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# TOWSON UNIVERSITY JOURNAL OF INTERNATIONAL AFFAIRS

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## LETTER FROM THE EDITORS

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Dear Readers,

We proudly present to you Volume LI, No. 1 of the *Towson University Journal of International Affairs*. This edition of the *Journal* includes three exceptional pieces of scholarship that each analyze a pressing issue facing the international community. In addition, the authors of these articles represent the diversity of individuals who publish their work in the *Journal*. The first article was written by two Towson University students and *Journal* members, the second by an International Affairs student and an Education professor from James Madison University, and the third by a Towson University professor in the Department of Political Science. These three articles represent the fact that the *Journal* receives submissions from authors all over the world and at differing stages of their academic careers. Each one of these articles focuses on a unique issue facing the international community, and in keeping with the mission of the *Journal*, the articles offer unique and well-constructed arguments pertaining to how international policymakers should handle these pressing issues.

First, Mackenzie E. Rice examines the prominence of masculinity within American nationalism and its influence on U.S. foreign policy in her article, “When Gendered Identities are National Identities: The Influence of Masculinity on American Foreign Policy.” In this unique analysis of American foreign policy, Rice demonstrates how a societal preference for and emphasis on masculinity has historically impacted both the rhetoric and outcome of various U.S. foreign policy decisions. Using the Cold War, the aftermath of 9/11, and the current administration as case studies, Rice demonstrates the impact of masculinity on the formation of both American national identity and foreign policy, offering a compelling and critical analysis of American culture and society in the process.

Second, in “The International Community’s Inaction Amidst the Rohingya’s Suffering,” Andrew M. Burchett and Amna Q. Rana offer a critical analysis of the ongoing Rohingya Muslim crisis in Myanmar and the various reasons for the international community’s apparent unwillingness to intervene in this humanitarian emergency. The authors highlight a number of systemic issues that have led to this international inaction and prolonged the brutal and horrific actions against the Rohingya. These factors include the history of non-intervention within the international community. However, the authors also argue that the mindset of the international community is currently shifting from one of non-intervention to that of a responsibility to protect. If such a shift is occurring, it is very possible that the international community will soon intervene to stop the Rohingya from being further massacred. Through this forward-looking analysis, Burchett and Rana offer an insightful perspective on an international crisis that rewards the thorough analysis that they have provided.

Finally, in “Thinking Strategically About North Korea,” Dr. Joseph R. Clark offers a summary of his remarks as the inaugural speaker for the Dr. Eric A. Belgrad Lecture Series. In his article, Dr. Clark weighs the policy options available to the U.S. in terms of dealing with North Korea’s nuclear weapons program. He effectively shows that with each option comes substantial risks, and he urges policymakers to think strategically about this issue and carefully evaluate the pros and cons of each option before making a definitive policy decision. In this manner, this article is not just related to North Korea; instead, it provides a lesson for all policymakers by encouraging them to think about the consequences of their decisions beforehand, especially considering the impact that such decisions have on the world. Finally, members of the *Towson University Journal of International Affairs* would like to extend their gratitude to Dr. Clark for his contribution to this issue as well as to the Dr. Eric A. Belgrad Speaker Series. The Speaker Series, in particular, would not have been possible without him.

The field of international relations is unique in that it is relevant to all citizens throughout the world. While some issues, ranging from Rohingya suffering to U.S.-North Korean diplomacy, illustrate particularly localized political developments, all members of the international community, through varying capacities, feel these issues’ effects. It is, therefore, the belief of our editing staff that the *Towson University Journal of International Affairs* offers a useful and easily-accessible platform for authors to disseminate information regarding some of the most pressing international political issues of our time. We hope that this issue will prove both educational and enjoyable to scholars and lay readers alike, as its contents are the product of arduous research, review, and editing.

Sincerely,  
Tim Bynion and Amna  
Rana, and Mackenzie E.  
Rice, Editors in Chief

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# When Gendered Identities are National Identities: The Influence of Masculinity on American Foreign Policy

Mackenzie E. Rice\*

***Abstract:** National identities are constructed through the process of ascribing a society's preferred attributes to the image of the state at large. In the United States, gender remains a prevailing construct that drives definitions of both individual and collective American identities. Societal preferences for masculinity frame a gendered depiction of the American identity, and subsequently shape foreign policy; as American political leaders design policies and champion rhetoric that serves to project masculinity to both allies and enemies abroad. The connection between foreign policy and masculinity, while often envisioned as "natural" or "intuitive" in traditional theories about international security and conflict, is in fact forged consciously, and in the case of the United States, predicated on gendered national identity preferences. Moreover, feminist analysis of past and present American foreign policy provides a deeper understanding of the true extent to which gendered identities have the ability to structure and define foreign policy discourse. This understanding is important, as all identities taken to extremes have the potential to be manipulated for political gain. Therefore, in the case of the United States, a comprehensive awareness of the interaction between national identity and foreign policy formation is imperative in order to maintain the ability to empirically evaluate foreign policy options.*

## I. Introduction

National identities are formed through the same socialization processes that shape the personal identities of individuals. As the American public makes decisions on the individual level about their identity preferences and personal image, these incremental decisions are aggregated to form an overarching national identity. Gender is one of the most salient social constructs in the United States of America, and it greatly influences the way in which the American people define themselves as a collective group and determine their national identity preferences. Dr. Anthony D. Smith of the London School of Economics defines national identity as "a measure of common culture and civic ideology, a set of common understandings and aspirations, sentiments and ideas that bind the population together in their homeland."<sup>1</sup> In the United States, these ideas of common culture, understanding, and ideology are constructed based on masculine values and characteristics. The American construction of national identity based on masculinity greatly influences the image of the United States that Americans wish to project on the international stage, as well as the preferred American foreign policy solutions to issues of national security arising from external threats.

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<sup>1</sup> Anthony D. Smith, *National Identity* (London: Penguin Press, 1991), 11.

The role of masculinity in American foreign policy can be discerned by examining the rhetoric used by politicians to frame policy positions in addition to actual policy execution. Foreign policy rhetoric is often used as a tool for expressing the state's international objectives and providing justification for them.<sup>2</sup> Rhetoric, by nature, is emotionally charged and provides a rationale for national objectives by grounding them deep in personal concepts such as national identity and community values. Therefore, to assess the presence of masculinity in past and present American foreign policy concerns, there is value in examining the rhetoric used by political officials as forum that expresses the motivations of foreign policy, as well as the implementation of policy itself. Furthermore, the United States' choice to use masculinized national identities as a driving force in foreign policy is particularly apparent when past and present foreign policy decisions are contrasted with relevant feminist analyses of the same issue or event, which illustrate strong alternative policy perspectives. The emergence of masculinity in foreign policy rhetoric and action is most pronounced when the United States is involved in a conflict that poses a credible external threat to national security. The two most notable occurrences of this phenomenon are the Cold War and the period following the 9/11 terrorist attacks, including both the war in Afghanistan and the war in Iraq. In addition, the United States is currently experiencing a magnification of masculinity in American foreign policy under the Trump Administration. These three eras of United States foreign policy serve as ideal case studies that illustrate the pervasive nature of masculinity in American national identity and the resulting implications for foreign policy.

## II. Constructing the National Gender

Before assessing the impacts of masculinity on American foreign policy, it is important to understand how gendered identities are formed, their defining attributes, and the policy implications when they are used on a national level. When individuals adopt certain traits and align themselves with various identity attributes, they are making implicit decisions about the way in which they wish to be represented and perceived. In the discipline of social psychology and gender studies, this phenomenon is known as gender-role preference, defined as "activities or traits that one would prefer to engage in or possess."<sup>3</sup> Applying the principles of gender preferences on a national level, national identities are similarly influenced by the ideals that the American public holds about gender, and the specific gender traits that Americans prefer as part of their collective identity.

Foundational scholarship in the field of gender studies frequently uses Bem's Sex Role Inventory (BSRI), developed by Dr. Sandra Bem in 1974, to measure individual self-selection of gender attributes.<sup>4</sup> The results of Bem's original study using the BSRI found twenty traits that were determined to be representative of masculinity because they were commonly selected as more desirable by men than by women. The masculine gender traits listed in this inventory include attributes such as assertive, dominant, forceful, aggressive, and strong.<sup>5</sup> By contrast, the BSRI also found a list of attributes such as sensitivity, sympathy, compassion, understanding, and warmth to be more feminine because they were significantly more desirable as self-identifiers to women than to men.<sup>6</sup> Societal conceptions

<sup>2</sup> Phillip Wander, "The Rhetoric of American Foreign Policy," *Quarterly Journal of Speech* 70, no. 4 (November 1984): 339.

<sup>3</sup> Anne Constantinople, "Masculinity-Femininity: An Exception to a Famous Dictum?" *Feminism & Psychology* 15, no. 4 (November 2005): 385.

<sup>4</sup> Kay M. Palan, Charles S. Areni, and Pamela Kiecker, "Reexamining Masculinity, Femininity, and Gender Identity Scales," *Marketing Letters* 10, no. 4 (1999): 365. <http://www.jstor.org/stable/40216548>.

<sup>5</sup> *Ibid.*, 365.

<sup>6</sup> *Ibid.*, 369.



about gender and its relationship to sex have certainly changed greatly since the development of the BSRI in 1974, and it is becoming ever more conventional to recognize “masculinity” as a concept distinct from the male sex, and “femininity” as a concept distinct from the female sex. Thus, traits of masculinity are not solely reserved for individuals of the male sex, and nor are the traits of femininity restricted to use solely by individuals of the female sex. However, the associations that the BSRI established between masculinity and traits of assertiveness, dominance, forcefulness, aggressiveness, and strength, and associations of femininity to traits of sympathy, compassion, understanding, and warmth, remain a valid analytical framework in the field of gender studies today.

Connecting these traditional attributes and roles of masculinity and femininity to the development of American national identity, a study recently published in *Psychology of Women Quarterly* found that both male and female respondents identified men and masculine attributes to be “more American” than women and feminine attributes.<sup>7</sup> Furthermore, 2017 survey results from the Pew Research Center report that more than half of Americans agree that society looks up to men who are “manly or masculine.”<sup>8</sup> In addition, a larger percentage of Americans agreed that society looks down on women who are “womanly or feminine” than men who are “manly or masculine.”<sup>9</sup> The survey also indicated evidence of how deeply gender preferences are ingrained and reinforced in American socialization processes by assessing the American public’s opinions about gender roles when raising children. While respondents overwhelmingly approved of encouraging girls to be like boys, they expressed significantly less approval of encouraging boys to be like girls.<sup>10</sup> These opinions about gender in the United States reveal not only a connection between American national identity and masculinity, but also a prevailing societal subordination of feminine attributes and behaviors to masculine ones.

These gendered preferences that lay at the foundation of American national identity form the basis of the national image that the United States strives to convey through foreign policy. As a result, foreign policy platforms of national leaders are designed to portray the United States as a tough, often aggressive, global power. The role of masculinity in American foreign policy became extremely salient at the conclusion of World War II. In the aftermath of World War II, as the United States emerged as a global leader in democratic governance, military capabilities, and economic strength, the state began to seek a “fatherly role” in the world order.<sup>11</sup> In addition, the development of a large standing military in the United States following the conclusion of World War II created a national glorification of American “men at war,” further promoting an idealized image of American masculinity, particularly with regard to conflict.<sup>12</sup> Since this formative time in the history of American national identity, the United States has continued to forge deep connections between masculinity, national image, and militarization. As a result, when the United States is faced with credible external threats to national security or ideology, which illicit increased levels of nationalism from the American public, policy-makers rely on national identity constructs to form and justify

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<sup>7</sup> Laura Van Berkel, Ludwin E. Molina, and Sahana Mukherjee, “Gender Asymmetry in the Construction of American National Identity,” *Psychology of Women Quarterly* 41, no. 3 (September 2017): 352.

<sup>8</sup> Kim Parker, Juliana Menasce Horowitz, and Renee Stepler, “Americans see society placing more of a premium on masculinity than on femininity,” Pew Research Center, December 5, 2017, accessed February 20, 2018, <http://www.pewsocialtrends.org/2017/12/05/americans-see-society-placing-more-of-a-premium-on-masculinity-than-on-femininity/>.

<sup>9</sup> Ibid.

<sup>10</sup> Claire Cain Miller, “Men and Women Say They’re More Different than Similar,” *The New York Times*, December 5, 2017, accessed February 20, 2018, <https://www.nytimes.com/2017/12/05/upshot/men-women-gender-bias-poll.html>.

<sup>11</sup> Laura Sjoberg, *Gendering Global Conflict* (New York, NY: Columbia University Press, 2013), 213.

<sup>12</sup> Rebecca A. Adelman, “Sold(i)ering Masculinity.” *Men and Masculinities* 11, no. 3 (April 2009): 261.

foreign policies that project the desired masculine attributes of American identity to enemies and allies abroad.

### III. Hegemonic Masculinity, World War II, and United States Foreign Policy

The use of masculinity during World War II bolstered the glorification of the United States military, contributed to the development of the American military industrial complex, and ultimately prompted the development of American hegemonic masculinity. Hegemonic masculinity is most succinctly defined by scholars R.W. Connell and James Messerschmidt as “the currently most honored way of being a man, it require(s) all other men to position themselves in relation to it, and it legitimate(s) the global subordination of women to men.”<sup>13</sup> The distinctive feature of hegemonic masculinity that differentiates it from other forms of gender ordering is that actors demonstrating hegemonic masculinity also assert dominance over other forms of subordinated masculinities. It is important to recognize that hegemonic masculinity is reflected in state foreign policy not because state leaders are predominantly male, but rather because institutional, organizational, and societal frameworks that are designed to reflect social preference of masculinity.<sup>14</sup> These practices of embedding culturally gendered notions in public institutions eventually results in a “common sense” ascription of masculinity to all things political, thereby setting a standard of hegemonic masculinity which is seldom questioned, and to which all policy is measured against. In the case of the United States, masculine national identity serves as the societal framework that validates the implicit associations between masculinity and foreign policy.

On an international level, states clearly demonstrate hegemonic masculinity when they engage in the processes of classifying or “othering” enemies perceived as threats to national security. Often when the United States is faced with an external security threat, the state impulsively embarks on a campaign to emasculate the enemy, or somehow mark the opposition’s masculinity as inferior to that of the American identity. During the Cold War, this tactic of hegemonic masculinity was used when the United States forged the association between communist sympathizers and homosexuality, in an attempt to make the enemy seem softer and less masculine.<sup>15</sup> This need to ascribe an inferior gendered identity to the enemy was exhibited during the response to the terrorist attacks of 9/11 through rhetoric that classified the terrorists as cowardly and deviant men, as well as the use of sexual humiliation to torture imprisoned terrorist suspects.<sup>16</sup> The persistent use of gender ordering and sexuality to define state enemies as lesser or to position them in opposition to the American identity is a definitive indication of the United States’ use of hegemonic masculinity in foreign policy.

Additionally, hegemonic masculinity is particularly salient to analysis of United States foreign policy because it can trigger policy responses that are characterized by hyper-masculinity. Ashis Nandy is thought to be the first scholar to clearly define the concept of and circumstances that give rise to “hyper-masculinity” in her study of colonialism. Nandy describes hyper-masculinity as, “reactionary masculinity that arises when agents of hegemonic masculinity feel threatened or undermined, thereby needing to inflate, exaggerate, or otherwise distort their traditional masculinity.”<sup>17</sup> Hyper-masculinity is most evident in the rhetoric that cloaks United States foreign policy initiatives as a mechanism of justifying and gaining public support for foreign policy initiatives. The two most recent instances of this

<sup>13</sup> R.W Connell and James W. Messerschmidt, “Hegemonic Masculinity: Rethinking the Concept,” *Gender & Society* 19, no. 6, December 2005, 832, DOI: 10.1177/0891243205278639.

<sup>14</sup> Laura Sjoberg, *Gendering Global Conflict*, 213.

<sup>15</sup> Michael Kimmel, *Manhood in America* (London: Oxford University Press, 2012): 170.

<sup>16</sup> Laura Shepherd, “Veiled references,” 26.

<sup>17</sup> Ashis Nandy, *The Intimate Enemy: The Psychology of Colonialism*. (Delhi: Oxford University Press, 1988).

phenomenon include the Cold War era of American foreign policy and the post-9/11 response to global terrorism.<sup>18</sup> Therefore, American foreign policy during these time periods serve as ideal case studies from which to assess the prevailing nature of masculinity in the foreign policy initiatives of the United States government, as well as the complementary gendered public rhetoric that accompanied these initiatives.

#### **IV. Alternative Perspectives: Feminist Foreign Policies and International Relations Theory**

The development of hegemonic masculinity in American national identity and political culture has cultivated a precedent for assuming that matters of foreign policy necessitate masculine approaches and policy prescriptions. However, the assumption that there is an implicit association between foreign policy and masculinity fails to consider other perspectives on issues such as security, negotiation, and conflict that do not fall within the framework of traditional masculinity and has the potential to create foreign policy blind spots. While masculine attributes and themes are valuable in motivating and implementing foreign policy, the masculine perspective is only representative of one school of thought. As an alternative analytical framework, feminist foreign policy and security studies scholarship recognized the role that gender plays in relationships between states and the foreign policy choices that states make. By doing so, feminist theories in these fields raise questions about why certain issues are privileged over others in a state's foreign policy decision-making framework and seek to challenge these norms.

Author and political science theorist Ann Tickner is credited as one of the founding authors of feminist international relations theory, which has paved the way for feminist scholarship in other areas including foreign policy and security studies. In her groundbreaking 1992 book *Gender in International Relations*, Tickner notes that international relations is one of the last fields of social science to embrace gender analysis, and claims that "the reason for this is not that the field is gender neutral, meaning that the introduction of gender is irrelevant... but that it is so thoroughly masculinized that the workings of these hierarchical gender relations are hidden."<sup>19</sup> Since the foundational work of Tickner, feminist foreign policy and feminist security studies have grown exponentially and continued to become increasingly diverse. Today, feminist perspectives on foreign policy and international relations include alternative frameworks for conceptualizing state relationships, methods of achieving state security, embracing the inclusion of feminine experiences of war and conflict, and analyses that advocate the importance of women in state-building and sustainable development. Each of these perspectives have applications to both past and present foreign policy case studies.

Valuable insight on the role of gendered national identities in foreign policy can be gained by contrasting traditional "masculinist" approaches to foreign policy concerns with feminist analysis of the same issue. In order to better comprehend the embodiment of masculinity in American foreign policy, this paper provides alternative feminist interpretations of three case studies of American foreign policy. The purpose of these comparisons is not to argue that one analytical lens is inherently better than the other, but rather to recognize the relationship between masculine and feminine foreign policy and to highlight their complementary nature. By drawing these connections, this analysis illustrates how American foreign policy decision is often unbalanced in favor of masculine frameworks,

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<sup>18</sup> Laura Sjoberg, *Gendering Global Conflict*, 89.

<sup>19</sup> Ann Tickner, *Gender in International Relations: Feminist Perspectives on Achieving Global Security* (New York, NY: Columbia University Press, 1992), 8-9.

due to the need for policymakers to appease the masculine-centric national identity preferences of the American population. Therefore, it is important to consider feminist perspectives on state security and foreign policy in order to gain a more comprehensive understanding of the extent to which masculinity has acted as a mobilizing, justifying, and legitimizing force in American foreign policy.

## V. United States Foreign Policy Case Studies

### *Setting Precedent: Masculinity and the Cold War*

Although masculinity has had a pervasive role throughout the history of United States' national identity, it became extremely pronounced as a foreign policy motivator during the Cold War. In the era of the Cold War, the United States faced the ideological threat of the rise of communism in the Soviet Union, which was thought to be an oppressive form of government that stood in opposition to traditional American values of freedom, capitalism, and democracy. This opposition caused Americans to pull inwards, exacerbating the importance of masculine attributes and ideals such as strength, resolve, and dominance in defining their collective national identity. As a result, the ideological threat was characterized as the antithesis of American identity; in this case, communism and communist sympathizers were emasculated. Furthermore, the emasculation of Soviet opposition and reaffirmation of a tough American masculinity was reinforced by the rhetoric and foreign policy initiatives of Cold War political leaders such as presidents John F. Kennedy and Ronald Reagan. Thus, the Cold War is a landmark case in the development of masculinity as a foreign policy motivator, as it established a political environment where the legitimacy of leadership was determined by gendered polarities of strength and weakness.<sup>20</sup>

Societal opposition to communism during the Cold War era produced gendered political polarization. During the early years of the Cold War, President John F. Kennedy stressed the importance of presenting a tough, masculine persona on the international stage; and maintained that a decline in rugged American masculinity at home would effectuate a decline in American military capability abroad.<sup>21</sup> As the Cold War wore on, an obsession with masculine toughness in foreign policy discourse emerged, which also rendered anything perceived soft or feminine as a threat to national security. However, communism in the era of the Cold War was associated with more than simply "softness." It was also associated with homosexuality, which was, at the time, an identity that was the antithesis of masculinity. During the 1950s and 1960s, mass media and literature in the United States developed an almost cautionary tale of "failed men" who turned into communists and homosexuals; "soft, spineless dupes of a foreign power who were incapable of standing up for themselves."<sup>22</sup> This example of gender-ordering illustrates how the American public often defines and constructs its collective national identity in opposition to external threats; gravitating towards the masculinization of the United States and the emasculation of its opponents. Furthermore, the use of gender and sexuality to characterize the threat of communist ideology during the Cold War is a clear example to the United States demonstrating hegemonic masculinity by engaging in cross-sectional gender ordering.

This gendered narrative of communism vs. democracy during the Cold War also greatly impacted the foreign policies pursued by the American government. To prevent the spread of communist ideology, American political leaders at the time believed they needed to

<sup>20</sup> Robert R. Dean, "Masculinity as Ideology: John F. Kennedy and the Domestic Politics of Foreign Policy," *Diplomatic History*, vol. 22, no. 1, 1998, 31.

<sup>21</sup> *Ibid*, 30.

<sup>22</sup> Michael Kimmel, *Manhood in America*, 170.

project the strength and resolve of the United States through mechanisms of foreign policy, and demonstrate the impenetrable nature of American national identity. One of the most compelling cases to use as a study of masculinity and American foreign policy during the Cold War era is the Vietnam War. Historian Christian Appy claims that, “U.S. policy in Vietnam was driven by men, who were intensely concerned about demonstrating their own – and the nation’s – toughness.”<sup>23</sup> While the Vietnam War became increasingly difficult to swallow, with images of scorched villages and dying Vietnamese civilians becoming commonplace, American policymakers became more and more dependent on the idea of maintaining strength to justify a war in which American lives were being lost for little evidence of military gain.<sup>24</sup> Moreover, the Vietnam War became a proxy for the United States to reaffirm its fatherly role that it sought to adopt after the conclusion of World War II.<sup>25</sup> As a result, leaders of American foreign policy during the Vietnam War felt compelled to maintain and increase the United States’ military action in Vietnam, for fear of appearing to have failed in their desired role as the global father-figure. This masculine-centric justification for military involvement in Vietnam was effective in prolonging the Vietnam War, as it embodied principles that were tightly bound to American sense of self and collective identity.

For the duration of the Cold War, the conflict was presented to the American public within an oppositional framework. This opposition was highlighted in President Ronald Reagan’s famous 1983 “Evil Empire” speech, in which he implored Americans to resist the temptation to “label both sides equally at fault, to ignore the facts of history and the aggressive impulses of an evil empire... and thereby remove yourself from the struggle between right and wrong and good and evil.”<sup>26</sup> Rather, the American public was urged to accede to a framework of moral absolutism that strictly aligned Soviet Union as the malicious opposite of virtuous American interests. This villain-hero narrative promotes zero-sum solutions and is a hallmark of masculine American foreign policy, particularly during the era of the Cold War. However, in the diverse field of international relations theory, oppositional frameworks are not the only approach to international conflict. Renowned feminist international relations author Laura Sjoberg explains that “traditional” masculine approaches to conflict adopt an oppositional, or “dyadic” approach.<sup>27</sup> Dyadic analysis and approaches focus on characteristics that states bring to an interaction and estimate the likelihood of conflict based on these independent features.<sup>28</sup> This framework of analysis particularly salient in research surrounding the causes of war is a primary foundation of the democratic peace theory.<sup>29</sup> Alternatively, Sjoberg offers a feminist approach to international conflict that views state interaction through a relational, rather than oppositional, frame of analysis.<sup>30</sup> Relational analysis in international relations is deemed to be feminist because it gives weight to the “emotional connectedness and social interdependence” of states in the international system; principles which are borrowed from the field of gender studies.<sup>31</sup> Rather than focusing on the

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<sup>23</sup> Christian G. Appy, *American Reckoning: The Vietnam War and Our National Identity* (New York, NY: Penguin Books), 78.

<sup>24</sup> Christian G. Appy, *American Reckoning: The Vietnam War and Our National Identity*, 78.

<sup>25</sup> Laura Sjoberg, *Gendering Global Conflict*, 213.

<sup>26</sup> Reagan Foundation, “Evil Empire Speech by President Ronald Reagan – Address to the National Association of Evangelicals on March 8, 1983,” 30:05, April 3, 2009, accessed April 3, 2018, <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=FcSm-KAEFFA>.

<sup>27</sup> Laura Sjoberg, *Gendering Global Conflict*, 106.

<sup>28</sup> *Ibid*, 109.

<sup>29</sup> *Ibid*, 106.

<sup>30</sup> Laura Sjoberg, *Gendering Global Conflict*, 106.

<sup>31</sup> *Ibid*, 108.

individual traits that states bring to an interaction, relational theories center on the shared interests that facilitate state interaction.

While an oppositional framework was the prevailing model for United States foreign policy during the Cold War, relational approaches to conflict and conflict prevention during this period were not entirely absent. However, when relational policies were pursued, they were typically cloaked in masculine policy rhetoric with the intent of maintaining a firm oppositional image. One of the most definitive moments of the Cold War that serves as an example of relational (feminist) policy cloaked in oppositional (masculine) rhetoric, is the Cuban Missile Crisis. During the tense, thirteen-day stretch that encompassed the Cuban Missile Crisis in 1962, President Kennedy was encouraged by many key policy advisers to take a hard-lining oppositional response by launching air-strikes in Cuba or initiating an invasion.<sup>32</sup> However, President Kennedy's response reflected principles of relational foreign policy. Historian Christian Appy asserts, "the crisis was resolved not by bluster or bravado, but by patience, flexibility, and a willingness on both sides to negotiate and compromise."<sup>33</sup> Publicly, the solution to the crisis was that Premier Nikita Khrushchev of the Soviet Union would remove nuclear weapons from Cuba, in exchange for a public statement by President Kennedy that the United States would not invade Cuba. Secretly, without a public announcement, Kennedy also agreed to remove nuclear weapons from Turkey as part of the resolution to the crisis.<sup>34</sup> The private nature of the latter part of this diplomatic solution was designed so that the Kennedy administration could sell the story to the American public that Kennedy had "strong-armed" Khrushchev until he agreed to back down. In private, President Kennedy added more vulgar flare in recounting the story; when talking about his interactions with Khrushchev, Kennedy said, "I cut his balls off."<sup>35</sup> Despite Kennedy's tactical use of relational foreign policy to navigate one of the most critical negotiations in the history of the United States; the public narrative was that his manliness had saved the day.

The Cold War serves as a foundational example of masculinity in American foreign policy because the emergence of the United States as the victor of the Cold War validated the use of masculine foreign policy prescriptions and rhetoric to defeat an external threat. One of the products of the Cold War that exemplifies the emergence of persistent masculinity for the future of American foreign policy was the rise of the military industrial complex in the United States and the development of the national security state.<sup>36</sup> Military servicemen and women became the embodiment of resolution, strength and toughness, demonstrating the value of using the presence of a large military as a system of defense. Since the Cold War era, references to the American military and soldiers have been incorporated into the fabric of everyday American lives, with the intention of serving as a constant reminder of America's dominance and masculinity. In some ways, the size of the military during the Cold War is held as the gold standard for American investment in the military. During the 2016 presidential election campaign, Donald Trump cited the size of the American navy, air force, and active-duty servicemen in 1991 at the end of the Cold War as a standard to which the American military should be rebuilt to meet.<sup>37</sup> As the role of masculinity in American foreign policy has developed over time, the Cold War foreign policy principles such as the

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<sup>32</sup> Christian G. Appy, *American Reckoning: The Vietnam War and Our National Identity*, 78.

<sup>33</sup> *Ibid*, 77.

<sup>34</sup> Christian G. Appy, *American Reckoning: The Vietnam War and Our National Identity*, 77.

<sup>35</sup> Christian G. Appy, *American Reckoning: The Vietnam War and Our National Identity*, 78

<sup>36</sup> Walter L. Hixon, *The Myth of American Diplomacy* (New Haven, Connecticut: Yale University Press, 2008): 167.

<sup>37</sup> "Transcript: Donald Trump's Foreign Policy Speech," *The New York Times*, April 27, 2016, accessed December 12, 2017, [https://www.nytimes.com/2016/04/28/us/politics/transcript-trump-foreign-policy.html?\\_r=0](https://www.nytimes.com/2016/04/28/us/politics/transcript-trump-foreign-policy.html?_r=0).

emasculatation of enemies, establishing a never-back-down mentality and the importance of a large, stand as tools of projecting strength have been reoccurring themes.

Overall, the success of the United States in navigating Cold War foreign policy established a standard for how “tough” future foreign policy decisions should appear in order for them to be desirable and consistent with the idealized American image. Gendered tactics that were used during the Cold War, such as emasculatation of the enemy and moral absolutism, as well as rhetoric that boasted the use of strong-arm diplomacy became normalized in American foreign policy following their use in the Cold War era. In addition, the case of the Cuban Missile Crisis reveals that even when the United States’ foreign policy decisions may have been guided by principles of feminist theory, they are cloaked in masculine rhetoric by American political leaders and media outlets in accordance with gendered national identity preferences. Masculinized foreign policy tactics and rhetoric similar to that employed by the United States during the Cold War reappear in the United States’ response to 9/11 and in the era of President Trump’s America First Foreign Policy.

### *Maintaining the Image: Masculinity and the Response to 9/11*

The terrorist attacks of September 11, 2001 on the United States evoked a resurgence of American nationalism, the magnitude of which had not been felt since the Cold War. The response of the United States to 9/11 demonstrated the hyper-masculinity that lies at the foundation of American national identity and ultimately shapes foreign policy. In this case, the threat to national security and ideology took the form of transnational terrorism, which had the demonstrated ability to extend to the American homeland. The rhetoric and foreign policy prescriptions employed by President George W. Bush in response to the 9/11 terrorist attacks reveal the pervasive nature of masculinity in American foreign policy. In President Bush’s first public address following the attacks, he stated, “Make no mistake: the United States will hunt down and punish those responsible for these cowardly acts.”<sup>38</sup> This visceral response to the attacks immediately indicated the willingness of the United States government to embark on an unwavering mission of retribution.<sup>39</sup> Furthermore, the foreign policy agenda pursued by the Bush administration framed the invasion of Afghanistan, and subsequently Iraq, to the American public as a “noble cause” and a “war between good and evil” in which the United States “stands strong on the side of good,” thus grounding foreign policy decisions in masculine ideals such as courage and nobility that are deeply embedded in the American national identity and psyche.<sup>40</sup> Similar to the case of the Cold War, the rhetoric surrounding the policy responses to 9/11 sought to establish a clear, dyadic view of the enemy and the United States, by defining the terrorists as everything opposite of the United States. In addition, by “othering” the enemy, the United States government intended to emasculate the terrorists; by characterizing their identity as an abnormal and deviant form of masculinity.<sup>41</sup> This reflexive use of gender ordering to justify and gain public support for military action is an example of the United States exercising hegemonic masculinity to bolster foreign policy choices when the state is faced with an external threat to national security.

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<sup>38</sup> Kevin Coe, “Masculinity as a Political Strategy: George W. Bush, the “War on Terrorism,” and an Echoing Press.” *Journal of Women, Politics & Policy* 29, no. 1 (January 2007): 32.

<sup>39</sup> *Ibid.*

<sup>40</sup> Laura Shepherd, “Veiled references: Constructions of gender in the Bush administration discourse on the attacks of Afghanistan post-9/11,” *International Feminist Journal of Politics* 8, no.1 (March 2006): 19-41;

Kevin Coe, “Masculinity as a Political Strategy,” 35.

<sup>41</sup> Laura Shepherd, “Veiled references,” 26.

In addition to the way in which American political leaders used gender ideals to frame foreign policy decisions to the public and during the aftermath of the terrorist attacks, the execution of the wars in Afghanistan and Iraq was also driven by masculinity. The tactics that were employed by the United States military during the “War on Terrorism,” such as measures of psychological warfare and extreme interrogation methods, proved the desire of the United States to use force and aggression as foreign policy tools to regain an image of strength and dominance. Methods of psychological warfare employed by the United States included dropping leaflets over Afghanistan, some of which included phrases such as, “Our goals will be achieved, if not willingly, then by overwhelming force” or alternatively displayed male American firemen raising an American flag at Ground Zero, with the caption “Freedom Endures.”<sup>42</sup> Although these leaflets served little tactical purpose in the war, they were used as tools to convey the resolve, strength, and dominance of American foreign policy, and to reignite the masculinity at the core of American national identity.

In addition to rhetoric espoused by political elites and the execution of foreign policy, media outlets also serve as a primary forum for communicating ideas about national identity and policy.<sup>43</sup> One of the most famously masculinized cases of media sensationalism during the years following 9/11 was the capture and subsequent rescue of Private Jessica Lynch in 2003 during the war in Iraq. Although the Iraq War was not a direct product of the 9/11 terrorist attacks, it was a part of the broader “War on Terror,” led by the United States military, which was developed as an American foreign policy framework by President George W. Bush after the attacks of September 11<sup>th</sup>, 2001.<sup>44</sup> While Private Jessica Lynch was deployed in Iraq in 2003, her unit was ambushed, and she was captured as a prisoner of war. A dramatic and highly gendered rescue mission executed by U.S. Army Special Forces ensued and was broadcast widely to the American public.<sup>45</sup>

The imagery used to portray Jessica Lynch during the rescue and upon her return to the United States serves as an excellent case study in the examination of the masculinization of the American military and national imperative to validate masculine ideals during times of war. The footage and the corresponding media commentary represented Jessica Lynch as a “damsel in distress,” saved by a masculine rescue crew in the midst of war. Several American media outlets, such as CNN, heavily criticized the release of the footage of Lynch’s rescue, claiming that it was fictionalized wartime propaganda.<sup>46</sup> Despite being portrayed as a damsel during the immediate release of the rescue footage, the public narrative of Jessica Lynch changed dramatically once she was back in the United States. Upon return, Lynch was commonly referred to as a “female Rambo,” a portrayal that masculinized her experience by equivocating her to the “hyper-masculinist, all-American, patriotic, hard-guy” that is encapsulated by the Rambo character.<sup>47</sup> Jessica Lynch, despite being a woman serving in combat, served as a mechanism to reinforce American masculinity in the execution of post-9/11 foreign policy, rather than the embodiment of the intersection of femininity and war. The case of Jessica Lynch serves as a microcosm of the larger gendered narrative of the United States’ response to 9/11 and reveals a critical facets of feminist international relations theory; that femininity and female experiences of conflict are typically only represented in conflict as a tool for validating masculine action.

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<sup>42</sup> Ibid, 30-31.

<sup>43</sup> Monteserrat Guibernau, “Anthony D. Smith on nations and national identity: a critical assessment,” *Nations and Nationalism* 10, no. ½ (2004): 125.

<sup>44</sup> Christian Spielvogel, ““You Know Where I Stand”: Moral Framing of the War on Terrorism and the Iraq War in the 2004 Presidential Campaign,” *Rhetoric and Public Affairs* 8, no. 4: 549.

<sup>45</sup> Véronique Pin-Fat and Maria Stern, “The Scripting of Private Jessica Lynch: Biopolitics, Gender, and the “Feminization” of the U.S. Military,” *Alternatives: Global, Local, Political* 30, no. 1 (2005): 27.

<sup>46</sup> Ibid.

<sup>47</sup> Ibid, 28.



Feminist analysis of foreign policy decision-making during the invasion of Afghanistan highlights the frequent use of women as justifications of war, and as a self-validating measure. In the response to 9/11, Afghan women were identified by American leaders as victims of the Taliban regime, and thus gave the United States opportunity to play the role of the hero, liberating these poor women from the violence and oppression facing them in their homeland. The invasion of Afghanistan was about retribution and the elimination of foreign threats to the American homeland, but the United States needed a cause that would give the military action nobility and chivalry, and Afghan women quickly filled that void. In November 2001, First Lady Laura Bush framed the “War on Terrorism” as a battle for human rights, stating:

The fight against terrorism is also a fight for the rights and dignity of women... Afghan women know, through hard experience, what the rest of the world is discovering: The brutal oppression of women is the central goal of terrorists. Long before the current war began, the Taliban and its terrorist allies were making the lives of children and women in Afghanistan miserable.<sup>48</sup>

The emphasis of Afghan women as the victim of the Taliban regime, reaffirmed an image of the United States as the masculine protector, framing the invasion as an almost romanticized rescue mission of, “our men, setting out to rescue their women, from their men.”<sup>49</sup> The way that United States authorities used Afghan women as justification for military action during the invasion of Afghanistan demonstrates the use of femininity and female experiences to solidify masculine ideals of American national identity and validate masculine action in foreign policy.

Additionally, the invasion of Afghanistan and the experience of Afghan women provides interesting insight into feminist foreign policy options for state-building that were not adopted. Feminist foreign policies also advocate for the inclusion of women in economic and political spheres, their representation in state-building to foster peace and sustainable development in communities worldwide; and particularly in the case of re-building weak states. The landmark Resolution 1325 adopted by the United Nations Security Council explicitly advocated for the “increased representation of women at all decision-making levels in national, regional and international institutions and mechanisms for the prevention, management, and resolution of conflict.”<sup>50</sup> Furthermore, the Bonn Agreement (Agreement on Provisional Arrangements in Afghanistan Pending the Re-Establishment of Permanent Government Institutions) included language specifying that decisions regarding appointments to the Interim Administration in Afghanistan should include a “significant number of women.”<sup>51</sup> However, only 2 women out of 30 total representatives were included in the interim administration.<sup>52</sup> Similarly, state-building efforts following the invasion of Iraq saw only three women appointed to the post-Saddam Hussein interim council.<sup>53</sup>

<sup>48</sup> Laura Sjoberg, *Gendering Global Conflict: Toward a Feminist Theory of War*, 139.

<sup>49</sup> Jan Jindy Pettman, “Feminist International Relations After 9/11,” *The Brown Journal of World Affairs* 10, no. 2 (2004), 89.

<sup>50</sup> “Resolution 1325 (2000),” United Nations Security Council, October 31, 2000, accessed April 3, 2018, <https://documents-dds-ny.un.org/doc/UNDOC/GEN/N00/720/18/PDF/N0072018.pdf>.

<sup>51</sup> “Agreement on Provisional Arrangements in Afghanistan Pending the Re-establishment of Permanent Government Institutions,” United Nations Security Council, December 5, 2001, 6, accessed April 3, 2018, [https://peacemaker.un.org/sites/peacemaker.un.org/files/AF\\_011205\\_AgreementProvisionalArrangementsinAfghanistan%28en%29.pdf](https://peacemaker.un.org/sites/peacemaker.un.org/files/AF_011205_AgreementProvisionalArrangementsinAfghanistan%28en%29.pdf).

<sup>52</sup> Jan Jindy Pettman, “Feminist International Relations After 9/11,” 89.

<sup>53</sup> *Ibid.*

Traditional masculinist perspectives on state-building generally assume the inclusion of women in government and state-building to be a peripheral concern; something to attempt or strive for after foundations of peace and concrete democratic institutions have taken hold. By contrast, feminist analyses argue that the representation of all members of society, including women and ethnic or racial minorities, is one of the most essential aspects of democratic participation, and that without this, constructed democratic institutions are unlikely to survive. In the cases of Afghanistan and Iraq, feminist analyses connect the lack of success in building stable foundations for democracy to the disingenuous effort of the international community to include women in government and peace-building efforts.<sup>54</sup> While feminist concerns, including the experience of Afghan women, were a theme during the United States' response to 9/11 and the beginning of the "War on Terror," the lacking effort to include women in subsequent state-building and democratization processes show that in this case, femininity was used to validate the masculine philosophy that drove American military action by giving it a sense of chivalry and nobility, rather than as a tool to better understand the role of women in conflict and peace.

### *Interpreting the Present: Masculinity and the Era of Trump*

The previous examination of the intertwined nature of masculinity and American foreign policy responses to crises of security and ideology can provide a lens through which to examine the current foreign policy developments under the Trump Administration. Although the threats that face the United States today are far less eminent and centralized than during the Cold War era and the years immediately following the 9/11 terrorist attacks, masculinity has nonetheless played a prominent role in the discourse of the 2016 election and the foreign policy preferences of the American people. During the 2016 election campaign, then presidential candidate Donald Trump presented solutions to these foreign policy issues that were based on the glorification of masculine attributes, and through the use of rhetoric, painted an image for the American people of the United States as a stronger, tougher, more dominant actor on the world stage. Although the 2016 presidential election proved to be exceedingly controversial, Donald Trump was able to use the ideals of masculinity that resonate within American national identity to rally enough public support to win the presidency. Trump's use of bombastic masculinity to guide his campaign style and policy platforms provides a unique case study because it demonstrates how these tactics can be used successfully to gain public support during a highly contested election, and how they will shape the development of his foreign policy while in office.

Trump's use of masculinity to gain public support during the 2016 election is most clearly demonstrated by his assertive campaign promises and persona. Prior to the election, almost 70% of Trump supporters believed that the United States had become "too soft and feminine."<sup>55</sup> This sentiment indicated a preference amongst the American public for a leader that would project a tougher, more masculine image at home and abroad. As a presidential candidate, Donald Trump tapped into this desire for increased masculinity by designing his personal image as well as his foreign policy platforms on the premise of masculinity. Trump's comprehensive speech on foreign policy on April 27<sup>th</sup>, 2016 outlined an isolationist, individualistic vision for the future of American foreign policy. This speech emphasized a Trump's intent for a tougher approach to multilateral agreements and organizations such as

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<sup>54</sup> Jan Jindy Pettman, "Feminist International Relations After 9/11, 90.

<sup>55</sup> Daniel Cox and Robert Jones, "Two-thirds of Trump Supporters Say the Nation Needs a Leader Willing to Break the Rules," PRRI, April 7, 2016, <https://www.prri.org/research/prri-atlantic-poll-republican-democratic-primary-trump-supporters/>.

NAFTA and NATO, describing these treaties as “false globalism” and supported increasing military investment and troop counts.<sup>56</sup> Lobbying for these policies highlighted the masculinity of Trump’s foreign policy proposals because they valued independence over collective action, resolve over compassion, and the use of force over diplomacy. By doing so, Trump claimed that these policies would “make America strong again,” and thus “make America respected again”, signaling the re-masculinization of America that would accompany a Trump presidency.<sup>57</sup>

During the 2016 election campaign, Trump’s vice-presidential running mate Mike Pence also used rhetoric to build a masculine image of what American foreign policy would look like under a Trump Presidency. This masculine rhetoric was used most prominently in the 2016 Vice Presidential Debate, in which Pence repeatedly used masculine attributes to describe the foreign policy positions of the would-be Trump Administration. During the debate, Pence referenced the need to approach foreign policy issues in Russia and Syria with “strong, broad-shouldered American leadership.”<sup>58</sup> The use of adjectives such as “strong” would generally constitute the masculinization of a policy position, however Pence extends this effect by personifying American foreign policy with a reference to “broad-shoulders.” This descriptor effectively associates the idea of American leadership with the body image of a powerful, athletic man with a physically dominating stature, thus signaling the masculinity embedded in foreign policy platforms of the Trump/Pence campaign. Furthermore, Pence promoted the idea of American masculinity in foreign policy with reference to the American military, claiming that the United States had experienced a great decline in naval power and number of standing troops, and reassuring the public that Donald Trump would “rebuild our military and project American strength to the world.”<sup>59</sup> These campaign promises were a verbal display of the intended masculine virtues of future American foreign policy under the Trump Administration.

The use of hyperbolic masculinity is also evident in the development of Trump’s foreign policy agenda while he has been in office. The Trump Administration’s America First Foreign Policy confirms and validates the values of masculinity that shape American national identity. The official description of the America First Foreign Policy that is publicly available to the American people first begins by establishing the primary goal of achieving “peace through strength.”<sup>60</sup> The articulation of this goal already demonstrates the masculinization of American foreign policy. Peace, a concept generally associated with feminine attributes, such as compassion, sensitivity, and understanding, is immediately stripped of its feminine connotation in Trump’s America First Foreign Policy by its association with strength; implying the necessity of using masculine means to meet feminine ends. The America First Foreign Policy agenda then continues by proposing the use of American military action to “defeat and destroy” terrorist organizations through “aggressive joint and coalition military operations.”<sup>61</sup> In this section of the agenda, the use of the words destroy and aggressive imply dominance and further remove the policy from any feminine association with its overarching

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<sup>56</sup> “Transcript: Donald Trump’s Foreign Policy Speech,” *The New York Times*, April 27, 2016, accessed December 12, 2017, [https://www.nytimes.com/2016/04/28/us/politics/transcript-trump-foreign-policy.html?\\_r=0](https://www.nytimes.com/2016/04/28/us/politics/transcript-trump-foreign-policy.html?_r=0).

<sup>57</sup> Ibid.

<sup>58</sup> “Fact Check: Vice Presidential Debate,” National Public Radio, October 4, 2016, accessed December 12, 2017, <https://www.npr.org/2016/10/04/496452797/fact-check-vice-presidential-debate-with-tim-kaine-and-mike-pence>

<sup>59</sup> Ibid.

<sup>60</sup> “America First Foreign Policy,” The White House, accessed December 12, 2017, <https://www.whitehouse.gov/america-first-foreign-policy>.

<sup>61</sup> “America First Foreign Policy,” The White House, accessed December 12, 2017, <https://www.whitehouse.gov/america-first-foreign-policy>.

goal, peace. Furthermore, the policy also reconfirms President Trump's commitment to expanding the American armed forces, with the rationale being that, "he knows that our military dominance must be unquestioned."<sup>62</sup> While Trump's foreign policy agenda began with the goal of peace, it uses hyperbolic masculinity to negate any feminine connotations with this objective, and instead colors it in with masculine attributes of aggression, dominance, and the use of force. The official language of America First policy demonstrates the pervasive and persistent use of masculinity as a guiding principle of American foreign policy under the Trump Administration.

The hyper-masculinity communicated by the Trump Administration's foreign policy agenda is particularly interesting when contrasted with recent foreign policy initiatives of other developed nations, several of which have incorporated gender equality and feminism as a central focus. Feminist foreign policies are ones which actively promote the global health, economic empowerment, and political inclusion of women as a means of achieving international peace and stability. Feminist foreign policy perspectives that advocate for women's rights and participation are premised on the theory that issues of human security are tantamount to issues of state security; and that the prosperity of women plays a vital role in mitigating human security concerns.<sup>63</sup> These theories acknowledge the importance of human development in the creation of stable societies and recognize that women's educational attainment and participation in the labor force is associated with faster economic growth, reductions in child mortality, and better opportunities for children.<sup>64</sup> Furthermore, support for the inclusion of women in state-building processes is grounded in the evidence that when women are included in peace negotiations; agreements receive greater public consensus, resolutions are more likely to be implemented, and post-conflict states have improved prospects for maintaining peace and achieving sustainable development.<sup>65</sup>

Recently, feminist foreign policies have been developed and implemented by countries such as Australia, Norway, Sweden, and Canada.<sup>66</sup> These countries have taken action to enshrine the principles of UN Security Council Resolution 1325 in their own foreign policy initiatives by designing foreign policies that support gender equality and the inclusion of women in peace-building, governance, and sustainable economic development across the world.<sup>67</sup> A specific example of this brand of feminist foreign policy in action is Canada's innovative Feminist International Assistance Policy, which identifies gender equality and the empowerment of women as a priority in peace building, the reduction of poverty, and global stability.<sup>68</sup> The initiatives of Canada's Feminist International Assistance Policy include commitments to providing sexual health and reproductive education and services to women in developing countries, promoting access to safe educational institutions that are inclusive of

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<sup>62</sup> Ibid.

<sup>63</sup> Nicole Detraz, *International Security and Gender* (Cambridge: Polity Press, 2012), 8, 132, 150.

<sup>64</sup> U.N. Women, "Facts and Figures: Economic Empowerment," 2017, accessed April 2, 2018, <http://www.unwomen.org/en/what-we-do/economic-empowerment/facts-and-figures>.

<sup>65</sup> U.N. Women, "Preventing Conflict, Transforming Justice, and Securing the Peace: A Global Study on the Implementation of United Nations Security Council Resolution 1325," United Nations, 2015, 41, accessed April 2, 2018, [http://wps.unwomen.org/pdf/en/GlobalStudy\\_EN\\_Web.pdf](http://wps.unwomen.org/pdf/en/GlobalStudy_EN_Web.pdf).

<sup>66</sup> Kristen P. Williams, "Feminism in Foreign Policy," *Oxford Research Encyclopedia of Politics*, September 2017, 2, accessed April 3, 2018, <http://politics.oxfordre.com/view/10.1093/acrefore/9780190228637.001.0001/acrefore-9780190228637-e-368?print=pdf>.

<sup>67</sup> "Resolution 1325 (2000)," United Nations Security Council, October 31, 2000, accessed April 3, 2018, <https://documents-dds-ny.un.org/doc/UNDOC/GEN/N00/720/18/PDF/N0072018.pdf>.

<sup>68</sup> Ministry of Foreign Affairs, "Canada's Feminist International Assistance Policy," Government of Canada, 2017, accessed April 3, 2018, [http://international.gc.ca/world-monde/issues\\_developpement-enjeux\\_developpement/priorities-priorites/policy-politique.aspx?lang=eng](http://international.gc.ca/world-monde/issues_developpement-enjeux_developpement/priorities-priorites/policy-politique.aspx?lang=eng).

girls, and advocating for the inclusion of women in post-conflict state-building.<sup>69</sup> By contrast, at the end of 2017, President Trump released the 2018 National Security Strategy of the United States, including a section on foreign policy entitled “Peace Through Strength,” which does not contain any references to women, gender equality, peace building, or human security.<sup>70</sup> Instead, the foreign policy directives outlined in the “Peace Through Strength” platform emphasized increasing the military presence of the United States around the globe, modernizing and expanding the United States’ nuclear weapons programs, and continuing the use of economic sanctions to safeguard American interests.<sup>71</sup>

The absence of policies directed towards improving the security or inclusion of women in the Trump Administration’s foreign policy is not necessarily evidence of sexist policy-making, but rather reflective of a traditionally gendered hierarchy in international security studies that considers issues of state security as separate from, and more important than, issues of human security. The traditional “masculinist” approach to security studies, typically establishes a firm divide between issues of state security and human security; with the former viewed as “high politics,” and the latter as “low politics.”<sup>72</sup> As a result, this perspective has a tendency to dismiss issues of human security, such as forced migration, human trafficking, sexual violence, and poverty (which often impact women and children disproportionately) as unfortunate consequences of the overarching and consuming quest for state security.<sup>73</sup> Thus, traditional masculinist foreign policy tends to devalue the centrality of human security to achieving state security, choosing to view human security concerns as merely humanitarian issues that need not be included foundations of foreign policy or national security. Alternatively, feminist security studies theories often view the security of individuals within a state as a function of achieving state security at large.<sup>74</sup>

## VI. Conclusions

Masculinity has been a founding principle of American national identity, as it is one of the defining attributes of collective American culture and politics. During the Cold War, masculinity was used to reinforce the virtue of traditional American values, and it characterized the opposition, in this case communism, as everything that was un-American, and thus “un-masculine.” Similarly, the rhetoric and policies that the United States pursued following the terrorist attacks of 9/11 served to emasculate America’s enemy by emphasizing the virtues of American military troops and first responders and using the protection of females as a justification military action. Using these case studies as an informative background reveals its driving influence in foreign policy as well as its importance to the American public. Turning to the era of Trump, it is evident that the desire for masculinity amongst the American public played a role in the outcome of one of the most controversial

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<sup>69</sup> Ibid.

<sup>70</sup> “National Security Strategy of the United States,” The United States Government, December 2017, 25, accessed April 3, 2018, <https://www.whitehouse.gov/wp-content/uploads/2017/12/NSS-Final-12-18-2017-0905.pdf> page.

<sup>71</sup> Ibid, 25-34

<sup>72</sup> Megan MacKenzie, “Female soldier and the reconstruction of women in post-conflict Sierra Leone,” in *Gender and International Security: Feminist Perspectives* edited by Laura Sjoberg (New York, NY: Routledge, 2010).

<sup>73</sup> Gillian Youngs, “Feminist International Relations: A Contradiction in Terms? Or: Why Women and Gender Are Essential to Understanding the World ‘We’ Live in,” *International Affairs* 80, no. 1, 2004, 83; Edward Newman, *Critical Human Security Studies* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2010), 73.

<sup>74</sup> Jan Jindy Pettman, “Feminist International Relations After 9/11, 91; Gillian Youngs, “Feminist International Relations: A Contradiction in Terms...” 75.

elections in the history of the United States and determined the trajectory of American foreign policy.

The purpose of this analysis is not to offer a normative evaluation of the role of masculinity in American national identity or foreign policy. Rather, this analysis is intended to illuminate a discussion about how foreign policy decisions are formed, how national identity is projected, and how these understandings can be used to explain current foreign policy debates. On the international stage, the American public desires a country that appears tough, unwavering, dominant, and, at times, aggressive. These preferences subsequently play a role in the decisions of political representatives, as they opt for foreign policy actions that reflect the public's desire for masculinity. Furthermore, feminist analysis provides a useful tool for understanding the extent that gender influences policy discourse, and how policy can be designed to reflect a gendered national identity.

The 2016 presidential election serves as an example for how politicians can use the personal and emotional connection that Americans have with masculinity as part of their national identity to amass public support. However, taken to the extreme, national identities, much like any other form of identity, have the potential to be manipulated for political gain. To avoid such manipulation, it is important for people to understand the way that their national identities relate to their policy preferences. In the United States, the danger of the relationship between masculinity and national identity is that an implicit connection between masculine and "better" exists in the minds of the American people. Masculine attributes and experiences are so central to American national identity, that they are often idealized when used as guiding principles of American foreign policy, whether they are truly in the interest of the United States or not. A comprehensive understanding of the masculinity as a component of American national identity allows for a more empirical, rather than emotional evaluation of foreign policy.

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# The International Community's Inaction Amidst the Rohingya's Suffering

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**Abstract:** *Despite continued democratization efforts in the country, the Rohingya in Myanmar continue to face severe persecution and ethnic cleansing at the hand of the military government with many calling for diplomatic intervention. During these human rights violations, foreign powers have stood by passively, yet they continue to decry the violence committed against the Rohingya. This article analyzes the current norms present within the international community that, due to their inherent conflict with one another, perpetuate the lack of humanitarian intervention currently seen. Smart sanctions enacted by all U.N. Member states are ultimately determined to be the most effective form of intervention due to their ability to significantly penalize the actions taken by the military and government of Myanmar while maintaining respect for state sovereignty.*

## Introduction

On September 2, 2017, a news headline read: “Hundreds are dead in Myanmar as the Rohingya crisis explodes *again*” (emphasis added).<sup>1</sup> The story was the same as it has been in the past: violence escalated between Rohingya insurgents and Myanmar’s security forces, and many innocent civilians became collateral damage, most of them Rohingya. While many members of the persecuted group fled the country, others remained behind to face atrocious human rights violations, including homelessness, starvation, dehydration, sexual violence, and murder. Horrifying images of such violations against the Rohingya have surfaced in the media, with countries around the globe refusing to acknowledge the situation. Following decades of revival of the violence between Myanmar’s forces and the Rohingya, we still have no substantial solution for this problem. The international community must tackle this problem in two ways. They must first acknowledge the actions taken by Myanmar’s government as ‘ethnic cleansing’ against the Rohingya people. The second step is to recognize that international pressure in the form of economic sanctions may be the only viable intervention capable of de-escalating the current Rohingya crisis in Myanmar due to state actors’ independently-constructed ideas of sovereignty and the responsibility to protect their populations from human rights violations. The legal context pertaining to the current situation and possible intervention in Myanmar as well as the normative environment of the international system writ large will be analyzed in order to highlight a possible avenue through which humanitarian action can be taken.

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<sup>1</sup> Joe Freeman, “Hundreds are dead in Myanmar as the Rohingya crisis explodes again,” *Chicago Tribune*, September 2, 2017, accessed September, 28, 2017, <http://www.chicagotribune.com/news/nationworld/ct-rohingya-myanmar-20170902-story.html>

## History of Violence and Budding Democracy

Even though we have recently seen a spike in the brutality in Myanmar, the country has always had a violence-filled past, albeit less concerning than the levels seen today. For over 60 years, Burma had been under British rule before gaining its independence in 1948. Despite its newfound independence, the Burmese government was taken over by a military junta just 14 years later. This military junta, known as the Tatmadaw, has held power for almost 70 years through coercion following a complicated civil war, where only the military had the means to subdue the competing parties for power.<sup>2</sup> Since gaining independence in 1948, the military has espoused the view that “parliamentary government [cannot] prevent the disintegration of the country; only the military stands between the nation and chaos.”<sup>3</sup> The military junta outlawed political parties, used group organizations including youth and work groups to indoctrinate and control citizens, suppressed political protest with extreme violence, and detained political prisoners they deemed a threat, all in its effort to maintain control over the state.

Despite its long history of military rule and suppression of opposing views, Myanmar in 2011 saw sweeping political reforms from President Thein Sein, including the return of debate into parliament, liberalization of the press, and release of political prisoners, most notably Aung San Suu Kyi.<sup>4</sup> Ms. Suu Kyi is the daughter of General Aung San, who helped Burma gain its independence, and she had previously been under house arrest for 20 years for her protests against government suppression. On the occasions that she had been released from her house arrest, she acted in opposition to the repression imposed by the Burmese government and was returned to house arrest.<sup>5</sup> She also won the Nobel Peace Prize in 1991 for her non-violent efforts to protect human rights and bring democracy to Myanmar.

After the first national vote held in Myanmar since a civilian government was introduced in 2011 and an overwhelming victory by Aung San Suu Kyi’s National League for Democracy (NLD) party, Myanmar has seen an increase in foreign aid, a more open political environment, and generally more optimism than it has been accustomed to since it gained independence.<sup>6</sup> Due to a clause in its constitution, Ms. Suu Kyi is unable to be president due to her children being foreign nationals, but she has assumed the newly created role of State Counselor and is now Myanmar’s de facto leader. Since the civilian government came into power, it has made moves to streamline bureaucratic decision-making, amended and broadened anti-corruption laws for government officials, extended agricultural loans to farmers, and begun the process of returning confiscated land to individuals.<sup>7</sup> Yet, even though the civilian government has taken steps towards creating a more efficient, thriving, and peaceful state, it still faces many obstacles.

High level positions in the government were filled mostly with NLD sympathizers, but the military continues to wield significant influence due to a constitutional mandate allocating to it 25% of all parliament seats, both nationally and regionally.<sup>8</sup> It maintains control over the three

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<sup>2</sup> Williams, David C. 2011. "Cracks In The Firmament Of Burma's Military Government: From Unity Through Coercion To Buying Support". *Third World Quarterly* 32 (7): 1199-1215. doi:10.1080/01436597.2011.596753.

<sup>3</sup> Ibid.

<sup>4</sup> Aspinall, Edward, and Nicholas Farrelly. 2017. "Myanmar's Democratization: Comparative And South East Asian Perspectives.". *South East Asia Research* 22 (2).

<sup>5</sup> "Profile: Aung San Suu Kyi". 2017. *BBC News*. <http://www.bbc.com/news/world-asia-pacific-11685977>.

<sup>6</sup> Thawngmung, Ardeth, and Gwen Robinson. 2017. "Myanmar's New Era: A Break From The Past, Or Too Much Of The Same?" *Southeast Asian Affairs*.

<sup>7</sup> Ibid.

<sup>8</sup> Ibid.

cabinet positions for security: home affairs, border affairs, and defense, in addition to the nomination and appointment of one of the two vice presidents.<sup>9</sup> The influence that the military still holds in the government requires more compromise and “meeting in the middle” than the previous relationship of confrontation between the two groups. Despite the impact they still have within the government, military lawmakers rarely oppose NLD-sponsored legislation in parliament, and both groups (the Tatmadaw and the NLD) avoid publicly criticizing one another.

Recently, Aung San Suu Kyi and the government of Myanmar have faced international criticism for the treatment of the Rohingya in the Rakhine state, which is situated on Myanmar’s western coast. The Rohingya are a Muslim ethnic minority group who have been settled in the Rakhine state since the early 7th century when Arab Muslim traders moved into the area.<sup>10</sup> Since 1962, the military-run government has held anti-Muslim views and has engaged in activities to erase their ethnic identity. In textbooks, official government documents, and state media, the Rohingya are referred to derogatorily as “Bengali” and portrayed as illegal migrants despite the international community recognizing them as an ethnic group whose history and “rightful home” can be traced back to Myanmar.<sup>11</sup> In 1982, Myanmar’s government passed the Citizenship Act, which stripped citizen status away from most of the Rohingya and has served as the mechanism for the military to continue justifying the human rights abuses inflicted upon the ethnic minority group because they are deemed “illegal.”<sup>12</sup>

Although Myanmar has been undergoing democratic reforms and has a more open political environment, the democratization process has created more confusion regarding whether the increasingly democratic civilian government or the Tatmadaw wield legitimate political authority. Jack Snyder, in his book *From Voting to Violence: Democratization and Nationalist Conflict*, argues in favor of the democratic peace theory, where democratic countries hold the same ideals and tend to be peaceful towards one another, but he highlights the dangers of the democratization process in creating conditions ripe for ethnic and national conflict. Snyder’s argument is particularly relevant to the contemporary situation in Myanmar, where the democratic transition has only added fuel to the fire to the human rights abuses committed against the Rakhine state.<sup>13</sup> Therefore, violence against the Rohingya people in the newly democratic Myanmar is a continuation of past practices, with conflict between the Muslim minority and the Buddhist majority continuing to resurface.

### Contemporary Situation and Legal Discussion

In the most recent revival of the crisis, a few Rohingya insurgents attacked 30 police stations and an army base in late August 2017. This attack resulted in the death of 12 members of the armed forces and 59 members of the insurgent group, which consists of approximately 1000

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<sup>9</sup> Ibid.

<sup>10</sup> Parnini, Syeda Naushin. 2013. "The Crisis Of The Rohingya As A Muslim Minority In Myanmar And Bilateral Relations With Bangladesh". *Journal Of Muslim Minority Affairs* 33 (2): 281-297. doi:10.1080/13602004.2013.826453.

<sup>11</sup> Zarni, Maung, and Alice Cowley. 2014. "The Slow-Burning Genocide Of Myanmar's Rohingya". *Pacific Rim Law & Policy Journal* 23.

<sup>12</sup> Ibid.

<sup>13</sup> Snyder, J. (2000). *From Voting to Violence: Democratization and Nationalist Conflict*. W. W. Norton & Company.

rebels.<sup>14</sup> However, the military's response, according to U.S. Deputy Assistant Secretary of State, Patrick Murphy, was "disproportionate."<sup>15</sup> Although Myanmar's government has denied any ties between the military and the recent violence against Rohingya, the attacks on Rohingya were most likely not carried out by civilians alone. Many villages were set ablaze using helicopters that fired petrol bombs, while front forces prevented the Rohingya from escaping.<sup>16</sup> The civilians also assisted the security forces, and many have told their Muslim neighbors to leave or be killed.<sup>17</sup> The death toll remains uncertain; however, the refugee toll is certainly high, as approximately 422,000 Rohingya have arrived in neighboring Bangladesh since August.<sup>18</sup>

While these people are either fleeing or dying, the world is scrambling for a term to identify this crisis. Is this ethnic cleansing, or worse, genocide? The primary issue is that ethnic cleansing is not considered a crime under international law, whereas genocide is. The United Nations (U.N.) states that because "ethnic cleansing has not been recognized as an independent crime under international law, there is no precise definition of this concept or the exact acts to be qualified as ethnic cleansing."<sup>19</sup> However, a United Nations Commission of Experts which was asked to look into the case study of Yugoslavia described ethnic cleansing as "a purposeful policy designed by one ethnic or religious group to remove by violent and terror-inspiring means the civilian population of another ethnic or religious group from certain geographic areas."<sup>20</sup> Further, the U.N. defines genocide as:

[A]ny of the following acts committed with intent to destroy, in whole or in part, a national, ethnical, racial, or religious group, as such: (a) killing members of the group; (b) causing serious bodily or mental harm to members of the group; (c) deliberately inflicting on the group conditions of life calculated to bring about its physical destruction in whole or in part; (d) imposing measures intended to prevent births within the group; (e) forcibly transferring children of the group to another group.<sup>21</sup>

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<sup>14</sup> Wa Lone and Shoon Naing, "At least 71 killed in Myanmar as Rohingya insurgents stage major attack," *Reuters*, August 24, 2017, accessed September 28, 2017, <https://www.reuters.com/article/us-myanmar-rohingya/at-least-71-killed-in-myanmar-as-rohingya-insurgents-stage-major-attack-idUSKCN1B507K>

<sup>15</sup> Antoni Slodkowski and Rahul Bhatia, "U.S. seeks urgent action on Myanmar, U.N. eyes \$200 million for refugees," *Reuters*, September 22, 2017, accessed September 28, 2017, <https://www.reuters.com/article/us-myanmar-rohingya-un/u-s-seeks-urgent-action-on-myanmar-u-n-eyes-200-million-for-refugees-idUSKCN1BX0UM?il=0>

<sup>16</sup> Hannah Beech, "Desperate Rohingya Flee Myanmar on Trail of Suffering: 'It Is All Gone,'" *New York Times*, September 2, 2017, accessed September 2, 2017, <https://www.nytimes.com/2017/09/02/world/asia/rohingya-myanmar-bangladesh-refugees-massacre.html?action=click&contentCollection=Asia%20Pacific&module=RelatedCoverage&region=Marginalia&pgtype=article&r=0>

<sup>17</sup> Max Bearak, Laris Karklis and Tim Meko, "The 'ethnic cleansing' of the Rohingya" *Washington Post*, September 18, 2017, accessed September 28, 2017, [https://www.washingtonpost.com/graphics/2017/world/rohingya/?utm\\_term=.72ba0c0a07d9](https://www.washingtonpost.com/graphics/2017/world/rohingya/?utm_term=.72ba0c0a07d9)

<sup>18</sup> Slodkowski and Bhatia, "U.S. seeks urgent action on Myanmar, U.N. eyes \$200 million for refugees," September 22, 2017.

<sup>19</sup> "Ethnic Cleansing," *The United Nations Office on Genocide Prevention and the Responsibility to Protect*, The United Nations, accessed September 30, 2017, <http://www.un.org/en/genocideprevention/ethnic-cleansing.html>

<sup>20</sup> Ibid.

<sup>21</sup> "Genocide," *The United Nations Office on Genocide Prevention and the Responsibility to Protect*, The United Nations, accessed September 30, 2017, <http://www.un.org/en/genocideprevention/genocide.html>.

It can be extremely difficult to identify a genocide because it is difficult to objectively determine "intent." The issue of intent is constantly debated in the international community because it is one of the few factors that separate genocide from other crimes. Furthermore, Myanmar's government has repeatedly denied accusations of the military's involvement in violence against the Rohingya, even going as far as accusing the Rohingya of burning their own houses for international attention.<sup>22</sup> In this case, since the government denies any intent to destroy the ethnic group, the crisis cannot be categorized as genocide. If it is believed that the government of Myanmar is not being truthful about revealing its actual intent, proving intent is still extremely difficult. As Katherine Goldsmith noted in *Genocide Studies and Prevention*, "Intent refers to a person's state of mind, a private thought process that, unless explicitly stated, is very difficult, if not impossible, to prove."<sup>23</sup> In order to classify the Rohingya case as genocide, the international community needs conclusive evidence of intent to commit genocide. Once again, obtaining proof "beyond reasonable doubt" remains a daunting task, which is impossible without either a confession from the government of Myanmar or some form of international intervention.

Still, of the five characteristics listed by the U.N. to identify genocide, the first four have been met by Myanmar's military for their treatment of the Rohingya people. Around 140,000 Rohingya have been forcibly relegated to Internally Displaced Persons (IDP) camps, where they are subject to conditions and restrictions not present elsewhere in the Rakhine state. Such impoverished, discriminatory, and under-developed IDP camps constantly allow for human rights abuses to occur. Control of Rohingya marriages and prevention of births within these camps are also common measures in an effort to destroy the Rohingya ethnic identity.<sup>24</sup> Another example of such government sanctioned effort is the anti-Rohingya campaigns conducted by local political parties that entail violence. These campaigns usually include boycotts, where those involved avoid interaction with Muslims, while those who do interact with them face public humiliation and persecution.<sup>25</sup> As a result, many of the Rohingya people have died although the exact number remains uncertain. Even if the Rohingya crisis is not yet severe enough to be classified as genocide, it can certainly expand from ethnic cleansing to genocide if Myanmar's government does not stop its anti-Rohingya campaigns.

On September 11, 2017, the U.N. High Commissioner for Human Rights, Zeid Ra'ad al-Husseini, did accuse Myanmar of carrying out "a textbook example of ethnic cleansing."<sup>26</sup> The informal definition of ethnic cleansing clearly fits the Myanmar case, which involved the violent removal of one ethnic group by another from the geographic area of Myanmar. However, because ethnic cleansing is not considered a crime according to international law, this accusation is of no use because it does not guarantee any action on behalf of the international community to retaliate against the ethnic cleansing.

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<sup>22</sup> Nick Cumming-Bruce, "Rohingya Crisis in Myanmar Is 'Ethnic Cleansing,' U.N. Rights Chief Says," *New York Times*, September 11, 2017, accessed September 28, 2017,

<https://www.nytimes.com/2017/09/11/world/asia/myanmar-rohingya-ethnic-cleansing.html?mcubz=1>

<sup>23</sup> Katherine Goldsmith, 2010, "The Issue of Intent in the Genocide Convention and Its Effect on the Prevention and Punishment of the Crime of Genocide: Toward a Knowledge Based Approach," *Genocide Studies and Prevention: An International Journal* 5, no. 3, 241.

<http://scholarcommons.usf.edu/cgi/viewcontent.cgi?article=1092&context=gsp>.

<sup>24</sup> Zarni, Maung, and Alice Cowley, 2014, "The Slow-Burning Genocide Of Myanmar's Rohingya," *Pacific Rim Law & Policy Journal*, 10.

<sup>25</sup> Ibid.

<sup>26</sup> Cumming-Bruce, "Rohingya Crisis in Myanmar Is 'Ethnic Cleansing,' U.N. Rights Chief Says," September 22, 2017.

In addition, the status of Rohingya in Myanmar and as refugees in neighboring countries remains uncertain, which has additionally problematic implications for the standard of living of the Rohingya people. In Myanmar, the minority group is denied citizenship based on claims that they are illegal immigrants from Bangladesh, even though they have been in Myanmar for centuries.<sup>27</sup> In 1982, the military dictator General Ne Win enacted the Burma Citizenship Law, which recognized 135 minority groups, excluding Rohingya. Staff Writer for Harvard International Review, Alexandra Phillips, describes the application of this law as follows: “Immigrants that settled in Myanmar before independence in 1948 are considered legal immigrants; all others are considered illegal immigrants unless they can prove their ancestors immigrated to Burma before 1948.”<sup>28</sup> Since many of the Rohingya people lacked proof of their ancestors’ migration because they had settled in Myanmar centuries ago, the Rohingya are treated as illegal immigrants in their own country. Absence of official citizenship or legal migration status usually translates into an absence of basic rights. Thus, the Rohingya do not have property rights or identification cards; they are denied access to higher education or government positions; and they are subject to curfews, high marriage fees, and laws limiting their reproduction.<sup>29</sup>

Furthermore, as the Rohingya flee persecution and seek refuge in the neighboring country of Bangladesh (their supposed country of origin), they are unwanted there as well. Of the 1.1 million Rohingya that lived in Myanmar, approximately 420,000 fled to Bangladesh.<sup>30</sup> Even while they are attempting to flee, they continue to encounter problems such as capsized boats and land mines “planted along the border, presumably aimed at killing escapees.”<sup>31</sup> Many of those arriving in Bangladesh are detained at the border and forced to return to Myanmar, because Bangladesh does not recognize the Rohingya as refugees.<sup>32</sup> Even those who are allowed to enter the country face terrible conditions because Bangladesh is not able to provide for them. When Bangladesh pressured Myanmar to deal with the persecution of the Rohingya, Myanmar’s officials proposed to take back 500,000 of the Rohingya refugees.<sup>33</sup> If according to this agreement, refugees are returned to Myanmar against their will, this agreement would be in violation of refugee rights, which prevent forcible return of refugees to the country from which they had originally escaped.

Such actions of the governments of Myanmar and Bangladesh, as well as the current conditions in both countries, are in conflict with international law pertaining to the rights of refugees. According to Article 14 of the Universal Declaration of Human Rights, everyone has a right to seek refuge from persecution.<sup>34</sup> Thus, as security forces in Myanmar prevent Rohingya from fleeing and security forces in Bangladesh prevent them from entering, the security forces

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<sup>27</sup> Alexandra Phillip, “The World's Blind Spot: Shedding Light on the Persecuted,” *Harvard Business Review*, 35 no. 2, (Fall 2013), accessed September 28, 2017, <http://www.jstor.org.proxy-tu.researchport.umd.edu/stable/pdf/42763572.pdf>

<sup>28</sup> Ibid.

<sup>29</sup> Ibid.

<sup>30</sup> Bearak, Karklis and Meko, “The ‘ethnic cleansing’ of the Rohingya,” September 18, 2017.

<sup>31</sup> Ibid.

<sup>32</sup> Kevin Ponniah, “Who will help Myanmar's Rohingya?” *BBC*, January 10, 2017, accessed October 3, 2017, <http://www.bbc.com/news/world-asia-38168917>.

<sup>33</sup> “Bangladesh: Myanmar proposes Rohingya refugee return,” *Al-Jazeera*, October 2, 2017, accessed October 3, 2017, <http://www.aljazeera.com/news/2017/10/bangladesh-myanmar-proposes-rohingya-refugee-return-171002114238000.html>

<sup>34</sup> International Justice Resource Center, “Asylum and the Rights of Refugees,” *ijrcenter.org*, accessed October 3, 2017, <http://www.ijrcenter.org/refugee-law/>.



are violating the Rohingya's right to freedom of movement. In addition, the principle of non-refoulement prevents the forcible return of refugees to the country that they fled from.<sup>35</sup> Therefore, Bangladesh cannot force the Rohingya refugees to return to Myanmar even if Myanmar agrees to accept them. While current actions of Bangladesh and Myanmar violate international law pertaining to refugees, neither country is a signatory to the 1951 Convention Relating to the Status of Refugees or its 1967 Protocol, which are the primary sources of international law on refugees.<sup>36</sup> This implies that the U.N. cannot force these countries to comply with international law on the rights of refugees.

### **Non-Intervention and Responsibility to Protect**

Although there is a legal basis for action and intervention towards Myanmar, namely through Article 48 of the UN Charter, which allows the Security Council to carry out decisions to promote and preserve international peace, the international community is currently undergoing a normative transition that could offer a more ethical basis for intervention in these types of situations.<sup>37</sup> The traditionally held notion of non-intervention has historically led to paralysis on the part of state actors considering whether to respond to human rights abuses due to their shared respect for state sovereignty. Despite this, the newly emerging norm of responsibility to protect can be seen as a way to redefine the traditionally understood primacy of state sovereignty in a way that would allow outside states, within bounds and for humanitarian reasons, to violate the territorial sovereignty of a state to protect its populace when it fails to do so.

In the past, a number of disturbing atrocities and human rights abuses have been committed against ethnic minority groups without any action taken by witnessing countries to condemn or "punish" the perpetrators due to respect for state sovereignty. In her book, *A Problem From Hell*, Samantha Power argues that when faced with genocides in countries such as Iraq, Bosnia, and Rwanda, the United States has had credible information of these human rights abuses, yet has pursued a policy of non-intervention.<sup>38</sup> For example, throughout the Rwandan genocide, the United States seemed increasingly hesitant to intervene or even label the atrocities as genocide. This lack of humanitarian intervention has been attributed to the loss of American lives during the humanitarian intervention into the Somali crisis in 1993; Somali militias had shot down two Black Hawk helicopters with US troops in 1992, and in June 1993, the militias had also killed two dozen UN peacekeepers.<sup>39</sup> The lack of action in the face of human rights abuses is not specific to the United States, as it has occurred in countries across the globe. France, even though it took no stance on the Rwandan regime's racial discrimination, had equipped the armed forces responsible for the ethnic cleansing only weeks before.<sup>40</sup> The United Nations had removed 75% of its peacekeeping forces from Rwanda despite knowledge that the

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<sup>35</sup> Ibid.

<sup>36</sup> UNHCR, "States Parties to the 1951 Convention relating to the Status of Refugees and the 1967 Protocol," *UNHCR*, 2015, accessed October 3, 2017, <http://www.unhcr.org/en-us/protection/basic/3b73b0d63/states-parties-1951-convention-its-1967-protocol.html>

<sup>37</sup> *Social, Humanitarian And Cultural Questions*. 2017. Ebook. [https://web.archive.org/web/20130927221000/http://unyearbook.un.org/1948-49YUN/1948-49\\_P1\\_CH5.pdf](https://web.archive.org/web/20130927221000/http://unyearbook.un.org/1948-49YUN/1948-49_P1_CH5.pdf).

<sup>38</sup> Power, Samantha. 2013. *A Problem From Hell*. New York: Basic Books.

<sup>39</sup> Sarkin, Jeremy. 2017. "The Responsibility To Protect And The Duty To Prevent Genocide: Lessons To Be Learned From The Role Of The International Community And The Media During The Rwandan Genocide And The Conflict In The Former Yugoslavia". *Transnational Law Review* 33: 35.

<sup>40</sup> Ibid.

Rwandan government was planning genocide. The inaction of the UN Secretariat and Security Council, even with information regarding the impending genocide, has been referred to as “[A] failure of international will—of civic courage—at the highest level.”<sup>41</sup>

Following the aftermath of the genocides committed in Rwanda and Srebrenica, Francis Deng, a scholar from the Brookings Institute and eventual UN special advisor on the prevention of genocide, published “Sovereignty as Responsibility,” which argues that states are not defined solely by their borders but rather by their obligation to protect their citizens.<sup>42</sup> In 2000, Canada’s International Commission on Intervention and State Sovereignty, with UN support, published their report, “The Responsibility to Protect,” as guidelines for humanitarian intervention. It was the first time the emerging norm “responsibility to protect” or “R2P” appeared on paper.<sup>43</sup>

Despite the emergence of responsibility to protect (R2P), nonintervention in the affairs of other states has been the prevailing norm in the international community for almost 400 years. The norm of non-intervention in other states’ affairs began with the birth of sovereignty and the modern nation-state following the Peace of Westphalia in 1648. This series of peace treaties ended the Thirty Years War in the Holy Roman Empire and established the notion of traditional, or “Westphalian,” sovereignty. According to Max Weber, sovereignty in the international community refers to “[A state] that successfully claims the monopoly of the legitimate use of physical force within a given territory.”<sup>44</sup> Sovereignty can also be understood in a legal context as “the basic international legal status of a state [which is] not subject, within its territorial jurisdiction, to the governmental, executive, legislative, or judicial jurisdiction of a foreign state or to foreign law other than public international law.”<sup>45</sup>

The norms of both non-intervention and self-determination arose out of respect of state sovereignty within the international community and are enshrined as core principles of international law. Article 2 of the United Nations Charter highlights the norm of non-intervention and respect for state sovereignty; where it holds that member states, “shall refrain in their international relations from the threat or use of force against the territorial integrity or political independence of any state” and codifies the respect of equal rights and self-determination of peoples in the international legal system. The norm of non-intervention is based on the respect of state sovereignty and right of self-determination. States have overarching authority within their own borders and have the right to develop and govern themselves in the ways they see fit.

Despite the traditional norm of non-intervention in the Westphalian international system, the responsibility to protect (R2P) norm has gained increasing traction in the international community. This new norm was first highlighted following the Rwandan genocide, when UN Secretary General Kofi Annan called for a “[decisive] response to gross human rights violations.”<sup>46</sup> At the 2005 UN World Summit, the United Nations formally highlighted the responsibility of states to protect their populations from genocide, war crimes, ethnic cleansing,

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<sup>41</sup> Benjamin, Dave O. 2010. "Rethinking Nonintervention". *Public Integrity* 12 (3): 201-218. doi:10.2753/pin1099-9922120301.

<sup>42</sup> Homans, Lynch, Luce, Kester, Gramer, Boot, Walt, and Traub. 2017. "Responsibility To Protect: A Short History". *Foreign Policy*. <http://foreignpolicy.com/2011/10/11/responsibility-to-protect-a-short-history/>.

<sup>43</sup> Ibid.

<sup>44</sup> Weber, Max. 1919. "Politics As A Vocation". Presentation, Munich, 1919.

<sup>45</sup> H Steinberger, 'Sovereignty', in Max Planck Institute for Comparative Public Law and International Law, *Encyclopedia for Public International Law*, vol 10 (North Holland, 1987) 414.

<sup>46</sup> Ibid, 38.

and crimes against humanity.<sup>47</sup> According to R2P, the international community has the responsibility to intervene in humanitarian means (i.e. economic sanctions, conflict mediation, and minimally violent military action) when states fail to protect their populations from these crimes.

Although responsibility to protect is typically viewed as having evolved from humanitarian intervention norms, it can also be seen as a new era of “sovereignty-building,” where the notion of sovereignty is reconceptualized and transformed.<sup>48</sup> Responsibility to protect as “sovereignty-building” can be understood to be distinct from typical humanitarian intervention doctrine due to its focus on promoting the long-term protection of state populations. Humanitarian intervention doctrine focuses on short-term solutions to end human suffering, whereas the goal of responsibility to protect can be seen as transforming the informal institutions and society within a state to achieve the goal of protecting populations in an ongoing, durable fashion. Even in this view of R2P as an emerging reconceptualization of sovereignty, it still conflicts with the traditional view of sovereignty and its norm of non-intervention. The traditional view remains focused on territorial sovereignty of states, whereas R2P focuses on popular and positive sovereignty, which emphasize the population of a state and its right to be protected and pursue domestic and foreign policy goals.<sup>49</sup>

The conflict between the non-intervention norm and the emerging responsibility to protect norm has largely been fought among Western countries, typically those in North America and Europe, and non-Western countries, most notably the BRICS (Brazil, Russia, India, China, and South Africa). The reasoning behind the contestation of the R2P norm can fall into two overarching categories: the country’s conceptualization of sovereignty and suspicion of Western attempts at implementing the norm.<sup>50</sup> Russia and China remain loyal to the traditional concept of sovereignty and territorial integrity, with Russia expressing reservations about R2P in its 2013 Foreign Policy Concept as follows:

Attempts to represent violations of international law as its “creative” application are dangerous. It is unacceptable that military intervention and other forms of interference from without, which undermine the foundations of international law based on the principle of sovereign equality of states, be carried out on the pretext of implementing the concept of ‘R2P.’<sup>51</sup>

Russian scholars have also suggested that many of the real reasons behind Western interventions have had to do with advancing their strategic interests and enacting regime change.<sup>52</sup> These types of suspicions are in line with the fears of Brazil, India, and South Africa given their history of colonialism; these countries mutually fear that Western culture attempts to dominate the non-Western world. Although much of the West has accepted the R2P norm, concerns regarding the motives of R2P and preservation of state sovereignty among non-Western

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<sup>47</sup> *Resolution Adopted By The General Assembly*. 2005. Ebook. UN General Assembly. <http://www.un.org/womenwatch/ods/A-RES-60-1-E.pdf>.

<sup>48</sup> Piiparinen, Touko. 2013. "Responsibility To Protect: The Coming Of Age Of Sovereignty-Building". *Civil Wars* 15 (3): 380-405. doi:10.1080/13698249.2013.842750.

<sup>49</sup> Ibid.

<sup>50</sup> Ziegler, Charles E. 2016. "Contesting The Responsibility To Protect". *International Studies Perspectives* 17 (1): 75-97. doi:10.1111/insp.12085.

<sup>51</sup> Ibid.

<sup>52</sup> Ibid.

countries have put the international community at an impasse in terms of implementation. This impasse holds implications for intervention in the current Rohingya crisis in Myanmar. With both Russia and China holding permanent seats on the United Nations Security Council, their views on sovereignty and the responsibility to protect populations from human rights breaches hold considerable weight on whether there will be direct intervention from the United Nations in Myanmar. The use of the veto within the Security Council can be expected to impede efforts at direct humanitarian intervention, and as such may leave the use of indirect intervention or international pressure by individual states as the only worthwhile options to pursue in attempting to alleviate the suffering and harm done to the Rohingya.

### **International Response and Economic Sanctions**

As of now, the future of the Rohingya Muslims appears bleak. They are unwanted in both Myanmar and Bangladesh, and thus, disenfranchised in both countries. Perhaps one of their last hopes, the U.N., has been barred by Myanmar's government from entering the country. The international community has responded to the crisis by condemning the persecution of the Rohingya, but it should not stop here. U.N. member states should combine their efforts to pressure Myanmar's government into reversing its practices and providing for the Rohingya minority. Both Myanmar and Bangladesh should be pressured to sign the 1951 Convention and the 1967 Protocol. Myanmar should abolish its discriminatory Burma Citizenship Law and recognize the rights of the Rohingya people as humans and as citizens. However, without a permanent peaceful solution for this problem, Myanmar will remain divided and unstable in the years to come. Learning from the example of previous genocides, such as those in Germany, Rwanda, Bosnia, and Darfur, the world cannot remain silent and let another case of ethnic cleansing occur or expand into a genocide.

Perhaps the best way to increase pressure on Myanmar is through economic sanctions. While under military rule, Myanmar did face sanctions, placed on 800 of its companies and 500 Burmese individuals, from the U.S. and the European Union. Many of these sanctions were lifted when the country had a democratic transfer of power in 2012.<sup>53</sup> However, despite the election of a democratic regime and the lifting of sanctions, violence against the Rohingya has continued. Thus, it can be concluded that western countries lifted the sanctions prematurely. Furthermore, an arms embargo remains in place even though other sanctions have been removed, which indicates a lack of trust in the newly elected democratic government of Myanmar to stop or prevent the human rights violations that occur in the country.<sup>54</sup>

While international condemnation can psychologically influence Myanmar's government to change its actions, placing sanctions will hurt the country in a more tangible way, and the consequences for human rights violations will become more real. As Vladislav Inozemstev notes, "The purpose of sanctions is to generate economic pain for political purposes."<sup>55</sup> Thus, hopefully renewing a set of more severe sanctions on Myanmar, or even the threat thereof, can impact the country's economy to the extent that, in order to avoid a complete destruction of its economy,

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<sup>53</sup> Phillip, "The World's Blind Spot: Shedding Light on the Persecuted," 33.

<sup>54</sup> Ibid

<sup>55</sup> Vladislav Inozemstev, "Yes, Sanctions Work," *American Interest*, 10 no. 4 (Mar/Apr 2015), 33. <http://proxy-tu.researchport.umd.edu/login?ins=tu&url=http://search.ebscohost.com.proxy-tu.researchport.umd.edu/login.aspx?direct=true&db=a9h&AN=101123888&site=eds-live&scope=site>

Myanmar is forced to yield and stop the atrocious human rights violations occurring against the Rohingya.

Even though economic sanctions have become a popular tool of foreign policy after the Cold War, their effectiveness remains disputed. The literature on economic sanctions contends that sanctions are not effective for a few reasons. Some scholars have argued that in cases of human rights violations, sanctions have actually led to a deterioration of human rights conditions in target countries.<sup>56</sup> Others believe that sanctions impact the innocent civilians more than the political elites who are making the decisions that the sanctions aim to change.<sup>57</sup>

However, there is a way to place sanctions strategically in order to prevent negative impact on civilians. One way to do so is by implementing smart sanctions, defined as follows:

Ostensibly, smart or targeted sanctions are the precision-guided munitions of economic statecraft. They are designed to hurt elite supporters of the targeted regime, while imposing minimal hardship on the mass public. By altering the material incentives of powerful supporters, the argument runs, these supporters will eventually pressure the targeted government into making concessions.<sup>58</sup>

Smart sanctions, when implemented, have alleviated the negative impacts of sanctions on civilians as they reduced the humanitarian costs in target countries.<sup>59</sup> Furthermore, a few scholars claim that sanctions have been effective in many cases, both humanitarian and non-humanitarian. For example, sanctions were effective in the case of South Africa, as they increased pressure on the government to end Apartheid. In addition, in a non-humanitarian case, "Iran would not be negotiating with the West had powerful sanctions not forced it to the table."<sup>60</sup> Thus, according to Inozemtsev, Moscow's Director of the Center for Post-Industrial Studies and Washington's Non-resident senior associate at the Center for Strategic and International Studies, sanctions can be effective despite the contrary consensus in western academic literature.<sup>61</sup>

Furthermore, even though the effectiveness of sanctions is disputed, placing economic sanctions on Myanmar remains the best policy option to deal with this humanitarian crisis. Because the international community is currently undergoing a transition from the norm of non-intervention to the new norm of right to protect, direct intervention on behalf of the Rohingya people is currently not considered an option due to the need to respect Myanmar's sovereignty. Furthermore, the U.N. Charter specifically states that "Nothing contained in the present Charter shall authorize the United Nations to intervene in matters which are essentially within the domestic jurisdiction of any state."<sup>62</sup> Thus, even the original U.N. law prevents direct intervention if one considers the Rohingya crisis a domestic one. While, as recently as

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<sup>56</sup> Dursun Peksen, "Better or Worse? The Effect of Economic Sanctions on Human Rights," *Journal of Peace Research*, 46, no. 1 (Jan, 2009) 59. <http://www.jstor.org.proxy-tu.researchport.umd.edu/stable/pdf/27640799.pdf>.

<sup>57</sup> Daniel W. Drezner, "Sanctions Sometimes Smart: Targeted Sanctions in Theory and Practice," *International Studies Review*, 13, no.1 (March, 2011) 96. <http://www.jstor.org/stable/23016144>

<sup>58</sup> Ibid.

<sup>59</sup> Ibid.

<sup>60</sup> Vladislav Inozemtsev, "Yes, Sanctions Work," *American Interest*, 10 no. 4 (Mar/Apr 2015), 34. <http://proxy-tu.researchport.umd.edu/login?ins=tu&url=http://search.ebscohost.com.proxy-tu.researchport.umd.edu/login.aspx?direct=true&db=a9h&AN=101123888&site=eds-live&scope=site>

<sup>61</sup> Ibid.

<sup>62</sup> Jayshree Bajoria and Robert McMahon, "The Dilemma of Humanitarian Intervention," *Council on Foreign Relations*, June 12, 2013. <https://www.cfr.org/backgrounder/dilemma-humanitarian-intervention#chapter-title-0-2>.

2005, international law has been reinterpreted to include the right to protect in cases of genocide, ethnic cleansing, and war crimes, many countries, most notably Russia and China, are reluctant to intervene in humanitarian crises based on claims of sovereignty.<sup>63</sup> Therefore, sanctions can be a sort of middle ground that many countries can agree upon, and “as tools of international pressure that fall between diplomacy and armed force,” they can achieve “political ends while avoiding the costs and destruction of war.”<sup>64</sup> Sanctions are also appealing because they can send across a stronger message of disapproval to the targeted state than condemnation alone. This policy tool is a form of indirect intervention that maintains the sovereignty of the targeted country, does not require a military commitment from the international community, and reveals with a sense of urgency that the targeted state needs to change its action.

Thus, multilateral economic sanctions coupled with diplomatic dialogue might be able to induce Myanmar’s government to terminate the ethnic cleansing campaign against the Rohingya. There is a desperate need for all countries to come together and act because action taken only by Western countries will not impact Myanmar as severely as action taken by all U.N. states. The primary reason for this is that Myanmar’s top trading partners include China, Thailand, India, Singapore, and Japan.<sup>65</sup> As a result, sanctions placed by western countries do not affect at least 82.24% of the country’s imports and 76.48% of its exports.<sup>66</sup> Multilateral sanctions placed by all U.N. countries can impact Myanmar’s economy and reveal international consensus on the need for Myanmar’s government to protect the Rohingya. Furthermore, these actions will be in compliance with international law, which makes all states responsible to act in cases of ethnic cleansing.

However, two things must be kept in mind while placing sanctions. Firstly, these sanctions should be “smart” and they should be targeted so that they do not harm innocent civilians if possible. Secondly, the U.N. and other countries with whom Myanmar shares a diplomatic relationship should maintain open dialogue with leaders of Myanmar as a way to reinforce the purpose of the sanctions and to further pressure the government to end its human rights violations. Coupled with diplomatic discussion, smart economic sanctions can potentially be effective in bringing peace to the country of Myanmar and diminishing the suffering of the Rohingya people.

## Conclusion

The bottom line is that the international community cannot remain silent anymore. Myanmar’s government has violated the human rights of the minority Rohingya population many times in the past, and it continues to do so today. As a result of these acts, the Rohingya people are disenfranchised in their own country, and even when they try to flee their country, they do not receive refugee rights in countries such as Bangladesh. Even though the crisis meets almost all of the requirements of genocide, the international community needs to at least collectively identify it as ethnic cleansing. Acting upon this identification, however, becomes a little troubling for states due to the conflicting norms of non-intervention based on respect for state sovereignty and responsibility to protect (R2P). Since many countries remain skeptical

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<sup>63</sup> Ibid.

<sup>64</sup> Richard Garfield, “Economic Sanctions, Humanitarianism, and Conflict After the Cold War,” *Social Justice*, 29, no.3 (2002), 94. <https://www.jstor.org/stable/pdf/29768138.pdf>.

<sup>65</sup> World Integrated Trade Solution (WITS), “Myanmar Trade at a Glance : Most Recent Values,” WITS (2016). <https://wits.worldbank.org/CountrySnapshot/en/MMR>

<sup>66</sup> Ibid.

about the use of direct intervention in humanitarian cases due to the resulting infringement of Myanmar's sovereignty, all U.N. member states should impose economic sanctions on Myanmar to pressure the government to change its inhumane policies against the Rohingya people. The effectiveness of such sanctions can only be determined after the fact, but by acting against this case of ethnic cleansing, the international community can at least hold Myanmar's government accountable and send a message to future generations that crimes such as ethnic cleansing and genocide will not remain unpunished.

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# Thinking Strategically About North Korea

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**Abstract:** *Thinking strategically about policy options regarding North Korea's nuclear weapons and ballistic missile programs requires consideration of the political ends sought by Washington and Pyongyang. It also requires consideration of the policy means by which each side may pursue said ends. This paper puts forth a logic for doing just that. It begins by differentiating the terms strategic and strategy. Then, it considers the objectives and relevant capabilities of each nation-state. Throughout the paper the potential effects of each nation-state's choices, actions, and instruments are given consideration based on the political objectives identified. The paper concludes with a brief consideration of the effects of strategic orientation and the risks presented by some of the choices before American policymakers.*

North Korea's nuclear weapons and ballistic missile programs present American foreign policymakers with an intractable set of policy choices. Every plausible course of action carries substantial risk. Paradoxically, many of the most effective options available to the president would trade a reduction in the immediate — more limited, yet severe — threat posed by North Korea for an exponential increase in the gravity of future threats posed by China, Russia, and other nuclear armed nation-states. This situation is the result of lack of intelligence about the motives driving the regime of Kim Jong-un and the constraints of the international system. Under these conditions, the achievement of any given set of American political objectives requires careful consideration of the *strategic* context.

This is a paper about how to think, not what to think. It is, perhaps subtly, perhaps not so subtly, an argument for the importance of thinking about the effects of a given policy before the selection of any policy. To highlight the differences between political purpose and policy, this paper begins with an examination of the differences between strategic and strategy. To introduce the current context of the Korean peninsula, it then reviews the potential political objective of Pyongyang. After that, an examination of the resources with which North Korea might pursue its strategic objectives is presented. Because the strategic context is interactive, this paper then reviews the potential political objectives of Washington and the resources with which the United States might pursue its strategic objectives. With the above in mind, a brief discussion about how to orient political objectives and strategy is put forth — all with an eye toward the final section, a general review of the strategic choices before American policymakers and how one ought to think about them.

## The Concepts of Strategic and Strategy in the Abstract

In discussions of foreign policy and debates about the use of military force, the word “strategic” is widely used. It is rarely used properly. In this context, strategic is not the adjectival form of the word strategy. Strategic does not mean important or significant. Yet, as Colin Gray notes, the term is often inserted into text and conversation when the author or speaker

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means just that — important or significant.<sup>1</sup> Within the context of foreign policy and debates about the use of military force, the word strategic approximates, but is not synonymous with, the meaning of the word decisive. That said, the term should not be used to make assertions of aspirational decisiveness. Historical examples, including Germany's use of the V-2 rocket against the United Kingdom<sup>2</sup> and the US's use of the B-52 bomber against North Vietnam,<sup>3</sup> warn of assuming decisive effect *a priori*. As instruments of policy, Germany's V-2 and America's B-52 produced little in regard to the aims sought (the surrender of the United Kingdom and preservation of South Vietnam's independence, respectively).

Within the context of foreign policy and debates about the use of military force, the term "strategic" refers to the consequences of a choice, action, or instrument on the political outcome pursued. A choice, action, or instrument is strategic *if* it has a direct effect on the achievement of the desired political outcome or, *if* it has a direct effect on the inability to achieve such.<sup>4</sup> The critical element is the effect on the political objective. Foreign policy, including the use of military force, is undertaken to achieve political, and politically defined, objectives. For a choice, action, or instrument to possess strategic value, it must affect the achievement of the identified objective. Although it is possible to make estimates of likely strategic effect based on evidence from past use, the actual strategic effect of a choice, action, or instrument will only be known after selection and application.

Although this conceptualization of the term strategic can be found in writings that pre-date the work of the Prussian general and theorist Carl von Clausewitz, it is his work *On War* that provides the foundational expression of this idea in the West. At the beginning of his discussion regarding the nature of war, Clausewitz writes "War is thus an act of force to compel our enemy to do our will".<sup>5</sup> With this, Clausewitz is arguing that war is a contest over politics. The political object of the war is key. Clausewitz returns to this idea repeatedly, often more explicitly. Later, he continues to expand on the idea, writing that "...the *political object*, which was the *original motive*, must become an essential factor..." in the use of force.<sup>6</sup> For Clausewitz, the political objective is the motivating force behind policy (military and non-military). The political objective is also the criteria by which policy success is measured, and by which the effectiveness of a given choice, action, or instrument is judged. Clausewitz's argument established the standard that something could only be strategic *if* it had a direct effect on the political objective(s) being sought. His conceptualization of the term has endured. Its logic is present in Giulio Douhet's theories regarding air power,<sup>7</sup> and in Bernard Brodie's work

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<sup>1</sup> Colin S. Gray, *The Future of Strategy* (Cambridge: Polity, 2015), 26.

<sup>2</sup> Karl W. Deutsch, "The Impact of Science and Technology on International Politics," *Daedalus* 88, no. 4 (1959): 669-85, <http://www.jstor.org/stable/20026535>.

<sup>3</sup> Chad Parker, "American Bombing Strategy and Teaching the Vietnam War," *OAH Magazine of History* 18, no. 5 (2004): 59-62, <http://www.jstor.org/stable/25163724>.

<sup>4</sup> Gray, *The Future of Strategy*, 26.

<sup>5</sup> Carl von Clausewitz, "On the Nature of War," in *On War*, translated by Michael Howard and Peter Paret (Princeton, NJ: Princeton University Press, 1976), 75.

<sup>6</sup> Carl von Clausewitz, "On the Nature of War," in *On War*, 80. Italics in original.

<sup>7</sup> Giulio Douhet, *The Command of The Air*, translated by Dino Ferrari (Washington, DC: Air Force History and Museums Program, 1998).

regarding nuclear weapons.<sup>8</sup> It is also present in modern arguments about military doctrine<sup>9</sup> and the potential of weaponized cyber technologies.<sup>10</sup>

Strategy, as opposed to the term strategic, is about causal logic — not effect. Strategy is a causal argument about the mix of choices, actions, and instruments most likely to achieve a desired end. In regard to foreign policy and the use of military force, that end is ultimately political. However, strategy may not bring about immediate or direct effects. Strategy is an expression of the ways and means by which a political objective is sought. Strategy attempts to coordinate the use of choices, actions, and instruments to create conditions in which strategic effect becomes possible.<sup>11</sup>

Something is strategic based on the desires of one actor, but strategy is interactive. To be successful, strategy must be based on calculations of the likely effects of the choices, actions, and instruments of all parties — the originator of any interaction and the respondents. Based on such calculations, strategy is a plan for how the political objective ought to be pursued.<sup>12</sup> In this, the term *ought* is critically important.

The use of the word *ought* seeks to capture judgments about the costs and benefits (the relative efficiency) of any proposed strategy, the probable reaction of the target audience, and the likely interpretation of the strategy's legitimacy on the part of the target and other observers. The achievement of any political objective, even when pursued without military force, requires legitimation. The permanent achievement of the political outcome, that is, for the condition sought by the originator to be static, respondents — even former adversaries — must ultimately accept it. Respondents must be convinced that the costs of resistance are greater than the costs of accepting the originator's desired outcome. If the political objective has been sought via the use of military force, such legitimation is even more important — it is the source of lasting peace.<sup>13</sup> Short of genocide, peace cannot be achieved without it. If the political objective has been sought via choices, actions, and instruments that will be viewed as illegitimate or unacceptable by the target or observers, said strategy reduces the likelihood that the political objective will be achieved. It also reduces the likelihood that any resulting peace and security will be permanent. Even if the originator of the interaction achieves their political objective with such a strategy, the costs of doing so may make them worse off — a pyrrhic victory.<sup>14</sup> As a result, whether or not a choice, action, or instrument possesses strategic value is contextual.

Strategic success, therefore, is predicated on the degree and accuracy with which an actor takes into account the political objectives they seek, the political objectives others seek, the choices, actions, and instruments available to each, and the objectives, choices, actions, and instruments of observers — as well as strategically important interpretations regarding the perceived legitimacy of objectives, choices, actions, and instruments. In total, and whether

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<sup>8</sup> Bernard Brodie, "Implications for Military Policy" in *The Absolute Weapon: Atomic Power and World Order*, edited by Bernard Brodie (New Haven, CT: Yale Institute of International Studies, 1946), 57-123.

<sup>9</sup> David H. Ucko, "Innovation or Inertia," in *The New Counterinsurgency Era* (Washington, DC: Georgetown University Press, 2009), 141-167

<sup>10</sup> Paul Rosenzweig, *Cyber Warfare* (Santa Barbara, CA: Praeger Security International, 2013).

<sup>11</sup> B. H. Liddell Hart, *Strategy*, Second Revised Edition (London, England: Faber & Faber Ltd., 1967), 322-330.

<sup>12</sup> Gray, *The Future of Strategy*, 7-22; Lawrence Freedman. "Part II: Strategies of Force" in *Strategy: A History*, (New York, NY: Oxford University Press, 2013), 69-244; Carl von Clausewitz, "On Strategy in General," in *On War*, translated by Michael Howard and Peter Paret (Princeton, NJ: Princeton University Press, 1976), 177-222.

<sup>13</sup> Carl von Clausewitz, "On the Nature of War," in *On War*, 75-123.

<sup>14</sup> Emile Simpson, *War from the Ground Up* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2013).

consciously considered or not, these elements constitute the strategic context within which strategy is formed.

Understanding the strategic context requires knowledge. It requires information that is (ideally) complete, accurate, timely, and capable of serving as a basis for decision making. This knowledge, referred to as strategic intelligence, provides policymakers with insights regarding the choices, actions, and instruments that strategically important nation-states and non-state actors may engage — both proactively and in response to the originator's attempt to achieve their desired political objective.<sup>15</sup>

Turning to the current situation with North Korea, the first questions to ask — before attempting to develop an American policy response — is this: what is the strategic context? Answering that question requires developing answers to the following questions. What are the political objectives of the Kim Jong-un regime? What instruments does it have with which to pursue its objectives? Given its objectives and instruments, what is Pyongyang's likely strategy? What are the political objectives of the United States? What instruments does it possess with which to pursue those objectives? Given its objectives and instruments, what are the US's options in regard to strategies? What are the likely effects of the interaction among potential North Korean strategies and those of the United States — and other potential respondents and observers?

Strategy making is always done under conditions of uncertainty. The closed nature of the North Korean regime enhances the degree of uncertainty. The US lacks key pieces of strategic intelligence that would normally be provided by the American intelligence community. Nonetheless, policymakers must make choices. They must forge a strategy. The US's policy response may be based on a range of actions or inaction (inaction is still a response, better that it be considered as much as the use of any other specific instrument).

The US needs a strategy for dealing with North Korea. That requires making tough choices about the wisdom of particular actions and instruments. Imperfect as it is, what is known about the strategic context provides key pieces of wisdom to help one think through the crafting of such a strategy.

### **Potential to Plausible North Korean Political Objectives**

The biggest unknown of the strategic context is that of North Korea's political objectives. Based on observations of North Korean behavior — the pursuit and production of increasingly powerful nuclear weapons, the pursuit and production of increasingly capable ballistic missiles, and the promulgation of aggressive anti-American rhetoric — it is logical to assume Pyongyang is following a strategy motivated by four possible political objectives:

- *Prevent the collapse of the North Korean nation-state.*
- *Ensure the survival of the North Korean nation-state.*
- *Ensure the survival of the Kim regime.*
- *Bring about the reunification of the Korean peninsula under Pyongyang.*

Strategies for achieving the first three of these possible objectives are not mutually exclusive. For example, the decision to develop a nuclear deterrent could be part of a strategy to

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<sup>15</sup> Sherman Kent, *Strategic Intelligence for American World Policy* (Princeton, NJ: Princeton University Press, 2015).

ensure the survival of the North Korean nation-state by preventing forcible regime change as a result of South Korean or American military action. The decision could also be part of a strategy to ensure the survival of the Kim regime by increasing Kim Jong-un's prestige within the governing elite and/or by diverting resources from the traditional military establishment that potentially poses the greatest risk to young Kim's political (and perhaps, personal) survival. The decision could also be part of a strategy to prevent the collapse of the North Korean nation-state by leveraging nuclear weapons and ballistic missiles to extort aid and resources from South Korea, the US, and/or the international community writ large.

This lack of exclusivity creates a situation in which observation of the methods being used does little to help discern the motives of Pyongyang. Furthermore, it is possible that multiple political objectives — perhaps even inconsistent and intransitive objectives — might be sought by Kim Jong-un (as a result of individual personality traits) or by the regime itself (as a result of bureaucratic politics). In a closed society, with little opportunity for collecting evidence about the actual objectives, it becomes impossible to resolve questions about which one of these first three objectives might be the outcome sought by North Korea.

It is only the fourth possible objective, reunification of the peninsula under Pyongyang, in which it is possible to gain some clarity. This is possible because the strategy for seeking this fourth possible objective threatens the other three. It is rational to assume that North Korea understands that the existing South Korean regime will not submit to such an outcome through the use of any non-military instruments. Pyongyang cannot talk Seoul into reunification under Kim Jong-un. Only a strategy predicated on military force could potentially achieve this political objective. Yet, such a strategy would catalyze responses from the current government in Seoul, from Washington, and even from Beijing, which would threaten one, or more, of the first three potential political objectives outlined above. South Korea, the United States, China, and other nation-states and international governing organizations have expressed their position that any strategy that seeks to achieve changes in national boundaries by force is unacceptable.<sup>16</sup>

Although Pyongyang seeks reunification under a communist political system, and despite continuing rhetoric concerning reunification, evidence suggests Pyongyang's ways and means for seeking reunification do not include the use of military force against the South. In the late 1980's, Kim Il-sung dropped talk of reunification through offensive military action. Instead, Kim Il-sung began promoting defensive reunification. Kim Il-sung argued that reunification would be brought about through the removal of imperialist (read, American) influence and forces. Kim Il-sung believed that the denunciation of the US and the removal of US forces would lead naturally to a communist revolution in the South, paving the way for reunification. During the last half decade of his life, Kim Il-sung pursued a strategy aimed at reducing the ability of the United States to leverage its power in support of the existing South Korean

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<sup>16</sup> Christine Kim and Kaori Kaneko, "South Korea says Trump's warning to North Korea 'firm and specific'," *Reuters*, September 20, 2017, accessed November 07, 2017, <https://www.reuters.com/article/us-northkorea-missiles-trump-reaction/south-korea-says-trumps-warning-to-north-korea-firm-and-specific-idUSKCN1BV0DQ>; Matthew Nussbaum, Bryan Bender, Brent D. Griffiths, "Mattis warns of 'massive military response' if North Korea threatens attack," *POLITICO*, September 03, 2017, accessed November 07, 2017, <https://www.politico.com/story/2017/09/03/trump-north-korea-nuclear-242289>; "Reckless game over the Korean Peninsula runs risk of real war," *Global Times*, August 10, 2017, accessed November 07, 2017, <http://www.globaltimes.cn/content/1060791.shtml>; Simon Denyer and Amanda Erickson, "Beijing warns Pyongyang: You're on your own if you go after the United States," *The Washington Post*, August 11, 2017, accessed November 07, 2017, [https://www.washingtonpost.com/world/china-warns-north-korea-youre-on-your-own-if-you-go-after-the-us/2017/08/11/a01a4396-7e68-11e7-9026-4a0a64977c92\\_story.html?utm\\_term=.de0c3622609d](https://www.washingtonpost.com/world/china-warns-north-korea-youre-on-your-own-if-you-go-after-the-us/2017/08/11/a01a4396-7e68-11e7-9026-4a0a64977c92_story.html?utm_term=.de0c3622609d).



government. Kim Jong-un appears to be following his grandfather's lead. Since coming to power, Kim Jong-un's statements regarding reunification have stressed the common racial identity of Koreans and referenced American imperialism as the root cause behind Seoul's unwillingness to improve relations.<sup>17</sup>

The assessment above is based more on logic than empirical evidence. As such, it represents poor strategic intelligence. Nonetheless, it provides insight from which a general understanding of the motives of North Korea may be constructed.

The defensive nature of the first three possible political objectives and the defensive approach of Pyongyang in regard to the fourth, suggests a strategic context in which the Kim Jong-un regime is motivated by the desire to achieve one or both of two plausible political objectives: (1) the conservation of the regime; and, (2) a reduction in the efficacy of American power in the region. Assuming one or both of these objectives represents the ends being sought provides a basis for understanding the strategic context. That, however, leaves open questions regarding the means and ways through which North Korea might pursue these objectives.

Regardless of the ends being sought, given North Korea's lack of economic or diplomatic instruments, it is logical to assume North Korean strategy would be predicated on military instruments. North Korea's military capabilities, therefore, represent the next element of the strategic context.

### **North Korea's Military Capabilities**

The conventional military forces, and burgeoning nuclear capabilities, of North Korea endow the regime of Kim Jong-un with an ability to influence regional and international events. Whether or not this influence is strategic — whether or not it delivers one or both of the plausible political objectives identified above — depends on the nature of each political objective and its acceptability to regional neighbors and the United States (more on that shortly). Whether or not North Korea's influence rises to the level of strategic also depends on the potential, realized, and perceived relative military capabilities of North Korea, its neighbors, the United States, and other interested nation-states. Understandings on the part of any potential originator and respondents of the relative effectiveness (and legitimacy) of military instruments will shape choices regarding strategy. The question is: can North Korea's military deliver the regime's political objectives?

The opaque nature of the regime makes it difficult to assess how well North Korean forces would actually fight in combat — an ability that results from a combination of equipment, personnel, training, and doctrine. Nonetheless, enough information exists to provide a rough description of North Korea's military capabilities. From that, wisdom regarding the degree to which the regime's armed forces have the potential for strategic effect may be generated.

Based on available data, North Korea possesses a large — but increasingly obsolete — conventional military force. North Korea's conventional military is in no condition to carry out successful offensive land operations beyond its own borders. It cannot invade, seize, and hold the territory of South Korea or any other neighboring nation-state. It cannot take, then trade, land to conserve the regime or reduce the efficacy of American policies in the region. The conventional capabilities of South Korea are too great. When the strength of American forces

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<sup>17</sup> Yong Ho Park, "South and North Korea's Views on the Unification of the Korean Peninsula and Inter-Korean Relations," Brookings.edu, April 01, 2014, accessed November 7, 2017, <https://www.brookings.edu/wp-content/uploads/2014/04/Park-Young-Ho-paper.pdf>.

stationed in the region is included<sup>18</sup> and China's signaled unwillingness to support North Korea in any conflict originated by Pyongyang is factored in, the strategic limits of North Korea's conventional forces become clear.<sup>19</sup> The strategic weakness of North Korea's conventional forces results from the following factors.

### *The Strategic Balance in Manpower*

The North Korean army includes some 1,020,000 personnel, 3,500 main battle tanks, and 21,100 pieces of artillery.<sup>20</sup> In comparison, the South Korean army has approximately 495,000 individuals, 2,434 main battle tanks, and 11,038 pieces of artillery.<sup>21</sup> Although a comparison of raw numbers suggests a North Korean advantage, such a quantitative assessment is misleading.<sup>22</sup> The personnel and equipment, including tanks and artillery, of the North Korean army are at a qualitative disadvantage relative to those of the South Koreans.

Consider the relative state of North Korean personnel. The regime keeps an estimated 70 percent of its manpower forward deployed within seventy miles of the demilitarized zone between North Korea and South Korea.<sup>23</sup> The North Korean army is a conscription force. Military service in one of four branches (army, navy, air force, or the civil security force) is compulsory at age seventeen. Men must serve ten years; women must serve until age twenty-three.<sup>24</sup> Regular soldiers (as opposed to special forces personnel) are poorly fed and equipped.<sup>25</sup> The bulk of their training is focused on political indoctrination and rudimentary combat training.<sup>26</sup>

<sup>18</sup> Among American forces in the region the US has 28,500 personnel stationed in South Korea (including the 8th Army and 7th Air Force) and 47,050 personnel stationed in Japan (including the 7th Fleet and 3rd Marine Division); "Chapter Six: Asia." *The Military Balance* 117, no. 1 (2017): 237-350. doi:10.1080/04597222.2017.1271212.

<sup>19</sup> Denyer and Erickson, "Beijing warns Pyongyang: You're on your own if you go after the United States.," "China Signals It Won't Support North Korean Attack," *Fortune*, accessed November 02, 2017, <http://fortune.com/2017/08/11/china-north-korea-missile/>.

<sup>20</sup> North Korea's army, like all armies, contains additional weapons systems and equipment (air defense systems, anti-tank weapons, fuel trucks, etc.). These three measures, however, provide a rough — but sound — measure of the North Korean army's conventional combat power.

<sup>21</sup> "Chapter Six: Asia." *The Military Balance*

<sup>22</sup> For comparison, the US Army is comprised of approximately 475,350 soldiers, 2,384 main battle tanks, and 5,312 pieces of artillery.; "Chapter Three: North America." *The Military Balance* 117, no. 1 (2017): 27-62. doi:10.1080/04597222.2017.1271209.

<sup>23</sup> *Korea Handbook: The Complex Operating Environment and Asymmetric Threats*. Fort Meade, MD: US Army Asymmetric Warfare Group, 2017, accessed October 31, 2017, <http://8tharmy.korea.army.mil/501mi/content/reading-list/Korea-Tactical-Handbook.pdf>; "Military and Security Developments Involving the Democratic People's Republic of Korea" (Report to Congress, Office of the Secretary of Defense, 2015)

<sup>24</sup> "The World Factbook: KOREA, NORTH," Central Intelligence Agency, last modified October 26, 2017, accessed November 01, 2017, <https://www.cia.gov/library/publications/the-world-factbook/geos/kn.html>.

<sup>25</sup> Eleanor Ross, "What life is like as a soldier in the North Korean army," *Newsweek*, June 21, 2017, accessed November 02, 2017, <http://www.newsweek.com/soldiers-life-north-korean-army-marked-hunger-and-defections-are-rising-627596>; "Former soldier says 60% of North Korean military training is ideological 'brainwashing'," *DailyNK.com*, September 03, 2017, accessed November 02, 2017, <http://www.dailynk.com/english/read.php?num=14403&catald=nk00100>.

<sup>26</sup> *Opposing Force Training Module: North Korean Military Forces*. Field Manual No. 34-71, Washington, DC: Headquarters, Department of the Army, 1982, accessed October 30, 2017, <http://nautilus.org/wp-content/uploads/2011/12/OpposingForceTrainingModule.pdf>; Aletha Adu, "They are dumb! North Korea BELITTLED after official training video films INEPT soldier," *Express.co.uk*, April 19, 2017, accessed November

Although the South Korean army also maintains a significant number of forces along the demilitarized zone — as part of the Capital Defense Command responsible for protecting Seoul — relative to North Korean army, it is deployed in greater depth throughout the country. This increased dispersion, a product of the history of the Korean War, protects South Korea against incursion by North Korean special forces.<sup>27</sup> The increased dispersion also protects the South Korean army from North Korean artillery. Like North Korea, South Korea maintains a compulsory military obligation for its citizens. Depending on the branch of service selected (army, navy, or air force), citizens between the ages of twenty and thirty must serve twenty-one, twenty-three, or twenty-four months (respectively) in South Korea's armed services.<sup>28</sup> South Korean soldiers are generally fed, housed, and equipped on par with American and other Western forces. Furthermore, Seoul is making major investments in military infrastructure to improve the living conditions and quality of life of those serving. These improvements are designed to enhance the military capabilities of South Korean forces and strengthen civil-military relations.<sup>29</sup> South Korean soldiers are trained in combined arms (the simultaneous use of infantry, armor, artillery, and other units to achieve combat objectives). They also receive training and acquire experience in joint operations (integrated effort with South Korean naval and air force units, and with foreign, normally American, military units). In its 2016 Defense White Paper, the South Korean Ministry of Defense outlined its plans to improve the manner in which it trains its soldiers. The Ministry intends to continuously adapt the army's ability to act in an increasingly complex environment against a range of possible North Korean threats.<sup>30</sup>

Soviet and Chinese military doctrine, modified by the realities of North Korean terrain and the regime's penchant for the use of unconventional warfare, provide the model for North Korean force employment.<sup>31</sup> Although the North Korean army may have adapted its military doctrine in response to changes in the capabilities of its forces (and those of South Korea and the United States), there is no evidence suggestive of significant changes in force employment. Given this, it is expected that should North Korea initiate hostilities, the regime would begin with a blitzkrieg attack, using artillery and armor forces in an attempt to smash through the demilitarized zone and overwhelm South Korean defenses.<sup>32</sup> Tanks would be used to try and exploit initial breakthrough points to destroy South Korean forces, capture or eliminate key

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02, 2017, <http://www.express.co.uk/news/world/794073/North-Korea-belittled-official-training-video-films-inept-soldier-Kim-Jong-un-Donald-Trump>.

<sup>27</sup> T. R. Fehrenbach, *This kind of war: the classic Korean War history* (Dulles, VA: Potomac Books, 2008); *2016 Defense White Paper* (Report by Ministry of National Defense, Republic of Korea, 2016) accessed October 29, 2017, [http://www.mnd.go.kr/user/mndEN/upload/pblicitn/PBLICTNEBOOK\\_201705180357180050.pdf](http://www.mnd.go.kr/user/mndEN/upload/pblicitn/PBLICTNEBOOK_201705180357180050.pdf).

<sup>28</sup> "The World Factbook: KOREA, SOUTH," Central Intelligence Agency, last modified October 26, 2017, accessed November 02, 2017, <https://www.cia.gov/library/publications/the-world-factbook/geos/ks.html>.

<sup>29</sup> Report by Ministry of National Defense, Republic of Korea, *2016 Defense White Paper*

<sup>30</sup> *Ibid.*

<sup>31</sup> *Opposing Force Training Module: North Korean Military Forces*. Field Manual No. 34-71; *The Korean Military Balance and Prospects for Hostilities on the Peninsula*, National Intelligence Estimate 42/14.2-87 (Langley, VA: CIA, 1987) accessed November 01, 2017, [https://www.cia.gov/library/readingroom/docs/DOC\\_0005569324.pdf](https://www.cia.gov/library/readingroom/docs/DOC_0005569324.pdf); Andrew Scobell and John M. Sanford, *North Korea's Military Threat: Pyongyang's Conventional Forces, Weapons of Mass Destruction, and Ballistic Missiles* (Carlisle, PA: Strategic Studies Institute, 2007)

<sup>32</sup> Franz-Stefan Gady, "Military Stalemate: How North Korea Could Win a War With the US," *The Diplomat*, October 10, 2017, accessed November 02, 2017, <https://thediplomat.com/2017/10/military-stalemate-how-north-korea-could-win-a-war-with-the-us/>; Edward C. O'Dowd, "The 1979 campaign," in *Chinese Military Strategy in the Third Indochina War: The last Maoist war*, (New York, NY: Routledge, 2007), 45-73; Edward C. O'Dowd, "The Battle of Lang Son, February—March 1979," in *Chinese Military Strategy in the Third Indochina War: The last Maoist war*, (New York, NY: Routledge, 2007), 74-88.

communications and transportation nodes, and seize territory.<sup>33</sup> Mechanized infantry units would follow the armor assault. These units would be tasked with securing targets and fortifying seized territory.<sup>34</sup> Based on what is known of North Korean military doctrine, the bulk of the regime's troops are expected to fight in a relatively unsophisticated manner that emphasizes firepower, speed, and simple tactics over the use of cover and concealment to protect individual troops and units.<sup>35</sup>

In contrast, South Korea is prepared to field a modern combined arms force modeled on American military doctrine and tailored to South Korean society, arms, equipment, and terrain. South Korean force employment emphasizes dispersed defense, in-depth maneuvers, interlocking massed fields of fire, counter-measures, counter-attack, and the sustainability of the army.<sup>36</sup> The South Korean military is prepared to absorb an initial attack by conventional North Korean forces and quickly synchronize counter-force operations to target and destroy invading units. After halting a North Korean invasion, the South Korean army would itself seek to break through the demilitarized zone to destroy those North Korean forces and fortifications responsible for the attack.<sup>37</sup> Given differences in training and force employment, it is reasonable to expect — even before taking into consideration differences in weaponry — that the North Korean army would be defeated in this type of invasion-counter-invasion scenario. Considering the respective weaponry of the two armies generates additional support for this assessment, as a quick examination of their respective weaponry highlights why it would be difficult for North Korea to achieve strategic results with conventional military forces.

### *The Strategic Balance in Conventional Weaponry*

North Korea possesses a large number of artillery pieces. The vast majority of them are placed along the demilitarized zone in hardened shelters.<sup>38</sup> They are positioned so that they can emerge and fire into the South — and into the northern sections of Seoul — if so ordered. Their potential is terrifying. News accounts describe a Pentagon report estimating the possibility of

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<sup>33</sup> *The Soviet Army: Operations and Tactics*. Field Manual No. 100-2-1. Washington, DC: Headquarters, Department of the Army, 1984; Todd South and Jeff Schogol, "War with North Korea: An inside look at how US troops would respond worldwide," *Military Times*, August 08, 2017, accessed November 02, 2017,

<https://www.militarytimes.com/news/your-military/2017/05/21/war-with-north-korea-an-inside-look-at-how-us-troops-would-respond-worldwide/>; Chetan Peddada, "A Sneak Peek at America's War Plans for North Korea," *Foreign Policy*, October 12, 2017, accessed November 02, 2017, <http://foreignpolicy.com/2017/09/07/a-sneak-peek-at-americas-war-plans-for-north-korea/>.

<sup>34</sup> Dennis J. Blasko, "PLA Force Structure: A 20-Year Retrospective," in *Seeking Truth from Facts: A Retrospective on Chinese Military Studies in the Post-Mao Era*, (Santa Monica, CA: RAND, 2001), 51-86; King C. Chen, "China's War Against Vietnam, 1979: A Military Analysis," *The Journal of East Asian Affairs* 3, no. 1 (1983): 233-63, <http://www.jstor.org/stable/23253977>.

<sup>35</sup> Department of the Army, *Opposing Force Training Module: North Korean Military Forces*; US Army Asymmetric Warfare Group, *Korea Handbook: The Complex Operating Environment and Asymmetric Threats*.  
<sup>36</sup> Stephen Biddle, "The Modern System," in *Military Power: Explaining Victory and Defeat in Modern Battle*, (Princeton, NJ: Princeton University Press, 2004), 28-51; 2016 *Defense White Paper*.

<sup>37</sup> Thomas H. Henriksen, "Tale of the Tape: North Korea vs. joint US-ROK force," *The Hill*, August 24, 2017, accessed November 02, 2017, <http://thehill.com/blogs/pundits-blog/the-military/347782-tale-of-the-tape-north-korea-vs-a-us-rok-joint-force>.

<sup>38</sup> "Here's A Closer Look At North Korea's Artillery Capabilities," *MauldinEconomics.com*, accessed November 03, 2017, <http://www.mauldineconomics.com/editorial/heres-a-closer-look-at-north-koreas-artillery-capabilities#>; John Pike, "Seoul, South Korea," *GlobalSecurity.org - Reliable Security Information*, accessed November 03, 2017, <https://www.globalsecurity.org/military/world/rok/seoul-imagery-artillery.htm>.

20,000 casualties per day. Such stories often portray the city as a hostage to North Korean artillery, a condition that many expect deters South Korean and American action against the regime of Kim Jong-un.<sup>39</sup> Although North Korea's artillery poses a significant threat, there are reasons to believe North Korean artillery may not be as dangerous or dominant as portrayed in public discourse.

First, in deciding what to target with its artillery, North Korea will make a tactical choice with strategic implications. If the regime chooses to fire at Seoul, it will leave South Korean and American forces free to quickly move against North Korean forces — including artillery positions. If the regime chooses to fire at South Korean forces, the regime forgoes coercive threats against Seoul by allowing the city's residents time to seek hardened shelters (which can house approximately twenty-million people) or evacuate.<sup>40</sup> Pyongyang may split the targeting between civilian and military targets — opting to try and inflict chaos and fear on the city while slowing the response of the South Korea military. Although such a choice would kill civilians and reduce the South Korean army's freedom of movement, it is unlikely to have strategic effect. Furthermore, those South Korean forces capable of moving would prioritize strikes against the North Korean artillery targeting Seoul. Once those weapons were destroyed, South Korean forces would target the remaining North Korean artillery positions.

Second, to fire, North Korean artillery pieces must emerge from their hardened shelters or be placed close enough to the opening of the shelter that they can fire without damaging their own fortifications.<sup>41</sup> In either case, this exposes the weapon to counter-battery fire from South Korean artillery and precision guided weapons. Although this condition does not present North Korea with a problem in regard to the first volley of artillery, which may strike with surprise, it quickly presents a challenge to the North. North Korean artillery is based on mid-twentieth century Soviet and Chinese designs.<sup>42</sup> Although Pyongyang has updated and modified some of its artillery, including the (indigenous) development of the M-1978 Koksan, the time it takes to load, aim, and fire these weapons is relatively slow compared to South Korean weapons systems. South Korean forces will be able to more quickly load, aim, and fire their newer artillery and precision guided weapons to destroy North Korean artillery.<sup>43</sup> Furthermore, South Korean

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<sup>39</sup> Barbara Demick, "Escalating tension has experts simulating a new Korean War, and the scenarios are sobering," *Los Angeles Times*, September 25, 2017, accessed November 03, 2017, <http://www.latimes.com/world/la-fg-korean-war-20170925-story.html>; David Wood, "North Korea's Simple But Deadly Artillery Holds Seoul And U.S. Hostage," *The Huffington Post*, April 18, 2017, accessed November 03, 2017, [https://www.huffingtonpost.com/entry/north-korea-artillery\\_us\\_58f631a4e4b0b9e9848eb990](https://www.huffingtonpost.com/entry/north-korea-artillery_us_58f631a4e4b0b9e9848eb990); Mark Bowden, "How to Deal With North Korea," *The Atlantic*, August 09, 2017, accessed November 03, 2017, <https://www.theatlantic.com/magazine/archive/2017/07/the-worst-problem-on-earth/528717/>.

<sup>40</sup> "Mind the Gap Between Rhetoric and Reality," Nautilus Institute for Security and Sustainability, March 12, 2013, accessed November 01, 2017, <https://nautilus.org/napsnet/napsnet-special-reports/mind-the-gap-between-rhetoric-and-reality/>.

<sup>41</sup> "DPRK Briefing Book: HARTS in North Korea," Nautilus Institute for Security and Sustainability, December 19, 2011, accessed November 06, 2017, <https://nautilus.org/publications/books/dprkbb/military/dprk-briefing-book-harts-in-north-korea/>.

<sup>42</sup> "Modern North Korean Army Combat Vehicles and Artillery (2017)," Military Weapons, accessed November 06, 2017, <https://www.militaryfactory.com/modern-armor/north-korean-army.asp>; "North Korea Land Systems List (Current and Former Types)," Military Weapons, accessed November 06, 2017, [https://www.militaryfactory.com/armor/by-country.asp?Nation=North Korea](https://www.militaryfactory.com/armor/by-country.asp?Nation=North%20Korea).

<sup>43</sup> Sebastien Roblin, "Meet the Koksan, North Korea's Giant Artillery," War Is Boring, October 23, 2017, accessed November 04, 2017, <http://warisboring.com/meet-the-koksan-north-koreas-super-big-artillery-gun/>; Joseph S. Bermudez, "The Yŏnp'yŏng-do Incident," 38 North, January 11, 2011, accessed November 6, 2017, [http://38north.org/wp-content/uploads/2011/01/38North\\_SR11-1\\_Bermudez\\_Yeonpyeong-do.pdf](http://38north.org/wp-content/uploads/2011/01/38North_SR11-1_Bermudez_Yeonpyeong-do.pdf); Christopher F

intelligence has spent decades identifying the locations of the hardened shelters and calculating from where each piece of North Korean artillery will emerge and fire. Each second North Korean artillery exposes itself in order to attack the South increases the likelihood said artillery is destroyed. After examining this dynamic, the Nautilus Institute for Security and Sustainability came to the conclusion that once a conflict begins, South Korean forces can be expected to destroy 1 percent of the North Korean artillery per hour.<sup>44</sup>

Third, North Korean artillery is only dangerous when it has a supply of reliable shells and rockets with which to shoot. Based on intelligence and past artillery attacks by North Korea, including the 2010 shelling of Yeonpyeong Island, estimates suggest that 25 percent of North Korean shells and rockets will fail to detonate on impact.<sup>45</sup> Even without South Korean counter-attacks, the poor quality of North Korean manufacturing reduces the potential of their artillery. Furthermore, although North Korea has reportedly developed a system of weapons caches to resupply its artillery, those caches themselves will be a priority target for South Korean forces — as will any convoy attempting resupply.<sup>46</sup>

It is unlikely that North Korean artillery alone will produce strategic influence by forcing Seoul to capitulate. Even if Pyongyang were to use its artillery to fire chemical weapons into the South, this condition would likely persist. Not only would North Korea face all of the challenges outlined above, the use of chemical weapons would trigger unlimited warfare on the part of South Korea. It would also catalyze wholesale intervention on the part of the United States and likely close off Chinese attempts to save the regime. In short, the use of artillery to launch chemical weapons would foreclose rather than facilitate the possibility of strategic success by denying the North the ability to achieve either conservation of the regime or a reduction in American power in the region.

Like force employment and artillery, North Korean armor is unlikely to produce strategic effect — and thus unlikely to generate strategic influence. North Korea's main battle tanks were designed by the Soviet Union. The oldest, the T-34, was designed in 1937. The newest, the T-62, was designed in 1957 and manufactured through 1975. The T-62 has a 115mm smooth bore main gun.<sup>47</sup> A well trained T-62 crew hits its target 90 percent of the time when the target is at a distance of 250 meters. Well trained T-62 crews demonstrate a 50 percent accuracy rate when their target is at a distance of 1,500 meters.<sup>48</sup> South Korea's oldest main battle tank, the K-1, was designed in 1983 by Hyundai Rotem based on the design of the American M-1 Abrams tank. The K-1, and its newer K-1A1 and K-1A2 variants, have been continuously updated with

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Foss, "South Korea boosts artillery capabilities," *Jane's 360*, June 30, 2017, accessed November 06, 2017, <http://www.janes.com/article/71938/south-korea-boosts-artillery-capabilities>.

<sup>44</sup> Nautilus Institute for Security and Sustainability, "Mind the Gap Between Rhetoric and Reality."

<sup>45</sup> "Satellite Imagery: Tactical Details of the Korean Artillery Exchange," *Stratfor Worldview*, November 29, 2010, accessed November 06, 2017, <https://www.stratfor.com/analysis/satellite-imagery-tactical-details-korean-artillery-exchange>; "How North Korea Would Retaliate," *Stratfor Worldview*, January 05, 2017, accessed November 03, 2017, <https://worldview.stratfor.com/article/how-north-korea-would-retaliate>.

<sup>46</sup> Nautilus Institute for Security and Sustainability, "Mind the Gap Between Rhetoric and Reality."

<sup>47</sup> "T62 Series Tanks," *Federation of American Scientists*, accessed October 28, 2017, <https://fas.org/man/dod-101/sys/land/row/t62tank.htm>; "T-62 main battle tank technical data sheet specifications information description pictures video," *Army Recognition*, May 21, 2017, accessed October 28, 2017, [https://www.armyrecognition.com/russia\\_russian\\_army\\_tank\\_heavy\\_armoured\\_vehicles\\_u/t-62\\_main\\_battle\\_tank\\_technical\\_data\\_sheet\\_specifications\\_information\\_description\\_pictures\\_video.html](https://www.armyrecognition.com/russia_russian_army_tank_heavy_armoured_vehicles_u/t-62_main_battle_tank_technical_data_sheet_specifications_information_description_pictures_video.html).

<sup>48</sup> *The Soviet Main Battle Tank: Capabilities and Limitations*. Fort Monroe, VA: United States Army Training and Doctrine Command, 1979, accessed October 27, 2017, <http://www.dtic.mil/dtic/tr/fulltext/u2/a392790.pdf>.

hardware improvements and with advanced electronics from Samsung Thales.<sup>49</sup> The K-1 has a 105mm rifled main gun. With it, a well trained K-1 crew exhibits a 90 percent accuracy rate against a target at a distance of 1,200 meters.<sup>50</sup> The K-1A1 and K-1A2 tank variants have a 120mm smooth bore main gun, with which a well trained crews exhibit a 90 percent accuracy rate against targets 3,500 meters away<sup>51</sup>. The range and accuracy advantage of South Korean armor compensates for North Korea's roughly 1.5-to-1 numerical advantage. It is logical to expect that South Korea would prevail in a tank fight.

### *The Strategic Limits of Nuclear Weapons and Ballistic Missiles*

The conventional military capabilities of the Kim Jong-un regime are unlikely to provide the means or ways by which North Korea may conserve the regime or reduce the efficacy of American power in the region. In short, the regime's conventional military forces are unlikely to produce strategic influence. Based on North Korea's observed pursuit of nuclear weapons and ballistic missile technology, it is reasonable to assume that Kim Jong-un shares this assessment. If North Korea's military is to serve as an instrument of strategic influence, it most likely would have to be through the nation's increasing capacity to field nuclear armed ballistic missiles.

According to media reports, the US intelligence community estimates Pyongyang's nuclear arsenal to be between thirty and sixty warheads with a current growth rate of twelve per year.<sup>52</sup> Other assessments have produced smaller estimated arsenals. The Stockholm International Peace Research Institute believes Pyongyang has between ten and twenty nuclear warheads.<sup>53</sup> In 2010, Stanford University's Siegfried Hecker, the former director of the Los Alamos National Laboratory, was the last American scientist to visit North Korea's nuclear weapons complex. Hecker estimates North Korea possesses between twelve and twenty warheads.<sup>54</sup> The Arms Control Association, a non-partisan arms control group in Washington, DC, generally agrees with the Stockholm International Peace Research Institute and Hecker. The Arms Control Association believes North Korea has between ten and sixteen warheads.

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<sup>49</sup> "K1," Military-Today.com, accessed October 28, 2017, <http://www.military-today.com/tanks/k1.htm>; "K1A1 Main Battle Tank," Army Technology, accessed October 28, 2017, <http://www.army-technology.com/projects/k1/>.

<sup>50</sup> "K1 88 MBT (1987)," Tank Encyclopedia, September 21, 2017, accessed October 28, 2017, [http://www.tanks-encyclopedia.com/coldwar/South\\_Korea/K1\\_88\\_MBT.php](http://www.tanks-encyclopedia.com/coldwar/South_Korea/K1_88_MBT.php); John Pike, "K1A1 Main Battle Tank," Global Security, accessed October 28, 2017, <https://www.globalsecurity.org/military/world/rok/k1a1.htm>.

<sup>51</sup> "K1 88-Tank," Revolvly, accessed October 28, 2017, [https://www.revolvly.com/main/index.php?s=K1\\_88-Tank;](https://www.revolvly.com/main/index.php?s=K1_88-Tank;) "120mm HE Projectile (Rheinmetall)," Defense Update, accessed October 31, 2017, <http://defense-update.com/products/digits/120he-mp.htm>.

<sup>52</sup> Joby Warrick, Ellen Nakashima, and Anna Fifield, "North Korea now making missile-ready nuclear weapons, U.S. analysts say," *The Washington Post*, August 08, 2017, accessed November 09, 2017, [https://www.washingtonpost.com/world/national-security/north-korea-now-making-missile-ready-nuclear-weapons-us-analysts-say/2017/08/08/e14b882a-7b6b-11e7-9d08-b79f191668ed\\_story.html?utm\\_term=.f2df7df71c81](https://www.washingtonpost.com/world/national-security/north-korea-now-making-missile-ready-nuclear-weapons-us-analysts-say/2017/08/08/e14b882a-7b6b-11e7-9d08-b79f191668ed_story.html?utm_term=.f2df7df71c81); Greg Price, "How many nuclear weapons and missiles does North Korea have?," *Newsweek*, August 16, 2017, accessed November 09, 2017, <http://www.newsweek.com/north-korea-nuclear-missile-number-651034>; Ankit Panda, "US Intelligence: North Korea May Already Be Annually Accruing Enough Fissile Material for 12 Nuclear Weapons," *The Diplomat*, August 09, 2017, accessed November 09, 2017, <https://thediplomat.com/2017/08/us-intelligence-north-korea-may-already-be-annually-accurring-enough-fissile-material-for-12-nuclear-weapons/>.

<sup>53</sup> "Global nuclear weapons: Modernization remains the priority," SIPRI, July 03, 2017, accessed November 12, 2017, <https://www.sipri.org/media/press-release/2017/global-nuclear-weapons-modernization-remains-priority>.

<sup>54</sup> Jonathan D. Pollack, "What do intelligence leaks about North Korea tell us?," Brookings, August 09, 2017, accessed November 09, 2017, <https://www.brookings.edu/blog/order-from-chaos/2017/08/09/what-do-intelligence-leaks-about-north-korea-tell-us/>.

However, it projects the Kim Jong-un regime will have as many as one hundred warheads by 2020.<sup>55</sup> In regard to the strategic context, however, the size of the arsenal is less important than its destructive ability, which is a product of the weapons' explosive force and the regime's ability to deliver them against a given target.

Evidence suggests that North Korea can produce thermonuclear hydrogen bombs capable of being mounted on an inter-continental ballistic missile (ICBM) and weighing less than 700 kilograms.<sup>56</sup> On 03 September 2017, the Comprehensive Test Ban Treaty Organization and the US Geological Survey recorded a 6.1-to-6.3 magnitude seismic event. The event originated from the area of North Korea's nuclear test site.<sup>57</sup> That same day, North Korean state television announced that the regime had carried out the successful test of a two-stage thermonuclear weapon — a hydrogen bomb.<sup>58</sup> The severity of the seismic event, and North Korean claims, suggest the explosive power of the bomb was approximately 120-140 kilotons (about eight times the strength of the atomic bomb dropped on Hiroshima in 1945).<sup>59</sup> On September 13th 2017, South Korea's Nuclear Safety and Security Commission announced its detection of the radioactive xenon-133 isotope, a form of xenon gas that does not occur naturally. The detection of xenon-133 is accepted by nuclear weapons experts as confirmation of a nuclear explosion.<sup>60</sup> Photographs released by the regime of Kim Jong-un — and analyzed by international nuclear weapons experts — indicate North Korean success in designing an ICBM-mountable thermonuclear warhead.<sup>61</sup>

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<sup>55</sup> "Fact Sheets & Briefs — Arms Control and Proliferation Profile: North Korea," Arms Control Association, September 03, 2017, accessed November 09, 2017, <https://www.armscontrol.org/factsheets/northkoreaprofile>.

<sup>56</sup> Joe Cirincione, "North Korea's New Missile Is a Game-Changer," Defense One, December 05, 2017, accessed December 29, 2017, <http://www.defenseone.com/ideas/2017/12/north-koreas-new-missile-game-changer/144304/>.

<sup>57</sup> "Comparison of seismic signals (to scale) of all six declared DPRK nuclear tests," CTBTO Preparatory Commission, accessed October 26, 2017, <https://www.ctbto.org/the-treaty/developments-after-1996/2017-sept-dprk/>; "M 6.3 Explosion - 21km ENE of Sungjibaegam, North Korea," U.S. Geological Survey, accessed October 26, 2017, <https://earthquake.usgs.gov/earthquakes/eventpage/us2000aert#executive>.

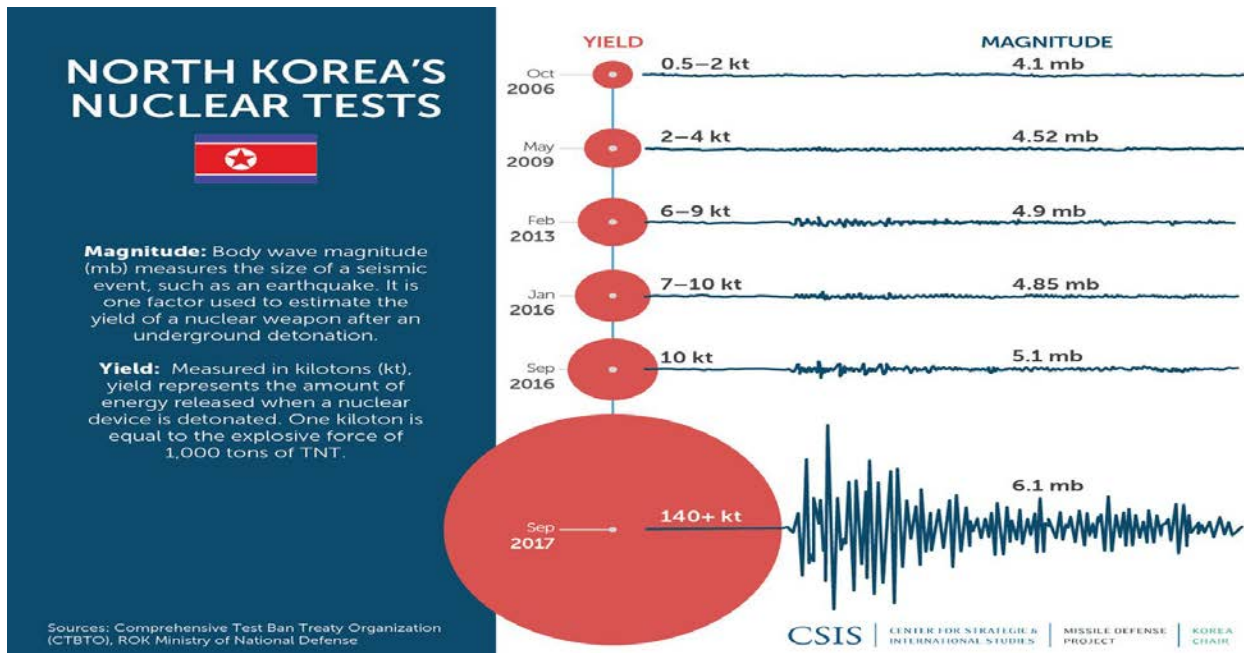
<sup>58</sup> Justin McCurry, "North Korean nuclear test confirmed in major escalation by Kim Jong-un," *The Guardian*, September 03, 2017, accessed October 26, 2017, <https://www.theguardian.com/world/2017/sep/03/north-korean-nuclear-test-confirmed-in-major-escalation-by-kim-jong-un>.

<sup>59</sup> Andy Dinville, "North Korea's Sixth Nuclear Test: A First Look," 38 North, September 05, 2017, accessed October 26, 2017, <https://www.38north.org/2017/09/punggye090517/>; "Missiles of North Korea — CSIS Missile Defense Project: Missile Threat," CSIS, accessed October 26, 2017, <https://missilethreat.csis.org/country/dprk/>.

<sup>60</sup> "South Korea detects radioactive gas from North Korea bomb test," CNBC, September 13, 2017, accessed October 26, 2017, <https://www.cnbc.com/2017/09/13/south-korea-detects-radioactive-xenon-gas-from-north-korea-nuclear-bomb-test.html>.

<sup>61</sup> Max Fisher and Jugal K. Patel, "What One Photo Tells Us About North Korea's Nuclear Program." *The New York Times*, February 24, 2017, accessed October 27, 2017, <https://www.nytimes.com/interactive/2017/02/24/world/asia/north-korea-propaganda-photo.html?smid=pl-share>.





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Based on observations of recent tests, North Korea possesses three ballistic missiles capable of striking the continental United States — Taepodong-2, Hwasong-14, and the newly tested Hwasong-15. Each has a range in excess of 10,000 kilometers.<sup>63</sup> The Taepodong-2 is a three-stage liquid fuel missile capable of carrying a 1,000 kilogram payload. It is based on the design of North Korea's Unha-3 missile, which was built to launch satellites. The Taepodong was first tested in 2006. Because liquid fuel cannot be stored in the missile, the Taepodong must be moved to its launch pad, then fueled. According to experts from the Center for Strategic and International Studies and from Johns Hopkins' US-Korea Institute, this process takes a couple of days.<sup>64</sup> The same is true of the two stage liquid-fueled Hwasong-14. It is believed that the Hwasong-14 was designed and built as an intercontinental ballistic missile. The Hwasong-14, newer than the Taepodong, was first observed in July 2017. Its payload capacity is estimated to be 600 kilograms.<sup>65</sup> The Hwasong-15 was test fired for the first time in late November 2017. The flight trajectory suggests a range of more than 13,000 kilometers. If this estimate is accurate, the east coast of the United States is within Hwasong-15's range. Photographic evidence suggests a significant improvement over the Hwasong-14. Johns Hopkins' Michael Elleman estimates that the Hwasong-15 has the potential to carry a 1,000 kilogram payload — enough for at least one nuclear warhead and counter-measures to potentially overcome American

<sup>62</sup> CSIS. "Missiles of North Korea — CSIS Missile Defense Project: Missile Threat." Accessed October-December 2017, <https://missilethreat.csis.org/country/dprk/>.

<sup>63</sup> CSIS, "Missiles of North Korea — CSIS Missile Defense Project: Missile Threat."

<sup>64</sup> "Taepodong-2 (Unha-3) — CSIS Missile Defense Project: Missile Threat," CSIS, August 08, 2016, accessed November 09, 2017, <https://missilethreat.csis.org/missile/taepodong-2/>.

<sup>65</sup> "Hwasong-14 (KN-20) — CSIS Missile Defense Project: Missile Threat," CSIS, July 27, 2017, accessed November 09, 2017, <https://missilethreat.csis.org/missile/hwasong-14/>; Michael Elleman, "A Quick Technical Analysis of the Hwasong-12," 38 North, June 05, 2017, accessed December 01, 2017, <http://www.38north.org/2017/05/hwasong051917/>; John Schilling, "What is True and Not True About North Korea's Hwasong-14 ICBM: A Technical Evaluation," 38 North, July 10, 2017, accessed December 01, 2017, <http://www.38north.org/2017/07/jschilling071017/>.

missile defense systems.<sup>66</sup> Photos released by the Kim Jong-un regime show the Hwasong-15 loaded on a new, larger, and more sophisticated transport truck, raising questions about the speed with which the weapon could be placed on a mobile platform, fueled, and readied for launch.<sup>67</sup>

Evidence suggests North Korea also possesses several medium-range ballistic missiles capable of carrying nuclear warheads. These missiles — the No-Dong, Musudan BM-25, and Hwasong-12, could strike targets in South Korea, Japan, the Philippines, Guam, and other American allies and interests in the Western Pacific.<sup>68</sup> Each of these missiles uses liquid fuel and each is transportable by truck.<sup>69</sup> Yet, like the Taepodong-2 and Hwasong-14, each of these missiles requires substantial preparation time before they can be fired.

Intelligence reports and media accounts indicate Pyongyang is developing solid fuel ballistic missiles. Unlike liquid fuel missiles, solid fuel missiles store their fuel onboard and can be readied for launch quickly — in minutes or hours, rather than days. Thus far, North Korea has been most successful with its KN-02 short range missile. The KN-02 can deliver conventional weapons up to a range of 170 kilometers.<sup>70</sup> In addition, the regime continues to develop its submarine-launched KN-11 and land-based mobile KN-15 missiles. When fully operational, it is expected that the KN-11 and KN-15 will be capable of carrying either conventional or nuclear warheads. Their range is expected to be between 1,200 and 1,500 kilometers.<sup>71</sup> At present, the chief threat posed by these solid fuel missiles is the speed with which they may be fired — giving Seoul little warning and effectively no time to interdict or prepare. Long-term, the technology present in these missiles poses a grave threat to South

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<sup>66</sup> Michael Elleman, “The New Hwasong-15 ICBM: A Significant Improvement That May be Ready as Early as 2018,” 38 North, November 30, 2017, accessed December 01, 2017, <http://www.38north.org/2017/11/melleman113017/>.

<sup>67</sup> Julian Borger and Justin McCurry, “North Korea fires missile towards Japan – possibly its most powerful yet,” *The Guardian*, November 28, 2017, accessed November 28, 2017, <https://www.theguardian.com/world/2017/nov/28/north-korea-has-fired-ballistic-missile-say-reports-in-south-korea>; Josh Smith, “How North Korea's latest ICBM test stacks up,” Reuters, November 29, 2017, accessed November 30, 2017, <https://www.reuters.com/article/us-northkorea-missiles-technology-factbo/how-north-koreas-latest-icbm-test-stacks-up-idUSKBN1DT0IF>; “Consistency in North Korea's Missile Testing,” CSIS, September 15, 2017, accessed November 30, 2017, <https://www.csis.org/analysis/consistency-north-koreas-missile-testing>; Choe Sang-hun, “North Korea's New Missile Is Bigger and More Powerful, Photos Suggest,” *The New York Times*, November 30, 2017, accessed November 30, 2017, <https://www.nytimes.com/2017/11/30/world/asia/north-korea-missile-test.html?rref=collection%2Fsectioncollection%2Fworld&action=click&contentCollection=world@ion=rank&module=package&version=highlights&contentPlacement=1&pgtype=sectionfront>; Anna Fifield, “North Korea has shown us its new missile, and it's scarier than we thought,” *The Washington Post*, November 30, 2017, accessed November 30, 2017, <https://www.washingtonpost.com/news/worldviews/wp/2017/11/30/north-korea-has-show>.

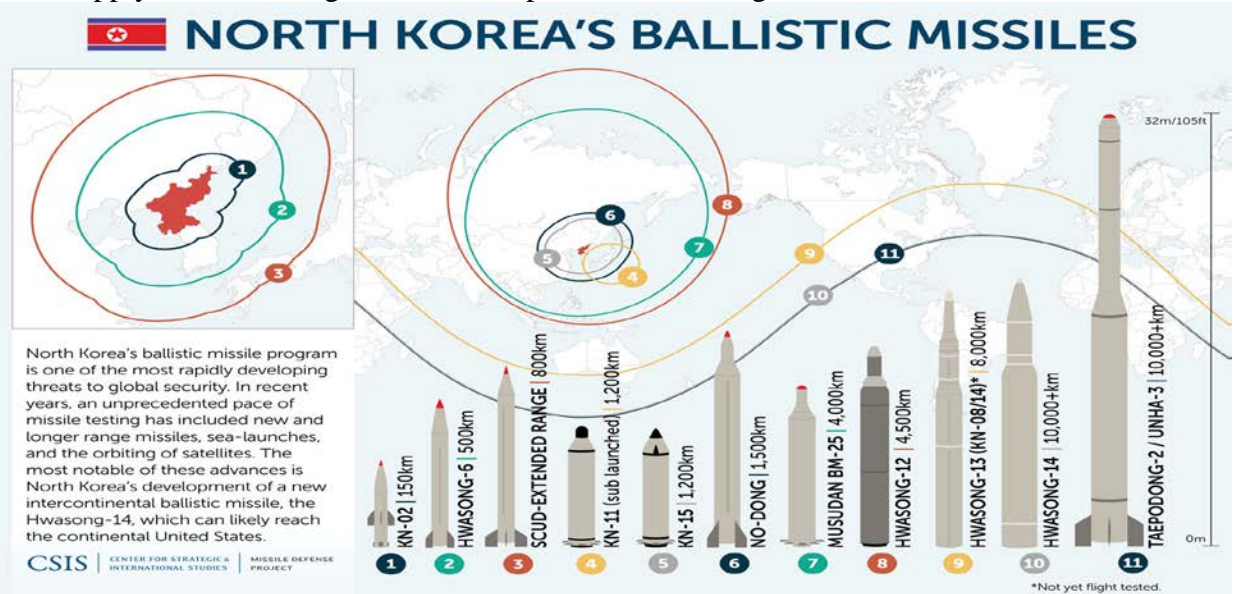
<sup>68</sup> CSIS, “Missiles of North Korea — CSIS Missile Defense Project: Missile Threat.”; Alex Wellerstein, “MISSILEMAP by Alex Wellerstein,” Restricted Data: The Nuclear Secrecy Blog, accessed November 12, 2017, <http://nuclearsecrecy.com/missilemap/>.

<sup>69</sup> “No Dong 1 — CSIS Missile Defense Project: Missile Threat,” CSIS, August 09, 2016, accessed November 12, 2017, <https://missilethreat.csis.org/missile/no-dong/>; “Hwasong-12 — CSIS Missile Defense Project: Missile Threat,” CSIS, May 16, 2017, accessed November 12, 2017, <https://missilethreat.csis.org/missile/hwasong-12/>; “Musudan (BM-25) — CSIS Missile Defense Project: Missile Threat,” CSIS, August 08, 2016, accessed November 12, 2017, <https://missilethreat.csis.org/missile/musudan/>.

<sup>70</sup> “KN-02 ‘Toksa’ — CSIS Missile Defense Project: Missile Threat,” CSIS, April 12, 2016, accessed November 12, 2017, <https://missilethreat.csis.org/missile/kn-02/>.

<sup>71</sup> “KN-11 (Pukkuksong-1) — CSIS Missile Defense Project: Missile Threat,” CSIS, August 29, 2016, accessed November 12, 2017, <https://missilethreat.csis.org/missile/kn-11/>; “KN-15 (Pukkuksong-2) — CSIS Missile Defense Project: Missile Threat,” CSIS, March 5, 2017, accessed November 12, 2017, <https://missilethreat.csis.org/missile/pukkuksong-2/>.

Korea, Japan, and the United States. As the Kim Jong-un regime masters solid fuel technologies, it will apply that knowledge to ICBMs capable of delivering a thermonuclear warhead.



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Given Pyongyang's development of a thermonuclear warhead and ICBM, the Kim Jong-un regime possesses substantial destructive capability. A single 120 kiloton warhead detonated approximately one mile above downtown Los Angeles on a weekday morning would kill an estimated 265,000 individuals and injure another 596,000. It would create a fireball with a radius of about two-tenths of a mile in any direction from ground zero and cause a crater some 100 feet deep. The concussive air blast would destroy or severely damage even heavily reinforced concrete buildings and structures within eight-tenths of a mile from ground zero; fatalities would be near 100 percent. Most residential buildings within two miles would collapse, causing widespread injury. Severe radiation — a dose of more than 500 rems — would extend for more than a mile from ground zero, killing between 50 and 90 percent of those exposed within hours to weeks. Any individual within three miles of ground zero would experience third-degree burns causing scarring, disablement, amputation, and potentially death. Were North Korea to fire two warheads (a logical assumption in order to ensure a successful attack), the effects would be magnified — likely causing 500,000 deaths and more than 1 million injuries.<sup>73</sup> A similar strike against Tokyo would result in some 900,000 dead and more than 3.4 million injured.<sup>74</sup>

Despite their catastrophic potential, North Korea's nuclear weapons and ICBMs presently yield little strategic influence. To produce a strategic effect, these weapons would have to successfully deter the United States from taking desired action against the Kim Jong-un regime and/or in support of South Korean forces. As instruments, they would have to reduce the efficacy of US power in the region. At present, this cannot be achieved.

<sup>72</sup> CSIS. "Missiles of North Korea — CSIS Missile Defense Project: Missile Threat." Accessed October-December 2017, <https://missilethreat.csis.org/country/dprk/>.

<sup>73</sup> Restricted Data: The Nuclear Secrecy Blog, "NUKEMAP by Alex Wellerstein."

<sup>74</sup> Ibid.

As a strategy, deterrence works by presenting a credible threat to cause intolerable pain and suffering if the target of the threat takes a specified action (or set of actions).<sup>75</sup> In this case, the deterrent effect would presumably result from the potential deaths of hundreds of thousands of American or Japanese citizens, and the injury of millions more, as a result of a nuclear strike. Because Pyongyang is likely unable to successfully carry it out, the threat is not credible (at least, not yet). For North Korea to successfully launch the type of attack outlined above would require a Taepodong-2, Hwasong-14, or Hwasong-15 missile be exposed for days on a launch pad while being armed with a nuclear warhead and prepared for a strike against the United States or Japan. While there, the missile would be exposed to US observation — and attack — thereby neutralizing any potential strategic effect.

Although North Korea could use a shorter range solid fuel missile, a KN-11 or KN-15, to attack Tokyo, such an attack would be unlikely to produce the desired strategic effect. Rather than reduce US power in the region through deterrence, such an attack would catalyze a full scale response on the part of Washington — jeopardizing Kim Jong-un's attempts to conserve the regime and increasing, rather than decreasing, the projection of American power into the region.

As Pyongyang masters the ability to produce solid fuel ICBMs, the strategic potential of the regime's nuclear weapons may increase. As instruments, these weapons may give North Korea the ability to leverage the threat of coercive violence against the United States to achieve political objectives. Whether North Korea's nuclear forces grant the regime strategic influence ultimately depends the technical capabilities of these instruments, the technical capabilities of other nations' instruments, and the political objectives of any potential originator, potential respondent, and other strategically important audiences.

### **Probable United States Political Objectives**

In general, US political objectives are based on a desire to preserve the *de jure* — if not *de facto* — status quo. Beginning with efforts on the part of President Ronald Reagan, the United States has sought four key political objectives in regard to the Korean peninsula and Western Pacific:

- *Enhance regional stability.*
- *Prevent the proliferation of nuclear weapons and ballistic missiles.*
- *Encourage dialogue between Pyongyang and Seoul.*
- *Maintain the close relationship and alliance between South Korea and the US.*<sup>76</sup>

Despite the rhetoric of President Donald Trump, and his Twitter exchanges with Kim Jong-un, there exists no evidence that the Trump administration intends to alter these objectives.

The president's National Security Strategy (NSS), released in December 2017, articulates the first, second, and fourth objectives listed above. Each of these objectives are repeatedly

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<sup>75</sup> Bernard Brodie, *The Anatomy of Deterrence* (Santa Monica, CA: RAND Corporation, 1958), [https://www.rand.org/pubs/research\\_memoranda/RM2218.html](https://www.rand.org/pubs/research_memoranda/RM2218.html); Thomas Schelling, "Chapter 1: The Diplomacy of Violence," in *Arms and Influence* (New Haven, CT: Yale University Press, 1966), 1-34.

<sup>76</sup> Joel Wit, "The United States and North Korea," Brookings, July 28, 2016, accessed November 13, 2017, <https://www.brookings.edu/research/the-united-states-and-north-korea/>.

mentioned in the NSS.<sup>77</sup> Toward the end of the document, however, the NSS identifies an additional objective in regard to Pyongyang — “the complete, verifiable, and irreversible denuclearization of the Korean Peninsula.”<sup>78</sup> No specific causal mechanisms for achieving this objective are presented. In addition, the NSS gives considerable attention to the development of ballistic missile defense to protect the US from North Korean weapons.<sup>79</sup> This suggests that the Trump administration does not believe denuclearization is an achievable political objective — and does not have a specific strategy for pursuing it.

Taken as a whole, the NSS and statements from administration officials suggest that the Trump administration is emphasizing the second and fourth objectives — the prevention of further proliferation and the protection of the US-South Korean alliance.

Following North Korea’s September 2017 nuclear test, Secretary of State Rex Tillerson, whose remarks emphasized the need for stability, publicly stated that diplomatic efforts between Pyongyang and Washington were continuing and would continue. The secretary suggested that tensions were ‘overheated’ beyond what was warranted by the actual situation. Furthermore, while stressing the unacceptability of a nuclear armed North Korea, Tillerson commented that progress on denuclearization would be “incremental.”<sup>80</sup> The secretary’s behavior could be interpreted as an attempt to calm the region (the first objective) and signal the administration’s continuing commitment to stopping proliferation (the second objective).

For his part, Secretary of Defense James Mattis has emphasized the importance of the US-South Korea relationship. The Secretary of Defense’s February 2017 visit to Seoul was the first foreign trip by a senior member of the Trump administration.<sup>81</sup> In Seoul, Mattis stressed the US’s commitment to the military alliance between South Korea and the US. In a more recent visit, after the North’s September 2017 nuclear test, Mattis met with his South Korean counterpart, Song Young-moo, and publicly reiterated the Trump administration’s commitment to the defense of South Korea.<sup>82</sup>

Washington’s emphasis on the prevention of proliferation and the protection of the alliance is also evidenced by recent policy choices. The Trump administration has repeatedly implored Beijing to use its sway to slow North Korean nuclear weapons and ICBM development.<sup>83</sup> By increasing the costs of proliferation, the Trump administration appears to hope that it can convince Kim Jong-un that further efforts will not yield political payoffs and are

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<sup>77</sup> *National Security Strategy of the United States of America*. Washington, DC: Executive Office of the President, December 18, 2017, accessed December 29, 2017, <https://www.whitehouse.gov/wp-content/uploads/2017/12/NSS-Final-12-18-2017-0905.pdf>.

<sup>78</sup> *Ibid.*, p. 47.

<sup>79</sup> *Ibid.*

<sup>80</sup> David E. Sanger, “U.S. in Direct Communication With North Korea, Says Tillerson,” *The New York Times*, September 30, 2017, accessed November 13, 2017, <https://www.nytimes.com/2017/09/30/world/asia/us-north-korea-tillerson.html>; Conor Finnegan and Quinn Owen, “US talking to North Korea ‘directly,’ Rex Tillerson says,” ABC News, September 30, 2017, accessed November 13, 2017. <http://abcnews.go.com/Politics/us-talking-north-korea-directly-rex-tillerson/story?id=50197907>.

<sup>81</sup> “US defence chief Mattis says South Korea alliance is ‘strong,’” BBC News, February 02, 2017, accessed November 13, 2017, <http://www.bbc.com/news/world-asia-38824008>.

<sup>82</sup> “Mattis: threat of North Korea nuclear attack ‘is accelerating,’” *The Guardian*, October 28, 2017, accessed November 13, 2017, <https://www.theguardian.com/world/2017/oct/28/james-mattis-threat-of-north-korea-nuclear-attack-is-accelerating>.

<sup>83</sup> “Trump asks China to work ‘hard’ and fast on N Korea,” *The Manila Times Online*, November 09, 2017, accessed November 13, 2017, <http://www.manilatimes.net/trump-asks-china-work-hard-fast-nkorea/361770/>; Brooke Seipel, “Trump: China ‘upping the sanctions against’ North Korea,” *The Hill*, November 12, 2017, accessed November 13, 2017, <http://thehill.com/homenews/administration/359954-trump-china-upping-the-sanctions-against-north-korea>.

not worth the consequences. At the same time, the Trump administration's high visibility military deployments — including the deployment of three aircraft carriers and theater ballistic missile defense systems — with their associated costs and inherent risks, not only increase the direct projection of American power into the region, but serve as indicators of the relative importance the US assigns to the prevention of proliferation and the protection of the US-South Korean alliance.<sup>84</sup>

As was the case with North Korean political objectives, the assessment of American objectives is based primarily on history and logic, rather than clear empirical evidence. The Trump administration simply has not articulated a set of political objectives in regard to Asia. Nonetheless, given the events noted above, it is safe to assume that the US seeks the protection of the status quo, primarily the prevention of proliferation and the protection of the US-South Korean alliance. Because of this, and as a result of the instruments available to North Korea, the question is: what instruments does the US have that might provide it with strategic influence and effect?

### United States Military Capabilities

To achieve the political objectives outlined above, American policymakers must make choices, take actions, and employ instruments to nullify the emerging and potential strategic effects of North Korean choices, actions, or instruments. Given Pyongyang's present relative lack of strategic influence, the US is predominantly employing non-military instruments — diplomacy and economic sanctions — to block North Korean attempts to acquire such influence. US military capabilities are, however, implicitly and explicitly part of these processes.

Kinetic military instruments — the weapons and supporting systems that can be used to destroy targets and kill individuals — backstop diplomatic and economic instruments, a point articulated by Thomas Schelling fifty years ago.<sup>85</sup> The potential unilateral use of force acts as an implicit threat that, ideally, and perhaps hopefully, motivates others to participate with American diplomatic efforts. Military instruments serve an additional function. Instruments for reconnaissance and intelligence collection provide information to policymakers in support of diplomatic and economic efforts — for example, to challenge Pyongyang's narrative of events or to evaluate the effects of sanctions.

If the use of non-military instruments fails *and* if American policymakers judge the political objectives to be worth the costs and risks of a strategy predicated on the use of military instruments, US officials have options. Should the above condition occur within this strategic context — meaning without a change in the choices, actions, or instruments of key participants (actual or potential) — the American objective likely collapses to the nullification of any potential strategic influence produced by Pyongyang's nuclear warheads and ballistic missiles. It can be expected that the logic of American strategy would be based on two tasks. The first task

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<sup>84</sup> Brad Lendon, "US puts on 3-carrier show of force for first time in decade," CNN, November 13, 2017, accessed November 13, 2017, <http://www.cnn.com/2017/11/12/politics/us-navy-three-carrier-exercise-pacific/index.html>; Dan Lamothe, "In standoff with North Korea, the U.S. keeps deployment of 'strategic assets' mysterious," *The Washington Post*, October 29, 2017, accessed November 13, 2017, [https://www.washingtonpost.com/news/checkpoint/wp/2017/10/29/in-standoff-with-north-korea-the-u-s-keeps-deployment-of-strategic-assets-mysterious/?utm\\_term=.dc90eb5fed86](https://www.washingtonpost.com/news/checkpoint/wp/2017/10/29/in-standoff-with-north-korea-the-u-s-keeps-deployment-of-strategic-assets-mysterious/?utm_term=.dc90eb5fed86); Sofia Lotto Persio, "U.S. missile defense shield THAAD ready for North Korea," *Newsweek*, October 23, 2017, accessed November 13, 2017, <http://www.newsweek.com/us-missile-defense-shield-thaad-ready-north-korea-690426>.

<sup>85</sup> Thomas Schelling, "Chapter 1: The Diplomacy of Violence."

would be to locate North Korean warheads and missiles. The second task would be to destroy them. These are the instruments available for the implementation of such a strategy.

To find North Korea's nuclear weapons and ballistic missiles, the US military could use the following reconnaissance and intelligence collection capabilities. Based on unclassified information presented by Keir Lieber and Daryl Press, the US military has the ability to observe 97 percent of North Korean roads in real-time using twelve RQ-4 Global Hawk unmanned aerial vehicles (UAVs). This would require the violation of North Korean airspace by at least four of the UAVs.<sup>86</sup> This raises an important point that goes unaddressed by Lieber and Press. To defend those four penetrating UAVs and their surveillance capabilities, the US would have to either use electronic countermeasures to conceal them to reduce the effectiveness of North Korean anti-aircraft weapons systems, and/or carry out airstrikes to neutralize such weapons systems (with the high probability of preemptively killing North Korean troops). As a result, the use of these specific capabilities introduces the risk of escalation. Before choosing to use UAVs in this manner, American policymakers would need to balance the risks of escalation with the risks generated by a lack of warning in regard to Pyongyang's preparations for the launch of ballistic missiles.

A less provocative and somewhat less effective alternative set of instruments for locating North Korean warheads and missiles exists. Using American and allied satellites, the US is capable of watching 90 percent of North Korean roads with as little as twenty-four minutes between passes.<sup>87</sup> This leaves North Korea very little time within which to move a nuclear armed ballistic missile from its hardened shelter to suitable location for launch. In the case of the Taepodong-2, Hwasong-14, and Hwasong-15 missiles, it would be extremely difficult for the missile to be moved, prepared for launch, and fired without the US being able to observe such preparations for hours if not days. Even in the case of the solid fueled KN-15, North Korea would have little time before the US would know the missiles were being moved to a firing position. The use of satellite capabilities avoids the risk of escalation. There are, however, questions of endurance and opportunity costs. Focusing a sizable amount of satellite capabilities on one target risks leaving the US blind to strategically relevant developments in other locations (for example, the Middle East). Worse yet, as a result of North Korean terrain, reliance on these instruments expands the amount of unobserved roadways by 7 percent — potentially increasingly Pyongyang's ability to transport and prepare an ICBM and warhead without being seen by the US.

Regardless of the reconnaissance and intelligence collection instruments used, once launch preparations are detected, the US would have a range of counter-force options with which it could destroy a nuclear armed missile.

The US could use conventional airstrikes or special forces teams to destroy North Korean missiles on a launch pad. In regard to airstrikes, the US could use strike fighters and bombers, and/or Tomahawk missiles, to attack observable North Korean missiles. Special forces teams could be inserted into areas unobservable by US satellites and/or UAVs. These teams could gather targeting information for an airstrike and/or strike North Korea's mobile missile teams and facilities themselves. Manned airstrikes using fighters and bombers would presumably

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<sup>86</sup> Keir A. Lieber and Daryl G. Press, "The New Era of Counterforce: Technological Change and the Future of Nuclear Deterrence," *International Security* 41, no. 4 (2017): 9-49, doi:10.1162/isec\_a\_00273.

<sup>87</sup> *Ibid.*

necessitate attacks against North Korean air defense units.<sup>88</sup> As before, any action that inflicts North Korean casualties heightens the risk of escalation. Tomahawk strikes and the use of special forces reduces — but does not eliminate — the likelihood, and number, of North Korean deaths. Given the threat posed by a nuclear armed ICBM being prepared for launch, logically this would be an acceptable risk for American policymakers.

There are, however, additional risks posed by the use of conventional airstrikes and/or the use of special forces that must be considered. These instruments are likely to trigger a game of cat and mouse. North Korea prepares a missile, the US destroys it. In response, the undeterred regime tries again — perhaps preparing multiple missiles at multiple locations. With each iteration, this dynamic increases the likelihood of escalation. As the number of missiles and locations increases, so too do the odds that either Pyongyang will successfully launch a weaponized ballistic missile that sparks war — or Washington will launch a counter-force strike of such magnitude that it sparks war. Because of this, conventional airstrikes produce little in the way of strategic value. They risk the US's political objective — the protection of the status quo.

The US military has the ability to use nuclear weapons as part of a counter-force strike against North Korea. Logically, the use of this instrument would be predicated on the decision to seek complete denuclearization of the regime and the crippling of its ballistic missile program. No political objective short of this would justify the inherent costs and associated risks.

To destroy Pyongyang's hardened nuclear and ballistic missile facilities, the US could choose to use high-yield nuclear weapons. These weapons, set to detonate low enough to the target to create a pressure shock wave, would destroy their targets by crushing them. Keir Lieber and Daryl Press argue that such a strike could be carried out using ten W88 nuclear warheads (with a yield of 455 kilotons) launched from American submarines.<sup>89</sup>

The use of these instruments presents two fundamental challenges. First, it violates the taboo against the use of nuclear weapons. This taboo emerged in the wake of World War II. It is considered a pillar of the nuclear non-proliferation treaty and has been cited by several nuclear powers in their renouncement of the right of nuclear first use.<sup>90</sup> Second, to create the necessary shock wave, the W88 warheads must be detonated close to the surface. As Lieber and Press note, this condition would result in the release of radioactive fallout throughout North Korea and into South Korea. It would also — depending on prevailing winds — result in the release of

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<sup>88</sup> Uri Friedman, "North Korea: The Military Options," *The Atlantic*, May 17, 2017, accessed November 30, 2017, <https://www.theatlantic.com/international/archive/2017/05/war-north-korea-options/524049/>; David E. Sanger, "How the U.S. Could Respond to Another North Korean Missile Test," *The New York Times*, September 07, 2017, accessed November 30, 2017, <https://www.nytimes.com/2017/09/07/world/asia/north-korea-missile-test-us-options.html>; Justin Bronk, "North Korea: What are the military options?," BBC News, September 03, 2017, accessed November 30, 2017, <http://www.bbc.com/news/world-asia-41095772>; "US Commandos Set to Counter North Korean Nuclear Sites," *Washington Free Beacon*, May 03, 2017, accessed November 30, 2017, <http://freebeacon.com/national-security/us-commandos-set-counter-north-korean-nuclear-sites/>; "US Delta Force, SEAL Team 6 Prepare To Take Out Kim Jong-Un, Practice Tactical North Korea 'Infiltration'," ZeroHedge, March 12, 2017, accessed November 30, 2017, <http://www.zerohedge.com/news/2017-03-13/us-delta-force-seal-team-6-prepare-take-out-kim-jong-un-practice-tactical-north-kore>; Paul D. Shinkman, "Trump Has Alternative Military Options for North Korea," *U.S. News & World Report*, August 10, 2017, accessed November 30, 2017, <https://www.usnews.com/news/national-news/articles/2017-08-10/trump-has-alternative-military-options-for-north-korea>.

<sup>89</sup> Lieber and Press, "The New Era of Counterforce: Technological Change and the Future of Nuclear Deterrence," 20-30.

<sup>90</sup> Nina Tannenwald, "Stigmatizing the Bomb: Origins of the Nuclear Taboo," *International Security* 29, no. 4 (2005): 5-49. doi:10.1162/isec.2005.29.4.5; Joeli Pretorius, "Ban the bomb by... banning the bomb?," *Bulletin of the Atomic Scientists* 73, no. 3 (2017): 201-203, doi: 10.1080/00963402.2017.1315121.



radioactive fallout into China or Japan. Lieber and Press estimated that such an attack would kill between two and three million people across the Korean peninsula.<sup>91</sup>

Even if successful in regard to the immediate threat posed by North Korea, the use of these instruments would be strategically counter-productive. They would undermine the status quo on the peninsula and — as a result of the massive number of casualties — and likely destroy the US-South Korean alliance (and very possibly the US alliance with Japan as well). The use of high-yield nuclear weapons would probably spark nuclear proliferation. It is logical to assume that a number of nation-states observing such events would judge US strategy to be illegitimate. In response to an American high-yield nuclear counter-force strike, and the perceived threat it might represent, it can be expected that said observers would seek a demonstrated deterrent nuclear capability — sparking a nuclear arms race. Because of the associated costs and risks posed by their use, the US's high-yield nuclear weapons have little strategic value in this context.

The US has another nuclear counter-force option. American policymakers could use a low-yield nuclear strike to create the pressure shock wave necessary to destroy North Korea's nuclear weapons and ballistic missile programs. Because of its technical properties, this low-yield nuclear strike option also carries strategic costs and risks. Like the high-yield option above, its consideration only makes sense if the goal is denuclearization and the crippling of the regime's ballistic missile program.

Using a recently developed fuze that compensates for the debris cloud generated by nuclear weapons,<sup>92</sup> it is possible to carry out a nuclear strike against North Korean targets using low-yield (.3 kiloton) B-61 gravity bombs delivered by American B-2 stealth bombers. Lieber and Press argue that by using twenty B-61 bombs, it is possible to destroy North Korea's nuclear weapons and ballistic missile sites while killing fewer than 100 North Koreans (those deaths being limited to the target sites).<sup>93</sup> Like the high-yield nuclear option, even if operationally successful, there are reasons to believe that the use of this instrument would result in strategic failure.

Any use of nuclear weapons, even low-yield weapons, will threaten US political objectives — the regional status quo and American alliances in Asia. Perhaps more damaging is that this capability, once demonstrated, is likely to produce negative strategic effects in regard to China and the other nuclear armed nation-states observing such a strategy. An American ability to forcibly denuclearize other nation-states inherently poses a risk to the deterrence capabilities of said nation-states' nuclear arsenals.<sup>94</sup> In threatening the primary political purpose for which nation-states seek nuclear weapons — deterrence via the threat of counter-strike — the use of these instruments would likely spark arms races and other counter-measures that would

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<sup>91</sup> Lieber and Press, "The New Era of Counterforce: Technological Change and the Future of Nuclear Deterrence," 30.

<sup>92</sup> This cloud makes it practically impossible to strike a single target with more than two warheads — the third attempted strike fails as the inbound warhead encounters the debris field and is destroyed before detonation. The compensating fuze allows the detonation point to be adjusted so that third (and potential additional) warheads avoid the field and its effects. Lieber and Press, "The New Era of Counterforce: Technological Change and the Future of Nuclear Deterrence," 21-22.

<sup>93</sup> Lieber and Press, "The New Era of Counterforce: Technological Change and the Future of Nuclear Deterrence," 21-32; Tom O'Connor, "The U.S. is building a nuclear bomb that's more accurate than ever," *Newsweek*, April 23, 2017, accessed November 30, 2017, <http://www.newsweek.com/us-build-better-nuclear-missile-585686>.

<sup>94</sup> Lieber and Press, "The New Era of Counterforce: Technological Change and the Future of Nuclear Deterrence," 16.

destabilize great power relations and increase risks to a range of US political objectives (including the physical security of the American homeland).

The above suggests that every plausible strategy for achieving US political objectives on the Korean peninsula through direct action carries substantial risk. Paradoxically, many of the most effective options available to the president would likely trade a reduction in the immediate — more limited, yet severe — threat posed by North Korea for an exponential increase in the gravity of future threats posed by China, Russia, and other nuclear armed nation-states. Before surrendering to despair or assuming American impotence, however, it is important to remember that the utility of instruments and the soundness of strategy are predicated on relative capabilities and the political objectives of any potential originator, potential respondent, and other strategically important audiences. Strategy is, in part, the art of balancing these elements. How one approaches that balance is critically important.

### **Approaches to Strategy**

There are two general approaches to strategy. Each seeks to create a causal logic for achieving the identified political objective. Each attempts a relative balance of the choices, actions, instruments, and political objectives presented by potential originators, respondents, and audiences. One approach emphasizes outcome-optimization; it seeks to construct a causal logic that produces the best chance of achieving the desired political objective given what is known. The other approach emphasizes robust-satisfaction; it seeks to construct a causal logic most likely to achieve the desired outcome across the widest range of possible scenarios.<sup>95</sup> The difference between the two can be difficult to detect. Outcome-optimization strategies are predicated on what is known. Robust-satisfaction strategies attempt to insure against what is unknown. This distinction is important.

Although strategies are developed in regard to the known strategic context and attempt to account for interaction among the choices, actions, and instruments of potential originators, respondents, and strategically important audiences — their formulation is, in fact, the product of decision making under conditions of uncertainty. As a result of gaps in intelligence, contradictory intelligence, and/or poor intelligence, the degree of uncertainty is often unknown. Strategists can never be certain of the range or efficacy of other actors' potential choices, actions, and instruments. Strategists can never even be certain of other actors' political objectives — for there may be reasons to misrepresent such. Yakov Ben-Haim describes the challenge this way: “It is as though we are rolling dice without knowing how many faces each die has, and whether or not each is balanced for equal probabilities of all outcomes. This is essentially the problem every strategist faces...”<sup>96</sup>

As a result of human psychology, the degree of uncertainty is often unappreciated. Valerie Hudson points out that people demonstrate a proclivity for heuristic fallacies. Individuals discount or overly weight information based on how well it fits pre-existing beliefs. This risks a skewed understanding of the strategic context. Similarly, Hudson argues that humans “...are notoriously bad at the calculation of joint probabilities.” Hudson's point is relevant to, and illustrated by, the strategic context here.

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<sup>95</sup> Yakov Ben-Haim, “Thinking Strategically: Dealing with Uncertainty in Strategic Decision-making,” *Parameters* 45, no. 3 (Autumn 2015): 63-73, [http://ssi.armywarcollege.edu/pubs/Parameters/issues/Autumn\\_2015/9\\_Ben-Haim.pdf](http://ssi.armywarcollege.edu/pubs/Parameters/issues/Autumn_2015/9_Ben-Haim.pdf).

<sup>96</sup> *Ibid.*, 63

Consider the number of steps necessary for Pyongyang to launch a successful nuclear strike against the United States — and how the likelihood of success at each step affects the likelihood of overall success. North Korea must prepare the missile for launch and do so without the missile being observed and destroyed by the US. Based on the American observation capabilities listed above, be generous and set the probability of an unobserved (and un-interdicted) launch at 25%. Then the missile must fly to its target, the warhead must survive reentry, and then the warhead must explode. Based on what is known about the success rate of North Korean tests and the success rates of the US and Soviet Union as they developed these technologies in the 1960s, set the probability of each of these stages at 50%.<sup>97</sup> How likely is it that North Korea would be able to successfully launch a strike against the US? Most people would probably answer — a little less than 50% — and use such as the basis for making decisions about what to do. The answer is actually 3.125% (.25 x .50 x .50 x .50). This is closer to the likelihood that should be used when deciding how to approach strategy making in regard to North Korea, and when evaluating the risks and costs of any particular strategy.

Given what is known and unknown about the strategic context in regard to North Korea, the strategic limits of North Korean and American instruments, and the assumptions about the political objectives of Pyongyang and Washington, how might American policymakers approach strategy? What would an outcome-optimization strategy look like? What would a robust satisfaction strategy look like? What courses of action and strategic choices would each approach entail? These are the last major elements that must be considered when thinking strategically about North Korea.

### **Courses of Action and Strategic Choices**

To achieve its political objectives, preventing proliferation and protecting the US-South Korean alliance, US policymakers may approach strategy either on the basis of outcome-optimization or robust-satisfaction. The two approaches change how the political objectives are framed and identify different measures of success. They do not alter the political objectives. Those remain constant regardless of the approach.

An outcome-optimization approach would likely stress denuclearization and a dismantling of Pyongyang's ballistic missile programs. At the very least, it would seek to freeze their technological development and size. At its core would be a causal logic designed to compel the Kim Jong-un regime to stop, if not destroy, its nuclear weapons development and ballistic missile programs. An outcome-optimization approach would be predicated on an assumption that to secure American political objectives, the US must stop an ongoing behavior on the part of North Korea. Such an approach assumes that this behavior, if unchecked, poses the greatest threat to US objectives. It also assumes that if these weapons are allowed to exist, they will eventually be used against the United States. Thus, they must be destroyed. If American policymakers work from this approach, the strategy most likely to bring about the elimination of these programs should be sought.

A robust-satisfaction approach would likely stress the prevention of a nuclear strike. At the core of this approach would be a causal logic designed to deter the Kim regime from using

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<sup>97</sup> John D. Steinbruner and Thomas M. Garwin, "Strategic Vulnerability: The Balance between Prudence and Paranoia," *International Security* 1, no. 1 (1976): 138-81, doi:10.2307/2538581; William C. Potter, "Coping with MIRV in a MAD World," *The Journal of Conflict Resolution* 22, no. 4 (1978): 599-626, <http://www.jstor.org/stable/173693>.

nuclear weapons and prevent a nuclear arms race (based on the assumption that the more actors who have nuclear weapons, the more likely one or more of them will use such weapons). A robust-satisfaction approach would be predicated on an assumption that to secure American political objectives, the US must prevent a new behavior on the part of North Korea (or other potential actors) — in this case, the actual use of nuclear weapons. It assumes that under the existing strategic context, absent the use of nuclear weapons, US political objectives are likely to be met. If American policy-makers work from this approach, the strategy that maximizes the prevention of the use of nuclear weapons over the widest possible scenarios should be sought.

Each approach carries costs, benefits, and risks. An outcome-optimization approach is likely to produce some form of conflict and a relatively small number of people will almost certainly be killed. Yet, it is more likely to reduce, if not eliminate, the threat posed by Pyongyang's nuclear weapons and ballistic missiles. The risks associated with a strategy based on such an approach are hard to know and likely unlimited. A strategy based on outcome-optimization and employing some of the choices, actions, and instruments outlined above could set in motion events that lead to thermonuclear war. A robust-satisfaction approach cannot guarantee the avoidance of conflict and it cannot promise that any conflict that comes about will be limited to conventional munitions. A strategy based on the type of robust-satisfaction described above will cost the US (and the world) — it will weaken, to some degree, the non-proliferation norm. It may embolden others to pursue nuclear weapons and ballistic missiles. It will truncate Washington and Seoul's ability to respond to Pyongyang's conventional provocations. But, it is more likely to forestall conflict, use of nuclear weapons, and a nuclear arms race. The risks associated with a strategy based on such an approach are more quantifiable — such a strategy risks the deaths of potentially millions of Japanese and American citizens, should Kim Jong-un be undeterrable in the preemptive use of his new weapons.

North Korea's nuclear weapons and ballistic missile programs present American foreign policymakers with an intractable set of policy choices. This situation is the result of lack of intelligence about the motives driving the regime of Kim Jong-un and knowledge as to whether or not he is deterrable — directly or via pressure placed through or on his regime. This situation is also a product of the constraints of the international system. At the close of the 20th century American policy-makers came to believe that the US's position of primacy left it free to act, secure in the virtue of its own motives, without consideration of the strategic context within which all foreign policy occurs. The events of the 21st century — the rise of China, a revisionist Russia, the wars in Iraq and Afghanistan, the situation on the Korean peninsula, and every other American foreign policy goal — demonstrate the eternal truth that the achievement of any given set of political objectives requires careful consideration of the *strategic* context.

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