantees the global order, has the potential to degrade and erode the international system. Thus far, Trump's impacts have caused limited damage or erosion to norms but it is imperative that norm entrepreneurs and supporters remain resolute. All non-norm conforming behavior, especially behavior that seemingly has no ultimate objective, as is becoming disconcertedly common with Trump, must be robustly and rigorously opposed. The institutions, organizations, and norms that compose the international liberal order must be whole-heartedly defended to ensure that the world does not regress to pre-Westphalian anarchy.

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