

Obtaining The Optimal State of National Security

Ulusal Güvenliğin Optimal Devletini Sağlamak

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Abstract: This paper uniquely gives insights into what an American Statesman should consider in the fields of international influence, economic warfare, and other measures to assert its unipolar power in the world. It does not reflect the author's opinion on how he would handle crises; instead, gives the academic insight on the task of the American Statesman, which is to manufacture a balance of fear amongst the world's powers as part of the maintenance of an orderly international system - a system that, while not necessarily just or fair, is accepted by the game's dominant players as legitimate and recognizes the United States as the game-master. This mindset is not only sui generis to an American statesman, but also utilized by any statesman concerning its country's ambitions. In the desired "optimal state," for the US, the global risk to American national security must be minimized.

Keywords: Tactical Economic Warfare, Foreign Policy, Qualitative Game Theory, International Relations

Öz: Bu makale, Amerikan Devlet Memurunun uluslararası etki, ekonomik savaş ve dünyadaki tek kutuplu gücünü ileri sürmeye yönelik diğer tedbir alanlarında düşünmesi gerekenleri ortaya koyuyor. Kişisel olarak krizleri nasıl ele alacağı konusu yazarın görüşünü yansıtmıyor; aksine, düzenli bir uluslararası sistemin sürdürülmesinin parçası olarak dünya güçleri arasında bir korku dengesi üretmekte olan Amerikalı Devlet adamının görevi üzerine akademik bilgilere yer veriyor - adil ya da adil olmaksızın kabul edilen bir sistem oyunun büyük oyuncularını tarafından meşru kabul edilir ve ABD'yi oyun yöneticisi olarak tanıır. Bu zihniyet sadece bir Amerika devlet adamına mahsus değil; aynı zamanda ülkenin hırslarına göre herhangi bir devlet adamı tarafından da kullanılmaktadır. ABD için arzulanan "optimal devlet" Amerikan ulusal güvenliği için ona karşı küresel riski en aza indirmelidir.

Anahtar Kelimeler: Taktiksel Ekonomik Savaş, Dış Politika, Kalitatif Oyun Teorisi, Uluslararası İlişkiler

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Introduction

National security, defined as “the requirement to maintain the survival of the state through the use of economic power, diplomacy, power projection, and political power,” (www.sciencedaily.com, 2018) is a concept that primarily aroused after World War II by US sources and government officials. Although various definitions remain afloat in academia, universal consensus is that national security is the government’s duty to protect their citizens’ lives from all possible domestic and international threats. Given the US’ strategic location as the top decisive power in the events occurring in the international arena, the duty of ensuring national security concerns an American statesman on a significant level.

The overarching concept of national security encompasses many fields—from cybersecurity to protection of the functionality of institutions, and to other measures to aver influence within the targeted region of a state and in the world. Besides, it can have unique missions such as economic warfare, cyber-attacks, currency manipulation, and trade wars within the name of “influence establishment.” Given this, any statesman main goal henceforward is to ensure that its country’s ambitions are established concerning its sui generis national security goals and measures. Within the context, the goal of an American Statesman is and has been to manufacture a balance of fear amongst the world’s powers as part of the maintenance of an orderly international system - a system that, while not necessarily just or fair, is accepted by the game’s major players as legitimate and recognizes the United States as the game-master. This unipolar world order- the existence of a single invincible superpower - is necessary to obtain the ‘optimal state of national security,’ which can be described as a hierarchical pyramid of state actors in which the US is situated at the top where power and influence are tightly concentrated. In the desired “optimal state,” for the US, the global risk to American national security must be minimized.

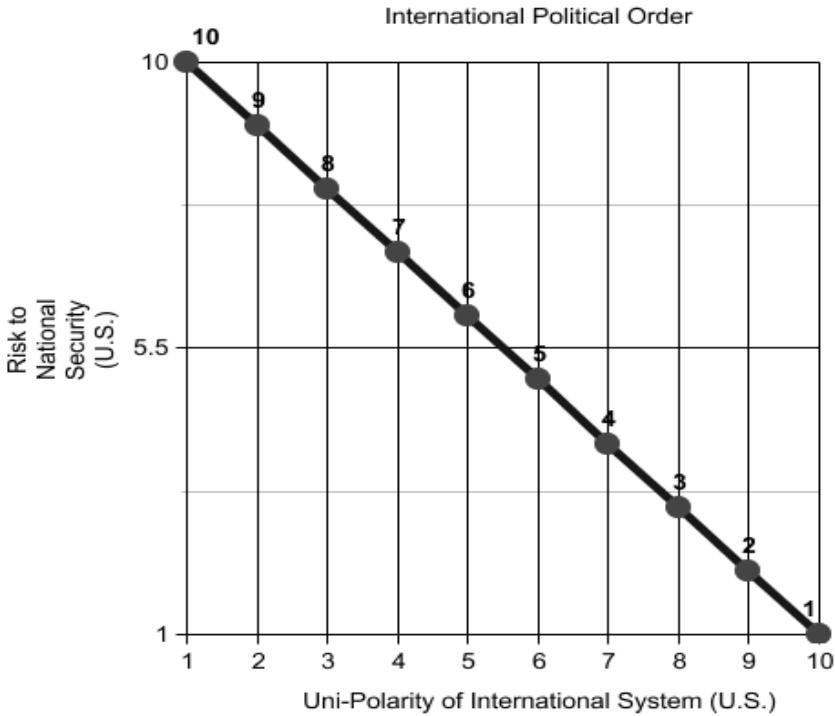
The range in which an American Statesman must operate to ensure national security is vast and endless. This paper, building on the concept of “optimal state for national security,” attempts to analyze the ongoing world influence warfare between Russia and the US by through the perspective of an American Statesman. Within the given context, measures examined are the proxy warfare between US and Russia; evaluation of US strategy on Russia’s involvement in Ukraine; tactical economic warfare; and a possible new route of US’ involvement in Syria by taking Putin’s motives and desires into consideration.

World Order: Obtaining the Optimal State of National Security

The task of a statesman is to “create new states, resolve conflicts, and inspire broad masses. The task of the American statesman, however, is to manufacture a balance of fear amongst the world’s powers as part of the maintenance of an

orderly international system - a system that, while not necessarily just or fair, is accepted by the game's major players as legitimate and recognizes the United States as the game-master. This mindset is not only sui generis to an American statesman, but also utilized by any statesman concerning its country's ambitions. This unipolar world order- the existence of a single invincible superpower - is necessary to obtain the 'optimal state of national security,' which can be described as a hierarchical pyramid of state actors in which the US is situated at the top where power and influence are tightly concentrated. The "optimal state," for simplicity, can be viewed as an equilibrium point at which the global risk to American national security is minimized (see Figure 1). This equilibrium achieves this risk minimization because:

Figure 1: Risk to National Security (U.S.)¹



¹ (1 to 10), where 10 represents an extreme risk. Uni-Polarity of International System (1 to 10), where 10 represents complete unipolarity. Please note that this is not a scientific graph and should therefore not be interpreted in numerical terms. It is difficult to quantify "Risk to National Security" and "Unipolarity of the International System." This graph is intended to serve as a conceptual illustration of the "Optimal State of National Security" that implies the following: As the international system becomes more unipolar [in favor of the United States], the risk to U.S. national security from other state actors will steadily decline until it reaches the optimal state at (10, 1) in terms of (x, y).

(I). *The probability of interstate conflict is significantly reduced.* The recognition of the United States as the “game-master” will make other state actors averse to carrying out activities that could be perceived as violating the United States’ national security interests.

(II). *The U.S. wields the unique ability to manipulate developments in the world in favor of its national security interests through its dreadful leverage in the decisions of International Institutions and being the sole state to control the most demanded currency in the world, the USD.* If other state actors were to acquire or even attempt to gain this ability, world order will deviate from the optimal state and result in conflict if a circumstance arises where a particular state actor, or group of state actors, behaves in a way that runs counter to U.S. national security interests.

The annals of history are rife with examples of trends toward the optimal state minimizing risk to the national security of a prominent state actor, and thus preserving peace. For instance, Klemens von Metternich, then the Austrian Empire’s Foreign Minister, built an international order so ingenious that from 1815, the year of Napoleon’s defeat at Waterloo, to the outbreak of World War I, one hundred years later, Europe knew no significant conflicts. (Kissinger, 2014: 15)

At the moment, the trend toward the optimal state that arose from the ashes of the Soviet Union is being threatened by Russian President Vladimir Putin’s ventures in Syria and Ukraine. It is clear that Putin wants to see U.S. leadership and credibility in the world recede. If Putin persists in the pursuit of this goal—which he most probably will—by implication, the U.S. will lose critical aspects of its ability to manipulate developments around the world that could run counter to its national security interests. Foreign Policy is a zero-sum game; therefore, the U.S. must inject a new dose of Classic (Kissingerian) Realism into its policy strategy to combat the Russian threat to world order. A blip in U.S. assertiveness has been taken advantage of by Putin to disrupt the trend toward the optimal state that the U.S. must obtain to minimize risk to national security. The U.S. policy response should, therefore, be one that sends a powerful message to those who would venture to contradict its interests on the world stage. This Foreign Policy strategy must include the militarization of Ukraine, the complete withdrawal of U.S. combat operations in Syria, and the tactical use of economic warfare to cripple the Russian economy (explained in following sections).

Russia is exerting tremendous military pressure on Ukraine that the U.S. cannot accept; any Russian influence and existence in Europe is a danger to the U.S. hegemony. Therefore, it is appropriate to respond in a way that not only counteracts these pressures but also creates additional burdens on Russian-backed separatists and the Kremlin. The West needs an outcome that does not make it appear weak, and the nature of the situation in Ukraine demands a concerted and aggressive response that will ultimately result in the reunification of the Crimean Peninsula and Ukraine under the tutelage of Ukrainian President, an American

loyalist, Petro Poroshenko. It is a misplacement of judgment to presume that mere diplomacy can settle international disputes in every circumstance where there is perceived to be ‘good faith’ and ‘willingness to agree.’ History has shown that when the annexation of sovereign territory is met with appeasement from the world’s powers, a dissolution of world order is inevitable. In his book “A World Restored,” Henry Kissinger commented on the 1938 debacle at Munich in which the British PM Neville Chamberlain sought peace to concentrate on the U. K’s domestic problems and therefore allowed Hitler to occupy the Bohemian borderlands of Czechoslovakia. Kissinger observed:

“Those ages which in retrospect seem most peaceful were least in search of peace... Whenever peace -- conceived as the avoidance of war -- has been the primary objective of a power or a group of powers, the international system has been at the mercy of the most ruthless member of the international community” (Kissinger, 1957: 4).

Fight the Proxy War

The U.S. should not avoid militarizing the Ukrainian forces in fear of inciting conflict, for conflict is the inevitable byproduct of the interaction of states. The U.S. should also not be focused on preventing conflict in general but preventing dissolution of world order that results in profound conflict. If the U.S. refuses to militarize the Ukrainians and engage in a proxy war with Russia, the international system will be at the mercy of the “most ruthless member,” Russian President Putin. This presents a clear and present danger to U.S. national security interests and must be confronted before irreparable harm is done to the U.S.’ long-term strategy of obtaining the optimal state. A Neo-Cold War is preferable to an international order that is harmful to U.S. national security interests. A proxy war with Russia will mean a short-term deviation from the trend toward the optimal state, but the long-term trend is far more important and should, therefore, be prioritized. That being said, the militarization of Ukrainian forces should include the provision of anti-armor weapons, military ‘advisers’ or ‘volunteers,’ aircraft, secure communications, reconnaissance drones, and other necessities to counteract the Russian occupation of Crimea.

Critics will suggest that militarizing the Ukrainians would provoke Putin to escalate the conflict to terrifying proportions (perhaps limited nuclear warfare). The fact of the matter is that he has already increased the conflict to such an extent. Putin has facilitated separatist militias by providing them with heavy weapons and supporting their advances with the Russian army. These developments imply that the opposite may well prove right: arming Ukrainian forces will increase the costs of escalation for Putin (explained under “Tactical Economic Warfare”) and, thus, make escalation less probable (Sonne, 2015). The U.S. must also consider the costs of doing nothing. Inaction could embolden Putin to escalate the conflict and

perhaps even test U.S. temperance elsewhere- probably in Syria. Even if Putin were to increase the conflict, the Ukrainians would bear the brunt of the escalation, not the U.S. If the Ukrainians are willing to accept these risks, the U.S. should not hesitate to meet their request for defensive arms. Fighting a proxy war through the Ukrainian forces will restore the dwindling credibility of U.S. security assurances, and thus its influence on the international stage. In 1994, the Budapest Memorandum was signed by the heads of state from the U.S., U.K., and Russia. The memorandum committed these nations to respect Ukraine's sovereignty. As a result, Kiev gave up 1900 nuclear warheads, the world's third-largest nuclear arsenal at the time. It is inarguable that Moscow has violated the memorandum by its annexation of the Crimean Peninsula (Magstadt, 2016: 218). The U.S. now has a moral obligation to respond with devastating force.

Tactical Economic Warfare

The militarization of Ukraine must not be the single strategy for combating the threat Putin poses to world order (Pomerantsev, 2014). It must be accompanied by a complete withdrawal from Syria for strictly strategic purposes and the execution of highly effective economic warfare tactics to limit Russia's capacity to escalate conflict with the U.S. If applied correctly, the U.S. will be launching an effective and rapid military campaign in the Crimea, which will eventually result in its reunification with Ukraine while simultaneously containing the Russian military response and its capacity to sustain Syrian President Bashar Al Assad. If the U.S. were to see these events come into fruition, it would amount to a series of historical foreign policy achievements that would define the century.

Primarily, the U.S. must realize the favorable position that it is currently in and take full advantage of it to assert dominance in the world before it is too late. The Russian economy, which is mostly dependent on oil prices, is weak and living standards are declining; however, if no further action is taken, Putin will eventually save the economy from its derailment. Russia's current recession has cut deep into its grandiose aspirations. The price of crude fell to its lowest level in 6½ years - around \$38 a barrel in 2015 (The Billings); however, the current rate of the crude has slightly increased to \$51.54 a barrel (Slav, 2016). Real wages fell 9.3 percent year-on-year. Unemployment rose to 6% in April, but it has unexpectedly dropped to 5.2% in August, increasing nominal wages to 9.4 % year-on-year to an average RUB 36115 (Focus-Economics). Inflation is at 15%, and competition between small and middle-sized businesses has fallen flat (Bowler, 2015). Evidently, the impact of Western sanctions has had calculable effects on the Russian economy, but they are not enough. Expecting these such outdated economic attacks, Putin has implemented policies to put the Russian economy back on its track. The IMF stated that the Russian Economy would return to growth in 2017 (www.cnbc.com, 2016). Instead of a conventional approach, the U.S. foreign policy strategy toward

Russia should instead include actively conducting covert cyber-attacks using advanced malware, such as the American-Israeli created Stuxnet Worm (ArsTechnica) to cause considerable damages to Russia's economic domain, hitting targets like banks, energy supply networks, communications, etc. The Stuxnet is "a computer worm that targets industrial control systems that are used to monitor and control large-scale industrial facilities" (Norton, 2018). A full on modern economic war, beyond the mere implementation of sanctions, is necessary to draw back Russian aggression and restore the trajectory of political order to the optimal state in a way that is forceful. This includes preclusive purchasing tactics, cyberwarfare, and besieging the ruble and the Russian monetary system (Barone, 2014). This type of economic warfare requires allies, and the U.S. not only has them, but its influence over countries and its global operations (the CIA) is merely enough.

Economists assert that Russian military expenditures are approaching absurd levels relative to Russia's capacity to maintain them, especially with Putin's incursions in Syria (Hobson, 2016). Putin's dominance over Russian politics was once a product of him redistributing petrol-revenues amongst greedy stakeholders, while also ensuring some trickle-down. As energy prices fell, he had to re-invent himself as a war leader, so he looked to Crimea. However, Putin's domestic popularity is fragile and is propped up by a state-run media. Its leaders are in desperate need of a new victory to sustain public support, and now is the time for the U.S. to strike the death blow. A critical part of this final blow is a withdrawal of the United States' military operations in Syria.

Syrian Withdrawal

It was a mistake to have defined the solution in Syria as "Assad must go." It has been clear from the beginning that removing Assad would result in utter chaos and potentially create a void that would have been occupied by radicals. Instead, the U.S. should have worked with Assad and made him loyal to U.S. interests. This would have been a far better alternative than training and equipping loosely connected rebel groups and potential terrorists, a tactic that has failed miserably and made the U.S. look utterly incompetent. But, that is a sunk cost. Looking forward, the U.S. must completely withdraw military operations in Syria. This includes cutting off its support for Syrian rebels. It is a win-win situation for the U.S. because one of two scenarios will arise from it:

(I). *If Putin fails*, or withdraws as a result of surmounting pressures in Ukraine (due to newfound American militarization) and worsening economic conditions at home (due to the U.S.' tactical economic warfare), Putin will severely damage his reputation in the Middle East, where he is becoming increasingly popular, and more importantly, on the international stage.

(II). *If Putin succeeds*, the U.S. national security interests are also satisfied because he will be fighting the so-called Islamic State and similar radical Islamic

groups. In this case, the U.S. has compatible interests. In time, Assad will go, but not now - the stability of the Middle East is too fragile.

Further strategy that Putin is attempting in Syria is to turn U.S. allies involved in the goal of stabilizing Syria against the U.S. by following simple logic, which is to work with nation states primarily rather than a mere “rebel” approach and to stay aloof to certain issues that are highly sensitive to some major players in the area. The U.S. must understand not only Turkey’s strategic location and the influence in the area but also the fact that Turkey has been a loyal ally of the U.S. since the Cold War era. Besides, Turkey is the only model country in the region where cherished values in the U.S., predominantly democracy, are prevalent. Turkey has been conducting major operations in Syria, the recent ones being the “Euphrates Shield” and “Olive Branch” where more than 6000 terrorists were killed according to the Turkish Armed Forces (TSK, 2018; Milliyet, 2017). Also, the Turkish Government is neutralizing the freed regions by establishing new businesses, schools, hospitals, postal services and other significant institutions (Stratejik Ortak, 2018). Given Turkey’s current and future influence in the region and its historical ties with the U.S., it would only serve as a counterintuitive measure to lose Turkish support and push them over to the Russian side of the spectrum by arming rebels such as PYD and YPG, which have established ties to globally recognized terrorist organizations such as the PKK. The rebel first strategy has created more chaos than stability, which served to specific U.S. interests in the short-term; however, it does not dovetail well with the long-run national security measures of the U.S. The U.S. should adopt a nation-state as a first strategy, which is easier to gain global approval and the most appropriate way to keep allies in check and the relationship with them stable.

Conclusion

The U.S. cannot rely on a linear strategy of fomenting discontent amongst the Russian population to oust Putin. Putin is and will remain, the principal power in Russia (Kendall-Taylor, Frantz and Wright, 2016). This does not mean that the U.S. should completely abandon covert operations to fund opposition parties. Its’ strategy must be overarching – what I call “shotgun warfare.” Create as many problems for Putin as possible to spread his resources thin – make him weaker (Baev, 2015). By fueling a proxy war in Crimea, crippling the Russian economy, and tossing the responsibility of Syria solely on the back of Putin (with the intention of ensuring his failure), the U.S. will be slowly degrading Russia’s momentum and credibility. Unipolar world order is necessary to obtain the optimal state, the point at which the global risk to American national security is minimized. The trend toward this world order has been diverted as a result of the Kremlin’s ventures in Syria and Ukraine. History has shown that rapid transformations in international order lead to profound conflict, whether throughout the Europe of

the early 1800s, owing to Napoleon's aggression, or in the Germany of the 1930s. To mitigate this risk to national security, the U.S. must implement a robust and aggressive foreign policy strategy against Russia. It includes withdrawing from Syria and allowing Putin to fill the void momentarily. He will likely dedicate more resources to the Middle Eastern conflict upon U.S. withdrawal. At this point, the U.S. must subsidize the Ukrainian war-machine to capacitate it to take back Crimea in a series of quick and concerted incursions (the war must not be prolonged). Simultaneously, the U.S. must step up its economic war against Russia to cripple its capacity to respond in Ukraine and limit the probability of escalation or direct conflict with the U.S. If successful, the U.S. will be situated closer to the optimal state than ever before and the trend toward a unipolar world order in which the U.S. reigns supreme will be reinstated. Establishing national security measures is at times difficult, yet this long-term strategy will ensure U.S.' top position in the world for generations to come.

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