

The US Bases and Their Contributions to US Hegemony

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Abstract

This study analyzes the perpetuation of US hegemony through its overseas military bases. It takes a Marxist-Gramscist hegemony approach as its theoretical basis and discusses the political processes, ideological debates, security perceptions; economic goals and hegemony seeking attempts when these bases are deployed. The study claims that the US used all its military deployments towards achieving its goals, with many military invasions being launched through the bases to perpetuate the hegemonic order in favor of US interests. In short, the US overseas military base structure forms part of its hegemonic expansion and is a reflection of hegemony's coercion component.

Keywords

Hegemony, consent, US hegemony, military bases.

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Introduction

The concept of hegemony is a crucial factor in world affairs and has been discussed ever since ancient times. However, it became popular when Italian political theorist Antonio Gramsci used the term in explaining Italy's political impasse following fascism penetrating the governance. While Gramsci defined hegemony at the state level, Robert W. Cox adapted it to global politics, by explaining the nature and implementations of hegemonic order. Conceptualizing hegemony from a neo-Gramscian perspective, Cox defines hegemony in a wider context by emphasizing the ties among society, economy, culture, gender and ideology that determine the future of political rule.¹ According to him, hegemony arises on the basis of consent, which means the adoption of thoughts and their support through material resources and institutions. In this perspective, the two pillars of hegemony are material capabilities and a set of institutions that act in harmony with each other.² Although various International Relations theories consider hegemony from different point of views, most of them agree that if the hegemon does not act in accordance with the hegemonic order, its power maybe challenged, making its decline or collapse possible.

In general, the rise of the United States (the US) as a hegemon since WWI, but especially after WWII, using both consent and coercion hegemonic elements helps us to make sense of world politics. However, since the coercive side of US hegemony seems to have been more dominant in determining its international relations, it raises questions about the future of such hegemony. It is assumed that the hegemon cannot survive only by relying on pure military power.³ Rather, a stable hegemonic order requires the consent of other states in the system. Comparison of the consent and coercion elements of hegemony in the world order gives hints regarding the stability or instability of the system. Since the system is determined by the hegemon's moves and attitudes, any changes in the consent-coercion balance is deeply felt by other states.

¹ Robert W. Cox, "Approaches from a Historical Materialist Tradition", *Mershon International Studies Review*, Vol. 38, Issue 2, (1994), p.366.

² Robert W. Cox, "Social Forces, States and World Orders", *Millennium*, Vol. 10, Issue 2, (1981), p.139.

³ Andrew Gamble, "Hegemony and Decline: Britain and the United States", in P. O'Brien and A. Clesse (eds.), *Two Hegemonies, Britain 1846-1914 and the United States 1941-2001*, Aldershot, Ashgate, 2002, p.130.

The main aim of the study is to understand the mechanism of hegemonic order and the US' implementation of it as a way to control world affairs through overseas bases, besides the changing position of US hegemony. There is a particular focus on the hegemon's coercive power to discuss its reasons and results. A cause and effect relationship in the hegemon's behaviors emerges as the defining factor in the hegemonic order. Regarding the scopes and limits of the study; political, economic and humanitarian dimensions of these military bases are not closely examined since the main discussion is about the military dimension of the US bases and their contributions to US hegemony.

US Military Expansionism

From Gramscian perspective, the establishment of bases in a number of countries requires us to consider whether they result from an invitation or the consent of host countries or due to pure coercive pressure. It is also important to investigate whether these military installations were so crucial to the US security, especially after the end of the Cold War. Bölme argues that the level of technology that the US has reached since WWII indicates that it does not require these military bases as much as it is assumed.⁴ It is reasonable to argue that these bases' function is more to expand its hegemony in a territory than preventing imperialist attacks against the US. These bases also transfer US-led capitalist economic dynamics to the host countries, turning them into huge markets for services and commodities. Additionally, they play a role in transforming the host countries' armies, besides serving as a source of intelligence for the US. Even during crises, the US prefers not to close down its bases but rather to negotiate in order to guarantee their permanency.⁵

In short, it can be seen that economic, political and military conditions determine US policy toward military bases. Following the end of WWII, US influence in Western Europe was extended with the formation of NATO.⁶ The US took an active part in any attempt by Western European countries to eliminate the communist structures. It also linked the provision of economic assistance to these countries with military installations. The Marshall Plan, set

⁴ Selin Bölme, *İncirlik Üssü: ABD'nin Üs Politikası ve Türkiye*, İstanbul, İletişim Yayınları, 2012.

⁵ *ibid.*, pp.58-65.

⁶ Geir Lundestad, "Empire by Invitation? The United States and Western Europe, 1945-1952", *Journal of Peace Research*, Vol. 23, Issue 3, (1986), pp. 263-277.

up in 1947 to restore war-torn Europe, was a conscious step towards creating consent among European states.⁷ In contrast, the first US military bases established in Latin America reflected the US coercive power.

Having gained independence and defeated Spain in the colonial war of 1898, the US gradually rose to become the new imperial power in its hemisphere. Since military predominance is an important precondition of being a hegemon, the US has successfully used its military superiority against all other states that challenge its hegemonic aspirations. By the 1970s, almost a million military personnel were serving around the world in different bases. WWII and the post-war era led the US to establish military facilities in Europe against the Soviet threat, and this policy gained momentum once communism took control in China, Czechoslovakia and half of Germany. The outbreak of Korean War in 1950 caused the immediate redeployment of US military components.⁸ When Japan surrendered to the US to end WWII, permanent US military bases were created, among which Okinawa is the most well-known. The US has more than 100 military installations in Japan, and they have been used to attack or invade third countries in case of a threat perception by the US.⁹ In effect, the US base web ranges widely across all of Europe, the Middle East, Asia and Africa, which host such installations willingly or unwillingly. Withdrawal or relocation from these bases is determined according the possibility of war or threat perception.

Regarding US intentions through these overseas military bases, Gerson argues that while they support the status quo in different regions, the possession of these bases makes easier to reach natural resources. Additionally, they are used to contain “enemy countries” as it did against the Soviet and Chinese during the Cold War. These installations serve US military plans and interventions in different countries.¹⁰

⁷ *ibid.*, p.267.

⁸ David W. Tarr, “The Military Abroad”, *Annals of the American Academy of Political and Science*, Vol. 368, Issue 1, (1966), pp. 32-34.

⁹ Joseph Gerson, “US Foreign Military Bases and Military Colonialism: Personal and Analytical Perspectives” in Catherine Lutz (ed.), *The Bases of Empire: The Global Struggle against US Military Posts*, London, Pluto Press, 2009, pp.52-54.

¹⁰ *ibid.*, pp.54-55.

Another dimension of the base issue is the occurrence of the so-called base wars.¹¹ For instance, when the US became concerned about a Soviet base in the Caribbean, it invaded Grenada in 1983. Likewise, the Soviets occupied Afghanistan in 1979 to acquire easier access to the Persian Gulf, which caused in response the US to reinforce its bases in neighboring countries such as Turkey.

Monroe Doctrine

It is appropriate to address the Monroe Doctrine in terms of the US' political, military and economic vision regarding the Americas and its rivalry with Europe. In 1823, President Monroe declared two basic foreign policy principles: de-colonization, which provided justification for the US to control territories it considered crucial to its interests; and non-intervention, which legitimized the US' use of force.¹²

Through the Monroe Doctrine, the US aimed to keep all European powers out of its hemisphere by announcing these principles and considering that any military intervention in South America was a threat to its existence. The political atmosphere in Europe, especially in Spain and France, favored monarchism over liberalism, and both countries aimed to reestablish their control in America, so it seemed a clear threat to the US.¹³

In one of his addresses to Congress, President Monroe stated the following:

The American continents, by the free and independent condition which they have assumed and maintain, are henceforth not to be considered as subjects for future colonization by any European powers. (...) We owe it, therefore, to candor and to the amicable relations existing between the United States and those powers to declare that we should consider any attempt on their part to extend their system to any portion of this hemisphere as dangerous

¹¹ Robert E. Harkavy, *Bases Abroad: The Global Foreign Military Presence*, Oxford, Oxford University Press, 1989.

¹² Heiko Meiertöns, *The Doctrines of US Security Policy: An Evaluation under International Law*, Cambridge, Cambridge University Press, 2010, pp.25-6.

¹³ Elihu Root, "The Real Monroe Doctrine", *The American Journal of International Law*, Vol. 8, Issue 3, (July 1914), p.429.

to our peace and safety. With the existing colonies or dependencies of any European power we have not interfered and shall not interfere.¹⁴

However, this official presentation of the doctrine hides the real intent behind it by consistently emphasizing values of liberty and democracy. The then Secretary of State of the US, Hughes commented that, since the US recognized Brazil, Mexico, Chile and some former other colonies, any intervention in these countries from Europe represented a challenge to US security.¹⁵ Thus, this official perspective considered South America as the US' backyard and connected to the north in terms of economy, security and peace. Therefore, it was impossible to think of it as a separate territory or with different interests. The Monroe Doctrine was passed down to other US governments and it was a clear message to Europe's expansionist countries which had colonial ambitions over the region. For US politicians, the declaration defended the US' hemisphere and prevented the Old World from realizing their imperialist ambitions over the New World.¹⁶

Meiertöns claims that this doctrine did not originally include any idea of hegemonic expansion into South America, with self-defence against imperialist European powers being its main motivation. However, almost 50 years later the doctrine represented US dominance over the whole continent. Its main intention was to prevent Europe dominating the Americas, with the US alone retaining the "right" to use military power against former colonies.¹⁷ Thus, the doctrine seemed to provide a legal way of establishing hegemony in the continent, which paved the way to the US becoming a new imperialist power in the global system.¹⁸

Over time, the doctrine was transformed and, while its original aim had been to prevent any European invasion on the American continent, its later aim was to control American territory, militarily, politically and economically. After 1845, the US adopted an approach based on annexing the South to replace Old

¹⁴ Monroe Doctrine; December 2, 1823, http://avalon.law.yale.edu/19th_century/monroe.asp, (access date: 22 April 2012).

¹⁵ Charles E. Hughes, "Observations on the Monroe Doctrine", *The American Journal of International Law*, Vol. 17, No. 4, (October 1923).

¹⁶ *ibid.*, pp.612-5.

¹⁷ Meiertöns, *The Doctrines of US Security Policy: An Evaluation under International Law*, pp.30-38.

¹⁸ Albert Bushnell Hart, "The Monroe Doctrine and the Doctrine of Permanent Interest", *The American Historical Review*, Vol. 7, Issue 1, (October 1901), p.83.

World powers, with the US now considering itself as the only arbiter in Latin America.¹⁹ France's annexation of Mexico from 1861 to 1867 was a test of how the US would implement the doctrine. In this case, the US stated that France's intervention represented an open threat to itself, so France had to leave the area. In a similar fashion, after 1823, the US gradually put an end to the Spanish and French domination in South America.²⁰ Thus, the Monroe Doctrine played an important role in building US hegemony in South America.

First US Military Bases

In the 1900s, US statesmen envisaged that an undefeatable navy was essential for the US to become a new superpower. This meant that overseas stations to provide coal fuel had to be established, so the first US military bases were established in Latin America at the end of the 1890s. The first overseas military installations were constructed in Cuba and Panama as both the Spanish-American War and the Panama Canal project were ongoing, making it necessary to protect US interests in these territories. During the end of 19th century, the US gradually expanded its colonial reach, annexing Hawaii, Puerto Rico, the Philippines and Guam.²¹

The completion of the Panama Canal was a turning point in US imperial plans because, by establishing a direct Atlantic-Pacific link, it made access to Asian, especially Chinese markets, easier and allowed the US to respond to any territorial threat from the Old World. That is, both security and economic interests seemed to make the canal crucial to the US. The Colombian government was not eager to allow the US to carry out the project, which created the pretext for Washington to attack Colombia. Thus, Panama declared its independency from Colombia and eventually, the US got what it wanted and, since then, the canal has continuously served US interests.²²

The US imposed its military presence 36 times in Latin America till 1934. For instance, the Dominic Republic and Haiti were occupied by the US for a

¹⁹ *ibid.*, p.77.

²⁰ *ibid.*, pp.81-82.

²¹ Mark L. Gillem, *America Town: Building the Outposts of Empire*, Minneapolis, University of Minnesota Press, 2007, p.20.

²² Grace Livingstone, *America's Backyard: The United States and Latin America from the Monroe Doctrine to the War on Terror*, London, Zed Books, 2009, p.13.

long time, since they occupied a critical position in relation to US economic ambitions.²³ Likewise, the US navy provided a constant means of intervention, remaining permanently ready on the coasts of Latin American countries in case of any order requiring military operations against them. This presence also played a role in overthrowing anti-US regimes in the region.²⁴

Increasing US Military Influence in Latin America during Wilson Era

During his presidency, President Wilson contributed hugely to the strengthening of US military bases in South America. Installations in Cuba, Haiti, the Dominican Republic, Mexico, Honduras and Guatemala were reinforced by naval units, which did not refrain from intervention when US political apparatuses failed to achieve their goals.²⁵ While power politics dominated in relations with South America, the US also provided financial aid to these countries, although the aim of such funding was to manipulate political, economic and military balances in Latin America in support of those repressive regimes that acted in parallel with US ambitions on the continent. In short, military interventions and foreign aid functioned side-by-side, and had a complementary structure.²⁶

The US used various tools to prevent European expansionism by cutting access to strategic locations throughout the continent. For example, out of concern for German expansionism towards Denmark, evidenced by its attempt to install a military base in Virgin Island, the Wilson government decided to buy the Danish Virgin Islands for \$25 million, which it later renamed the US Virgin Islands.²⁷ One of the long-term military deployments of the US during the interwar years took place in China, beginning in 1912 and continuing for 26

²³ *ibid.*, p.15.

²⁴ Thomas F. O'Brien, *Making the Americas: The United States and Latin America from the Age of Revolutions to the Era of Globalizations*, US, University of New Mexico Press, 2007, p.75.

²⁵ Andrew J. Birtle, *US Army Counterinsurgency and Contingency Operations Doctrine 1860-1941*, Washington, DC, Center of Military History United States Army, 2009, p.191.

²⁶ Lars Schoultz, "US Foreign Policy and Human Rights Violations in Latin America: A Comparative Analysis of Foreign Aid Distributions", *Comparative Politics*, Vol. 13, Issue 2, (January 1981), p.150.

²⁷ David Vine, *Island of Shame: The Secret History of US Military Base on Diego Garcia*, New Jersey, NJ, Princeton University Press, 2009, p.49.

years. This was in response to the Chinese Boxer Rebellion against foreign elements, which aimed to establish Chinese economic and political control over the country.²⁸

While the US dominated Latin America during the Wilson era, Europe was ruined by WWI, which had only ended with the help of the US. Following the end of the war, Wilson declared his 14 points to prevent future catastrophic wars among European powers. Although Wilson stated that the only aim of the declaration was to make the world safe to live in and nothing peculiar to the US, the 14 points served long-term US interests.²⁹ In addition, Bailey argues that the US did not keep the promises it made to Europe, calling them “wartime idealism”.³⁰ Despite initiating the establishment of the League of Nations, the US refused to become a member of it and the organization proved a failure. Meanwhile, the punitive structure of the Treaty of Versailles imposed a burden on Germany and the US contributed to the collapse of the European economy by imposing high trade tariffs and barriers. Consequently, Europe’s economy fell into the Great Depression that paved the way for Hitler’s rise to power.

World War II and the Truman Doctrine

The WWII years had several effects on US hegemony. While European predominance over the world system, especially British dominance, declined rapidly before its power was lost irretrievably, the US became the only winner from the process. The establishment of the UN, the IMF, the World Bank, the GATT and NATO in the late 1940s served the interests of this new undisputed hegemon.³¹

US economic power at that time was unchallengeable. Its gross national product had risen from \$209.4 billion in 1939 to \$355.2 billion in 1945. It produced 46% of the world’s total electricity. It controlled over 59% of the world’s total oil reserves. No other country’s gross national product came close

²⁸ Birtle, *US Army Counterinsurgency and Contingency Operations Doctrine 1860-1941*, pp.249-242.

²⁹ President Woodrow Wilson's Fourteen Points, January 8, 1918, http://avalon.law.yale.edu/20th_century/wilson14.asp, (access date: 17 April 2012).

³⁰ Thomas A. Bailey, “Woodrow Wilson Wouldn’t Yield”, *American Heritage*, Vol. 8, Issue 4, (1957).

³¹ Daniel W. Drezner, “The New World Order”, *Foreign Affairs*, (March/April 2007), p.2.

to even one-third of the US'.³² Thus, as a great power, the US was determined to end WWII to the disadvantage of the Axis powers, to enforce its hegemony over the Old World, and to win a victory of deterrence against Germany's expansionism. It therefore reached various bilateral agreements with Britain that gave it rights to bases in various British colonies, such as British Guyana and Newfoundland. It also established bases in Greenland and Iceland. During the WWII, the US had won the right to keep air and naval bases in the North Atlantic such as Eastern side of the Bahamas and Southern coast of Jamaica for the next 99 years in exchange of transferring five warships to Britain.³³

US plans for base deployments in Europe and other key locations were drafted in 1944, with the Joint Post-war Committee preparing a document about overseas bases. While Alaska was initially considered to be the prime location from which to contain the Soviet Union, later its difficult climate conditions were taken into consideration, so Europe was marked as the most appropriate area for air and ground military installations.³⁴ Thus, the end of WWII allowed the US to control Germany, Korea and Japan, while military outposts were also formed in Italy.³⁵

Since the US was not eager to abandon the bases that it had won during the war in the Pacific, it also looked for a way to dominate this region in order to retain its presence. Its goal was to encircle Pacific from the Philippines to Japan and Alaska. Accordingly, permanent bases were sited on Okinawa in Japan, the Ryukyu Archipelago in the Philippines and the Aleutian Islands in Alaska.³⁶

The WWII indicated the beginning of a new era in relations between Europe and the US. However, it also signaled the end of the US' previous isolationist policy established by the Monroe Doctrine. The war also created a new kind of enmity between Washington and Moscow by emphasizing

³² Lundestad, "Empire by Invitation? The United States and Western Europe, 1945-1952", p.164.

³³ Kurt Wayne Schake, *Strategic Frontier: American Bomber Bases Overseas, 1950-1960*, Trondheim, Norway, Norwegian University of Science and Technology, 1998, pp.34-35.

³⁴ Elliott V. Converse III, *Circling the Earth: United States Plans for a Postwar Overseas Military Base System, 1942-1948*, Alabama, Air University Press, 2005, p.51.

³⁵ Gillem, *America Town: Building the Outposts of Empire*, p.16.

³⁶ Vine, *Island of Shame: The Secret History of US Military Base on Diego Garcia*, p.52.

hegemonic contest.³⁷ While the US installed values such as democracy and capitalism, the Soviet Union supported the establishment of communist regimes in Eastern Europe, so it did not take long for Washington to get involved in proxy wars between communism and capitalism, initially in Greece and Italy.³⁸

As the US expanded its sphere of influence into Europe, it did not neglect Latin America. During WWII it used all means to ban trade with Europe, obliging the region to buy American weapons using its military aid program. Through its Good Neighbor Program, the US made regular use of its military bases in Latin American countries. The numbers of military personnel and bases increased during the war.³⁹

As to how WWII contributed to US hegemony and the situation of Europe, it might be claimed that ideological divisions between East and West forced the US to play a more active, hegemonic role in the continent to counter the Soviet Union.⁴⁰ Disputes between the Soviet regime and the US arising from WWII suddenly turned into a US containment policy against its erstwhile negotiating partner. The US diplomat, George F. Kennan, constructed such a perception on the US side with his famous text which was called “Long Telegram” to the US State Department. Published in *Foreign Affairs* magazine with “X” nickname in 1947 under the title “The Sources of Soviet Conduct”, Kennan’s ideas played a crucial role in determining the US policy and relations between the two sides, advising the containment of the Soviet Union. Kennan defended a “long-term, patient but firm and vigilant containment” of the Soviet regime.⁴¹

Ironically, in 1948, just after his construction of this anti Soviet perception in US foreign policy, later developments forced him to resign. The Truman government decided to contain the Soviet regime through the deterrent effect of high-technology and hydrogen bombs, NATO cooperation, and by

³⁷ Philip H. Gordon and Jeremy Shapiro, *Allies at War: America, Europe and the Crisis over Iraq*, New York, NY, Brookings Institution, 2004, pp.20-21.

³⁸ Michael J. Sullivan, *American Adventurism Abroad: 30 Invasions, Interventions and Regime Changes since World War II*, Malden, MA, Blackwell, 2008, pp.17-18.

³⁹ George C. Herring, *From Colony to Superpower: US Foreign Relations since 1776*, New York, NY, Oxford University Press, Inc, 2008, pp.557-559.

⁴⁰ Tarr, “The Military Abroad”, pp.34-36.

⁴¹ Walter L. Hixson, *George F. Kennan: Cold War Iconoclast*, New York, Columbia University Press, 1989.

excluding Soviets from negotiations that were not in harmony with his Kennan's ideas. Kennan was against a militarized containment policy, preferring a disengagement policy in Europe. For Kennan, such a huge pressure on the Soviet regime "consolidated communist power throughout Eastern Europe".⁴²

In 1947, the success of communists in the civil war in Greece between communists and conservatives motivated US President Truman to declare the Truman Doctrine, stressing "the policy of the United States' support to free peoples who are resisting attempted subjugation by armed minorities or by outside pressures."⁴³ While it created the basis for the development of US hegemony, in its first stage, \$400 million in foreign and military personnel aid was released for Greece and Turkey.⁴⁴ In contrast to the Monroe Doctrine, the Truman Doctrine still shapes US foreign and security policy, providing a foundation for US overseas military operations.⁴⁵

In the post-war era, the US aimed to revive Europe economically and militarily against the Soviet threat besides penetrating the Old World and creating a Europe dependent on permanent US aid. Following the declaration of the Marshall Plan, \$13 billion of monetary aid was released for European countries destroyed during the war. It showed its first effects in West Berlin, with its clear economic development compared to East Berlin, separated by two different ideologies. In response, the Soviet regime banned all border crossings.⁴⁶ Following the financial and political backing to Europe, a military organization- NATO- which aimed to defend the Western ally's interests was established in 1949. While providing moral support to the Old World, the US engineered a clear recovery in every area. Germany was also integrated back into Europe without raising French objections. By supporting a German-French peace, the US laid the foundations for a united Europe. Europe undertook a military commitment toward the US that it could never reject by

⁴² *ibid.*, p.73.

⁴³ President Harry Truman's Address Before a Joint Session of Congress, March 12, 1947, http://avalon.law.yale.edu/20th_century/trudoc.asp, (access date: 3 March 2012).

⁴⁴ Meiertöns, *The Doctrines of US Security Policy: An Evaluation under International Law*, p.102.

⁴⁵ *ibid.*, p.109.

⁴⁶ Alan P. Dobson and Steve Marsh, *US Foreign Policy since 1945*, London and New York, Routledge, 2001, pp.24-25.

accepting economic aid with its conditions. Western Europe was anyway eager to remain under the US' security umbrella against the Soviet threat.⁴⁷

The other turning point in US policy against the Soviet Union was the National Security Council Paper 68, published in 1950. This declared that the Soviet regime and communism was the only threat to world security, and that the US would fight it until it was overcome. Following this declaration, the US defence budget rocketed during the Eisenhower era from \$13 billion to \$50 billion.⁴⁸ Layne and Schwarz argue that the document's perspective would have been the same even if the Soviet threat had not developed.⁴⁹ Thus, this proves that the US did not create the rules and new order in response to a threat or an enemy. Rather, it first established an order before struggling with those who were against it, as a hegemonic system requires.

Communism's relative success in China, Czechoslovakia and East Germany created a military alert on the US side. The outbreak of the Korean War in 1950 marked a new era in the power struggle between the capitalist and communist worlds in which the US implemented its containment policy against the Soviet Union. It replaced its military deployments in France with deployments in Germany and the UK, with intercontinental missile defence systems being developed as the foundation of deterrence.⁵⁰ The Korean war also signaled a new US strategy to build bases, with the aim of preventing communist hegemony by creating a counter-hegemony via these overseas bases. By 1957, the US had 556 military installations in Europe.⁵¹

While NATO created a defence umbrella over Europe, it also provided the US with an opportunity to deploy nuclear weapons in these countries against the Soviet threat. West Germany, Turkey, Italy, France, Netherlands, Greece, Britain, Belgium and Spain all hosted such weapons. These intermediate-range nuclear weapons were seen as a deterrence tool that could prevent a war between two blocks. Concerned by these weapons, a resistance

⁴⁷ G. John Ikenberry, "Rethinking the Origins of American Hegemony", *Political Science Quarterly*, Vol. 104, Issue 3, (Autumn 1989), pp.387-394.

⁴⁸ H.W. Brands, "The Age of Vulnerability: Eisenhower and the National Insecurity State", *The American Historical Review*, Vol. 94, Issue 4, (1989), p.965.

⁴⁹ Christopher Layne and Benjamin Schwarz, "American Hegemony: Without an Enemy", *Foreign Policy*, Issue 92, (1993), p.5.

⁵⁰ Tarr, "The Military Abroad", pp.34-6.

⁵¹ Schake, *Strategic Frontier: American Bomber Bases Overseas, 1950-1960*, pp.37-38.

movement emerged in European public opinion to get rid of these installations.⁵²

Eisenhower Doctrine

With a new wave of military installation underway in 1950, US hegemony was gaining strength. The Cold War was escalating, with a nuclear war seeming a possibility as the Soviet Union developed a second-strike capability. Before this process, the US had started a new era in relations with the rest of world. The passing of the Atomic Energy Act in 1946 indicated that the US planned to act against the Soviet threat through a nuclear arsenal stockpile. Thus, while there had only been two nuclear weapons in 1945, this number was fifty in 1948 and kept on increasing.⁵³

Meanwhile, a pro-Soviet coup in Czechoslovakia in 1948 was a clear challenge to the US, and an attempt to isolate Eastern Europe from any capitalist penetration. These steps by the Soviet leader Stalin gave the US the reason to contain the Soviet Union militarily, politically and economically. At the same time, Europe's perception of the Soviet threat made the "Old World" vulnerable to accepting all US demands.⁵⁴ While the division of Berlin contributed to a reinforcement of the US point of view, it also made the US to think about using a nuclear bomb against Soviet rule. However, Moscow's retaliatory capacity deterred the US. The Korean War in 1950 marked the beginning of a new campaign to increase US nuclear bomb stockpiles, so that they reached almost 18,000 by the end of the 1950s. With the start of Eisenhower's presidency in 1953, the US entered a new era on this issue.⁵⁵

In the 1960s, ballistic missile technology and competition marked the era on both sides. The UK, Greenland and Canada became first places where

⁵² David Heller and Hans Lammerant, "U.S. Nuclear Weapons Bases in Europe", in Catherine Lutz (ed.), *The Bases of Empire: The Global Struggle Against U.S. Military Outposts*, London, Pluto Press, 2009, pp.97-99.

⁵³ David Alan Rosenberg, "The Origins of Overkill: Nuclear Weapons and American Strategy", *International Security*, Vol. 7, Issue 4, (Spring 1983), pp.3-71.

⁵⁴ Michael Cox, "From the Truman Doctrine to the Second Superpower Détente: The Rise and Fall of the Cold War", *Journal of Peace Research*, Vol. 27, Issue 1, (February 1990), p.30.

⁵⁵ Rosenberg, "The Origins of Overkill: Nuclear Weapons and American Strategy", pp.3-71.

ballistic missile early warning systems were introduced. Italy and Turkey also hosted nuclear weapons as part of the US' containment policy.⁵⁶

At the end of the 1960s, the situation had changed and the Cold War was being questioned, even by Western allies, following the eruption of the Cuban missile crisis. This led to *détente* between two blocks in the 1970s. The Soviet Union also had similar problems, such as a disagreement with China over basic issues, and economic crisis and turmoil in east Europe, which also compelled it to engage *in détente*.⁵⁷ However, pro-Soviet successes in Africa and the occupation of Afghanistan by the Red Army proved that *détente* was not so effective in preventing a conflict between communist and capitalist blocks, so the Reagan era marked the start of a renewed Cold War.⁵⁸

During the Cold War, the Middle East was ideologically and militarily the most important battleground for the US and the Soviet Union. US involvement in the Middle East was not so welcomed by Arab countries since it gave full support to the establishment of the State of Israel in Palestine in 1948. This move had different dimensions: while one was about domestic considerations in relation to the strong Jewish lobby in the US, another was continuing the containment policy against the Soviet regime in the Middle East and Mediterranean.

However, protection of Israel in the Middle East or eliminating the Soviet threat were not the only motivations for the US' active role in the region. One of the most important incentives was ensuring a permanent flow of oil to western markets. Accordingly, US oil companies had started to be very active in the 1940s in the region. Europe owed its rapid economic development to this smooth flow of oil and, since any Soviet intervention would mean a collapse in the process, this it also entailed a threat to US security. Washington's fear of communism and a cut in oil supply can be seen in the US' operation to overthrow the Iranian regime. When Iranian leader Mossadegh nationalized the country's oil industry by canceling all agreements with Britain, the CIA carried out a coup in 1953, replacing Mossadegh with the Shah.⁵⁹ Following the coup,

⁵⁶ *ibid.*, pp.3-71.

⁵⁷ Cox, "From the Truman Doctrine to the Second Superpower Détente: The Rise and Fall of the Cold War", pp.32-33.

⁵⁸ *ibid.*, pp.32-33.

⁵⁹ Robert A. Divine, *Eisenhower and the Cold War*, New York, Oxford University Press, 1981, pp.71-76.

Iran was recognized as the owner of its oil but marketing decisions were turned over to a consortium in which American and British petroleum companies had 80 percent control. Unsurprisingly, this regime change also led the US to deploy military installations in Iran and begin spying activities against the Soviet missile threat. Iran also turned into an important arms client for the US.⁶⁰

The US-backed Baghdad Pact, in which Turkey, Iran, Pakistan and Iraq took part, backfired, causing the Soviet regime to spread into the region following Egyptian leader Nasser's agreement with the Soviet Union over armament supplies. An inevitable break up between the West and Egypt came following a disagreement on credit for the Aswan Dam project. In response, Nasser nationalized the Suez Canal, in which France and Britain had considerable interest.⁶¹ When Nasser decided to solve Egypt's water problem, the US decided to support this to prevent Soviet-Egypt cooperation in the region. However, the US later withdrew its backing from the project, which offended Nasser's self-esteem. Additionally, the decision weakened the US position in Egypt.⁶²

Increasing US hegemony over European politics was confirmed by the Suez Canal crisis in 1956. Without gaining the approval of the US, France, Britain and Israel planned and implemented a military operation against Egypt to counter its nationalization of the canal, leading to a harsh US response. Its resolution in the UN Security Council (UNSC) calling on these countries to leave Egypt was vetoed by France and Britain. In response to this challenge, the US imposed various economic measures against them while warning Britain to withdraw immediately. It was the first and last conflict to divide the allies so sharply and publicly. The outcome demonstrated Europe's political and economic dependence on the US.⁶³

While the Suez crisis resulted in the withdrawal of Britain, France and Israel from Egypt, Israel did not relinquish its control of the Gaza Strip and Sharm el-Sheikh.⁶⁴ Therefore, the US administration decided to take a radical

⁶⁰ Sullivan, *American Adventurism Abroad: 30 Invasions, Interventions and Regime Changes since World War II*, pp.40-41.

⁶¹ Divine, *Eisenhower and the Cold War*, pp.80-82.

⁶² James E. Dougherty, The Aswan Decision in Perspective, *Political Science Quarterly*, Vol. 74, Issue 1, (March 1959), p.21.

⁶³ Gordon and Shapiro, *Allies at War: America, Europe and the Crisis over Iraq*, pp.25-26.

⁶⁴ Meiertöns, *The Doctrines of US Security Policy: An Evaluation under International Law*.

step with Congress allowing the US military to use force in the Middle East against the communism threat. The decision included the provision of military, economic and political aid to those countries that applied to the US. Thus, the path to the permanent deployment of US troops in the region was created.⁶⁵

When the Eisenhower Doctrine was declared in 1957, based on supporting pro-American regimes in Arab countries, its only pretext was Soviet aggression. However, it became rapidly clear that the region was the target of a proxy struggle between the superpowers who were attempting to defend their ideological stance, as demonstrated by the Arab-Israel wars, other regional conflicts and regional proliferation.⁶⁶

Trying to keep Jordan's pro-western king in power and prevent a nationalist upheaval, the US immediately sent financial aid and directed the Sixth Fleet to the eastern Mediterranean. Concerned by a possible Iraqi invasion of Kuwait, the US "transferred a Marine regimental combat team from Okinawa to the Persian Gulf and a tactical air strike force from Europe to bases in Turkey".⁶⁷ Thus, all of a sudden, the Middle East was hosting both US land and naval military components.

Lebanon also slid into internal conflict and asked for US help. 15.000 US marines were sent to reestablish order.⁶⁸ While Lebanon's Christian leader adopted a pro-western attitude, Nasser supported pro-Arabic groups and a civil war took over the country. However, Lebanon's problems were not the direct result of the blocks. Rather regional rivalry engulfed it, leading to a proxy war. Following a coup in Iraq that toppled its pro-Western leader, the US responded by intervening in Lebanon's civil war. Although the intervention only lasted for three months, its effects on the future of the country and region were important.⁶⁹

⁶⁵ *ibid.*, p.122.

⁶⁶ Stephen Hubbell, "The Containment Myth: US Middle East Policy in Theory and Practice", *Middle East Report*, Vol. 208, (Autumn1998), p.8.

⁶⁷ Divine, *Eisenhower and the Cold War*, p.97.

⁶⁸ Burton I. Kaufman and Diana Kaufman, *Historical Dictionary of the Eisenhower Era*, Lanham, Maryland, The Scarecrow Press, Inc., 2009, pp.4-5.

⁶⁹ Sullivan, *American Adventurism Abroad: 30 Invasions, Interventions and Regime Changes since World War II*, pp.50-51.

Nuclear Race Seizes Europe

1945 marked a new era in the hegemonic competition when the US dropped two atomic bombs on Hiroshima and Nagasaki. After the cities were destroyed, Japan surrendered to the US, ending WWII. Because it was clear that only the US had the technology to produce the atomic bomb, this meant they offered more than a total destruction, being much more a psychological weapon against other rival states challenging the US hegemonic posture.⁷⁰ However, the event also triggered a new global arms race as other states attempted to defend themselves. Thus, the closing of WWII period with a hegemonic bomb introduced a more problematic phase, the Cold War, an era of struggle for hegemonic leadership characterized by a competition for nuclear weapons.

Some have argued that the arms race could cause US hegemony to decline or collapse entirely. According to Kennedy, for example, nuclear armaments, since 1945, proved extremely costly for the US, and it does not seem possible that these weapons can be used in a war. Thus, it was a burden on the US economy to invest in such weapons. The US also had global interests, and global challenges to these interests, in other regions, such as the Middle East and Latin America, which the US could not abandon. Therefore, the US military presence in Europe, and defending the region against other great powers, is vital to its interests. However, the burden it imposed on the US economy was severe and concentrating US military power in a single region prevents it from implementing “a grand strategy which is both global and flexible”. Consequently, the US felt itself trapped between “American commitments and American power”. That is why the Pentagon has had to adopt an *ad hoc* military base policy rather than anchoring in Europe -by permanent and large military installations.⁷¹

The US nuclear dilemma is a result of its policy during the Cold War. In this period, nuclear armament captured the continent. While the Soviet regime constructed nuclear bases in East Europe, the US, as a part of its containment policy, developed a counter-nuclear policy. NATO became the most important

⁷⁰ Henry Lewis Stimson, “The Decision to Use the Atomic Bomb”, *Primary Source Document with Questions*, (February 1947), http://afe.easia.columbia.edu/ps/japan/stimson_harpers.pdf, (access date: 12 March 2017), pp.14-15.

⁷¹ Paul Kennedy, *The Rise and Fall of the Great Powers: Economic Change and Military Conflict from 1500 to 2000*, London, Unwin Hyman Limited, 1998, pp.514-519.

element linking both continents militarily, and a means for coordinating common defence policies. The US containment policy caused many European countries to host nuclear weapons and missile systems on their territories; thus they put aside the disagreements that WWII had once created.

At the peak of the Cold War, there were 350.000 US troops in overseas bases. Concentrated in Britain, Germany and Italy, these deployments protected US interests in Europe.⁷² These US ground, air and naval components in Europe allowed it to maintain its economic growth. Since first deploying tactical nuclear weapons in Europe after WWII, the number of US installations was highest in 1971, with almost 7.300 nuclear warheads.⁷³ Following Eisenhower's New Look policy of 1953, these weapons were seen as the best defence against the Soviet threat. While some nuclear weapons are deployed by the US directly, others were installed under the NATO umbrella.

The first threat of nuclear war between the two blocks occurred in Cuba in 1962, when the US mobilized opponents of the Cuban government and planned and implemented an attack to overthrow Cuba's socialist leader Castro. In response, the Soviet government decided to deploy missiles in Cuba, which the US declared was a reason for war. At this point, both countries were ready to use their nuclear capabilities against each other in the case of a state of war. However, Russian leader Khrushchev agreed to remove the missiles from Cuba in exchange for the removal of US Jupiter missiles previously deployed in Turkey. Thus, on this occasion, the danger of nuclear war actually led to *détente*.⁷⁴

While Germany provided a base for US land forces, Britain hosted the US air force, making the US provider of a nuclear umbrella for Europe. As technology developed, the purposes of nuclear weapons also gradually changed. The 1950s was marked by a nuclear equilibrium between the two blocks in producing, stockpiling and stationing nuclear weapons, and the nuclear race was at its peak. In contrast, the 1960s introduced a new perspective to the nuclear race. Instead of total destruction, the US discovered that the Soviet

⁷² Michèle A. Flournoy, *Strategy – driven choices for America's security*, Washington DC, National Defense University Press, 2001, pp.237.

⁷³ Robert S. Norris and Hans M. Kristensen, "US Tactical Nuclear Weapons in Europe", *Bulletin of the Atomic Scientists*, Vol. 67, Issue 1, (2011), p.65.

⁷⁴ Wayne D. Cocroft, and Roger J.C. Thomas, *Cold War: Building for Nuclear Confrontation 1946-1989*, Swindon, English Heritage, 2003, p.9.

nuclear threat could be controlled by limited measures, such as "flexible response", which was announced officially in 1967. Thus, rather than direct involvement in all-out nuclear war, surveillance and radar systems were deployed in Europe, with NATO member countries becoming the most important actors in this process during the 1970s.⁷⁵ In mid-1960s almost 375 US bases were built abroad⁷⁶, these years also marked a *détente* era in Europe. Since the Soviet regime had embraced an appeasement policy rather than aggression, the two sides reached an agreement to ban under-sea testing of nuclear weapons. However, France declared that it could leave NATO in response to the US' latest installations. As a result, NATO and the US had to move some bases out of France to Germany and other European countries.⁷⁷

The war in Vietnam proved, however, that flexible response strategy did not work well, and it could not result in favor of US ideology in all aspects. Gaddis indicates that none of the US' targets which were envisaged at the beginning of the war were achieved. During ten years of war, the communist threat was not eliminated and the war became a quagmire for the US military, which harmed the country's national pride. Additionally, the US interests and image were damaged in the US and abroad.⁷⁸

However, Germany was hesitant about the deployment of the neutron bomb on its territory since it might trigger a nuclear war within Germany, so other European countries were offered to the US for possible stationing. Hippel also suggests that, since the superpowers retreated from high profile rearmament and tried to find a way towards reconciliation, this period could also be called one of *détente*. Additionally, both states decreased escalation and, instead of focusing on critical regions such as the Middle East and Berlin, they preferred to involve themselves in more limited areas where they could continue to impose their ideologies more easily.⁷⁹ However, this atmosphere did not last long for a number of reasons. Both sides had different motives while pursuing *détente* policy. The US considered it as a way to control Soviet

⁷⁵ Cocroft, and Thomas, *Cold War: Building for Nuclear Confrontation 1946-1989*, p.52.

⁷⁶ Julian Go, "Waves of Empire: US Hegemony and Imperialistic Activity from the Shores of Tripoli to Iraq, 1787-2003", *International Sociology*, Vol. 22, Issue 5, (2007), p.28.

⁷⁷ Richard W. Stewart, *American Military History: The US army in a Global Era, 1917-2003*, Washington DC, Center of Military History United States Army, 2005, pp.267-268.

⁷⁸ John Lewis Gaddis, *Strategies of Containment: A Critical Appraisal of American National Security Policy During the Cold War*, New York, Oxford University Press, 1982, pp.236-239.

power, while the other side wished to decrease US dominance over the world system. Even if avoiding nuclear war, establishing military parity and arms control were the most important goals during the process, the search for absolute security undermined *détente* because both sides suspected that the other side was engaged in a secret military build-up.⁸⁰

Both superpowers made attempts to halt the salient nuclear arms race. The first was Limited Test Ban Treaty in 1963, following the Cuban missile crisis with an agreement also involving the UK. The resulting treaty banned atmospheric nuclear arms testing. In 1972, the Strategic Arms Limitation Treaty (SALT I) was signed when the US and the Soviet Union agreed to limit the numbers of intercontinental ballistic missiles. In 1979, the SALT II was signed to extend the earlier treaty (although the US Senate did not ratify the agreement).⁸¹ Despite these efforts, the nuclear arms race reached a peak in the 1970s.

Post-Cold War Era

While an era ended in world politics with the dissolution of the Soviet Union, another era began with Iraq's occupation of Kuwait and the US' intervention by declaring a new national security strategy that would lead to new invasions and military operations around the world. However, there are arguments that do not consider the huge gaps between pre-Cold War and post-Cold War era. Layne, for instance, assert that there was not too much change in US foreign policies following the end of the Cold War. It has perpetuated its main strategy to dominate world affairs. Moreover, the Soviet Union was not as much of a focus of the US while it shaped its global agenda.⁸² Although the final aim of the US, as hegemon, is to seek power and dominance over the rest of the world, the process to maintain this determines the hegemonic dominance and its future.

⁸⁰ Raymond J. Garthoff, "Détente and Confrontation: American-Soviet Relations from Nixon to Reagan", *The Brookings Institution*, (1982), pp.13-41.

⁸¹ Kennedy, *The Rise and Fall of the Great Powers: Economic Change and Military Conflict from 1500 to 2000*, pp. 395-6.

⁸² Christopher Layne, "Rethinking American Grand Strategy: Hegemony or Balance of Power in the Twenty-First Century", *World Policy Journal*, Vol. 15, Issue 2, (Summer 1998), p.8.

Of course, the global political atmosphere changed with the advent of the post-Cold War phase; in particular, the Soviet regime was not an enemy anymore⁸³, so relations between the two states changed to cooperation. Soviet President Gorbachev was against in perpetuating Cold War dynamics and called for the partial withdrawal of Soviet forces in Eastern Europe, offering to establish a new world system with the US. Following concrete steps by the Soviets, such as decreasing the number of Soviet troops in Eastern Europe, the US responded positively and a new *détente* emerged. As a result, military facilities in European countries were reorganized in accordance with the new tasks and interests of the US in place of containment of Russia. The perception of threat was redirected to the Third World, lesser states and terror issues.

The collapse of the bipolar world system gave rise to a unipolar moment that triggered many debates. Enjoying a unipolar world, the US felt itself so powerful that it could neglect or deny the constitutionalist pressures of the system. Regarding the hegemon's and weaker states' actions in the current hegemonic system, Hurrell considers that, when the hegemon needs a multilateral framework, it involves itself in the process, but unless there is no such a need, it acts alone and unilaterally.⁸⁴ Lesser states try to take advantage of the situation because of their limited unilateral capacity. They try to restrain the hegemon's unilateral structure as much as they can, by making concessions to keep the hegemon in line with international law and the system.⁸⁵ However, as hegemon, the US aims to make other great powers accept its hegemonic position in the system and to make them act consistent with its interest and values, rather than by dominating lesser states and others. The US mostly owes this position to its economic parameters. However the US will eventually lose this hegemonic power since hegemony is not just domination but also requires legitimacy in the execution of force.⁸⁶

Although the perception of threat has changed, military bases have remained or been relocated in line with new US interests. Thus, the US military used the pretext of the "War on Drugs" to interfere in Latin American

⁸³ Siobhán McEvoy-Levy, *American Exceptionalism and US Foreign Policy: Public Diplomacy at the end of Cold War*, New York, Palgrave, 2001, pp.46-56.

⁸⁴ Andrew Hurrell, "There are No Rules (George W. Bush): International Order After September 11", *International Relations*, Vol. 16, Issue 2, (2002), p.185.

⁸⁵ *ibid.*, p.191.

⁸⁶ Michael Mastanduno, "Hegemonic Order, September 11, and the Consequences of the Bush Revolution", *International Relations of the Asia-Pacific*, Vol. 5, Issue 2, (January 2005), p.179.

countries. Interestingly, the Washington administration's budget to finance and train Latin American soldiers and police forces was 20 times more than all other aid. On the other hand, uncontrollable regime changes in some countries, such as Venezuela, have led to US military installations being removed. Until 1997, US military elements were seen as an unchangeable fact especially around the Panama Canal. Later on, however, the US moved its Howard Air Force Base from Panama to Miami. While the US Army South mission was moved to Texas, its naval elements were stationed in Florida. Some missions were not removed but their tasks changed sharply.

It is argued that the G. W. Bush administration and its new security policy marked a new era in relations with Europe, too. The hegemonic aspirations of the new president and his team disturbed the transatlantic alliance, and European countries began to consider that the nature of relations had changed: while once it was based on international law and cooperation, now military power determined the ties. However, even if some European countries questioned their partnership with the US; NATO played a unifying role between the allies to repress objections under its security umbrella. The US proposal to make NATO stronger by removing the need for a UN mandate for its military operations was considered by Europeans an attempt to broaden US hegemonic expansion.⁸⁷

After the Cold War, the US redesigned its military base policies in accordance with the changing political atmosphere. Calder describes the new role of these military sites: "bases serve as crucial guarantors against destructive regionalism and balance of power rivalry at the heart of the global system, inhibiting the nationalistic, and mercantilist forces".⁸⁸

New World Order

While the end of the Cold War should have heralded the victory of US hegemony and its order against communism, instead of stability the new atmosphere brought more chaos with the US declaration of a New World

⁸⁷ Stanley R. Sloan, Robert G. Sutter and Casimir A. Yost, *The Use of U.S. Power: Implications for U.S. Interests*, Institute for the Study of Diplomacy, Edmund A. Walsh School of Foreign Service, Georgetown University, 2004, pp.54-59.

⁸⁸ Kent E. Calder, *Embattled Garrisons: Comparative Base Politics and American Globalism*, Princeton, Princeton University Press, 2007, p.65.

Order under the first Bush administration. President Clinton later continued Bush's vision with his Balkan interventions, before it was finally expanded globally by the second Bush government.

Feeling itself freer than during the Cold War era to impose its rules and order, the US clearly showed that no state could act against its dominance. Any opposition to its coercive power would face the military apparatus of hegemony. Following the transition from a bipolar to a unipolar world, the US' main goal has been to protect its unique position in world affairs. Thus, it would be appropriate to claim that the US actually is attempting to preserve its dominance and unique position that it has created. Therefore, when needed, the US military is used against any challenge to this new order. The consolidation of the order requires the establishment of US military bases to make it possible to access targeted zones.

Under Clinton's presidency, the US maintained its interventionist policies. In this context, the 1990s marked a great opportunity for the US to defend its hegemonic position. When the US began military operations against Afghanistan and Sudan in 1998, due to attacks on its embassies in Kenya and Ethiopia, it did not even take the issue to the UNSC with the reason of "self-defence". Russia and many other countries duly condemned the operations, and even those countries which find the US right rejected its self-defence doctrine, being particularly against such unilateral acts.⁸⁹

Similarly, the 1995 Bosnia and 1999 Kosovo interventions were symbols of US hegemonic aspirations. Although these operations were questioned since the US had no direct strategic interests in the two countries, Layne points out that the real intention was to preserve the US' hegemonic position against the emergence of rivals such as Germany.⁹⁰

Trying to legitimize its military interventions in the 1990s, the US used the label of humanitarian intervention when crises erupted in weaker states. During the Bosnian and Kosovo interventions, this pretext was popular, but there are concerns that it violated and undermine done of the most important pillars of international law: state sovereignty. Ayooob questions the legitimacy of such

⁸⁹ Hurrell, "There are No Rules (George W. Bush): International Order After September 11", p.188.

⁹⁰ Christopher Layne, "US Hegemony and the Perpetuation of NATO", *Journal of Strategic Studies*, Vol. 23, Issue 3, 2008, p.60.

military engagements, and arguing that respect for state sovereignty and the principle of non-intervention is essential for the international system to survive.⁹¹ Additionally, during the 1990s, humanitarian concerns over interventions were controversial since the era marked a challenge to the balance of global power.⁹² Thus, it might be argued that these interventions were a kind of punishment mechanism against those states that did not accept US norms of hegemonic rule. Accordingly, UNSC members bargained among themselves over which countries should be invaded in 1994. As a result, operations were carried out by the US in Haiti, France in Rwanda and Russia in Georgia. During UNSC voting, they approved of each other's demands. This indicates that such intervention bargaining is a symbol of advancing "strategic and economic interests in their spheres of influence".⁹³

Conclusion

The military apparatus of the US has played an important role in its hegemonic posture and expansionism following WWII. A Europe, which was collapsed economically, politically and militarily, was in need of the US' support and aid. While the US backed Europe politically with Truman Doctrine and economically with Marshall Plan, the policy was resulted with the US to penetrate Europe by establishing many military bases there. The other reason that made Europe feel obliged to the US support was the threat perception that the USSR caused. Feeling stuck with communism threat and post-war problems, Europe allowed the US to expand its values, ideology and to establish military bases in the continent. However, prior to military bases in Europe, the US' practices in Latin America were heralding the implications in the old continent. With the Monroe Doctrine, all European elements were excluded from Latin America and the US executed many military operations and deployed military installations there.

It can be argued that the US' military posture in Europe and elsewhere has served its interests as a mechanism to expand its hegemonic ambitions. During the Cold War, both pillars of hegemony, consent and coercion, were used in

⁹¹ Mohammed Ayoob, "Humanitarian Intervention and State Sovereignty", *The International Journal of Human Rights*, Vol. 6, Issue 1, 2010.

⁹² *ibid.*, pp.81-7.

⁹³ *ibid.*, p.88.

parallel. However, when the end of the Cold War left the US as only superpower able to impose its agenda, it began to neglect the consensual element of hegemonic leadership. Subsequent unilateral US actions and military engagements have led to an increasing debate and bitter criticism about its hegemonic role, even by its allies. During the Cold War, all the US' military bases in Europe, whether nuclear, navy, air or ground, remained available to play a crucial role in eliminating the communist threat and defending pro-western regimes worldwide. Most of these wars, supported by the network of bases, ended in favor of the hegemon's interests. Even though the cost increases permanently, these military bases assisted the rise of US hegemonic power. However, this study argues that the US' more recent unilateral engagements using these bases, such as the second Iraq war, signal the beginning of the decline of hegemony. The invasion of Afghanistan, Iraq and other military engagements and interventions in the territories of many countries, such as Pakistan, in pursuit of 'terrorists' are clear instances of coercion, which is a pillar of hegemony, but at risk without the most important pillar-consent. Consequently, US rhetoric about democracy and freedom is unable to find passionate supporter, which makes it difficult for the United States to use its military bases as much as before.⁹⁴ The key point is that, without gaining the consent of others, it seems impossible for a hegemon to maintain the system it controls through coercion alone for long.

About the future of US hegemony and the United States military bases all around the world, exists a contradiction. Even though the number and locations of bases increase permanently, a decline in US hegemony due to the lack of consent in executing world politics in the global level occurs. Thus it is more possible that US is going to face growing resistance against its interests. Additionally, by changing its base policy according to differing threat perceptions in different periods, the US has used these military installations regularly and in parallel with its interests. Whenever the US has experienced problems accessing the alliance's military base system, it created new military deployments in different countries than those in Europe that have served its global ends. While it is easier to establish these bases in undeveloped and developing countries, developed and democratic countries are in quest of more legitimacy which causes the United States to have a limited access to these bases and countries. A trend of deploying these bases in Eastern Europe and

⁹⁴ Bölme, *İncirlik Üssü: ABD'nin Üs Politikası ve Türkiye*, p.65.

Asian countries (both are old Soviet satellite regions) is a expression of the decline in US hegemony since the US has dominance in determining the scope of bilateral military base agreements with them, while Central European countries are more suspicious about these bases and, in some cases, do not share the same vision in the terms of these bases' worldwide usage. So, unless the US revises its position as a hegemon and relies more on consent of other states, its hegemonic order might be damaged causing the military bases to lose their utility. Moreover, the future of the US-Europe relations in terms of military bases has the potential of deteriorating due to the US' unilateral policies in its military operations on different regions of the world. This is also an indication of the decline in consent power of US hegemony. The other point that arises questions about the future of US hegemony is that the US have no preponderance in material sources and capabilities anymore and is less eager to align its interest with those of Europe. Similarly, Europe is not in need of protection from the US against the Russian threat as it was during the Cold War. So, the more political cooperation declines between two sides, the more US hegemony decays.

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