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TRUMP'S FALSE 'REALISM'

Muhammad Ali Baig* and Syed Sabir Muhammad**

Abstract

Foreign policy pivoted upon realist principles has have remained a vital instrument to pursue, achieve, secure and sustain the policy objectives of a state. America being the liberal hegemonic state maintained 'liberal hegemony' since the end of the Second World War. Realists intended to adopt a realist foreign policy; however, ideologies like 'American Exceptionalism' dominated over the former. President Donald Trump opted for protectionism with the objective of strengthening U.S. indigenous economy – a realist approach. Nevertheless, Trump's foreign dealings in relation to America's allies are causing damage to the established balance of power and the hard-earned trust of allies. This article intends to discover Trump's policies against the dictates of realism and how U.S. President can restore American hegemony under the premises of realism while employing deterrence, containment and offshore balancing as alternatives.

Key Words: Trump, Realism, US Foreign Policy, Alliance, Trade War.

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Introduction

International politics are as dynamic as it ever was. A plethora of unseen encounters and matters has dominated the global politics. New poles of power are evolving, attempting to cast their footprint and impacting the international structure. The good old strategy of alliance formation is in tatters, where confusion and mistrust has put a question mark on their viability. Actors other than state (AOTS) are effectively testing the legitimacy and will of the states and at the same time powerful enough to draw the attention of major actors in their favour. A number of threats are causing security concerns including the unauthorized proliferation of fissile material, cyber warfare and dirty bombs. At the same time, global activists are campaigning hard for alleviation of poverty, preservation of natural resources, promotion of human rights, and conservation of global environment. In a nutshell, international politics is becoming international in the true sense of the word. No one state can shun its international engagement to become a spectator. Every state has a role to play not only in progressing the international politics but also in safeguarding its national interest. This engagement, on part of states, in international politics is called 'strategy'. Every state, minor or major, devises a strategy to operate in international politics. The essential of any strategy is not only to gain or forward its own national interest but also to have a check on those of others. Any viable strategy would ask for, to concentrate on the potential aggressor/revisionist and to contain or stop its status-quo disturbing activities. The United States, too, is part of international politics. Being a major power, its responsibilities are global like its interests. Its strategy encompasses securing its vital interests, observing the smooth function of the international institutions, allocating its domestic resources to most immediate concerns, spreading of liberal values, and safeguarding the security of allied states and carefully monitoring the potential and future peer competitors.

To fulfil such genuine responsibilities of a great power, U.S. administrations envisaged and articulated their particular set of beliefs in their specific doctrines and grand strategies in the realization of American global objectives and goals. Martel argued that "America's distinctiveness lies in the exceptionalism of its grand strategic history."¹ In simplest terms, a doctrine deals with 'how to do things,' while on the other hand Hooker averred that plainly a grand strategy is the employment of available resources and power to secure the state. However, it maintained that a grand strategy is above military and political strategies ultimately to achieve political objectives.² Similarly, Christopher Layne outlined three basic stages of a grand strategy; i) Important interests related to security, ii) Existing and potential dangers to such objectives and goals; and, iii) Choosing the combination of available platforms including political, military and economic in securing those objectives and goals.³ Nevertheless, Hooker, Martel and Layne made it clear that the achievement of objectives and goals are inherently dependent upon doctrine and grand strategy.

¹ William C. Martel, *Grand Strategy in Theory and Practice: The Need for an Effective American Foreign Policy* (New York, NY: Cambridge University Press, 2015). 19.

² R.D. Hooker, Jr., *The Grand Strategy of the United States*, INSS Strategic Monograph (Washington, D.C.: National Defense University Press, 2014). 1.

³ Christopher Layne, "From Preponderance to Offshore Balancing: America's Future Grand Strategy," *International Security* 22, no. 1 (Summer 1997). 88.

What is then missing in Trump's grand strategy? Can we call Trump's strategy viable or realistic? Is Trump on the verge of shunning all its responsibilities (responsibilities of a major/great power) and on the verge of becoming a spectator? Is the roll-back approach observable in American foreign policy a realist one? The paper will try to address these questions. Fundamentally, the paper will analyse America's grand strategy during Trump Administration. Furthermore, the paper will evaluate the nature of Trump's strategy using the realist lens.

America's Grand Strategy: Trump Administration

Historically, global threats (Nazism, Communism, Terrorism and concurrently the Chinese threat) have influenced American global engagement. These threats posed imminent or perceived challenge to American security. To counter these challenges and to nip the evil in the bud, the United States devised strategies and pursued these strategies globally. The pivotal ingredient of the overall the strategy was creating network of institutions and allies to support and forward its cause. After giving up its isolationist tradition, Roosevelt's Lend Lease Agreement was an attempt to support the enemies of Nazism and authoritarian regimes and U.S. extended its support to Soviet Union. In post-World War-II, U.S. envisaged a plan under the premise of Truman Doctrine in backing nations which felt threatened by the spread of the Soviet ideology; security apparatus to defend against possible aggression; a highly structured organizational platform to promote liberal economy; placed itself at the forefront of global resistance; and ensuring access to natural resources and smooth flow of international trade and commerce. This global arrangement, being its leader, needed constant American efforts. Concurrently, President Donald Trump has been tainted and charged for not having a doctrine or a grand strategy.⁴

Fundamentally, Layne advocated that security and economic factors play a vital role in any grand strategy.⁵ Ever since the U.S. adopted policy of foreign engagement, the U.S. has conceived global security and prosperity indispensable of the prosperity of the U.S. Its strategy has regarded the use of international institutions, agreement and alliances more effective in pursuing global peace and prosperity. Institutions like the United Nations Organization (UNO), North Atlantic Treaty Organization (NATO), World Bank (WB), International Monetary Fund (IMF), and World Trade Organization (WTO) are considered useful in safeguarding U.S. political and economic interests and are means of exercising American leadership and not an alternative to it.⁶ President Trump presented a radical policy options for the U.S. It projected a captivating slogan for America by arguing in favour of 'America First'.⁷ He criticised the utility of international financial and monetary organizations and the status of security pacts i.e. NATO. In his scheme, Trump advocated that America's role as vanguard in providing security i.e. extended deterrence to its post-

⁴ Rebecca Friedman Lissner and Micah Zenko, "There Is No Trump Doctrine, and There Will Never Be One," *Foreign Policy*, July 21, 2017, <https://foreignpolicy.com/2017/07/21/there-is-no-trump-doctrine-and-there-will-never-be-one-grand-strategy/>.

⁵ Christopher Layne, "From Preponderance to Offshore Balancing: America's Future Grand Strategy," 90.

⁶ John B. Judis, *The Folly of Empire: What George W. Bush Could Learn from Theodore Roosevelt and Woodrow Wilson* (New York: Scribner, 2004). 204-205.

⁷ Barry R. Posen, "The Rise of Illiberal Hegemony: Trump's Surprising Grand Strategy," *Foreign Affairs*, April 2018, <https://www.foreignaffairs.com/articles/2018-02-13/rise-illiberal-hegemony>.

World War-II allies will come at a price acceptable to the U.S. and its allies must share the financial burden. Thus far, President Trump suggested to arm Japan and South Korea with nuclear weapons to overcome the issue of overstretch – since the latter was highlighted by Layne who cited Paul Kennedy’s notion of “imperial overstretch” – both argued that ‘over-commitment’ overburdens a great power.⁸ Minimizing America’s active role in NATO;⁹ withdrawing from the Iranian Nuclear Deal or Joint Comprehensive Plan of Action (JCPOA), human rights were his solution to Middle Eastern quagmire and to appease the Israel-Egypt and Saudi Arabia set. To stabilize economy, it suggested building a wall at the U.S.-Mexico border, strict immigration policy, raising taxes and tariffs on goods imported from China and defying the utility of WTO for America. It also promoted bilateral diplomacy instead of a multilateral one.

Middle East

American foreign policy believed in engaging hostile states to maintain the status quo and keep their revisionist tendencies below the threshold to maintain balance of power. The Nixon administration supported China and Pakistan to contain Soviet Union and India.¹⁰ Similarly, Obama administration took Iran into the mainstream and brought it to talks on Tehran’s nuclear ambitions; gave China a significant space in global politics; called for a greater role for the European Union; and tried to bring Russia to play a larger geopolitical role. The Middle East being a region of great strategic value, the U.S. intends to ensure the fulfilment of its energy needs, balance of power and free of nuclear weapons with a check on terrorist organizations. Trump Administration maintained a hostile rhetoric right from the beginning especially related to North Korea and Iran. This hard stance manifested in the withdrawal from JCPOA. The agreement was brokered by America’s Atlantic Allies including Britain, France and Germany, of course except Russia and China. The anticipated withdrawal met severe criticism and subsequently Iran enriched more uranium. Conceivably, Trump has a clear leaning towards Saudi/Israeli/Emirati views on Iran; disregarding the dictums of offshore balancing. Undoubtedly, Iran is an important player in the region’s quagmire.

Mearsheimer and Walt¹¹ argued Israel to be a “strategic liability” and declared Washington’s undying support for Israel as the root cause of massive Muslim hatred against U.S. Mearsheimer and Walt also argued that since the Arab-Israeli War of 1973, U.S. is relentlessly securing the interests of Israel while jeopardizing its very own. The authors asserted that “Israel’s security is ultimately not of critical strategic importance to the United

⁸ Christopher Layne, “From Preponderance to Offshore Balancing: America’s Future Grand Strategy.” 110.; Paul Kennedy, *The Rise and Fall of the Great Powers: Economic Change and Military Conflict from 1500 to 2000* (New York, N.Y.: Random House, 1988). 515.

⁹ Demetri Sevastopulo, “Donald Trump Open to Japan and South Korea Having Nuclear Weapons,” *Financial Times*, March 27, 2016, <https://www.ft.com/content/c927017c-f398-11e5-9afe-dd2472ea263d>.

¹⁰ Zbigniew Brzezinski, “From Hope to Audacity: Appraising Obama’s Foreign Policy,” *Foreign Affairs*, February 2010. 27.

¹¹ John Mearsheimer and Stephen M. Walt – both are ardent realists and are regarded as an authority in the realist tradition. While the former is an Offensive Realist and the latter belongs to Defensive Realist school of thought.

States.”¹² It is our contention that the transfer of U.S. Embassy from Tel Aviv to Jerusalem was a superficial decision that was primarily orchestrated by Trump's son-in-law Jared Kushner. Consequently, America was singled out internationally and faced unnecessary criticism.

Similarly, Syria's alleged use of chemical nerve agent 'sarin' resulted in the deaths of innocent civilians in April 2017.¹³ The Trump Administration decided to punish Assad Regime with that of cruise missile strikes. On April 7, 2017 U.S. Mediterranean Fleet launched 59 BGM-109 *Tomahawk* cruise missiles at Syrian targets.¹⁴ Trump opted for more troop deployment in the Middle East since according to *Newsweek* U.S. Military enlarged its presence in the region by 33 percent.¹⁵

Arguably, Trump's decision to initiate a blockade of Qatar is somewhat reminiscent of NATO's expansion that backfired and Putin annexed Crimea from Ukraine – Mearsheimer declared the annexation of Crimea as the West's fault.¹⁶ Quite opposite to Trump's anticipation, Turkey and Iran supplied Qatar and Trump's endeavour to choke Doha embarrassingly failed.

Mearsheimer made it clear that Europe, North-East Asia and Persian Gulf – are three regions with vital strategic importance to the United States – primarily due to the fact that other great powers are located near Europe and North-East Asia and Persian Gulf produces thirty percent of world's oil with fifty five percent of reserves.¹⁷ Trump's decisions and actions are quite contrary to the assertions made by Mearsheimer.

Realism pays great emphasis on the spirit of nationalism. Walt argued that nationalism serves as a binding force for states and nations.¹⁸ Likewise, Mearsheimer declared nationalism and realism as close as cousins¹⁹ and stated nationalism to be an adhesive that binds politicians and people.²⁰ Nevertheless, Trump failed to discern amongst his nationalistic fervour and the strategic needs of America's allies. Arguably, maligning and

¹² John J. Mearsheimer and Stephen M. Walt, *The Israel Lobby and U.S. Foreign Policy* (New York: Farrar, Straus and Giroux, 2007). 338.

¹³ Spencer Ackerman et al., “Syria Missile Strikes: US Launches First Direct Military Action against Assad,” *The Guardian*, April 7, 2017, <http://www.theguardian.com/world/2017/apr/06/trump-syria-missiles-assad-chemical-weapons>.

¹⁴ “US Missile Attack on Syrian Air Base,” *Sputnik*, accessed July 26, 2018, https://sputniknews.com/trend/us_attack_syria_2017/.

¹⁵ John Haltiwanger, “Trump's Secret War? U.S. Military's Presence in Middle East Has Grown 33 Percent in Past Four Months,” *Newsweek*, November 21, 2017, <http://www.newsweek.com/trumps-secret-war-us-militarys-presence-middle-east-has-grown-33-percent-past-718089>.

¹⁶ John J. Mearsheimer, “Why the Ukraine Crisis Is the West's Fault,” *Foreign Affairs*, October 2014, <https://www.foreignaffairs.com/articles/russia-fsu/2014-08-18/why-ukraine-crisis-west-s-fault>.

¹⁷ John J. Mearsheimer, “America Unhinged,” *The National Interest*, February 2014. 12-13.

¹⁸ Stephen M. Walt, “Nationalism Rules,” *Foreign Policy*, July 15, 2011, <https://foreignpolicy.com/2011/07/15/nationalism-rules/>.

¹⁹ John J. Mearsheimer, “Kissing Cousins: Nationalism and Realism,” *University of Chicago*, May 5, 2011, <http://mearsheimer.uchicago.edu/pdfs/kissingcousins.pdf>.

²⁰ John J. Mearsheimer, *The Tragedy of Great Power Politics* (New York, NY: W.W. Norton & Company, 2001). 109.

accusing the allies based upon nationalism might gather national level support; however, it could considerably injure the prestige and power of the U.S.

False Notion of Realism

Realism strives for prestige along with power. Realists present a unique approach by building a case in adopting deterrence and containing the peer-competitors flanked by offshore balancing in order to realize policy goals and objectives. Realism is adaptive and perhaps due to this very attribute of the tradition it has a number of schools of thought with quite a many theories and concepts. The cruise missile strike on Syria was utterly based upon false realism in two ways; i) Long before the strike Russia had deployed its state-of-the-art S-400 *Trimuf* surface to air missile system in Syria in aftermath of the downing of its Su-24 aircraft by Turkish F-16s in November 2015. S-400 retains the capability in shooting down air assets and missiles such as American BGM-109 *Tomahawk* cruise missile. Russians shot down 36 American *Tomahawk* cruise missiles in mid-air that resulted in nothing but garnered embarrassment and revealed operational weaknesses of the U.S.; and ii) Mearsheimer asserted that America had neither any strategic advantage nor any moral compulsion in conducting the strike.²¹ Interestingly, it was predicted by Baig that Russian S-400 could shoot down U.S. *Tomahawk* cruise missiles in mid-air due to its advanced radar and engagement capabilities.²²

Later, Trump's former National Security Advisor Lt. Gen. H. R. McMaster made it clear that Trump's foreign policy will be based on "principled realism;"²³ however, there seems neither principles nor realism – but false realism. As a consequence of air strikes Russia suspended cooperation with U.S. in Syria and called the strike to be the violation of international law.²⁴ A joint Syrian, Iranian and Russian Foreign Ministers statement warned against any new attacks.²⁵ Russian Foreign Minister Sergei Lavrov declared that "U.S. strikes on Syria contradict anti-terror goal."²⁶ Trump's attack brought Russia and America close to a direct confrontation and could have resulted in the concept of escalation outlined by Clausewitz²⁷ – a realist.

²¹ *The Best Documentary Ever - John Mearsheimer on Syria War, Hitler, and the Use of Chemical Weapons 8*, 2017, <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=-WCngB3ftnc.>; Nader Hashemi, "Obama's Syria Mistake Is Now Trump's Problem," *CNN*, April 9, 2017, <https://www.cnn.com/2017/04/09/opinions/obamas-mistake-is-now-trumps-problem-syria-hashemi/index.html>.

²² Muhammad Ali Baig, *Hilal*, February 2017.

²³ Jamie McIntyre and Travis J. Tritten, "H.R. McMaster: Trump National Security Strategy to Be Based on 'Principled Realism,'" *Washington Examiner*, December 4, 2017, <https://www.washingtonexaminer.com/hr-mcmaster-trump-national-security-strategy-to-be-based-on-principled-realism>.

²⁴ Neil MacFarquhar, "Russia Suspends Cooperation With U.S. in Syria After Missile Strikes," *The New York Times*, April 7, 2017, <https://www.nytimes.com/2017/04/07/world/middleeast/russia-iran-us-strikes-syria.html>.

²⁵ Kate Brady, "Russia, Iran Warn US against New Syria Attacks," *DW*, April 14, 2017, <https://www.dw.com/en/russia-iran-warn-us-against-new-syria-attacks/a-38425379>.

²⁶ "US Strikes on Syria Contradict Anti-Terror Goal - Lavrov," April 13, 2017, *Sputnik*, accessed July 26, 2018, <https://sputniknews.com/politics/201704131052594715-us-syria-strikes-goal/>.

²⁷ Carl von Clausewitz, *On War*, ed. and trans. Michael Howard and Peter Paret (Princeton, New Jersey: Princeton University Press, 1989). 25.

Arguably, it is a linchpin of realism that 'great power comes with great responsibility' – consequently, President Trump has to act more responsibly. There is relatively little doubt that President Bush's unilateral decision to attack Saddam Hussein of Iraq in 2003 was actually the start of an era that marked fading American global power. Bush failed to consider the dangers predicted by 650 Realist scholars belonging to the U.S. academia in handling the Iraq War.²⁸ Similarly, if Trump is not going to conform to the core principles of realism – his future and the fate of America as a great power might fluctuate and deteriorate. Mearsheimer and Walt argued against war and regime change in Iraq and provided historical precedent that Saddam Hussein could be contained and deterred.²⁹ The authors quite rightly predicted the likelihood of an alliance between Iraqi fighters and Al-Qaeda that culminated in the creation of Daesh or Islamic State of Iraq and Syria (ISIS). The predictions of Walt and Mearsheimer have manifested in the outward appearance of the ISIS.³⁰

Middle Eastern politics has its own dynamics. It operates as zero-sum. It operates as block, the Shiite block led by Iran and the Sunni Block led by Saudi – and in case of Syrian strife – Egypt and Saudi Arabia. Alongside, Israel maintains a central role in overall picture. Schism in blocks disturbs the equilibrium. Israel shifts its alliance at the time of need. Groups have to take animosity factor—the Israeli card—at the level that it does not create a massive outcry from public. Israel favours Saudi views on the growing Shiite crescent and regards it as an element of destabilization in the Middle East. The Syrian-Iranian-Russian troika is heating up the regional security arrangement and the trio's tactical gains are American strategic losses. However, Syria is of great strategic value for Iran and could not afford to lose its influence. Furthermore, Tehran is arming and financing Hezbollah and Shiite militants to conduct operations inside Syria. Turkish Erdogan joined the fight and is fighting against ISIS, who in reality is bombing the Kurd population. It is asking for minus-Assad, as it tries to send immigrants back to Syria.

On the other hand, Saudi Arabia is entangled in multiple problems including the Yemen War and attacks on its oilfields and tankers. Its vulnerable petro-chemical economy is further weakened by increased production of oil by Iran and Iraq. Also, the JCPOA does not solve Saudi fear of a nuclear Iran. Now, AOTS are important tools for Riyadh to carry out attacks in Iraq and Syria.³¹

In this quicksand, President Trump cannot afford to keep aloof of these geopolitical realities in the Middle East. Before acting on behalf of one side. Tactical engagements and solutions are likely to further complicate the situation. The Iranian presence and influence make it an indispensable element to be completely overlooked. However, Russia successfully engaged a NATO-member i.e. Turkey in buying Moscow's most sophisticated S-400 missile

²⁸ Daniel W. Drezner, "IR Scholars Weigh in against Iraq," *Foreign Policy*, October 12, 2004, <https://foreignpolicy.com/2004/10/12/ir-scholars-weigh-in-against-iraq/>.

²⁹ John J. Mearsheimer and Stephen M. Walt, "An Unnecessary War," *Foreign Policy*, February 2003.

³⁰ John J. Mearsheimer, "Donald Trump Should Embrace a Realist Foreign Policy," *The National Interest*, November 27, 2016, <http://nationalinterest.org/feature/donald-trump-should-embrace-realist-foreign-policy-18502>.

³¹ Yasir Kuoti, "Exclusion and Violence in Post-2003 Iraq," *Journal of International Affairs* 69, no. 2 (August 2016). 19-28.

system and associated equipment. It would not be ambitious to argue that Turkey being an ally is slipping out of the American hands. Some commentators feared that the military coup against President Erdogan in July 2016 was orchestrated primarily by America. Nonetheless, Turkey is a NATO member. A few journalists speculated that Russian President Putin helped President Erdogan to regain control of Ankara. However, it all happened before Trump ascended to power. Nevertheless, Trump could not do anything to keep Turkey close to America. It is worth mentioning that Halford Mackinder argued that if Tsars and Ottomans combine – the West would be the prime sufferer.

Trump’s Stance on China and Taiwan

President Trump criticised China during its election campaign and tweeted in September 2011 that “China is neither an ally or a friend--they want to beat us and own our country.”³² Later, in May 2016 Trump advocated that “We can’t continue to allow China to rape our country.”³³ Trump’s former Secretary of Defence Gen. (R) Mattis alleged Beijing of inflicting fear on the parties involved in the South China Sea by projection of military power.³⁴ Chinese President Xi Ping responded firmly to America’s assertion by saying that China won’t give up a single inch of territory.³⁵ Trump out of desperation resorted to increase in tariffs on Chinese products and authorised an increment of 10 to 25 percent.³⁶ Elliott argued that it is not easy to compete in a trade war.³⁷ Likewise, Larry Kudlow, the Director of National Economic Council, advised Beijing that it “better take Trump seriously.”³⁸

³² Veronica Stracqualursi, “10 Times Trump Attacked China and Its Trade Relations with the US,” *ABC News*, November 9, 2017, <http://abcnews.go.com/Politics/10-times-trump-attacked-china-trade-relations-us/story?id=46572567>.

³³ Jeremy Diamond, “Trump: ‘We Can’t Continue to Allow China to Rape Our Country,’” *CNN*, May 2, 2016, <https://www.cnn.com/2016/05/01/politics/donald-trump-china-rape/index.html>.

³⁴ “South China Sea Dispute: Mattis Says China ‘Intimidating Neighbours,’” *BBC News*, June 2, 2018, <https://www.bbc.co.uk/news/world-asia-44340439>.

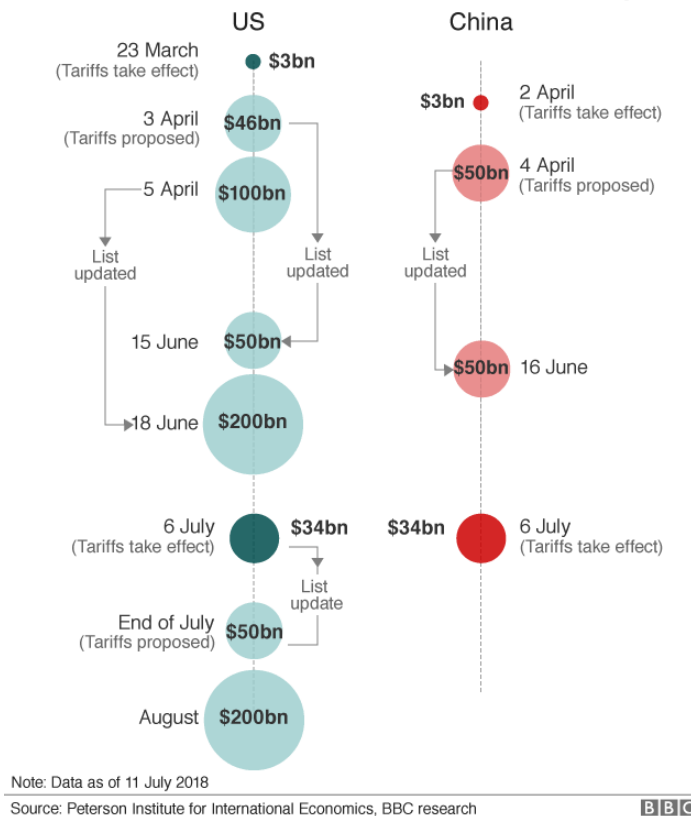
³⁵ “China Won’t Give up ‘one Inch’ of Territory Says President Xi to Mattis,” *BBC News*, June 28, 2018, <https://www.bbc.co.uk/news/world-asia-china-44638817>.

³⁶ Ana Swanson and Keith Bradsher, “Chinese Goods May Face 25% Tariffs, Not 10%, as Trump’s Anger Grows,” *The New York Times*, August 1, 2018, <https://www.nytimes.com/2018/08/01/business/china-tariffs-trump.html>.

³⁷ Larry Elliott, “Trump Will Soon Find That Winning a Trade War Is Not That Easy,” *The Guardian*, July 1, 2018, <https://www.theguardian.com/business/2018/jul/01/trump-will-soon-find-that-winning-a-trade-war-is-not-that-easy>.

³⁸ Grace Segers, “Larry Kudlow Warns That China ‘Better Take President Trump Seriously’ on Trade,” *CBS News*, August 3, 2018, <https://www.cbsnews.com/news/kudlow-warns-that-china-better-take-president-trump-seriously-on-trade/>.

How the tariffs battle has escalated this year



Source: BBC News.³⁹

Trump's earlier stance on revising America's One China Policy did hurt interests of America since it harnessed criticism. Due to the geographical location of Taiwan in the Pacific, it is of great strategic importance to the United States and an important offshore base – which if employed wisely can help America in deterrence and containment of the rising China. Mearsheimer called Taiwan a “giant aircraft carrier”⁴⁰ that China can use for military power projection in the Western Pacific.

However, President Trump must consider that if China intends to use Taiwan as a strong military base, then surely America can as well. China is a revisionist state claiming that Taiwan be made a part of mainland China; nevertheless, equipping Taipei with a variety of traditional and non-conventional weapons including the proposed tactical nuclear weapons (TNWs) to halt a potential People's Liberation Army invasion. Consequently, using Taiwan as a buck catcher in relation to China can best serve American interests under the realist tradition. Mearsheimer argued that if China continues to grow economically over the next three decades just like it did in the past three decades, then it would translate its economic power into a formidable military power. Consequently, China would be in a position to

³⁹ Ana Nicolaci da Costa, “Six Ways China Could Retaliate in a Trade War,” *BBC News*, July 20, 2018, <https://www.bbc.co.uk/news/business-44763110>.

⁴⁰ John J. Mearsheimer, “Taiwan in the Shadow of a Rising China,” *The University of Chicago*, December 7, 2013, mearsheimer.uchicago.edu/pdfs/Taiwan%20Talk%202012.2013.pdf.

become a regional hegemon and to dominate Asia just like America dominates the Western hemisphere. Mearsheimer also argued that to counter China's military might, U.S. would engage into a balancing coalition including most of China's neighbours primarily to contain Beijing.⁴¹

Moreover, Trump's overblown statements and rhetoric on trade with China have had unintended consequences i.e. the growing relations among the BRICS (an inter-governmental and multi-lateral organization including Brazil, Russia, India, China and South Africa). It is observable that Trump's National Security Strategy of 2017 argued Moscow and Beijing to be peer-competitors and challengers to "American power, influence, and interests."⁴² Nevertheless, Trump's false realism is augmenting the trade cooperation and coordination between its 'challengers' and peer competitors.

North Korea

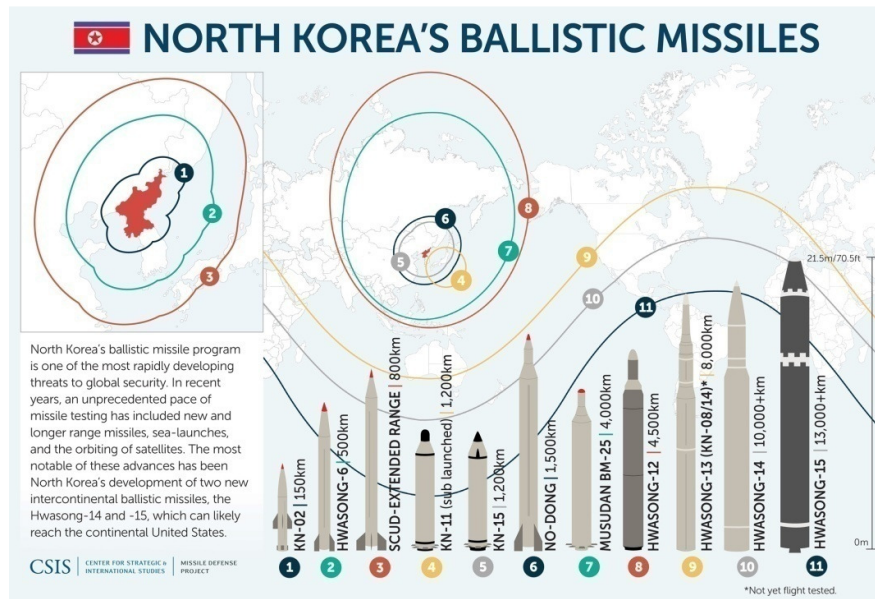
It is noticeable as Jina Kim noted that North Koreans threatened to unleash a sea of fire on South Korea and turning its capital Seoul into a fireball back in 1994.⁴³ These remarks clearly exhibit North Korean military capabilities to inflict damage more than two decades earlier and now they are possessing nuclear-tipped intercontinental ballistic missiles (ICBMs) including a wide range of ballistic and submarine launched ballistic missiles (SLBMs). The North Korean Hwasong-15 ICBM is capable to reach nearly 13,000 km and can deliver payload to American Western and Eastern seaboard.⁴⁴

⁴¹ Peter Navarro, "Mearsheimer on Strangling China & the Inevitability of War," *Huffington Post*, March 10, 2016, https://www.huffingtonpost.com/peter-navarro-and-greg-auntry/mearsheimer-on-strangling_b_9417476.html.

⁴² "National Security Strategy of the United States of America," *The White House*, December 2017, <https://www.whitehouse.gov/wp-content/uploads/2017/12/NSS-Final-12-18-2017-0905.pdf>.

⁴³ Jina Kim, *The North Korean Nuclear Weapons Crisis: The Nuclear Taboo Revisited?*, 1st ed. (New York, NY: Palgrave Macmillan, 2014). 29.

⁴⁴ Dave Majumdar, "Expert on North Korea's New Hwasong-15 ICBM: 'You Cannot Stop This Thing,'" *The National Interest*, December 2, 2017, <https://nationalinterest.org/blog/expert-north-koreas-new-hwasong-15-icbm-you-cannot-stop-23476>.



Source: Centre for Strategic and International Studies (CSIS).⁴⁵

Trump and Kim Jong-Un exchanged a series of hostile statements, the result of which was a meeting of both leaders. The summit yielded the predicted doubtful promises. The Joint Statement at Singapore encouraged new endeavours to bring peace and stability and to “build a lasting and stable peace regime on the Korean Peninsula;” a fresh commitment by Pyongyang to the Panmunjom Declaration, that previously called for “complete denuclearization of the Korean Peninsula.” The declaration was also a step to return the exhumed remains of U.S. soldiers and prisoners of war from the Korean War.⁴⁶

In retrospect, Trump’s ‘fire and fury’ statement over North Korea was a clear evidence of its false interpretation of realism. Mearsheimer outlined strategy of ‘buck passing’ in its Offensive Realism. Trump could have passed the buck to Japan, South Korea, Taiwan and Vietnam in relation to North Korea (allies doing the dirty work for the US: the strategy used in 1980’s against the Soviets in Afghanistan). By doing this, Trump could have gained time and increased pressure on North Korea instead of directly threatening it. America acts as an offshore balancer for Japan, South Korea, Taiwan and Vietnam and provides extended deterrence so that they can be employed for North Korea’s containment.

False Notion of Realism

Trump’s policy in relation to North Korea is another example of anti-realist practice. In the presence of these missile capabilities, it is very much dangerous for Trump to make “fire and fury” sort of statements. Kaplan argued realism to be a state of “sensibility.”⁴⁷ Realism is all

⁴⁵ Missile Defense Project, “Missiles of North Korea,” *Missile Threat, Center for Strategic and International Studies*, June 14, 2018, <https://missilethreat.csis.org/country/dprk/>.

⁴⁶ The New York Times, “The Trump-Kim Summit Statement: Read the Full Text,” *The New York Times*, June 12, 2018, <https://www.nytimes.com/2018/06/12/world/asia/trump-kim-summit-statement.html>.

⁴⁷ Robert D. Kaplan, “On Foreign Policy, Donald Trump Is No Realist,” *Washington Post*, November 11, 2016, https://www.washingtonpost.com/opinions/on-foreign-policy-donald-trump-is-a-fake-realist/2016/11/11/c5fdcc52-a783-11e6-8042-f4d111c862d1_story.html.

about rationality. A realist would try and avoid committing anything against the dictates of realism. Many regard realism as a pessimistic and perhaps an evil tradition. Realism talks about reality and perhaps it is often pungent and unacceptable. Realism professes deterrence and containment to meet threats such as emanating from North Korea. Realism also advocates squeezing North Korea with intense economic sanctions so that the Kim Regime may give up its nuclear ambitions. In this regard Sun-Tzu – a realist, argued that “do not press a desperate foe too hard.”⁴⁸ Sun-Tzu’s argument provides a viable logic to be employed while dealing with North Korea.

Zenko and Lissner argued that Trump’s ambiguous doctrine and grand strategy would confuse the allies – consequently would make it difficult for them to realize global U.S. national interests.⁴⁹ One argues that Realism apart from being a tradition having various schools of thought – offers a viable strategy or perhaps grand strategy. German General Heinz Guderian of the Second World War put it quite rightly that ‘there are no desperate situations, there are only desperate people’. Against many analyses and commentaries – the authors maintain that President Trump is not a madman at all – he is just being desperate primarily due to a rising China and resurgent Russia. Realism suggests the best possible ways to overcome desperation is containment and deterrence while possibly maintaining the balance of power.

Transatlantic Alliance and Donald Trump

One of the most interesting features of post-Second World War international politics is an alliance between the U.S. and its transatlantic allies. It was argued that the cornerstone of U.S. victory in the Cold-War was all due to its ability to work in alliance and harmony with the Western democracies.⁵⁰ The U.S. laid down a disciplined system to bring together European allies against the Soviet threat while advancing and spreading liberal values.⁵¹ However, quite unfortunately, Goldberg cited an anonymous senior official of the White House that “the President believes that the United States owes nothing to anyone – especially its allies.”⁵²

⁴⁸ Sun Tzu, *Sun Tzu on the Art of War: The Oldest Military Treatise in the World*, trans. Lionel Giles (Leicester, England: Allandale Online Publishing, 2000). 29.

⁴⁹ Micah Zenko and Rebecca Friedman Lissner, “Trump Is Going to Regret Not Having a Grand Strategy,” *Foreign Policy*, January 13, 2017, <https://foreignpolicy.com/2017/01/13/trump-is-going-to-regret-not-having-a-grand-strategy/>.

⁵⁰ Melvyn P. Leffler, “9/11 and the Past and Future of American Foreign Policy,” *International Affairs* 79, no. 5 (2003). 1061.

⁵¹ G. John Ikenberry, *After Victory: Institutions, Strategic Restraint, and The Rebuilding Of Order After Major Wars* (New Jersey: Princeton University Press, 2009). 163-164.

⁵² Jeffrey Goldberg, “A Senior White House Official Defines the Trump Doctrine: ‘We’Re America, Bitch,’” *The Atlantic*, June 11, 2018, <https://www.theatlantic.com/politics/archive/2018/06/a-senior-white-house-official-defines-the-trump-doctrine-were-america-bitch/562511/>.



Source: BBC News.⁵³

President Trump desired that Berlin must contribute at least 2% of its gross domestic product (GDP) towards NATO, to minimise the economic burden on U.S. Ostensibly, Trump seemingly is in a campaign against its German counterpart. Previously, Trump maintained a stern narrative about Germany during its election campaign. Historically, after the Second World War, the West Germany acted as a close U.S. ally. Bacevich averred that U.S. and NATO remained extremely concerned about guarding the Fulda Gap – a German region considered to be the main route of a potential Soviet ground invasion.⁵⁴ Later, Trump went further and accused that Germany was “totally controlled by Russia”⁵⁵ and of being a “captive of Russia.”⁵⁶ Quite the contrary, Trump’s performance at the Helsinki Summit with Russian President Vladimir Putin was labelled as treasonous by former Director Central Intelligence Agency John Brennan – since Trump compromised the prestige of the United States and its intelligence community.

Similarly, *BBC* reported that “Donald Trump lashes out at America’s key allies” at the G7 summit. Trump called Canadian Prime Minister Justin Trudeau as “very dishonest and weak.”⁵⁷ Trump also refused to sign the joint G7 2018 Agreement.⁵⁸ Quite strangely, Trump insisted on the reinstatement of Russia in the G7, while making it again G8. As, Russia was

⁵³ “Trump Nato: New War of Words with Merkel,” *BBC News*, July 11, 2018, <https://www.bbc.co.uk/news/world-europe-44780489>.

⁵⁴ Andrew J. Bacevich, *The New American Militarism: How Americans Are Seduced by War* (New York, NY: Oxford University Press, 2005). p. x.

⁵⁵ “Trump Nato: New War of Words with Merkel.”

⁵⁶ Jeremy Diamond, “NATO Summit: Trump Accuses Germany of Being a ‘Captive of Russia,’” *CNN*, July 11, 2018, <https://www.cnn.com/2018/07/11/politics/trump-germany-russia-captive-nato/index.html>.

⁵⁷ “Trump Lashes out at America’s Key Allies,” *BBC News*, June 11, 2018, <https://www.bbc.co.uk/news/world-us-canada-44434558>.

⁵⁸ “G7 Summit Ends in Disarray as Trump Abandons Joint Statement,” *BBC News*, June 10, 2018, <https://www.bbc.co.uk/news/world-us-canada-44427660>.

dismembered in 2014 due to its annexation of Crimea from Ukraine.⁵⁹ The dismemberment of Russia was the true demonstration of realist practice – to impose sanctions and weaken the adversary economically. Trump’s calling for Russian reinstatement in G7 would further weaken its partnership with its allies – given that every member of G7 is an American ally and apart from European Union and Japan, the rest are also NATO members. Furthermore, Japan is a key U.S. ally in the Pacific.

False Notion of Alliances: The Missing Elements in Trump’s Realism

Realists assume at the core of their arguments that states are deeply and inherently concerned with their survival – anarchic international structure being the primary driving force behind this very desire. To ensure security while increasing the chances of their survival – states tend to form or enter into alliances for primarily two reasons; i) To balance the power of the perceived aggressor, and, ii) To balance the threat emanating from the threatening state. Perhaps, American allies are not likely to face ‘security dilemma’ as it was argued by Glenn H. Snyder in his article ‘The Security Dilemma in Alliance Politics’⁶⁰ – since Allied powers willingly accepted American leadership role during and after the Cold War.

Whether, it was Thomas Schelling’s ‘Strategic Realism’ or Kenneth Waltz’s ‘Structural Realism’ and even Niccolo Machiavelli’s ‘Morality-cum-interest politics’ – all stressed on the importance of allies. Waltz advocated the importance of international structure and declared anarchy to be the core concept for states to seek security. Hans Morgenthau defined self interest in terms of power and argued that ‘statecraft is a sober activity that involves a profound awareness of human limitations and human imperfections’. Not a single school of thought of the Realist tradition negates the importance of allies. Stephen M. Walt while outlining the importance of alliances gave pivotal importance to allies and alliances in his seminal book.⁶¹

Later on, Mearsheimer underscored the importance of international institutions fundamentally from a realist standpoint.⁶² Realists believe that international organizations and institutions are the carriers by which states increase, improve and sometimes maintain their relative power position. Similarly, international institutions and organizations regardless of their nature i.e. security or cooperation – are ultimately the instruments to pursue such ambitions. Mearsheimer includes European Community (EC), NATO, Conference on Security and Cooperation in Europe (CSCE) as such instruments. It cited U.S. Secretary of State Warren Christopher who said that “a framework of complementary, mutually reinforcing... ..through interlocking structures, each with complementary roles and strengths”

⁵⁹ Krishnadev Calamur, “America Alone?,” *The Atlantic*, June 10, 2018, <https://www.theatlantic.com/international/archive/2018/06/trump-g7/562493/>.

⁶⁰ Glenn H. Snyder, “The Security Dilemma in Alliance Politics,” *World Politics* 36, no. 4 (July 1984). 461-495.

⁶¹ Stephen M. Walt, *The Origins of Alliances*, Cornell Studies in Security Affairs (Ithaca, New York: Cornell University Press, 1987).

⁶² John J. Mearsheimer, “A Realist Reply,” *International Security* 20, no. 1 (Summer 1995). 82-93.

– to garner maximum security and cooperation – resultantly benefitting great powers (for realists cooperation means relative gains).⁶³

Quite the contrary or perhaps unfortunately, President Trump maintained a stance on reducing U.S. participation in NATO – ostensibly to reduce American global military overstretch. Nevertheless, NATO is an effective instrument to ensure offshore balancing in the eyes of Christopher Layne – a realist. Layne was the first realist who highlighted offshore balancing⁶⁴ – similarly, Mearsheimer dedicated an entire chapter to offshore balancing and balancers in his book.⁶⁵ On similar footing Trump pushed out of Trans-Pacific Partnership (TPP)⁶⁶ and wants to re-negotiate North American Free Trade Agreement (NAFTA).⁶⁷ International institutions and organizations whether with a security or economic cooperation outlook – play a vital role in enhancing a state's relative power in the international system as it was argued by Mearsheimer.

False Notion of Realism: The Rhetoric of 'America First' Economic Nationalism

According to Donald Trump, American economy is facing threats from China and immigrants. Due to free market system and free trade agreements Chinese products dominate American markets. Major companies have invested in East Asian countries and China too. Those companies have the advantage of access to cheap labour and resources. Furthermore, Chinese currency devaluation too added to the wound. Therefore, companies operating outside the U.S. are not helping American economy as it is taking investment away from Washington. Similarly, Chinese exports makes it difficult for American products to compete with Chinese goods due to its market value. As, companies working in the United States, are investing in the U.S. and provide job opportunities to the people of the U.S., pay federal taxes and pay in dollar. Why is there unemployment? Trump believes that due to illegal immigrants, American people do not find jobs. As it is economical for investors and companies to carry out the work through illegal immigrants rather than to pay standard wages to the U.S. citizens. Furthermore, Trump believes that the U.S. should not provide free security to others.

What are the options available then? Mercantilism and protectionism remained the economic policies of empires around the globe to extract maximum fruits of trade. However, it is noticeable that imperial powers employed these policies fundamentally to impose high trade tariffs to inflict damage on the adversaries' economies and they used to alter their policies based upon the principle of gain and loss. Realism argues in favour of zero-sum game and advocates states to concentrate on relative gains when it comes to trade. Trump took U.S. out of Trans-Pacific Partnership (TPP), on the ground that the partnership is

⁶³ John J. Mearsheimer, "The False Promise of International Institutions," *International Security* 19, no. 3 (Winter 1995). 5-49.

⁶⁴ Christopher Layne, "From Preponderance to Offshore Balancing: America's Future Grand Strategy." 86-124.

⁶⁵ John J. Mearsheimer, *The Tragedy of Great Power Politics*. 234-266.

⁶⁶ "Trump Executive Order Pulls out of TPP Trade Deal," *BBC News*, January 24, 2017, <https://www.bbc.com/news/world-us-canada-38721056>.

⁶⁷ Ana Swanson, "How the Trump Administration Is Doing Renegotiating Nafta," *The New York Times*, September 28, 2017, <https://www.nytimes.com/2017/09/28/business/how-the-trump-administration-is-doing-renegotiating-nafta.html>.

allowing China to increase its influence in the region and ripping the fruits of the partnership; and halted the Transatlantic Trade and Investment Partnership (TTIP). Simultaneously, Trump is taking side in the Brexit episode, and offering deal to the United Kingdom at the end of Brexit and predicting the collapse of European Union. Nevertheless, realism is deeply pivoted upon rationalism and does not favour these policies to be employed in relation to allies. If protectionism and tariffs are applied on allies as well, there are chances that they find a way collectively to evade it. The manifestation of this policy can be seen in the joint effort by Germany and Japan to oppose Trump's tariffs on trade.⁶⁸

Perhaps, American Realists have to influence President Trump like they wrote an open letter to U.S. President Bush before. Mr. Trump has to discern between Neo-conservatism and Realism. Mr. Trump is completely being a false realist and his situation is comparable to last Soviet Premier Mikhail Gorbachev who while trying to save Soviet Empire introduced radical policies of *Perestroika* and *Glasnost*. President Trump intends to 'Make America Great Again' – however, without having a doctrine and grand strategy pivoted upon Realist tradition – the dream is not likely to become reality.

Realism pays great emphasis on the spirit of nationalism. Walt declared nationalism to be a great cohesive force in the life of nations.⁶⁹ Mearsheimer called 'realism and nationalism as cousins'⁷⁰ and argued it to be the cause of a strong relationship between politicians and people.⁷¹ Nevertheless, Trump needs to discern between his nationalistic fervour and the respect of America's allies. Maligning and blaming the allies primarily due to nationalistic agenda might gather national level support; however, it would injure America's global power and stature.

Recommendations – 'Make America Great Again' – with Realism only!

It is our observation that 'Make America Great Again' remains the strongest slogan in the history of U.S. Presidential Elections. It is evident that the 2016 Elections were more or less same as Truman vs. Dewey – since the Chicago Daily Tribune was that much sure of Dewey's success that it inadvertently published "Dewey Defeats Truman" on November 3, 1948.⁷² The question arises that what exactly Trump's anti-realist policies are yielding? While keeping in view the strength of 'Make America Great Again' it can be argued that only realism can 'Make America Great Again'.

Conceivably, the world order is no more unipolar. China's rapid rise and Russian resurgence and re-emergence demand an enhanced American role. International institutions and alliances are more relevant in the contemporary era ever than before. Cold War 2.0 like

⁶⁸ Peter Landers, "Japan and Germany Find Common Ground Opposing Trump on Trade," *Wall Street Journal*, July 25, 2018, <https://www.wsj.com/articles/japan-and-germany-find-common-ground-opposing-trump-on-trade-1532519287>; Iain Rogers, "Germany Seeks Japan Alliance to Counter Trump's America First," *Bloomberg.Com*, July 25, 2018, <https://www.bloomberg.com/news/articles/2018-07-25/germany-seeks-japan-alliance-to-counter-trump-s-america-first>.

⁶⁹ Stephen M. Walt, "Nationalism Rules."

⁷⁰ John J. Mearsheimer, "Kissing Cousins: Nationalism and Realism."

⁷¹ John J. Mearsheimer, *The Tragedy of Great Power Politics*. 109.

⁷² Tim Jones, "Dewey Defeats Truman," *Chicago Tribune*, 2018, <http://www.chicagotribune.com/news/nationworld/politics/chi-chicagodays-deweydefeats-story-story.html>.

its predecessor is likely to go hot; nevertheless, for realism another Cold War would be preferable. There is no doubt that President Trump might 'Make America Great Again' – however, perhaps American influence, power and its allies would decrease significantly. Realism rejects this dimension of greatness. Possibly, Mr. Trump is being used by certain individuals and organizations for some specific objectives which they otherwise cannot achieve.

American relations with France, Germany and Britain are continuously deteriorating. Similarly, Trump's telephonic battle with Australian Prime Minister Turnbull may also deprive America with an important ally and partner in the Pacific. John Walcott from *Reuters* reported on February 23, 2018, that Trump's two top aides Gen. (R) John Kelly and National Security Advisor Lt. Gen. H. R. McMaster are likely to distance themselves from Trump Administration⁷³ – fundamentally, due to Trump's deviation from the framework of Realism. Later, McMaster was removed by President Trump.⁷⁴

Realism dictates Trump to acquire power and security while strengthening its offshore bases – since China is rising rapidly and Russia is on its way to resurge and re-emerge on the international horizon. It is understandable that the world order is no more unipolar – since Kim Jong Un and Bashar Al-Assad are still challenging American hegemony and apart from all steps taken by the U.S. to oust them – they are getting stronger and powerful. Had America adopted containment and deterrence for Syria, North Korea and Iran – being the hegemon – the outcomes might have been different.

John Mearsheimer favoured the bullish behaviour of great powers and stressed the acquisition of more and more power with the intention of becoming the regional hegemon flanked by the grand strategy of 'offshore balancing' – again outlining the relevance of allies. In the current scenario, Mearsheimer's thesis obviously favours Indo-U.S. relations as compared to Pakistan. Nevertheless, none of the assumptions of Mearsheimer's thesis favours abandoning Pakistan. President Trump and his advisors may think that betraying Pakistan and using it as a scapegoat in the pursuit of exiting from Afghanistan might be the best possible option. However, the Trump Administration must not forget that it was Pakistan that spearheaded the collapse of the Soviet Union. It would not be a surprise that another great power may crumble down in Afghanistan due to Pakistan's influence over Taliban. It is certain that Islamabad still maintains and retains a considerable influence over Afghan Taliban – a pivotal requirement of being an ally. Realism pays great emphasis on rationality. Trump's stance against Pakistan is not in America's favour – perhaps, Mr. Trump is unaware of this basic principle of realism. Also, Pakistan has acted an important U.S. ally and can act as a vital offshore base in containing China. Historically, Islamabad acted as a frontline state against Soviet Union during the Afghan War and worked very closely alongside America.

⁷³ John Walcott, "Two Top White House Advisers May Leave over Tensions with Trump: Sources," *Reuters*, February 23, 2018, <https://www.reuters.com/article/us-usa-trump-mcmaster-kelly/two-top-white-house-advisers-may-leave-over-tensions-with-trump-sources-idUSKCN1G7001>.

⁷⁴ Ben Riley-Smith and Nick Allen, "Donald Trump Replaces HR McMaster with Foreign Policy Hawk John Bolton as National Security Adviser," *The Telegraph*, March 23, 2018, <https://www.telegraph.co.uk/news/2018/03/22/trump-ousts-mcmaster-makes-bolton-national-security-adviser/>.

Trump's former National Security Advisor Lt. Gen. H. R. McMaster along with Gary Cohen argued in an op-ed that "America First Doesn't Mean America Alone."⁷⁵ The article overtly stated that America was asking a lot from its 'allies and partners' – however, it would make America a 'true friend' of its allies.

Previously, the Policy of forward engagement was adopted by the Obama Administration. The declared objective of the strategy was to deter major conflicts and ensure stability "...The cornerstone of forward engagement will be positioning U.S. troops in vital regions to deter major conflicts and to promote stability, particularly in Asia and Middle East..."⁷⁶ However, the foundational stone of the strategy was to strengthen the confidence of the allies in U.S. leadership. Furthermore, it aimed at sending a powerful message to the adversaries that America is physically present to support and protect its allies. It was a policy of 'strategic rebalancing' in Asia Pacific.⁷⁷ TPP was a part of the same strategic thinking. The need of the time for Trump administration is to rethink the strategy of 'forward engagement' and 'burden sharing', i.e. to prepare its allies to take responsibilities and protect interests mutually arrived at. Instead of chanting American sacrifices for its allies and international peace and stability, Trump's strategy should concentrate on aiding and abiding its allies' security infrastructure and develop their confidence in American security assurances.

Conclusions and Recommendations

While keeping in view Trump's rhetoric, decisions and actions – it is not very difficult to assume that Trump's policies are foundationally anti-realist. The most dangerous thing emanating from Trump's false realism is rupture to its zero-sum game and the advancement of the Primakov Doctrine which Ariel Cohen referred to as "Russia's zero-sum game with the United States."⁷⁸ Realism argues that a state is obsessed with the preservation of already acquired power; nevertheless, Trump's false realism is likely to loosen the strategic advantages America earned globally. Since, realism favours offshore balancing as a means to pose a credible threat and deadly response towards the peer competitors and enemies while containing, deterring and frustrating the latter's capabilities; nonetheless, offshore balancer acts as the launching pads for such deterrence and containment strategies. Trump's anti-realist policies are widening and exacerbating the cleavages of potential disagreements among the allies and it is moving in a direction that would lessen American power, prestige and influence.

Quite contrary to Trump's former National Security Advisor McMaster's assertion that "America First Doesn't Mean America Alone," America is seemingly becoming alone and isolated. The demonstration of this assertion was visible in the 2018 G-7 Summit. Also, Robin Wright drew severe criticism on Trump's diplomatic skills and cited Richard Burt – a former U.S. Ambassador to West Germany. Burt narrated Trump's assertion that, had he

⁷⁵ H. R. McMaster and Gary D. Cohn, "America First Doesn't Mean America Alone," *Wall Street Journal*, May 30, 2017, <https://www.wsj.com/articles/america-first-doesnt-mean-america-alone-1496187426>.

⁷⁶ Michèle Flournoy and Janine Davidson, "Obama's New Global Posture: The Logic of U.S. Foreign Deployments," *Foreign Affairs*, August 2012. 57.

⁷⁷ *Ibid.* 59.

⁷⁸ Ariel Cohen, "The 'Primakov Doctrine': Russia's Zero Sum Game with the United States" (Washington, D.C.: The Heritage Foundation, December 15, 1997).

been appointed to talks with the Soviets, he would have said “Fuck You!” and left the room.⁷⁹ Cassidy cited the Smoot-Hawley Act of 1930 that was an attempt to raise tariffs on almost twenty thousand goods.⁸⁰ Also, Murphy and Armstrong argued that Smoot-Hawley Act did little to improve U.S. Economy; rather it was a deliberate effort to spread the shocks of U.S. Economic Depression.⁸¹ It can be assessed and predicted here that Trump’s ‘Trade War’ and increased tariffs would further weaken the U.S. Economy.

Seemingly, offshore balancing best serves American interests and its status of a regional hegemon. Mearsheimer and Walt cited French Ambassador Jean-Jules Jusserand who argued about America’s unique geographical position as “On the north, she has a weak neighbor; on the south, another weak neighbor; on the east, fish, and the west, fish.”⁸² This assertion gives impetus for America to adopt offshore balancing as its grand strategy and resort to deterrence and containment to achieve its grand strategic policy objectives.

⁷⁹ Robin Wright, “For Trump, Diplomacy Is a Four-Letter Word,” *The New Yorker*, March 29, 2018, <https://www.newyorker.com/news/news-desk/for-trump-diplomacy-is-quite-literally-a-four-letter-word>.

⁸⁰ John Cassidy, “The Real Danger of Trump’s Steel and Aluminum Tariffs,” *The New Yorker*, March 8, 2018, <https://www.newyorker.com/news/our-columnists/the-real-danger-of-trumps-steel-and-aluminum-tariffs>.

⁸¹ Daniel P. Murphy and Stephen Armstrong, *5 Steps to a 5: AP U.S. History 2018* (New York: McGraw-Hill Education, 2017). 249-253.

⁸² John J. Mearsheimer and Stephen M. Walt, “The Case for Offshore Balancing: A Superior U.S. Grand Strategy,” *Foreign Affairs*, August 2016. 72.