

U.S. Global Engagement and the Military

Strategic Visions for U.S. Engagement and the Military

- Unilateral Preeminence
- Multilateral Leadership
- Unilateral Restraint
- Assertive Nationalism

per Gordon Adams

Unilateral Preeminence

- Preserve American hegemony that emerged at the end of WWII
- Be the protector of an international rules-based order
- Global military dominance
- Add more than \$1 trillion to U.S. defense spending
- Escalate security assistance spending
- Emphasis on expanding role of Defense Department and diminished role of the State Department (noting State's "seriously ossified culture")
- Alternative to Pax Americana is "global disorder"

Unilateral Preeminence Criticism

- Unrealistic in a re-balancing world
- Case studies of failure: Iraq and Afghanistan
- Most countries do not welcome U.S. hegemony
- Expanding and deploying forces in an effort to ensure dominance would lead to even more rebalancing
- Cost

Multilateral Leadership

- Emphasizes alliances, international institutions, diplomacy and promotion of democratic and free market values
- Emphasizes multilateral military action (e.g. NATO, Kuwaiti coalition, Balkan states, Libya)
- Balance and coordination with the State Department and other statecraft agencies
- Increase military spending by \$100 to \$400 billion
- Expanded arms sales and global security assistance
- Use of all the tools of statecraft

Multilateral Leadership Criticism

- Increasingly inconsistent with shifting global power realities
- Unsuccessful military and security assistance outcomes have diminished U.S. role as global security provider
- Unwillingness of emerging economic, political and military powers to accept U.S. leadership
- Increasing boldness of competitors for leadership

Unilateral Restraint

- Avoidance of military interventions
- Core mission of military: off-shore balancing, not invasion, occupation or nation-building
- Engage globally without responsibility for global security
- Emphasis on regional responsibility of regional players
- Smaller ground force, shrink special ops, fewer air assets, smaller Navy but not diminished in size as much as the others
- Robust nuclear deterrent, based solely on submarines
- Shrink defense budget by \$1 trillion

Unilateral Restraint

- Match foreign objectives to abilities and resources and put domestic needs first
- Eliminate most U.S. overseas bases, much of the U.S. security assistance programs, and arms sales
- Eschews American exceptionalism and America as indispensable global leader
- In the emerging world order, regional orders become less geared toward serving America's power and purpose and more reflective of the interests and identities of local actors

Unilateral Restraint Criticism

- Would other countries rise to the task?
- Regional conflicts would increase
- Could create power vacuums to be filled by emerging power players like China
- Emerging regional actors would bring regional value systems that are anathema to an orderly world

Assertive Nationalism

- Promote and defend U.S. interests over and against any other nation's interests
- Views diplomacy as a zero sum game in which the U.S. either wins or loses
- Rejects U.S. exceptionalism and indispensable leadership
- Rejects spreading U.S. values, making judgments about others' internal values and politics, and nation-building
- Relies on larger, unequivocally dominant military for self-interested U.S. security—"Peace through strength"
- 10% increase in defense budget
- Increased arms sales
- Increased security assistance programs
- De-emphasizes non-military statecraft
- De-emphasis of funding alliances like NATO

Assertive Nationalism Criticism

- U.S. is an indispensable global leader
- American exceptionalism is essential to a peaceful world order
- Danger of mixed messaging of expansion of military capabilities and dismissiveness of multilateral security arrangements leading to greater rebalancing of power as world views America as a more sinister, bellicose power
- Creation of power vacuum to be filled by emerging powers, such as China and Russia
- Cost—Would additional arms sales, security assistance spending and increase in military budget stimulate economic activity or add to the national deficit and debt