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"VOLATILE POLITICAL AND INSTITUTIONAL CHANGE: DISCOURSES ON OUR FUTURE"

Contributors

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A Letter from the Editor

On behalf of the Editorial Board and the Department of Political Science, it is my pleasure to present the Fall 2018 Edition of the Undergraduate Political Review. As the student-run affiliate of the Department of Political Science at the University of Connecticut, UPR has a long and documented history of identifying and illuminating the formative political issues of our time. Whether a semesterly edition of the Review explores the legacy of the Obama Administration, Climate Justice, or Globalization, the Editorial Board of the Undergraduate Political Review has unflinchingly offered the undergraduate perspective on complex issues that far too often are obscured by undisciplined political discourse. The mission of the Undergraduate Political Review is to give these important political issues and phenomena due consideration, providing the University of Connecticut with crucial student perspectives while endeavoring to preserve the integrity of independent thought. Through the guidance of the Editorial Board, we strove to refine and expand student articles to consider insidious byproducts of political exchange, to critically evaluate even the most basic of ideological assumptions, and to meaningfully incorporate a global perspective into a typically Americanized scholastic lexicon. The selection of this semester's topic underwent a continual process of expansion until we as a Board felt it would resonate with nearly every reader browsing the contents of its pages. Our justification for the decision to focus on volatile political and institutional change lies in the ambiguity of the political discourse that seems to dominate the non-academic world, particularly the often-perpetuated rhetoric framing the current political climate as undergoing rapid change. Instead of repeating and thus diffusing vague arguments on the state of domestic and global politics, the Fall 2018 Edition of UPR contextualizes the claim of our world as one of rapid

political change through diverse instances of shifting electorates, economic relations, and institutional change, to simply name a few. We as an Editorial Board are proud to offer the University community what we believe is a comprehensive review of international affairs, domestic policy, and influence of these world-building forces on the future of the political. Most importantly, I would like to sincerely thank the monumental efforts put forth by the student writers and assistant editors who entrusted me with their perspectives.

A Return to Bipolarity and the Erosion of International Law

A holistic analysis of the state of international law and further speculation on the disturbing resurgence of realpolitik on the global stage is a task far too large for the purpose of the Fall 2018 Edition of the Undergraduate Political Review, and likely is a topic better suited to those who have moved beyond their undergraduate studies. Nevertheless, UPR aspires to boldly explore the topics of today and tomorrow by harnessing the idealism and passion often attributed the undergraduate experience. The following article intends to contextualize a great deal of the political turbulence that has motivated political discourse through an examination of shifting international power structures. By relying on both the historical and modern judicial rulings and the contingent hegemonic responses to checks on their unilateral power, the International Criminal Court, International Court of Justice, and Permanent Court of Arbitration provide the ideal context to examine the nature political power through an international legal framework, and its influence geopolitical adjudications; consequently, the basic ineffectiveness of these international bodies in checking hegemonic power illustrates the need for the bolstering of international law. The imminent arrival of China as a genuine hegemony has exacerbated festering tensions between the United States and the international bodies it supports, fundamentally challenging the rule of law. In order to motivate such a crucial argument, the perspectives of all actors must be meaningfully engaged, and the prescriptive implications of the aforementioned political phenomena must be handled with similar care. Although characterized as a fairly daunting task, the following article functions as an introduction to the diverse student articles offered in the contents of the Review, anchoring the more nuanced examples of political and subsequent institutional change in the context of rapidly shifting global power structures. I

sincerely hope any and all who read the following appreciate the gravity of the subject, and thus are more inclined to work for its just resolution with a sense of genuine urgency.

The forthcoming analysis of the legal precedent of the United States regarding international rulings condemning its foreign affairs is not an appeal to realism, but rather is intended to illuminate the remarkable consistency with which the U.S. applies realist principles to its particular foreign policy decisions. Although the inner-workings of international legal bodies are considerably complex, the temperament of the United States when faced with legal arguments supporting a rules-based system of international law can succinctly be defined as disingenuous. As the primary architect of the post-World War Two liberal world order and lone hegemony at the conclusion of the Cold War, few would deny the rhetorical consistency of U.S. leaders in their advocacy for substantive international jurisprudence (Leonard 2018). The rise of China and the rapidity of a return to quasi-bipolarity as the foundation of international politics has functioned as a referendum of the United States post-war order; furthermore, allowing the resulting ethnocentric and legally fallacious arguments to perpetuate throughout the international system foments dangerous conceptions of the international (Wall 2012). Such corrosive methods of exercising unilateral power by both modern hegemons likely will yield multidimensional negative externalities, and a regression of global politics to a crude zero-sum game.

A crystalline example regarding the tendency of U.S. foreign policy to revolve around the dichotomy of egalitarian rhetoric and realist policy is evident in the vehement resistance to the ratification of the 1998 Rome Statute. As one of seven nations that failed to initially ratify the treaty, the Statute and thus the authority of the International Criminal Court were finally accepted via ratification by the United States as of November 25th, 2002 (American Bar

Association 2012). The American Bar Association published a since-updated document at the time of ratification, both eviscerating the bad faith arguments offered by American politicians and criticizing the Bush administration for waging a willful information war in an attempt to undermine the authority of the ICC. Specifically identifying the U.S. concerns of politically motivated investigations and rulings, claims that the ICC violates due process, and the argument that the court poses a fundamental threat to national sovereignty, the ABA responded by comparing the legal parameters of the ICC and Rome Statute. The United States' characterization of the ICC as an esoteric legal body blatantly disregarded its generous legal standards for due process and the burden of evidence, equaling or even surpassing that of American legal codes; the ABA ultimately concluded "It is unconscionable for the United States to actively undermine the court before it has had an opportunity to prove itself a truly independent and impartial arbiter of international justice" (The American Bar Association 2012). A decade later, these arguments demonstrated a surprising resilience, even in the face of indefensible American atrocities abroad. The ICC ruled against the United States Military last year on the basis of the war crimes their forces committed during the Afghanistan War, reporting that "…war crimes and crimes against humanity had been committed by U.S. armed forces in Afghanistan, as well as members of the CIA in secret detention facilities in Poland, Lithuania, and Romania. The allegation was that they had tortured, mistreated, or raped at least 88 detainees between 2002 and December 2014" (Hale 2017). Far from merely speaking idealistically on the virtues of law and order and simultaneously failing to uphold these lofty ideals with vigilance, the United States is willing to denigrate the authority of an international body entrusted with preventing the most horrific of crimes (Hale 2017). Worse still, controversial yet prominent think

tank the Heritage Foundation perpetuated these arguments in the face of this knowledge even a decade later, even maintaining that "...the Obama Administration should resist pressure to 're-sign' the Rome Statute...and then only if the Rome Statute and the ICC and its procedures are amended to address all of the serious concerns that led past U.S. Administrations to oppose ratification of the Rome Statute" (Groves 2009). The particular concerns acknowledged echoed an apparently unseen ABA article, citing "[a lack of] prudent safeguards against political manipulation, possesses sweeping authority without accountability to the U.N. Security Council, and violates national sovereignty by claiming jurisdiction over the nationals and military personnel of non-party states in some circumstances" (Groves 2009).

China's ascension onto the international stage and re-orientation of its dependent power structures thus threaten to exacerbate the structural political flaws of the post-war world, particularly through their emulation of the United States' disregard of the rule of law and reliance on realpolitik. The quasi-hegemony seems only moments away from fully challenging the dominance of the United States, and has accordingly challenged both U.S.-backed international institutions and legal rulings in just a few short years. China ignored an unfavorable ruling from the Permanent Court of Arbitration regarding their maritime dispute in the South China Sea, drawing hypocrisy-laden criticism from the United States and her allies (The Permanent Court of Arbitration 2018). A Chinese official called the ruling "little more than a piece of paper" (Allison 2016), a forceful refutation that at its base is a change in rhetoric rather than substantive foreign policy. Historical record reveals that no member of the United Nations Security Council has ever honored a legal ruling of this nature, in fact, "...none of the five permanent members of the UN Security Council have ever accepted any international court's

ruling when (in their view) it infringed their sovereignty or national security interests. Thus, when China rejects the Court's decision in this case, it will be doing just what the other great powers have repeatedly done for decades" (Allison 2016). Logical inconsistencies aside, the modern Chinese state poses a threat to the international order unlike the other members of the Security Council, as the magnitude and rapidity of its rise insinuates a return to bipolarity. A unipolar hegemony building global hierarchies of power and influence while disregarding negative byproducts of diffusing control is damaging enough, but the coupling of the U.S.-backed international system with the rise of an illiberal hegemony threatens to potentially collapse the role of international institutions in adjudicating disputes and ameliorating conflict. It is crucial to understand that both logically and functionally, the United States and China display differences of rhetoric and ideals, but analogously exercise their strength in true realist fashion (Allison 2018).

Arriving at the current state of global affairs, the categorical denial of international legal authority when it concerns American or Chinese foreign initiatives is a reckless precedent for bipolar hegemonies to set. Appeals to sovereignty by both states function as legal facades subsuming the primary political, economic, and militaristic ambitions of each nation. In another ruling against the United States involving a dispute with Nicaragua, U.S. Ambassador to the United Nations Jeane Kirkpatrick articulated Washington's thoughts on the legal ruling, categorizing the International Court of Justice as a "semi-legal, semi-juridical, semi-political body, which nations sometimes accept and sometimes don't" (Allison 2016). A casual disregard for a legal precedent, however troubling on face value, is further problematized by the near repetition of this argument by China. The sweeping legal victory of the Philippines over China

by the Permanent Court of Arbitration found that China had illegally claimed crucial regions of the South China Sea, bringing legal appreciation for a beautifully constructed argument, yet utterly lacking the force to bring China to heel (Graham 2016). Realist analysts expressed cynicism when considering the likelihood of such a ruling bringing about meaningful legal precedent, summarizing "Where big powers are concerned, might trumps right. Without an enforcement mechanism, the tribunal's ruling is destined to be ignored, or worse still, constitute an empty provocation to a vengeful Beijing bent on turning the South China Sea into a Chinese lake" (Graham 2016). The two powers are rapidly approaching a full-scale trade war and arms race, with China increasingly flexing its muscle abroad. Whether it is the spread of its wealth and influence through the Belt and Road Initiative or the drastic acceleration of military spending and influence, China is unequivocal in its plans to challenge and circumvent U.S. power structures. Both the United States and China constantly attempt to outmaneuver the other in a globalized landscape that increasingly appears headed for imminent collapse.

The immensity and import of the fate of international law and institutions cannot be understated, and at a time where the world needs innovative collaboration between wealthy nations most, our near-bipolar international system is consumed by two superpowers locked in a zero-sum game. Perhaps most disturbingly of all the sociopolitical competition between the two nations is the almost exponential increase of military consolidation and production, and global economic policies that act as poorly disguised efforts to expand their respective spheres of influence (Leonard 2018). There simply is no time for continued political maneuvering or a dismissal of meaningful legal rulings aimed at eliminating the worst of human crimes, particularly in contested regions of the world. Places like the South China Sea must be mediums

for revolutionary and unprecedented international cooperation, refining antiquated notions of sovereignty and the legal obligations of states before developing tensions upend the international system. Reducing international cooperation to a complex amalgamation of unilateral agreements between the United States, China, and their respective allies beckons the chaotic forces of unrestrained capital and sovereign power. The Council on Foreign Relations suggests a suitable catalyst for meaningful reform may be found through "Directing policy and capacity-building efforts toward fisheries protection and conservation in the South China Sea would be consistent with the tribunal's findings and could draw on a broad coalition of actors, including environmental groups that have yet to show much interest in the sea. This approach likely has the best prospects for rallying wider support within ASEAN especially Indonesia, given the priority it accords to thwarting illegal fishing" (Leonard 2018). A noble idea to be sure, but one that cannot be actualized without critically evaluating and eliminating the noxious influence of normative Western biases, realist conceptions of the political exchange, and a fundamental and unequivocal respect for the strength and force of the law on a global scale.

Isolationist Foreign Policy and the Liberal World Order

The world dubbed the United States the "World Policeman" many decades ago, but that role changed dramatically with the latest American administration. This position of prominence flowed from the ideological dominance of the United States as well as the country's economic strength, which allowed it to spread its influence far and wide. Now, the White House lectures a position turning inwards and focusing primarily on America. As the United States has had its

hands in the affairs of other nations for many years, this proposed policy change is a huge leap from the policies of the last few administrations. During the Bush and Obama administrations, the presence of the United States—overseas and diplomatically— was widespread. The overhaul of the United States' traditional position as one of the active leaders and a model for other nations in the international system will create massive disorder throughout the world due to the absence of other potential leaders, creating a power vacuum on the international stage.

The Soviet Union collapsed in 1991, and the United States took center stage as the world's greatest power. This gave the United States a unique position that had not existed before: being a single power in a time when globalization reached farther than it ever had. As Michael Mandelbaum of Johns Hopkins University expressed, when "the international society needs governance... the United States provides it." This position has allowed the United States to bolster its businesses, increase profits for its military-industrial complex, and maintain its status as the richest superpower. This comes from the United States' funding for international institutions, and its influence in areas of the world such as Europe, Latin America, and the Arabian Peninsula.

Since the Presidential Election, The Trump administration's "America First" doctrine shows that the new policy-makers within this administration are taking a step back from international politics and focusing primarily on certain issues within the United States. Examples of this come from the Trump campaign, such as ceasing to have American goods made abroad, and from his speeches as president. Trump's speech to the United Nations General Assembly was no exception to this inward-oriented attitude when he explained that his "government's first duty is to its people, to our citizens- to serve their needs, to ensure their safety, to preserve their

rights, and to defend their values." While prioritizing one's own nation over others is a legitimate and prevalent stance taken by many countries, the Trump administration's policy shift is a byproduct of extreme nationalism.

Nationalism had a very positive connotation, especially in countries such as the United States. It can be seen in the love of patriotism, the plethora of American flags hung from homes, and the way fans sing "God Bless America" during a seventh inning stretch. This positive connotation is due to the beneficial aspects of nationalism, such as being able to create a sense of a collective identity to which individuals belong. This group mentality can ideally lead to human progress as people work together in order to improve the lives of those in the group, with advances in education or increased economic vitality.

Unfortunately, nationalism can also create violence and encourage fear of others including fear of different religions, races, cultures, and sexualities. This is the kind of nationalism that Trump employs within a large section of the American public in creating an "us versus them" rhetoric. This is demonstrated in Trump's 2016 interview with CNN's Anderson Cooper in which Trump declared, "I think Islam hates *us*." The nationalism of this administration has alienated countless countries abroad by pitting the country against nations dissimilar to the United States. When nationalism is used in this negative light, its potential for political progress, fostering hope, and promoting positive collective identities do not occur; in fact, the opposite occurs, as evident today. For example, the Muslim travel ban allowed anti-Muslim sentiment within the United States to become legitimized. These restrictions on immigrants demonstrate to the world that the Trump administration does not allow foreign individuals or countries to turn to the United States for leadership and guidance. In the past, the

United States did play this role for countries around the world.

One of the best examples of positive foreign intervention by the United States is the rebuilding of Europe after the Second World War. This included supplies such as over 16 million tons of food to 17 nations affected by the war, feeding over 300 million people. This was then expanded to $13 billion in aid, fuel, and machinery. The United States saw these investments not only supporting the good of the countries receiving help but also enhancing the security of the United States, as the aid helped promote democracy throughout Western Europe, creating future allies and ending old feuds. The reconstruction of Europe demonstrates how the United States' interest in the affairs of other nations can help everyone involved. If a president with the philosophies of Trump had been in power during the end of the World War, Europe and the alliances that remain with the United States today would be disadvantageously different, with fewer alliances being formed.

For a more recent example of positive foreign influence on the part of the United States, the Iran nuclear deal provides an excellent case study. The 2015 agreement was a monumental achievement of the Obama administration. Iran, China, France, Germany, Russia, the United Kingdom, and the United States were involved in the negotiations that took place in order to construct the deal. Today, the United States is the only country leaving the deal. Even though international inspectors have proven that Iran acted in accordance with the agreement, President Trump decided that this is one of the "bad deals" that the United States made in the past. But it is yet another instance in which the leadership and example once shown by the United States is being discarded. Luckily, other nations are trying to renegotiate the deal as it restricts Iran's nuclear activity and promotes regional nuclear non-proliferation. The Trump administration does

not seem to value these accomplishments. Instead President Trump reinstated old sanctions on Iran with the most important relating to the import of Iranian oil. What this administration does value, on the other hand, is damaging the economic relations of the United States.

Utilizing his "America First" campaign doctrine, Trump's trade war has wreaked havoc throughout the international community. President Trump claims that America's past trade deals favored other countries' economies while hurting the United States, so he began to tax many goods entering the United States such as solar panels and washing machines. The purpose of these tariffs is to force American trading partners to negotiate bilateral deals which Trump views as profitable for the U.S. The IMF's chief economist warns of China and the United States that "When you have the world's two largest economies at odds... everyone suffers." The IMF projected that on account of the trade war, growth in the United States will decrease by almost half a percent, affecting billions of dollars in trade. Creating such a disorder within the international system does not bode well for the United State economically or politically. When Trump suddenly reverses long-standing policy; it discourages other nations from cooperating with the United States in trade or in the political sphere in the future, knowing that their mutual deals could be discarded at any time, much like the Iran nuclear deal.

One instance of intervention by the United States within this administration is Trump's active role in the discussions between North and South Korea. While controversial, most are relieved that these are taking place at all. But this active role of the United States in the affairs of foreign nations go to show that Trump's supposed nationalistic strategy is not what is good for the world and, therefore, not good for the United States.

Of course, examples like the United States' intervention in Vietnam, Iraq and

Afghanistan have become symbols of the negative effects of American intervention. Beginning in 1965 in Vietnam, American troops were deployed in order to fight allegedly Communist forces within the country. In 2001, the United States went into Afghanistan with the intention of ousting the Taliban. Iraq was next beginning in 2003 with the intention to remove Saddam Hussein from power. Considering the last two of the examples, the underlying problem with these interventions do not seem to be the interventions themselves, but rather the implementation of new regimes by the United States. The interventionist role of the United States abroad should be to influence other nations, not to run their affairs for them.

The question that accompanies the United States stepping down from a leadership role in the international arena is which nation will succeed it. Great powers such as Russia and China come to mind. Even with the negative ramifications of the diplomatic history of the United States, one has to weigh the options of who in the world might decide to adopt this role. This might not seem like a drastic change, but with the long history of American intervention abroad, and their varying outcomes, even small changes that the United States makes can have ripple effects around the globe. Positive outcomes like the ending of World War Two, in which the United States and its allies were able to liberate many Nazi concentration camps, remind the world that even with past and possible future negative outcomes, placing the benefit of one nation so highly above the rest of the world is not constructive for anyone. The international system craves a leader, and President Trump is not willing or suited to do the job.

Addressing the Climate Change Amidst the Rise of Populism

For many people around the world, the past few years have brought about

unthinkable tragedies in the form of natural disasters. In 2017 three major hurricanes —Harvey, Irma, and Maria —accounted for thousands of lost lives, primarily in Puerto Rico. The monetary cost of these disasters was estimated to be at least $306 billion (Ward). Hurricane Michael devastated lands stretching from Florida's Panhandle to Virginia, claiming 32 lives with hundreds still missing (Sachs). Indonesia suffered a major earthquake and tsunami, with 844 dead and 2.4 million negatively impacted. These statistics do not begin to address the severity and increased occurrence of natural disasters the planet is facing. Scientists made it clear that these natural disasters are not contingencies; they are results of global inaction against climate change. On 8 October 2018, the United Nations (UN) and their Intergovernmental Panel on Climate Change (IPCC) released a report warning that the world is headed for a temperature rise of 1.5 degrees Celsius by 2030 from pre-industrial times. The consequences of this are unprecedented destruction to the environment, as well as to humanity. Dramatic and radical action needs to be taken by the international system (Keating). The authors of this report stated emissions need to be down 45 percent from 2010 levels by 2030, and 100 percent by 2050. They also stressed that it would be essential to end our dependence on coal as an energy source. Coal's use as a major electricity source would need to decrease from where it stands today at 40 percent to one to seven percent by 2050 (C. Davenport). The IPCC called on all 195 countries involved in the 2015 Paris Agreement to exponentially raise commitments to battle climate change in order to avoid catastrophe (Erickson).

Despite the urgency of the IPCC's warning, the authors of the report acknowledge the low likelihood of a political solution. The rise of right-wing populism (RWP) in European nations and the United States has created an increasingly polarized international system. The

political power RWP has gained in nations makes it difficult for world leaders to address a

liberal issue like climate change, while still attempting to appease their more conservative

constituents. Analyzing the ideology of RWP reveals a correlation between the support for RWP

and opposition to policies addressing climate change.

There are two approaches to employ when exploring RWP and its relation to climate

change. First, structuralist thought emphasizes the emergence of RWP from a specific

demographic (Lockwood). Job sectors like manufacturing, heavy industries, and mining are all

negatively impacted by global processes of change. These processes of technological change,

globalization, and deunionization are spurred on by free trade agreements, labor outsourcing, and

immigration policies. As the global system shifted to accommodate these changes, it excluded a

part of the global population. RWP draws much of its support from this constituency of excluded

individuals (Ibid). Jobs like manufacturing and mining are extremely carbon-intensive on the

environment. Individuals who occupy these jobs are threatened by climate policies that would

restrict carbon emissions, consequently leaving them without a source of income. Structuralist

thought therefore illustrates the negative impact climate change policies would have on

supporters of RWP. The polarization between RWP and Left-Wing Populism (LWP) also

contributes to RWP's opposition to climate change. While all populism is anti-elitist, RWP

constructs elites as liberal. Because climate policy is framed as part of the liberal agenda, RWP's

opposition is seen as an act of hostility towards liberals.

The second approach—the ideological approach— underscores the socially conservative

and nationalist values of RWP. The nationalist ideology of RWP generates domestic concern

over the potential for dependence on outside energy imports that would hinder national

independence. This concern produces a concept of national energy independence established in terms of maintaining the status quo, and rejecting climate policies like renewable energy (Ibid). For nations using fossil fuels, national energy independence is framed in terms of maintaining and developing those resources. Choosing not to embrace policies that support liberal, outside-the-box ideas like stopping climate change allows RWP to preserve a strong sense of nationalism. In sum, the available evidence suggests a correlation between RWP, climate skepticism, and hostility towards environmental policy (Ibid).

As events in recent years have illustrated, RWP has gained prominence and political strength in some nations. The most notable examples of RWP's rise are the 2016 Brexit Referendum in the United Kingdom and election of Donald Trump in the US. The rise of RWP in the US has seen devastating consequences for climate change policy. In 2017, President Trump declared he was pulling the US out of the Paris Agreement. Since the US is the world's largest economy and second-largest emitter of carbon dioxide, the action sets a poor precedent for other countries (L. Davenport). The Trump administration also attempted to weaken legislation that targeted and fined air pollution. This gives corporations less incentive to reduce carbon emissions. These actions signify the US' continued support of coal as an energy source (Meyer). Meeting the goals of the IPCC report involves a profound change — a change a lot of individuals in power will not be willing to make. Significant transitions in transportation, energy, building infrastructure, and industrial systems would have to occur (Irfan). While the rise of RWP in the US has led to international difficulty in addressing climate change, its growing strength in Europe has negatively impacted the European Union's (EU) new proposals for climate change as well.

The rise of RWP within the EU can be seen as a backlash against increased immigration and globalization. The public's fear of a weakening national identity led to increased conservatism, nationalism, and RWP (BBC World). The most significant example of this is the rise of RWP parties in European countries, including The Alternative for Germany (AfD), the Freedom Party (FPÖ) in Austria, and the conservative Law and Justice Party in Poland. RWP's resurgence pressures the EU's political leaders to move right on certain issues, or risk losing support from a growing portion of their population. This pressure will affect how political leaders decide on issues dealt with by the EU. If the most liberal option will go against the wishes of a large number of constituents in a nation, the leader will presumably not choose that option in order to avoid empowering his electoral opponents. For example, the EU had previously announced it was striving for a 'net zero' emissions goal. Under this framework, any carbon emissions in the EU would be offset by actions elsewhere to lower the amount of carbon in atmosphere. Solutions to offset the carbon included planting forests and using storage technology to trap carbon underground (Keating). A leaked draft of the EU's latest long-term climate strategy revealed net zero would probably never come to fruition. In the draft net zero is proposed as one of three options; the other two are the goal of 80 percent emission reduction by 2050, and net zero's deadline being extended to 2070 (Ibid). The EU has been shown to usually avoid the most ambitious option. This conservatism, combined with rising RWP and nationalist sentiments in European nations, produces an increasing difficulty in addressing climate change.

The IPCC called for heavy taxes on carbon dioxide emissions to encourage accountability for nations' environmental footprints. However, high costs could prove to be politically impossible in the US, given all the special interests at work (Ibid). The ramifications of the

temperature rise by 2030 will include irreversible damage to the environment, as well as real problems for humans. Right-wing populism gaining support and power increases nationalist and conservative values in nations, hampering the ability of world leaders to negotiate effective political solutions to issues like climate change. Given RWP's increasing influence on nations in the international system, the future of climate change seems bleak. Right-wing populism brings about ideals like nationalism and conservatism. With the rising nationalism, nations are more likely to think about their self-interests than the impact of climate change on the entire system. However, if climate change is not appropriately targeted, every nation and its citizens will be affected.

Shifting Sands: America, Iran, and the New Middle East

On January 16th, 1979, 2,500 years of monarchy came crashing down in the streets of Tehran. Thousands marched in protest, waving portraits of Ayatollah Ruhollah Khomeini and chanting for the exile of Mohammad Reza Shah Pahlavi. The last Shah of Iran fled, and the newly installed Grand Ayatollah—or Supreme Leader— constructed an Islamic Republic in his wake. In the thirty years since, Iran consistently proved an unrelenting thorn in America's side. The infamous hostage crisis lasting from 1979 to 1981 set the tone between Washington and Tehran early on. Needless to say, regional proxy wars, escalating tensions with Israel, and Iran's pursuit of nuclear bombs only worsened the American-Iranian relationship. In spite of this frayed history, in 2015 the Joint Comprehensive Plan of Action (JCPOA) was signed in Vienna by the U.S., E.U., France, Germany, Russia, China, and Iran (P5+1). Orchestrated by the Obama

Administration, the deal represented a landmark moment in American diplomacy. For the first time in close to thirty years, America and Iran took a significant step towards rapprochement by restricting Tehran's nuclear program. Today—just three years later—relations between Iran and the U.S. lie at their lowest point since 1979. Indeed, Secretary of State Pompeo outlines a pressure campaign driven by economic sanctions and military deterrence in his tellingly titled *Confronting Iran*, published last month. The Trump Administration's Iran policy represents a drastic departure from that of the Obama years. Its confrontational approach to Iran serves as the linchpin of a Middle Eastern foreign policy ignoring the rapid changes sweeping the region, and simultaneously serves as the catalyst for the formation of anti-Western regional blocs. Abandoning engagement in favor of confronting Iran stems from two conflicting interpretations of Washington's role in the Middle East, reintroducing polarizing bloc alignments to the region.

The Obama Administration's achievement of a nuclear deal with Iran in 2015 provided America and its allies with an unprecedented opportunity—building diplomatic ties with the Islamic Republic. In doing so, his administration attempted to integrate Iran into a larger Middle Eastern strategy of U.S. drawdown. The process began in 2009, when President Obama stated during a televised interview, "If countries like Iran are willing to unclench their fist, they will find an extended hand from us." (Sedarat, Noueihad, 2009). The same year, widespread upheaval shook the theocracy to its very core. Thousands of Iranians took to the streets in a manner eerily similar to the 1979 revolution, calling for an end to the Ayatollah's reign and for the social, political, and economic liberalization of the country. The "Green" movement failed, brutally repressed with the approval of the Ayatollah (Misagh, 2016). However, it resulted in massive voter turnout during the 2013 elections, where Hassan Rouhani won in a landslide. Within days

of his victory, President Rouhani embraced his reformist mandate, and called for re-opening negotiations with the P5+1, led by the United States (Sherman, 2018). The prior decades of severe sanctions increased inflation and greatly reduced the potential for foreign investment in Iran's economy. Recognizing the toll these punitive measures took on Iranian citizens and having campaigned on raising the Iranian standard of living, President Rouhani sought warmer relations with the U.S. (Sherman, 2018). The Obama Administration implemented an engagement-based approach to Iran, and reaped the rewards. Within two years of President Rouhani's election, the JCPOA was negotiated and signed, curbing the regime's uranium enrichment in exchange for sanctions relief. The deal created a foundation for future negotiations with the West by virtue of its initial success. As President Rouhani stated, the question became, "whether the accomplishments thus far can be used as a road map to agreement on other issues." (Warner 2015).

Importantly, Iran fit into President Obama's larger, long-term Middle Eastern strategy of outlining the limits of U.S. involvement in the Middle East, ideally encouraging regional cooperation in resolving conflicts (Lynch, 2015). After two fateful wars in Afghanistan and Iraq, the American public's view of U.S. commitments in the Middle East soured. His administration consequently pursued regional drawdown by setting precedents clarifying the limits of U.S. actions in the Middle East and emphasizing the necessity of Saudi Arabia and Iran to cooperate in regional disputes (Lynch, 2015). Specifically, this view premised U.S. foreign policy on the limits of U.S. power to effect region-wide change. Bringing Iran into the West's diplomatic fold allowed future presidents a direct line of communication to the regime, to be used in resolving regional disputes or clashes while avoiding direct U.S. commitments. It also raised the profile of

Iran through a successful nuclear negotiation, indicating Iran's potential capability to contribute to regional diplomacy.

U.S. intervention in Libya and inaction in Syria, and U.S. backing of Saudi Arabia in Yemen, demonstrate this approach elsewhere. In Libya, U.S. military support for protesters and rebels helped overthrow autocrat-in-chief Muammar Gaddafi, but triggered a civil war following his downfall (Tierney, 2016). Massive U.S. troop deployments would almost certainly have been required to stanch the bloodshed. Bearing in mind this lesson, and the American public's unwillingness to open another war front in the Middle East, President Obama refused to intervene in Syria's civil war (Goldberg, 2016). In Yemen, President Obama demonstrated the unshakeable strength of the U.S.-Saudi alliance, providing funding and arming the Royal Family's military pursuits. Just as Iran, Libya, and Syria were meant to lay precedents for U.S. policy, American aid to Saudi Arabia's proxy war indicated the lengths to which U.S. presidents would go in maintaining regional alliances, but implicitly and unfortunately legitimized Saudi Arabia's agenda (Goldberg, 2016). President Obama used the Iran Deal, then, to legitimize Iranian standing in the Middle East alongside Saudi Arabia, an attempt to lay a foundation to move the region away from rivalry and proxy war while decreasing the U.S. military footprint in the Persian Gulf and North Africa.

Casting aside the Obama heritage in using Iran as part of a broader shift toward regional drawdown and balance, the Trump Administration escalates its rhetoric of confrontation by the day, and with it, escalates the drumbeats of war. President Trump's revocation of the Iran Deal in May brands Iran as the chief destabilizing force in the region so as to form an Arab coalition capable of meeting U.S. objectives. President Obama's recognition of the limits of U.S. power in

the Middle East rankled current officials, instantly changing the premise and dynamic of American policy in the region. Secretary Pompeo attacks that recognition as an, "...accommodationist strategy that incorrectly signaled diminished American power and influence." (Pompeo, 2018). Within three years, the very foundation of President Obama's engagement of Iran—recognizing the infeasible and limited nature of U.S. power in decisively balancing the Middle East—was dismissed.

For the past decade—and for the prospective future—three major crises define the Middle East: the aftermath of the Arab Spring, Syrian and Yemeni Civil Wars, and renewed sectarian violence (Nasr, 2018). Where President Obama recognized that the forces responsible for these crises are many and varied, the current presidency pins the blame on Iran's malignant activities. Citing Iran's, "...destabilizing activity in Afghanistan, Iraq, Lebanon, Syria, Yemen, and Gaza.", Secretary Pompeo and the Trump Administration ignore the influence of reformist democratization movements on modern struggles in any number of Arab countries (Pompeo, 2018). Furthermore, using Iran's admittedly flawed actions as a means of explaining the Middle East's troubles carry significant consequences. By identifying Iran as the sole bad actor, even in the face of Saudi Arabia's slaughter of U.S.-based journalist Jamal Khashoggi, America pushes Israel and the Arab states together, forming a loose coalition dedicated to containing Iran (Entous, 2018). In the months after announcing the death of the Iran Deal, Jared Kushner went so far as to say, "If we're going to take on Iran, we want to do it all together." (Entous, 2018). In an eerily similar vein, Israeli Prime Minister Benjamin Netanyahu stated in May, "Iran is in conflict with us, Iran is in conflict with the United States, Iran is in conflict with just about all the Arab states in the Middle East... we should unite together under President Trump's leadership..."

(Entous, 2018). Clearly, the Trump Administration has strayed from the strategy of diplomatic engagement and broader drawdown defining the Obama years. As Prime Minister Netanyahu and his new Arab allies understand it, the U.S. is spearheading a campaign to contain and cripple Iran across the Middle East. By appearing to create an anti-Iran bloc in the Middle East, President Trump and Secretary Pompeo will not be able to bring Iran back into negotiations any time soon. In fact, their fallacious visions of American power superseding diplomacy, and their attempts at unifying the Arab world against Iran pushed the Islamic Republic into a bloc of its own while escalating tensions.

Refusing to take advantage of the diplomatic foundation laid by the Obama Administration and turning away from Iranian engagement resulted in Tehran moving closer to Russia and Turkey (Clarke, Tabatabai, 2018). The Trump Administration's desire to remove Bashar Al-Assad from power in Syria clashes with Turkey's desire to avoid a state failure on its southern border. Iran seeks Assad's continued presence, primarily because his regime aided Iranian pursuits in Lebanon, such as backing the Shiite militia Hezbollah. Importantly, the Syrian state worked with Iran as a geostrategic ally in areas of security (Byman, 2006). The third component of this trifecta, Russia, shares the goals of Iran and Turkey. President Putin seeks to keep the Assad regime in power as well, in order to prevent U.S. backed forces from gaining more territory in the country and in order to establish Russia as an alternate deal-breaker in the Middle East (Polyakova, 2018). The Trump Administration refuses to engage Iran in diplomatic overtures and negotiations, meaning that fracturing this new coalition is close to impossible. Tying its Middle Eastern strategy directly to confronting Iran, an approach which pushed Iran into the arms of Russia and Turkey while miring the U.S. in Middle East politics, the Trump

Administration possesses few options to split the new bloc. With confrontation and military posturing the favored option, the threat of war increases as a result.

In 2015, Iranian President Hassan Rouhani asked, "whether the accomplishments thus far can be used as a road map to agreement on other issues." (Warner, 2015). The Trump Administration answered with a resounding no. President Obama incorporated Iran into a strategy of attempting to decrease America's commitments in the Middle East, hoping Iran and Saudi Arabia could work alongside each other to depolarize the region. Flawed as that vision was, its premise rang true. The Obama Administration recognized the limits of U.S. global power, especially as applied to the Middle East. No amount of U.S. dollars or U.S. troops can bring stability to the troubled region. The Trump Administration's approach uses Iran to promote unity among Israel and the Arab world by common contempt. Of greater importance, this administration simply does not believe limits exist on what the U.S. can achieve. As a result of its strategy of confrontation and pressure, rapid realignment sweeps the Middle East. Such polarization decreases communication between regional powers and pits them against one another. Given new alignments—already prolonging wars in Syria and Yemen—the stage is set for future conflicts. Already, a new bloc rises from the sands. Turkey, Russia, and Iran share no love of America. In fact, their unity is a byproduct of failed U.S. strategy. Only time will tell how this new force redefines the Middle East. But if the Trump Administration's rhetoric is anything to go by, the Persian Gulf is quickly becoming ground zero for a massive revision of U.S., Israeli, and Arab-led order.

History Isn't Over Yet: Illiberalism and the Rise of China

The stunning collapse of European communism in 1989 led political scientist Francis Fukuyama to declare "the end of history". Its last ideological rival soundly defeated, liberalism would be the only viable system for organizing society going forward. While some regions of the globe would still experience pangs of authoritarianism, liberal democracy would remain uncontested on a social, ideational level as the inevitable endpoint for all societies on earth. Now, the emergence of illiberal China as the world's likely future hegemon casts serious doubt on Fukuyama's hopes.

In 1989, the year Fukuyama published his argument, China was a barren, destitute third world country wrecked by forty years of Communist mismanagement. Ninety percent of one billion Chinese lived in extreme poverty, scraping by on less than two dollars a day (Allison 13). Soon, all of this began to rapidly change, largely owing to Deng Xiaoping and his program of pragmatic modernization. Following a wave of successful anti-communist uprisings in Europe, and a violent standoff between police and pro-democracy activists in Tiananmen Square, China's Communist Party realized that it would have to adapt if it was to survive. Understanding that the Soviet Union's collapse was rooted in its economic failures, Deng launched a series of market reforms beginning in 1992; market controls were relaxed, globalization was welcomed, and businessmen were allowed to accumulate significant wealth. By implementing this program, the Party was able to both unlock China's productive potential and buy the support of the discontented groups that had previously lead the country's pro-democracy movement (e.g. engineers, entrepreneurs, students, and intellectuals) (Beja 7-8).

After nearly thirty years of incredible growth, it is becoming increasingly difficult to find a single measure of intellectual, economic, technological, and military power in which China is not about to surpass the United States, if it has not already surpassed it. Their exports now standing at 151% of U.S. levels, the Chinese have become the world's most important manufacturers (Allison 9). Even more astonishing is that for most products, China, not America, is now the world's largest consumer market as well. Furthermore, China's GDP, measured at purchasing power parity (PPP), surpassed America's in 2014, and since the Great Recession, China has accounted for a higher percentage of global economic growth (40%) than any other nation (11-12). The Chinese have also outpaced the Americans in almost every aspect of the

STEM Revolution, which is the foundation for the growth of the high-tech industries that will drive national productivity in the modern era. China, for instance, surpassed the U.S. in yearly STEM graduates around 2003-2004, and it now graduates *four* times as many STEM students annually, severely endangering America's long-held status as the leader in innovation (Wadhwa et al). As a result of this prosperity, China has pursued a program of rapid military expansion and defense systems development. It now has a military budget second only to that of the U.S., and a landmark 2015 study by the RAND Corporation found that China now enjoys either supremacy or parity with America in 6 out of 9 key areas of military capability. According to the report, due to China's growing ability to project military and economic power in the Asia-Pacific, U.S. dominance in the region will gradually wane in the coming decade, despite Obama's attempt at a "Pivot to Asia" (Allison 20).

Throughout all of this development, the authoritarian core of China's political system has remained remarkably stable. Fukuyama claimed in his original essay that political liberalism and democracy have been following economic liberalism (Fukuyama 7, 9). Writing shortly after the Tiananmen Square massacre, he predicted that the opening of China to capitalism meant that the pro-democracy movement would outlast and sweep away the authoritarian government that had tried to violently repress it (Fukuyama 10; Fukuyama 96). Nothing of the sort has happened. Of course, China has largely done away with Marxism in its political and economic spheres, but it has replaced this system not with democracy, but with a form of authoritarian nationalism. The one-party state remains, and it neither holds public elections (except limited elections at the village level) nor permits the formation of an independent civil society. It is not liberal in any true sense. Nonetheless, the Party survives because it enjoys greater legitimacy than most of the world's democracies.

How has the government managed to remain so legitimate? First, it stirs intense nationalistic sentiments in the people by making constant reference to Classical China's glory as the "Middle Kingdom", which it strives to revive and emulate (Allison 122). Second, and most importantly, it maintains a system of "responsive authoritarianism", in which the government's legitimacy stems not from popular election, but rather from its performance and competency. The Party uses its Organization Department to recruit the most talented administrators to its ranks, and these officials are judged and promoted partly on the basis of public opinion surveys filled out by their local constituents. In fact, the largest client of polling companies in China is

the government, which constantly seeks to gauge public approval of its performance (Li). Protests limited primarily to everyday material issues - such as the quality of drinking water in a city - are permitted and even encouraged, as they allow officials to recognize and address sources of social discontent early on (Porter and Heurlin). By all measures, this system works incredibly well despite its illiberal nature. According to a 2006 review, on a scale measuring public attitudes about government legitimacy, China ranks 8.5 out of a possible 10, while the U.S. ranks hardly above a 7 (Gilley 512). Another good indicator is a 2017 IPSOS poll, which found that the Chinese are the most optimistic public on earth: 53% believe the world is getting better, as opposed to only 16% of Americans (Duffy 169-70). This is largely a reflection of the growth and prosperity they know their government has delivered to them in the space of a single generation.

It is now clear that the world's next superpower possesses a highly stable, effective, yet undemocratic regime type. Even this fact alone would cast doubt on Fukuyama's claims about the inevitability of liberalism's triumph in the international system. Yet China has not only provided a viable, legitimate alternative to liberalism domestically; as a budding hegemon, it has also become the focal point of a rising "axis of authoritarianism" challenging the West on the world stage (Martel). Fukuyama wrote in 1989 that "The People's Republic", now stripped of its Communist ideology and therefore its desire to promote worldwide Socialist revolution, could "no longer act as a beacon for illiberal forces around the world" (Fukuyama 10). However, a prosperous, non-Communist China now uses economic instruments (trade, foreign aid, foreign investment, and the like) to align with and support similar "illiberal forces" to advance its geostrategic goals. To be clear, the modern Chinese, unlike their ideologically expansionist Communist forebears, are largely pragmatists. They do not support authoritarian regimes *because* they are authoritarian, for they do not share Americans' missionary zeal to spread their ideology on the world stage. Instead, setting aside high-minded moral and philosophical considerations, they will support any nation and take any action that advances their rational political goals (Allison 144). However, because China views the West as its main competitor, it often allies itself with non-Western countries that happen to be deeply illiberal.

In recent years, for instance, China has forged strong bilateral trade ties with authoritarian Russia, particularly through arms and energy deals, which have propped up a Russian economy dogged by Euro-American sanctions. Members of this new authoritarian alliance now work together to systematically immobilize the Western-dominated United Nations and empower

undemocratic governments the world over. Using their veto power on the U.N. Security Council, Russia and China have blocked numerous resolutions imposing sanctions on the Syrian government for its deployment of chemical weapons. Likewise, the two powers have repeatedly opposed Western sanctions against Iran for its nuclear program (Martel). As North Korea's largest trading partner, China props up the totalitarian Kim regime. Maduro's dictatorship in Venezuela has also received support from China, which has invested heavily in the regime's oil ventures (Cunningham). China's largest gift to the world's despots, however, has been its "One Belt, One Road" initiative, a multi-trillion dollar trade infrastructure project that spans much of Afro-Eurasia. The Chinese aspire to build and then lease railways, oil refineries, bridges, and seaports in foreign countries. There is both an economic and geostrategic reason for this approach; economically, China wants to make it easier for the world to trade with it, and geostrategically, China desires to control global commerce in the Indian Ocean by building a string of Chinese-owned ports in the region. Unlike foreign investments made by Western governments, these infrastructure projects come with no ideological strings attached (e.g. the host country need not make democratic reforms). In addition, some of the world's poorest, most conflict-ridden nations - which are statistically less likely to be liberal democracies - are logically the most desperate for foreign investment. Because of these two factors, China often ends up investing in and therefore stabilizing some of the most despotic regimes on earth, including Pakistan, Saudi Arabia, Azerbaijan, Thailand, Laos, and Belarus (Ellis). Once again, it is worth emphasizing that China's backing of illiberal governments in all of these cases is *not* the result of some grand mission to advance illiberal ideology; rather, it is the natural consequence of China's hardheaded, amoral, and non-missionary approach to world politics. But perhaps most importantly, in their real-world effects (i.e. the undermining of liberalism on the global stage and the empowerment of liberalism's ideological competitors), China's current actions are almost indistinguishable from an *intentional* promotion of authoritarianism.

When thinking about what the future of liberalism might look like, it is useful to review what we already know. First, we know China's rise to world hegemony, accompanied by its stabilization of authoritarian regimes abroad and the success of its own illiberal government at home, shows few signs of faltering. Second, we know that both elites and ordinary citizens act differently based on whether or not international trends are favorable to democracy (Singer). For instance, Mikhail Gorbachev's spirit of non-intervention and tolerance toward dissent

empowered the reformers in Eastern European communist governments, as well as the hundreds of thousands of activist citizens who suddenly perceived a lower cost to speaking out. Likewise, the resulting collapse of the Soviet bloc, and the violent end met by many of its dictators, alarmed some Sub-Saharan African despots, making them more open to democratization (Ibid). The converse is also likely to be true: leaders and citizens may take cues from anti-democratic trends as well. A rising Chinese authoritarian superpower, located at the center of a network of undemocratic regimes, may cause the backsliding of liberal democracy via a similar contagion effect. By the same logic, America's simultaneous disengagement from world affairs, stemming from the emergence of populist-nationalist ideologies at home and a disaffection with decades of costly, seemingly fruitless nation-building abroad, may discourage liberalism's supporters and strengthen its opponents around the globe. Third, we know that the Third Wave of democracy, to the extent that it can be described as single wave, seems to have peaked and is now showing clear signs of petering out (Aziz and Ginsburg). Anti-democratic backsliding is increasingly common, as demonstrated by the emergence of proto-authoritarian leaders in Hungary, Poland, the Philippines, and most recently, Brazil. This broad trend might exacerbate the Chinese-driven authoritarian contagion effect discussed above. Fourth, China's pragmatic, amoral, "might makes right" approach to settling territorial disputes (for instance, ignoring international laws and court rulings favoring other countries' land claims in the South China Sea) may send the message to world leaders that the liberal, rules-based world order itself is no longer viable, especially without a hegemonic U.S. presence to defend it. These four considerations, taken together, point to an uncomfortable conclusion: that the prospects for global democratic peace and liberal dominance are uncertain at best.

Hillary Clinton, echoing the present anxieties of many Westerners, privately confided that she did not want her grandchildren to grow up in a world dominated by the Chinese (Goldberg). But, barring some unforeseen reversal of fortune, dominate the world they almost certainly will. And the new global order that arises from such dominance will be no friend to free and lawful government. Perhaps that "arc of the moral universe" is even longer than we thought.

Climate and Political Justice: Investing in the Developing World

The news is grim on the climate front. In order to prevent a catastrophic rise in global

temperature, the Intergovernmental Panel on Climate Change (IPCC) urges "rapid, far-reaching and unprecedented changes in all aspects of society" (IPCC 2018). This recommendation comes at a time when global energy dynamics are rapidly changing. The International Energy Agency predicts that over the next twenty years, Africa, China, Southeast Asia, Latin America and India will demand significantly more energy in order to satisfy their rising populations and meet industrial goals. By 2040, global energy demand will grow by 30%, despite projected decreases in Japan, Europe and the United States (IEA 2017).

The shift of energy consumption to developing nations, coupled with the radical societal restructuring recommended by the 2018 IPCC report, mandates a sea change in how we think about climate change solutions. Domestic carbon taxes, emission caps, renewable energy subsidies and traditional market forces show promise, but do not fully address the international scale and urgency of this crisis.

This is where the Climate Marshall Plan (CMP) comes in. The original Marshall Plan infused money into post-war Europe to rebuild, re-industrialize and revitalize the war-torn region. The CMP similarly aims to heavily invest capital from developed nations into the renewable energy infrastructure of developing nations, while recognizing the right of developing nations to industrialize and emphasizing domestic energy security. Investment in renewable energy sources, energy-efficient power grids and low-carbon infrastructure are essential in order to lay the foundations for a green society (Tongia 2018).

The Green Party of Canada, the Democratic Socialists of America, the former President of Ireland Mary Robinson, the Global Marshall Plan Initiative and former Vice President of the United States Al Gore have all explicitly proposed this idea. The Paris Climate Agreement did

not call for a CMP, but did use language consistent with the plan: "Developed country parties shall provide financial resources to assist developing country parties with respect to both mitigation and adaptation in continuation of their existing obligations under the convention" (United Nations 2015). The 2017 UNEP report also agreed with the CMP's central premise: "Developed countries need to transfer resources, including policy and technical expertise, best available technologies, and financing, to developing countries in order to create the enabling environments necessary for [renewable energy] and [energy efficiency] expansion at a scale commensurate with what international climate goals demand" (UNEP 2017). The same UNEP report indicates that past investment of this kind has yielded reductions in greenhouse gas emissions. Additionally, the report projects that "Greenhouse gas emissions reductions from internationally supported [renewable energy] and [energy efficiency] projects could be on the order of 1.4 gigatons of carbon dioxide per year by 2020 if committed public finance for climate mitigation is used to scale up these activities" (UNEP 2017). For reference, the world emits around 32 gigatons of carbon dioxide per year (350.org). So, while the Paris Agreement shows promise in its structure, the scale needs to be expanded exponentially in order to make a substantial dent in emissions. Importantly, the CMP promises more than reduced emissions: there are indications that renewables are a significantly better option to ensure economic growth than traditional fossil fuels (Ohler and Fetters 2014). A case study in South Africa found that renewable energy development is strongly linked to long-term economic growth and energy stability (Khobai 2018).

  Renewables also provide a unique opportunity to engage the 1.3 billion people across the world without access to electricity. Most of these people live in the poor, rural areas of Asia and

Africa. At the moment, the path toward electricity access in these areas runs through coal and other cheap fuels. Instead of cheap fuels, these regions should turn to renewables. Renewables are localized and will create electrical mini-grids as well as jobs to empower the rural poor. In this manner, the CMP doubles as a poverty reduction plan.

In 2016, utilizing a $75 million investment, the Rockefeller Foundation brought electricity to 40,000 rural poor in India through renewable energy mini-grids. Residents have benefitted from increased economic opportunities, educational opportunities, healthcare and public safety, particularly for women (Mishra et al. 2017). In a 2017 report, the United Nations Environmental Programme (UNEP) predicted similar positive outcomes for renewable energy investment in developing nations (UNEP 2017). Critically, there is a body of evidence which suggests an appetite for renewable energy in these countries. Over the past few years, developing countries have passed developed countries in total investment in renewable energy sources (Frankfurt School et al. 2018). However, some countries, like China, still fall short of their emissions goals due to a lack of infrastructure investment (Yang et al. 2016). In order to hasten the transition from fossil fuels to renewables, exterior funding is necessary.

While the CMP is a natural response to the intersection of a number of current trends, it is also grounded in a historical understanding of industrialization, colonization and the stunted growth of many developing nations. Industrialization was the engine that propelled current world leaders to powerful positions in the international community. In order to fuel urbanization, manufacturing and the wholesale restructuring of society, the United States, Japan and much of Europe burned fossil fuels at an astonishing rate. The first and second industrial revolutions brought these countries to the forefront of global politics. During this period, these same

countries subjugated indigenous populations across multiple continents, pillaged lands for natural resources and built the foundations of their modern wealth. While a small number of these colonies emerged and flourished following decolonization, there is a strong correlation between which indigenous populations in Latin America, Africa and Asia were colonized and which countries continue to struggle with economic development today (Acemoğlu and Heldring 2017). Essential political and economic institutions were severely hindered by decades-long colonial occupation (Heldring and Robinson 2012). After most colonies gained independence in the mid-twentieth century, many former colonizers maintained some level of control through sporadic coup d'etats, interventions and neocolonialism, the process by which "...foreign capital is used for the exploitation rather than for the development of the less developed parts of the world" (Nkrumah 1965). Now, formerly-colonized countries are industrializing and modernizing, relying primarily on the same readily-available, cheap fossil fuels that developed nations once used. Simultaneously, the world has realized the severity of our climate crisis.

It is important that all CMP proposals are grounded in the basic understanding of this historical economic inequality. Developing countries have a right to industrialize like all developed countries once did. Developed countries, in turn, must recognize that their wealth was built on the backs of colonial resource and labor exploitation. They have a responsibility to aid developing countries throughout the renewable energy transition. Additionally, developed countries must actively work to reform neocolonial policies and eradicate its legacy. The independence and autonomy of countries receiving aid is paramount. Luckily, most developing countries are ready for a renewable energy revolution. There should be no tension between the goals of developed nations and the goals of developing nations: developed nations benefit from

reduced emissions and developing nations benefit from sustainable energy infrastructure. With an ideal CMP, everyone wins.

Political will is the main obstacle to a CMP. Convincing countries to implement a CMP, either through domestic or international politics, will be a challenging enterprise. Using tax dollars to fund large infrastructure projects in other nations is a generally unpopular idea, especially when domestic projects go unfunded. Additionally, India and China are two of the largest economies in the world, so even though it is imperative to help them rapidly transform their infrastructure, mass foreign aid to these countries might raise eyebrows. For much of the West, China is considered a geo-political rival, a reality that could further complicate a potential CMP. The Paris Agreement included a clause with a stated goal similar to the CMP, but it was toothless (United Nations 2015). Developed countries who agreed to contribute to the fund were able to determine their own commitments, and there was no mechanism to punish countries who did not contribute.

There is also a perception that foreign aid, particularly aid to developing countries, is stolen or not used for its intended purpose. While there is a modicum of truth to this, aid is generally more successful than not. Politicians and the public often grossly overestimate the amount of aid that is wasted (Kenny 2017). Still, safeguards would need to be devised, as they are in all foreign aid missions, to protect from egregious corruption. Furthermore, in order to avoid repeating past mistakes, developed nations who contribute to a CMP have to strike a balance between results and control. Recipients of the aid must invest in renewable energy and infrastructure, but they must also be allowed to tailor solutions to their individual problems.

Ultimately, the CMP is a big, bold idea. In these times of imminent climate crisis, the

world needs big, bold ideas. There is no more room for half-measures or moderation. If the scientists are to be believed, climate change must be dealt with right now. Engaging the largest emerging energy markets before they become too deeply connected and reliant on fossil fuels is one essential step. The Paris Agreement has shown that international cooperation in this manner is a real possibility, although the scale must be expanded to address the full scope of the climate crisis. Additionally, while a CMP would be most effectively implemented within a broad international coalition, a small group of dedicated, wealthy nations could also accomplish some of the CMP's goals. It's far past time for radical actions to fight climate change. The world needs big ideas. The world needs the Climate Marshall Plan.

The Global Implications of Changing American Trade Policy

American trade policy is undeniably in a period of significant change following the 2016 presidential election. The election of Donald Trump as President of the United States and the strong performance of Senator Bernie Sanders in the Democratic primaries demonstrated the end of a long tradition of bipartisan consensus in favor of free trade in Washington DC. Both Trump and Sanders made trade centerpieces of their campaigns, railing against ratification of the Trans-Pacific Partnership (TPP) and criticizing existing free-trade agreements. Trump went as far as calling the TPP "a continuing rape of our country," and describing the North American Free Trade Agreement (NAFTA) as "the worst trade deal maybe ever signed anywhere but certainly ever signed in this country." Even after taking office, President Trump has not walked back the criticisms of free trade agreements he made during the campaign. He has already fulfilled his

campaign promises to withdraw the United States from the TPP and to raise tariffs on countries

that have a history of manipulating their currency to gain advantages in trade. Additionally, he

has made significant progress on his promise to renegotiate NAFTA, as the United States,

Canada, and Mexico reached an informal agreement in October on a replacement deal called the

United States-Mexico-Canada Agreement (USMCA). President Trump's significant changes to

American trade policies will undoubtedly have a lasting effect on the global economy. This

paper will explore the factors that led to the collapse of the bipartisan American consensus in

favor of free trade and discuss the implications of the rejection of this consensus on the world.

The bipartisan American consensus in favor of free trade emerged in the aftermath of

World War II largely in response to the economic effects of the Smoot-Hawley tariff,

consideration of the geopolitical implications of tariffs, and the realization of gains from reduced

tariffs. The first significant American reform that laid the groundwork for freer trade occurred

during the Great Depression in response to the Smoot-Hawley tariff. In 1930, a Republican-

controlled Congress implemented the Smoot-Hawley Tariff, which raised tariffs to their highest

level in 100 years in an attempt to protect struggling American industry from foreign

competition. However, the tariff proved to be a colossal failure as America's trading partners

responded by implementing their own retaliatory tariffs, effectively reducing American imports

and exports by almost two-thirds. Two years after taking office, Franklin D. Roosevelt responded

to the ineffectiveness of this tariff by signing into law the Reciprocal Trade Agreements Act

(RTAA), which "allowed the president to negotiate tariff-reduction agreements with other

countries without obtaining Congressional approval." This piece of legislation allowed the

United States to enter numerous bilateral trade agreements in the late 1930s and eventually the

General Agreement on Tariffs and Trade (GATT) in the postwar period. The American decision to join GATT, the world's first multilateral trade agreement attempting to reduce worldwide tariffs, was largely inspired by Democratic Secretary of State Cordell Hull, who viewed high tariffs as geopolitical barriers to international peace. While GATT saw initial resistance from some Republicans, by the early 1950s, both parties had generally accepted free trade as a way to open new markets to American businesses and incorporate other nations into a capitalist world. This emerging bipartisan consensus in favor of free trade was only solidified in the 1970s and 1980s as global trade grew from $332 billion in 1970 to $3.7 trillion by 1993, boosting worldwide economic growth.

The long-standing American bipartisan consensus began showing cracks in the debate over the ratification of NAFTA in the early 1990s. This agreement between the United States, Canada, and Mexico intended to establish a vast free trade zone among the three countries that would allow each country to better specialize in the economic activities in which it had a comparative advantage. Proponents of NAFTA, such as President Bill Clinton, argued that it would lead to lower prices for American consumers and produce "good jobs, rewarding careers, [and] broadened horizons for middle class Americans." However, almost all major American labor unions rallied against the ratification of NAFTA, expressing concerns that it would lead to the loss of numerous American manufacturing jobs. Additionally, Ross Perot, the Reform Party nominee in the 1992 presidential election, famously told voters that should the United States ratify NAFTA, they would hear a "giant sucking sound as the remainder of our manufacturing jobs get pulled across our Southern border." While NAFTA was ultimately ratified by Congress with widespread Republican support and signed by Democratic President Clinton, it was not

without a political battle uncharacteristic of previous American attempts to expand free trade. This newly emerging anti-free trade movement continued to gain steam even as President Clinton forged ahead with a free trade agenda that included joining the World Trade Organization (WTO). The WTO served as a replacement for GATT that looked to break down non-tariff barriers to trade, as GATT had largely already reduced most tariffs across the globe. Clinton's decision to join the WTO prompted enormous protests from a coalition of union members, environmentalists, and consumer rights advocates frustrated with the effects of free trade on jobs, wages, and the environment.

In many ways, the election of Donald Trump as President of the United States is a manifestation of the expansion of the anti-free trade coalition that began to emerge in the late 1990s. While significant portions of the Democratic Party continued to remain skeptical of free trade agreements (specifically those concerned about labor and environmental issues), they were joined in this skepticism by an increasing number of Republicans following the Great Recession. Republican support for free trade agreements cratered from 57% in 2009 to just 29% in October of 2016 as concerns over globalization took hold within the party. With expanded support among Republicans, the coalition of anti-free traders demonstrated their increased political strength in the battle over the TPP. This trade agreement, negotiated under the second Bush administration and the Obama administration, attempted to continue to break down barriers to trade by establishing a free trade zone consisting of Pacific Rim nations in North America, South America, Asia, and Oceania. However, it failed to gain ratification in the Senate because it drew opposition from a coalition that included an ideologically diverse group of senators ranging from Ted Cruz (R-TX) to Elizabeth Warren (D-MA). The 2016 election continued to demonstrate the

rising strength of the anti-free trade movement, as Donald Trump's anti-free trade message resonated in important Midwestern presidential battleground states like Iowa, Pennsylvania, Ohio, Michigan, and Wisconsin. Protectionist interests loom large in the Midwest, where manufacturing has traditionally played a prominent role in the economy. Ultimately, the election of Trump, as well as his subsequent implementation of tariffs and additional barriers to trade, represent the rising power of the American anti-free trade movement, and the death of an already-fractured bipartisan trade consensus.

The impacts of the changes that have occurred within America regarding trade policy will be felt beyond our borders. Because America is the world's largest economy, changes in its trade policy will play a significant role in changing global trade policy. Just as other countries responded to the Smoot-Hawley tariff with their own retaliatory tariffs during the Great Depression, the implementation of additional barriers to trade by the Trump Administration risks retaliatory action by other countries. This risk has already begun to materialize, as China has responded to America's implementation of a 10% tariff on $200 billion of Chinese goods by implementing their own tariffs on $60 billion of American goods. While President Trump hopes to secure concessions from China and other nations that will provide the United States with fairer terms of trade, most economists suggest that an escalating global trade war could have significant negative economic implications. Even a minor global trade war in which worldwide tariffs rise by 10% would reduce the GDP of most countries by 1% to 4.5%. However, even if no global trade war emerges from America's new willingness to utilize strategic trade policy, the Trump administration has likely ushered in a worldwide shift away from the multilateral trade agreements that dominated the latter half of the 20th century towards more bilateral trade

agreements. With America's rejection of the TPP, the era of the giant free-trade zone consisting of dozens of nations may be coming to an end. Concerns over globalization and unfair terms of trade seem primed to move the world back towards a global trade structure consisting of many small bilateral trade agreements rather than a few large multilateral ones.

In conclusion, the post-World War II bipartisan American consensus in favor of free trade has collapsed. An anti-free trade movement that began largely in opposition to the ratification of NAFTA in the 1990s has continued to gain strength following the Great Recession. The failure of the Senate to ratify the TPP and Donald Trump's victory in the 2016 presidential election demonstrate the growing political clout of this movement. As the United States begins to change the ways in which it conducts trade by implementing additional trade barriers and threatening withdrawal from multilateral agreements, global trade policy will inevitably begin to change as well. We can expect to see a future global trade structure that consists of many bilateral trade agreements between nations rather than a handful of multilateral agreements.

Brexit: European Historical Legacy and its Democratic Implications

On June 23, 2016 the United Kingdom voted to leave the European Union in a referendum colloquially called Brexit. It's been more than two years since the people of the UK voted in this historic referendum, and re-evaluating what happened is pertinent when trying to understand the extent to which democracy works. This referendum not only challenged the international liberal order but also continues to raise questions about the institution of democracy and its fundamental principles of one person one vote.

To understand the origins of the European Union it is imperative to understand the atmosphere under which it was created. In the years preceding WWII, with the dilution of power in a multipolar world, European nations were plagued by multilateral conflicts in which death tolls were heightened by the bettering of technological capacities. Thus, Europe felt a responsibility in the years following WWII to prevent further warfare at all costs, coming to the conclusion that economic interdependence may allow for more pragmatic cost-benefit analyses than those that caused the imperialistic wars of their past.

The steps to reach this goal are highlighted by the Schuman Declaration of 1950 which included the creation of a European Coal and Steel Community (ECSC). (Anonymous, 2016) The chief goal of the Declaration was to create interdependence between France and Germany in order to not only prevent war but to make it an impossibility. The Declaration itself stated, "the pooling of coal and steel production... will change the destinies of those regions which have long been devoted to the manufacture of munitions of war, of which they have been the most constant victims." The following decades are of prosperity and increased trade, as "....figures suggest an increase of trade both within the Community, as well as with non-member states in Europe and other parts of the world, contributing to massive economic expansion..." (Hudson, 2016).

Then, as the Cold War began between the United States and USSR, there was an atmosphere of tension in Europe. Thus, in 1957, France, West Germany, Italy, the Netherlands, Belgium, and Luxembourg signed a treaty in Rome establishing the European Economic Community (EEC) to strengthen their economic interdependence and prevent potential war. Through the establishment of the ECC, trade barriers diminished eventual movement of labor and capital, as well as common regulations. Noticeably Britain, at the inception of the ECC, declined its invitation and opted to join the European Free Trade association instead.

The ECC and ECSC were the predecessors of the current European Union, officially created in 1993 with the ratification of the Maastricht Treaty. The treaty included provisions for a common currency, a common bank, an organized parliament, and a common defense. There was debate in Britain about its ratification, as highlighted by discussion in the House of Lords on December 17, 1993. Many opposed ratifying the treaty on the grounds that Britain would lose its sovereignty. Others, such as the Baroness of Elles, shared the view that,

"There is no option for Britain now to go it alone in an unstable world and raise barriers with our most important trading partners. The Acts of Parliament... acknowledged the transfer of

sovereignty on some issues to a system of co-decision with other member states, and that requires and demands that negotiators on behalf of Britain need the strength and support of a majority of Parliament behind them."(Hansard, 1993).

The debate among the elite in 1993 foreshadows the months leading up to the most recent referendum, which centered around whether it was time for the United Kingdom to leave the European Union.

In June 2016, after twenty-three years of membership, the people of the United Kingdom once again were in a debate over their futures. Issues of economic growth, regulations, migration, and health care were at the forefront of the debate, in place of defense. There were two broad categories of political stance: 1) the remainers, campaigning and voting to remain in the EU, and 2) the Brexiteers, campaigning and voting to leave the EU.

The Remainers' campaign premised itself on the notion that economic interdependence helps the United Kingdom and argued that the EU allows for comprehensive international trade agreements. They emphasized the importance of these trade agreements to job growth. For example, "About 31 million jobs in Europe depend, directly or indirectly, on the EU and its Member States' ability to trade. In other words, EU external trade concerns almost one in every seven jobs in Europe, " (Salam and Andre, 2017). Often times the remainers are portrayed as pro free trade and free cross-border movement. However, on some occasions, they exaggerate the importance of free trade in preventing war, the decreased price of goods, and job creation. For example, a claim made by Alan Johnson,"Two thirds of British jobs in manufacturing are dependent on demand from Europe" was based on outdated statistics. Furthermore, their free movement campaign often underscores the importance of UK youth studying abroad in Europe, and being able to find work in other countries. The remain campaign may have overemphasized the success of the European Union, while the Leave campaign overemphasized its determinants.

In sum, the leave campaign message was, "to take back control." They sought to regain control of borders, trade, immigration, and healthcare. The fear of incoming migrants from Eastern Europe and Turkey (if it was accepted as a member of the Union) underscored the leave campaign. This was a fear exaggerated by media ads and commentators. Take for instance an ad stating, "Albania, Macedonia, Montenegro, Serbia, and Turkey are joining the the EU. Seriously. Vote Leave,". (BBC 2018) That claim that is objectively false. None of these nations had immediate plans to join the union. The fear of immigration is extensively studied, oftentimes

better understood when juxtaposed with a scarcity of adequate housing and ever-depleting services. (Hatton, Williamson, 2005). The leave campaign also stated that extensive trade regulations hinder economic growth—fees to the EU would be more useful domestically. Public opinion favored funding services such as the National Health Service. The NHS was a popular service among Britons and its role is highlighted by its presence on the side of red buses, "We send the EU 350 million a week, let's fund our NHS instead." Implicit in that assertion was the belief of retracting United Kingdom membership to allow the poorly funded NHS to offer better treatment and wages to Britons.

In all, the exit from the European Union cannot be simply framed as leaving or remaining. The European Union is a complex system, integrating many aspects of government into a common standard. There are three major categories that separately define and interpret what Brexit means; a Hard Brexit, the Canadian route, and the Norway option. A Hard Brexit means that the UK unambiguously and immediately leaves all parts of the EU and revisits deals to redress each issue. For example, the UK would leave the single market and redresse trade and tariff policies in each sector, with each partner country if need be. A subcategory of a Hard Brexit is the No Deal Brexit or simply Britain's leaving the EU without having addressed or reached a "deal" with the European Union on trade, services, migration, etc. The Canada option, promoted by a Brexiteer and the UK's minister in exiting the EU, lays out a pathway to complete an eventual, total exit from all aspects of the EU. "U.K.'s Brexit journey begins in *Brussels* (the status quo, EU membership), transitions through *Norway* (the U.K. retains access to the Single Market and Customs Union) and ends up in *Canada* (the U.K. sets its own course and maintains access to EU markets, while avoiding the EU's most onerous requirements for doing so)" (Rediker, 2018). Many criticize this as an unreasonable fantasy. The Norway option is a type of Brexit in which the UK is not an official member of the E.U., but still accesses many of the European Union features and abides by many of its policies. To summarize, the "*Norway*" model accepts EU law as the starting point for the future relationship. Under this model, the U.K., having renounced its EU membership, would nonetheless be allowed continued access to the European Single Market and Customs Union. However, it would be required to accept many of the most politically controversial strictures of the EU, including, crucially, the "four freedoms": free movement of goods, people, services, and capital across borders. (Rediker, 2018)"

Brexit brings up the idea of democracy having a redo button. In the US this "redo" may be the midterms or presidential elections every four years, but these elections are founded on term limits, where Brexit was not. For example, President Herbert Hoover lead the United States at the beginning of the Depression and was voted out after one term, replaced by President Roosevelt. The Brexit referendum was framed as allowing the people to decide if the UK should abandon the EU, but as discussed, did not take into account several complexities. Additionally, its ballot may have been too simplistic. People used their voice to prove they wanted to leave the European Union. However, each had different interpretations. Also, Brexit provides a unique case about the extent to which democracy is a viable form of government. It brings into question the role of propaganda and misinformation in campaigns, highlighting how these tools may create unrealistic notions about outcomes like an implausible or fallacious "Brexit".

One of the most pertinent issues with a second referendum is who would be motivated to participate, as "Different divisions: between age cohorts, social groups and … territories of the UK, all have an impact on the way in which the overall vote is perceived" (Blick, n.d). Many would argue that a second referendum is the only democratic way out in the aftermath of a confusing campaign. However, it is still unknown who will choose to be politically active in the vote of the second referendum.

In conclusion, Brexit is continually testing the limits of democracy and still has many questions to answer. It has highlighted why misinformation may be a threat but also has emphasized why voting may not be adequate, but *educated* voting might be. It helps us understand in which instances the general public should have a voice. Furthermore, it suggests that informed consensus formation and thorough explanation of outcomes, instead of two-word ballots (i.e leave or remain) may allow for more fruitful outcomes in the future. Brexit has taught us many lessons, most importantly about how fragile democracy can be.

National Security and Democratic Liberty in the Information Age

Technology has proved to be a double-edged sword in the hands of the American government. On one hand is the infringement of individual liberty, while on the other is the

reasonable concern for public safety. In the post-September 11th era, the American government

has engaged in policies authorizing mass surveillance and the collection of civilian data. While

these policies claim to strengthen national security and protect American citizens from further

attacks, they simultaneously infringe on the very rights and values cherished by the country's

citizens. The right to privacy protected by the Fourth Amendment has been continually

dissipated through increasingly aggressive governmental surveillance, and will continue to as

long as laws regarding national security remain paramount to those protecting individual liberty.

The Fourth Amendment states that Americans have the right to "be secure in their

persons, houses, papers, and effects, against unreasonable searches and seizures". However, this

amendment has been rendered meaningless through American jurisprudence, and especially now

in relation to new technology. The capabilities of technology in the hands of a massive national

bureaucracy became evident in the 1967 United States Supreme Court case *of Katz V. United*

States, where law enforcement used an electronic device to record and listen to Katz private

phone calls in a telephone booth. After its verdict declaring the search unconstitutional, the

Fourth Amendment has been suggested to extend to include the right to privacy with one's

intangible property (Katz v. United States 1967). However, with the increasing threats to national

security, Americans' Fourth Amendment right has been left on the back burner. Violating

citizens' privacy and utilizing data largely as they please, even going as far to demonize those

that attempt to speak out against extra-legal state policies.

In the post-September 11 era, the government has created well-liked laws that strengthen

America's national security in order to avoid another deadly terrorist attack. After such a tragic

event, laws were passed with ease and mutual agreement as citizens were willing to give up

some of their own civil liberties for the security of their country. In fact, Americans' frequently favor protection. In 2010, a study revealed that 47 percent of Americans think the government has "not gone far enough to adequately protect the country," while 32 percent think the opposite that "they have gone too far in restricting the average person's civil liberties (Doherty)".

However, the laws created are far from perfect. The Patriot Act, for example, which was prompted immediately after September 11, violates privacy by giving the government the power to surveil their internet and phone communications (Patriot Act 2001). The act itself aims to reduce terrorist attacks by surveilling possible suspects, but individual liberty violations have arisen due to surveillance that goes beyond just "possible suspects (Lind and Otenyo)." Furthermore, the Patriot Act was not the first instance of mass surveillance; in fact, Project Echelon surfaced in the 1960's as one of the first government surveillance type of programs created Echelon works throughout the world as a vast network of technology-based spies; essentially, the project surveils each other's citizens daily through electronic signals. "Some sources claim that Echelon sifts through 90 percent of all Internet-based traffic (Lind and Otenyo)." In 2013, former CIA employee, Edward Snowden, confirmed these sources when he leaked classified information from the NSA, revealing to Americans the power of the government and frailty of the fourth amendment. Snowden, among other whistleblowers such as Julian Assange and Mark Klein, made Americans aware of the magnitude of matters such as the Patriot Act and Project Echelon. The information he leaked included both collections of telephone records and collections of data via media such as Facebook and Google, among other materials (Gellman and Poitras). For example, in 2013, Verizon customers were targeted in a top-secret court order requiring the company to hand over all information on its users. For a

specified three-month period, the FBI collected information such as "location data, call duration, unique identifiers, and the time and duration of all calls (Greenwald)". Debates ensued as a response regarding whether Snowden was either a patriot or a traitor to his country. But regardless of the differing sentiments on the actions of Snowden, what he did exposed Americans' to the capabilities of their government. In response to Snowden, the U.S.A. Freedom Act was passed in June of 2015, essentially revising the government's ability to collect any and all data authorized under the Patriot Act, as it had done before. The data handed over now is required to be approved by the Foreign Intelligence Surveillance Court to pose "reasonable, articulable suspicion" that it is linked to terrorism (Savage).

Although new laws such as the U.S.A. Freedom Act aim to protect individual's private information, a question comes into play as to what is really considered "private". Essentially, today's society has morphed into a massive record system and most of people's records are stored throughout third party system's that are not protected by the government (Solove). These third-party systems, commonly referred to as private sectors, include: Google, Facebook, Verizon, AT&T, among countless others. When a person creates an account with a company such as Google, they are agreeing to allow the company access to information they may consider private. The words "privacy" and "internet" are then almost oxymoronic in this sense because in order to create an account some element of privacy must be sacrificed. The government can then easily get their hands-on data stored on the internet through subpoenas and court orders. Although whether or not to disclose the data is up to the particular private sector, they are more often than not willing to accept money in exchange for data (Solove).

The Fourth Amendment has essentially become lost in an increasingly technological

society; as one's privacy of data and electronic communication can sometimes be outright false. Upon agreeing to the terms and conditions of a company, Americans willingly forfeit some extent of their private data. Due to Snowden's revelations warrantless data searches by the government are no longer permissible, but the searches themselves have not ended. Instead, they have taken another form; and their future depends on government regulation of the private sector. Nonetheless, Americans' still favor national security over individual liberty, prompting private sectors to work concertedly with the government. On one hand, the government collection of data leaves American civilians vulnerable to the misuse of their private information; while on the other hand leaves them better protected from threats to national security. The collection of records can assist the government in tracking down fraud, espionage, and terrorist threats, among other activities, but can also be the beginning of a totalitarian state, the dissipation of democratic activities, and the bureaucratic misuse of information (Solove). The future of the Fourth Amendment appears bleak with an American penchant for protection; and it is likely the Fourth Amendment will continue to dissipate.

The Unconventional Role and Rhetoric of the Modern Presidency

A positive byproduct of a democratic political institution is the inherent power of choice. Embedded within a democracy is the election of the President—people have a choice in who becomes the leader of their nation. That being said, however, the U.S. Constitution—and any other work of democratic law—does not lay out the type of person the President must be, although in the U.S. there are specific qualifications, such as being a "natural born citizen, or a citizen of the United States"(Staff 2018). The character, personality, and values of the President are part of the presidential package democratic constituents choose from. The idea of what type

of person the President should be has been greatly prominent with the 2016 elections of U.S. President Donald Trump and Philippines' President Rodrigo Duerte. Both are unconventional Presidents as Trump is new to the political world and both have outspoken personalities. Many question if they embody the true meaning of a President, as Trump is compared to all past Presidents, mostly who all had political and/or military experience. Political and military experience is something not explicitly required by a President, but has been on the resumes of all past Presidents one way or another, therefore making it like an expectation. Thus, Trump and Duerte may change the dynamic of the office of the Presidency and reshape how people view one as "presidential".

The victory of President Trump in the 2016 election shook the nation. It was a battle between veteran and amateur, as the Democratic party candidate Hillary Clinton had a resume packed full of political experience. Many knew her for her role as First Lady under her husband Bill Clinton's reign as President from 1993-2001 and as Secretary of State under President Obama, but she was also "the first American first lady to ever win a public office seat" (A&E 2018) when she was elected to the U.S. Senate in 2001. On the other hand, Donald Trump was more known for his accolades as a businessman and reality star, owning many hotels and casinos from the Plaza Hotel at the Trump Taj Mahal Casino to Trump Towers. He even starred in his own show, 'The Apprentice' (Famous People 2018). His prior political experience was a topic of many critics, as Trump never held a government position. However, this was not an obstacle on his road to success. Without experience, though, many wonder what state the military will be in and how he will handle political projects while in office.

In a government system where politicians rule, no one expected Trump to make it through the race, nevertheless be victorious in the end. As a Republican candidate, he stood for many policies such as "lower taxes, stronger law enforcement, cutting government regulation and eliminating red tape". (Penn 2018) His sound bites like "Build a Wall" and "Make America Great Again" were focal parts of his campaigning strategy, expressing his desire to change our immigration system and restore America's greatness. Trump's persona of having a boisterous, outspoken attitude and personality caused widespread divisions within society, leaving people to conclude he was corrupt and unprofessional, or that he was *the* breath of fresh air which politics and the Presidency needed. This is shown through opinion polls, as "thirty-six percent of U.S. adults have a positive image of Donald Trump "as a person," while 55% have a negative opinion

of him"(Jones 2018). His supporters liked how Trump is not the typical, quintessential politician, but a businessman, which, the thinking goes, could be a new quality that can benefit the economy and the country. His focus on the everyday American and his unfiltered words caused many to relate to and support him, as they felt it showed he could not be controlled by any establishment. On the other hand, those who take a negative view of him are backed by evidence of Trump making many sexual comments many years prior, his uncomfortable comments about his daughter Ivanka, and the election scandal with Russia, where Russia allegedly aided his presidential campaign and victory. In all, Trump's political inexperience coupled with his unfiltered tone led him to be open to criticism, but also enabled his to rise to power.

Rodrigo Duerte rose to power when he became President of the Philippines in May 2016. He centered his campaign around being "anti-establishment" and wanting to revive the nation. Unlike Trump, Duerte had prior political experience where he served as Mayor of the city of Davao. During his 20 years as Mayor, and now as President, his mission is to combat the war on drugs and crime that is suffocating the country. His efforts as Mayor turned "Davao from the country's murder capital to one of its safest cities" (Silva 2017). While his goals might be admirable, the tactics to carry them out are not. Duerte has been accused of hiring and sending hitmen to kill alleged drug dealers, addicts, and criminals. He uses violence as a way to promote safety—there have been an estimated 7,000 deaths since his start in office (Silva 2017). However, he rose to and continues to stay in power due to the new light he brings to politics. By being anti-government and "being well known known for his outrageous statements and unfiltered attacks on his rivals" (BBC 2018). Duterte was able to win the votes of the everyday people, similar to Trump. Past Philippine Presidents came from or are a part of extreme wealth and high class, unlike Duerte, who does not identify with the elite, making him liked by the common man. Regardless of him criticizing other religions, calling God "stupid", and other comments, Duerte was what Filipinos felt the Presidency needed.[7]

Since the start of the American Presidency with George Washington, having political and/or military experience has been precedent for those who reign in office. For example, before becoming President, "Martin Van Buren spent 31 years in public office."(Crockett 2017). Having such prior experience led people to believe these candidates and future Presidents were fit for the job as Commander in Chief and political power figure. However, not every President

came into the job with a plethora of years as a politician, senator, or war fighter. Abraham Lincoln, who was a highly praised President for passing the 13th Amendment and preserving the Union, only served one term in Congress from 1847-1849 prior to the Presidency (Divine 2013). Although he was a volunteer for Illinois militia, he never saw combat. Thus, with his little experience, he still went on to be one of the most well-respected Presidents who successfully commanded an army. What led Lincoln to winning the presidency was, partially, his character. People respected how he was committed to taking a stance on different issues and finding solutions (Divine 2013). Ulysses Grant, who was an accomplished Civil War general, won the office without any political experience either (Murse). Therefore, using political and military experiences as indicators of capability for Presidents is not always reliable. It is understandable to think that someone with a lot of military experience will be able to be a strong Commander in Chief, just as much as someone with political experience will be able to handle lawmaking, ambassador meetings, etc. However, experience does not always yield success. Richard Nixon was a WWII veteran and went on to "defeat a five-term Democratic incumbent to represent his California district in the U.S. House of Representatives" (History) in 1946. However, even with his immense experience, he still went on to be involved in the controversial Watergate scandal that led him to leave office; a scandal that an experienced politician should know to avoid.

Trump and Duerte's roles in the Presidency as a democratic construct have great implications for the future. They can reshape the Presidency, changing it to an office not centered around the typical politician that many people feel their respected countries have been plagued by for years. Their actions during their term(s) can impact whether future candidates who have similar inexperience/personalities as them can be elected. Duerte still has high approval ratings among his people, regardless of the alleged violence he uses, due to the results he is achieving in his war on drugs and crime. One could argue that his use of violence is unacceptable and a more humane tactic could be implemented, however, considering his approval among his constituents, who's to say that those policies are unpopular? Someone similar could be elected in the future. Comparably, Trump has had a rollercoaster of approval ratings. His outspokenness and unfiltered speech still seems to be working against him. Yet, as one could see from his successful run for the Presidency, anything can happen in politics, so whether a future Trump-like candidate could be elected in the future is not clearly known, but could happen. Both can change how people view what is deemed "Presidential". Although there

needs to be a form of class and respect as Presidents are true representations of their countries, being Presidential can change to mean simply leading a country to prosperity, not being chocked full of political and military experience. As with the ever changing opinion of society, defining the type of person the President should be may change in future years. However, in the meantime, Trump and Duerte have a chance to make their own definition.

Gun Laws and Regulations Throughout the World

Around the world, the debate over gun policies has become increasingly prominent in recent years. While "mass public shootings are roughly as common as they were in the 1980s and '90s," numerous countries are in the process of adjusting their gun policies due to the increasing deadliness of these shootings. Recent studies found that "before 2012, the five-year moving average never exceeded 20 victims shot (per 100 million Americans). Since then, the five-year moving average rate has been above 20 every year but one (201rs4)." Different nations have adopted different solutions in order to help decrease rising fatalities resulting from mass shootings. Perhaps the most popular solution has been to adopt stricter gun laws. While lawmakers in the United States have been reluctant to limit the types of weapons and ammunition available for purchase by American citizens, German and Australian lawmakers have responded to mass shootings in their countries by implementing strict limitations on firearm ownership. Ultimately, the strict gun laws implemented by the German and Australian governments have proven to be more effective than American gun policy.

Due to the United States' unique cultural and constitutional history, gun control policy is perhaps an even more controversial issue for Americans than those in other nations. The second amendment protects the right of the people to keep and bear arms. Because of this amendment,

regulating gun laws in the United States has become much more complicated. As a result, not only does the United States have more guns than any other country in the world, it also has the most gun deaths in any other nation. Throughout history, there have been several cases that has shaped the Second Amendment. For instance, the Supreme Court case, *District of Columbia v. Heller*, incorporated the right to bear arms in 2008. This case "made it illegal to carry an unregistered firearm and prohibited the registration of handguns, though the chief of police could issue one-year licenses for handguns. The Code also contained provisions that required owners of lawfully registered firearms to keep them unloaded and disassembled or bound by a trigger lock or other similar device unless the firearms were located in a place of business or being used for legal recreational activities." However, based off of data, this attempted change has not been enough to prevent the amount of gun homicides from occurring.

Major changes began to develop as a result of the Sandy Hook school shooting in that occurred in 2012, killing twenty children between the ages of six and seven as well as six educators. Without a doubt, this was one of the worst mass shootings in United States history. As a result of this deadly shooting, "more than 100 state-level gun laws have passed since Sandy Hook, but every major attempt at federal legislation has failed, even as shootings with ever-higher body counts keep coming." For instance, The Manchin-Toomey Bill gained traction soon after Sandy Hook. This bill would have required background checks for all gun sales between private dealers. However, "after falling six votes short of the 60-vote threshold," those checks are only required for federally licensed gun dealers. President Donald Trump made it very clear that he was going to protect Second Amendment rights at all costs. Along with the president, the National Rifle Association (NRA) has had some say in regulating gun laws as

well. The NRA, an organization advocating for gun rights, is one of the most powerful special interest lobby groups in the US, with a substantial budget to influence members of Congress on gun policy. Taking everything in account, "...federal inaction on gun legislation has ultimately allowed the United States to continue to stand out as the nation with the highest frequency of mass shootings in the world."

The German system of gun control is among the most rigorous in Europe. Germany regulated their gun laws as a result of the 2002 Erfurt massacre. In 2002, "a 19-year-old expelled from his high school in Erfurt brought a semiautomatic pistol to the school and killed 16 people before killing himself." The German parliament responded by passing major revisions to weapons laws, including increasing the minimum age for acquiring a gun and requiring a psychological exam for people under twenty-five. It restricts the acquisition, possession, and carrying of firearms to those with a creditable need for a weapon. It bans "fully automatic weapons and severely restricts the acquisition of other types of weapons. Compulsory liability insurance is required for anyone who is licensed to carry firearms."

This change helped decrease the amount of death occurring because of firearms. According to research conducted by UNODC, in 2012, "there have only been 1.9 homicides by firearm per 1 million people in Germany. While, in the United States, there have been 29.7 homicides by firearm per 1 million people." Since the implementation of these more stringent gun laws, there has been a decreased amount of mass shootings and deaths by firearms in Germany. Research shows that "in 2009 when Winnenden happened, there were 179 crimes against life that involved guns being fired, compared to the 130 such crimes in 2015." It is clear that stricter gun laws have prevented mass shootings from happening frequently in Germany.

Australia's gun laws effectively changed after shooting massacres had occurred. April 28, 1996 is a day that Australians will never forget. That day, "35 people were killed by a gunman, Martin Bryant, wielding semi-automatic weapons at a former prison colony and tourist attraction in Tasmania, Australia." This act of violence disgusted Australians and forced the Australian government to make changes. As a result, this was the turning point for gun regulation in Australia. This event drove the Australian government to enact some of the most protracted gun laws in the world.

After they completely changed their gun laws, a mass shooting has not occurred ever since. In less than two weeks after the massacre, all six Australian states agreed to enact the same gun laws banning semi-automatic rifles and shotguns. They also made it more difficult for prospective gun owners and their weapons. Unlike the United States, self-protection is not a justifiable reason to own a gun. According to research, "...the numbers of Australia's mass shootings dropped from 11 in the decade before 1996, to one." Australia has the least amount of homicides by firearm in the world, ranking at 1.4 per million people. The statistics prove that stricter gun laws prevent deadly massacres from occurring.

The increased deadliness of mass shootings has forced many countries to reevaluate their gun policies in order to decrease the amount of deaths caused by these incidents. In the United States, some states have made efforts to change gun policies and regulations. However, little progress has been made at the national level. Due to this, the United States continues to lead the world in deaths due to firearms. Countries such as Germany and Australia have made adjustments to their gun policies in response to deadly mass shootings and have seen positive results. They have continued to be the lowest ranked countries when it comes to homicides

caused by firearms. The successes of Germany and Australia demonstrate that the best way to

decrease the amount of deaths caused by firearms is to enact stricter gun laws. Without doing so,

fatalities caused by mass shootings will only continue to rise.

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