

**Origins, Facts and Perils of
U.S. Military Hegemony**

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Preface

On August 30, 2021, the U.S. military cargo aircraft carrying the last batch of American troops took off from Hamid Karzai International Airport in Afghanistan, marking the end of the longest war in U.S. history. Mark Milley, chairman of the U.S. Joint Chiefs of Staff, later described the end of America's war in Afghanistan as a "strategic failure" when testifying before Congress. The military hegemony of the United States and its harm have once again aroused strong doubts at home and abroad.

The year 2023 also marks the 20th anniversary of the U.S. invasion of Iraq. This is an aggressive war waged by the United States against a sovereign state under the pretext of lies to pursue absolute security and realize its own geopolitical interests, which has brought heavy costs and has had a far-reaching impact on Iraq, the Middle East, the world at large, and the United States itself.

Since the American Independence in 1776, the United States has constantly sought expansion by force: It expanded its territory following the Mexican- American War, became a trans-regional power and penetrated into the Western Hemisphere and East Asia after the American- Spanish War, became a global superpower after the two world wars, and acquired the ability to project power and set rules around the world. The bipolar structure was replaced with unipolar hegemony after the Cold War, after which the United States achieved global military hegemony. Since then, the United States has been keen on maintaining its military hegemony by force and other means.

Throughout the 240-plus-year history of the United States, there were less than 20 years in which the country was not at war. The United States might as well be called the most belligerent country in the history of the world. According to incomplete statistics, from the end of World War II in 1945 to

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2001, there were 248 armed conflicts in 153 regions of the world, of which 201 were initiated by the United States, accounting for about 81 percent.¹ The United States has military tentacles all over the world and currently has about 750 military bases in at least 80 countries around the world.² Among the 193 member states of the United Nations, about 175 countries have U.S. military personnel stationed there.³ Since 2001, the United States has launched wars and military operations in more than 80 countries around the world in the name of "anti-terrorism," which has directly resulted in the deaths of about 929,000 people, including 387,000 civilians, and the displacement or refugee status of about 38 million people.⁴

¹ [China] "The United States war of aggression against foreign countries has caused a serious humanitarian disaster", China Society for Human Rights Studies, April 9, 2021. <https://www.humanrights.cn/html/rqyj/8/2021/0409/58160.html>.

² Doug Bandow, "750 Bases in 80 Countries Is Too Many for Any Nation: Time for the US to Bring Its Troops Home", October 4, 2021, <https://www.cato.org/commentary/750-bases-80-countries-too-many-any-nation-time-us-bring-its-troops-home>

³ Mark Leon Goldberg, "Do People Like Having US Military Bases in their Country? New Public Opinion Research", UN Dispatch, December 21, 2022, <https://www.undispatch.com/do-people-like-having-us-military-bases-in-their-country-new-public-opinion-research/>.

⁴ Costs of War Project, Watson Institute for International and Public Affairs, <https://watson.brown.edu/costsofwar/papers/summary>

During this process, the United States has followed an "imperial way of thinking" such as Manifest Destiny and American exceptionalism, and justified its hegemonic acts under the guise of the Sea Power theory and hegemonic stability theory. In its narrow pursuit of absolute power, interests and an ambition to dominate the land, the sea, the sky and even outer space, the United States has frequently launched wars and interfered in other countries' internal affairs, in an attempt to establish the so-called "Pax Americana," which is in fact a unipolar world subject to U.S. hegemony.

With its military hegemony, the United States has been promulgating hegemonic policies and actions, bringing tremendous harm to the whole world; destroying lives and human dignity, trampling on the sovereignty of other nations, disturbing the international order, hindering peaceful development, causing humanitarian disasters, jeopardizing global security and

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stability, impeding the progress of human civilization, as well as even harming itself.

This report, by presenting facts and data, aims to trace the root cause of U.S. military hegemony, to explore how the United States has pursued, maintained and abused its military hegemony, and to tell the truth about the perils of the practices of U.S. military hegemony to the whole world.

Chapter I Formation of U.S. Military Hegemony

Throughout U.S. history, many politicians have concealed America's ambition for world domination. They coveted "domination of the oceans, and all the seas," and predicted that the United States "may well be the most powerful and fearsome empire across the world in history." They imagined the American nation could "control the American continent first, which is but the prelude to global hegemony, and soon put the entire world under control," and claimed the advent of the "American Century."⁵⁶⁷

History is a mirror. Seen from a broad perspective, the history of germination, rise, establishment, consolidation, and expansion of the U.S. military hegemony has coincided with the country's expan-

⁵ George Herring, *From Colony to Superpower: U.S. Foreign Relations since 1776*, Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2008, p.207.

⁶ [U.S.] Robert Kagan, *Dangerous Nation: America's Place in the World from Its Earliest Days to the Dawn of the Twentieth Century (I and II)*, translated by Yuan Shengyu, Guo Xuetang, and Ge Tengfei, Social Sciences Academic Press (China), 2011, p. 44.

⁷ *Ibid.*, p. 326.

sion from east to west, from land to sea, and from different regions to the world within the framework of the "imperial thinking" as its root.

1.1 A brief history of U.S. military hegemony

The history of U.S. military hegemony can be roughly divided into four stages: It was formed between the Mexican-American War and the American-Spanish War, was finally established between the two world wars, then met competition during the U.S.-Soviet Cold War, and has reached its peak since the end of the Cold War

—The United States made preparations for acquiring hegemony from the Mexican-American War in the mid-19th century to the Spanish-American War in the late 19th century.

Following the independence and founding of the country, the United States initiated the "Westward Expansion" and the process lasted for nearly a

hundred years. The Mexican-American War from 1846 to 1848 was the first major military operation of the United States outside its borders and the first time it occupied another country. The United States seized about 2.3 million square kilometers of land before and after the war, expanded over the North American continent, and gained access to the Pacific Ocean, thereby creating conditions for its subsequent military and economic expansion in the Pacific Ocean and East Asia.

At the end of the 19th century, calls for military expansion in the United States were on the rise, and the modernization of the U.S. Navy gradually advanced. The Spanish-American War in 1898 is considered to be the climax of the first imperialist era of the United States after its founding. In this first war of conquest outside North America, the United States defeated Spain and gained control over Cuba, Puerto Rico, the Philippines and Guam, and at the same time annexed Hawaii, which

demonstrated that the United States was well on the road to hegemony and expansion by dint of force. The United States now has military bases in both the Caribbean Sea and the Pacific Ocean, which indicates its rapid expansion and the desire of its rulers to further strengthen their economic, political, and military power.⁸

- The U.S. military hegemony was established during the two world wars in the first half of the 20th century.

The military strength of the United States has significantly improved through World War I. After the outbreak of the war, the United States passed the National Defense Act and the Naval Act in 1916 to expand its army and navy. It then joined the war in 1917 and deployed military forces on a large scale to Europe. After the end of World War I, the United States became an important force in the

⁸ David Vine, *The United States of War: A Global History of America's Endless Conflicts, From Columbus to the Islamic State*, Oakland, California: University of California Press, 2020, p.102, 121.

world. Not only did the number of those enlisted in the army expand from less than 130,000 in 1917 to four million, but a new motorized combat force and a logistics support system were built.⁹ Its naval power continued to grow and had the size of that of the United Kingdom thanks to the release of the Washington Naval Treaty, also known as the Five-Power Treaty, in 1922. A military limitation was placed on Japan, and the United Kingdom lost its dominance to the United States in this regard.¹⁰

The end of the European era in world politics occurred during World War II. The United States, far away from the battlefield, showed great military potential. It fought on the two fronts in the Pacific and Europe respectively, and was the only country that became stronger after the war.

In August 1945, the United States dropped

⁹ The American Expeditionary Forces, Library of Congress, <https://www.loc.gov/collections/stars-and-stripes/articles-and-essays/a-world-at-war/american-expeditionary-forces/>

¹⁰ Kori Schake, *Safe Passage: The Transition From British To American Hegemony*, Cambridge: Harvard University Press, 2017, p.236.

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atomic bombs on Hiroshima and Nagasaki, Japan, which accelerated the end of World War II, demonstrated the power of nuclear weapons, and laid an important foundation for the U.S. military hegemony after the war. The United States is so far the only country that has used nuclear weapons in a war.

The United States not only gained victory in World War II, but also laid down the cornerstone for hegemony- an unprecedented war machine. At the end of the war, the United States had 12.5 million soldiers, with 7.5 million stationed overseas, a navy with about 1,200 large warships, and an air force with long-range bombers and a monopoly on nuclear weapons.¹¹ As its military hegemony was established after the two world wars, the United States became the first power in history to control the strategic axis, "both ends of the Eurasian conti-

¹¹ Paul Kennedy, *The Rise and Fall of the Great Powers: Economic Change and Military Conflict from 1500 to 2000*, London: Unwin Hyman Limited, 1988, p.358.

ment,"¹² with unprecedented influence and control all over the world.

- The Cold War, which lasted for more than 40 years, marked the competition for military hegemony between the United States and the Soviet Union.

During the Cold War, the United States and the Soviet Union invested massive manpower and materials in an arms race and launched wars or proxy wars abroad. Both of the two large-scale wars that the United States was involved in during this period, the Korean War and the Vietnam War, aimed to "contain the expansion of communism."

In 1950, the United States Objectives and Programs for National Security (NSC68) proposed a military superiority strategy that was "more rapidly built in the free world" to mobilize people and

¹² [U.S.] Alfred W. McCoy, *The Rise and Decline of U.S. Global Power*, translated by Xiaomaoxian, Gold Wall Press, 2019, p. 9. Quoted from *After Tamerlane: The Global History of Empire Since 1405* by John Darwin, an Oxford University historian.

achieve "overall strength" as the basic guideline of the country during the Cold War. The various programs formulated accordingly included: a large expansion in the military budget of the United States, the development of conventional and nuclear weapons, improved technological edge, intimidation of the Soviet Union, and defense of its overseas interests.¹³

To this end, the United States sought to build conventional and nuclear forces based on high technology, as well as a huge system of bilateral and multilateral alliances and military bases all over the world, the latter two of which were absent as regards the Soviet Union. Experts have pointed out that in the 1950s, the United States offset the Soviet Union's superiority in the scale of conventional force with its superiority in nuclear power. In the

¹³ NSC-68. 1950, Office of the Historian, U.S. Department of State, <https://history.state.gov/milestones/1945-1952/NSC68>.

1970s and 1980s, the Soviet Union could compete with the United States in terms of nuclear power, but the United States developed conventional guided weapons and built battlefield networks.¹⁴ The two "offset strategies" enabled the United States to maintain its superiority in the competition with the Soviet Union for military hegemony and even maintain it in the post-Cold War era.

- The bipolar structure was brought to an end with the Cold War and the United States saw its heyday in military hegemony.

With the disintegration of the Soviet Union in 1991, the United States became the only superpower with overwhelming military power as it ranked first in terms of military expenditure. It could control all the oceans and seas in the world, and has also developed the military capability to control the

¹⁴ Remarks by Deputy Secretary Work on Third Offset Strategy, April 28, 2016, <https://www.defense.gov/News/Speeches/Speech/Article/753482/remarks-by-deputy-secretary-work-on-third-offset-strategy/>.

coast through coordinated sea, land and air operations; its vassals were found throughout the Eurasian continent.¹⁵

In order to maintain its military hegemony, the United States, on the one hand, stepped up its military intervention and military deterrence in the world by increasing defense expenditures, expanding its military power, and building bases, and on the other hand, tried to justify the necessity of military alliances with itself as the leader through military actions. To prevent the cohesion of the alliance from weakening at the end of the Cold War, the United States encouraged the North Atlantic Treaty Organization (NATO) to expand eastward in the 1990s and maintained bilateral alliances in the Asia-Pacific to safeguard its global military and geopolitical interests.

¹⁵ [U.S.] Zbigniew Brzezinski, *The Grand Chessboard: American Primacy and Its Geostrategic Imperatives*, translated by China Institute of International Studies, Shanghai Century Publishing Group, 2007, p. 19.

After the September 11 attacks in 2001, the United States launched wars in Afghanistan and Iraq, and carried out military operations in Libya and Syria. The long-term "global war on terrorism" has greatly consumed the national power of the United States and damaged its reputation. Americans became less willing to see its military use force against other countries. Even so, the United States still occupies a dominant position in the military field, and strives to maintain its military hegemony in the 21st century through the integration and application of new technologies and new operational concepts and the deepening and adjustment of the alliance system.

1.2 Root cause of U.S. military hegemony

The concepts of "empire," "hegemony" and "authority" are found throughout the history of the United States. Although the country rejects the word "empire" in political terms, the concept has

been deeply ingrained in its spirit since its founding. The idea has continuously influenced U.S. policies and behavior on its way towards global military hegemony.

American poet and writer Walt Whitman proclaimed as early as 1860 that the United States was an empire: "I chant the new empire, grander than any before — As in a vision it comes to me; I chant America, the Mistress — I chant a greater supremacy."¹⁶ American writer Robert Kaplan's book describing the United States is simply titled *An Empire Wilderness*. "As both a dream and a fact the American Empire was born before the United States," American historian Bernard DeVoto once pointed out.¹⁷

¹⁶ Walt Whitman, "A Broadway Pageant", Walt Whitman Archive, Publish works, <https://whitmanarchive.org/published/LG/1881/poems/105>.

¹⁷ Robert Kaplan, "In Defense of Empire", The Atlantic, April 2014 Issue, <https://www.theatlantic.com/magazine/archive/2014/04/in-defense-of-empire/358645/>.

—Destiny of the empire: from Manifest Destiny to American exceptionalism

Military expansion and wars have constantly occurred throughout the history of the United States, and the ideological roots can be traced to the "destiny of the empire." This kind of self-positioning and values came into being with the arrival of Western colonists on the North American continent, and was particularly reflected in a sermon delivered by John Winthrop, the first governor of the Massachusetts Bay Colony.

Before arriving in the colonies in 1630, the Puritan immigrant leader issued a proclamation: "We shall be as a city upon a hill. The eyes of all people are upon us ... we shall be made a story and a by-word through the world."¹⁸ These words have been repeated by countless Americans for more

¹⁸ John Winthrop, "A Modell of Christian Charity (1630)," <https://history.hanover.edu/texts/winthmod.html>; John Winthrop Dreams of a City on a Hill, 1630;

than 240 years, allowing them to gradually develop the national consciousness that Americans are "chosen people" and the conviction of exercising the right of conquest in the name of civilization over what they consider to be "backward nations." As Eric Hobsbawm, a master of modern world history, puts it, it was a fundamental belief with messianic implications that made the United States expansionist from the beginning, with its initial decision to become a continental giant, eventually having its population spread over the entire continent.¹⁹

The two prominent arguments of "manifest destiny" and "American exceptionalism" have since then endowed the United States with so-called "legitimacy" and "sanctity" in its military expansion and military hegemony.

¹⁹ [UK] Eric Hobsbawm, *Globalisation, Democracy and Terrorism*, Shanghai Renmin Publishing House, 2022, Chapter 3.

"Manifest destiny" was put forward by American columnist John O'Sullivan in 1845. It meant that God instructed the United States to expand its territory and sphere of influence in the North American continent and beyond, and spread its system and values. Historians believe that the purchase of Louisiana from France in 1803 by the United States added the real substance of expanding territory and building an empire on the belief of "manifest destiny." Before the United States and the United Kingdom started the War of 1812, the war hawks in the United States who supported the expansion with force released "manifest destiny" as a political force for the first time.²⁰ From Texas to Hawaii, "manifest destiny" has become the basis and excuse for the United States to use military means to expand its territory and persecute indigenous people. It indicates selfishness and

²⁰ George Herring, *From Colony to Superpower: U.S. Foreign Relations since 1776*, Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2008, p.107, 126, 180.

racism. With the evolution of world history and changes in the national power of the United States, "manifest destiny" has become one of the ideological roots of the country in its fight for world dominance, export of values, and foreign military intervention since the 20th century.

According to "American exceptionalism," the United States is a unique country in human history and represents the direction of civilization and progress. The British- American thinker Thomas Paine declared in his book *Common Sense* that "... it is evident they belong to different systems: England to Europe, America to itself," which is seen as an early manifestation of "American exceptionalism."²¹ In this sense, the U.S. expansion is aimed at breaking the old order and establishing a so-called "new world." The exceptionalism has served as a driving force and excuse for America's imperial

²¹Thomas Paine, *Common Sense*, <https://www.ushistory.org/Paine/commonsense/sense4.htm>.

thinking and its expansion policy in particular. It has become one of the roots of American foreign policy and has also served to whitewash the idea that the United States, as a hegemonic country, is better and more civilized than the old empires. Niall Ferguson, a historian at Harvard University in the United States, said: "To those who would still insist on American 'exceptionalism,' the historian of empires can only retort that the United States is as exceptional as all the other 69 empires."²²

—Imperial worldview: from "sea power theory" to "hegemonic stability theory"

In its path to expansion and military hegemony, the United States has developed its own theoretical system for promoting military hegemony.

The Spanish-American War at the end of the 19th century profoundly changed America's position

²² Niall Ferguson, *The unconscious colossus: limits of (& alternatives to) American empire*, Daedalus, 2005 Spring, <https://www.amacad.org/publication/unconscious-colossus-limits-alternatives-american-empire>.

in the world. Before the outbreak of the war, the voices in the United States for outward expansion had been strong, and "theories" advocating expansion also emerged. Among them, Alfred Thayer Mahan's "sea power" theory not only met the political needs of the expansionist Theodore Roosevelt back then, but also became a booster for the development of the U.S. Navy. The "sea power theory" has had a profound impact on U.S. military development and hegemony. It went from seizing the Panama Canal and dominating the Caribbean Sea to forming the "Great White Fleet," moving to the Far East and the Pacific Ocean, and acquiring naval bases all over the world. The United States gradually dominated the oceans.

At the beginning of the 20th century, the emergence of the discipline of international relations and the development of related theories exerted great influence on American foreign policy. The United States became a superpower after

World War II, which coincided with the maturity and development of international relations theory. The United States was the "research center" of this theory, and its theoretical schools such as realism and liberalism have provided the basis and guiding principles for the United States in its pursuit and preservation of hegemony as well as its foreign military intervention.

The realist school centers on power politics, among which the core view of neorealism is that the international community is in a state of anarchy, survival and security are the primary considerations of a state, and military force is the first element of state power.²³ Offensive realism believes that the greater the military superiority of a country over other countries, the safer it is. Every country hopes to become the country with the strongest military strength in the international system, and the ideal

²³Kenneth Waltz, *Theory of International Politics*, Illinois: Waveland Press, 2010.

result is to become a hegemon in the international system so that its survival can be guaranteed.²⁴

Liberalism emphasizes that people enjoy inalienable rights, and this logic makes it permissible for so-called free countries to interfere in the internal affairs of other countries on the pretext of human rights issues, while the best way to protect human rights in other countries is to realize so-called "freedom and democracy" in other countries, and establishing a world composed of democratic countries is the "ideal way" to achieve world peace.²⁵ The formation and development of this theory have given the United States a great impulse and motivation to interfere in other countries' internal affairs and effect regime changes.

The hegemonic stability theory, the unipolar stability theory and democratic peace theory have

²⁴ John Mearsheimer, "The False Promise of International Institutions", *International Security*, Vol. 19, No.3, Winter 1994-1995, p.11-12.

²⁵ John Mearsheimer, *The Great Delusion: Liberal Dreams and International Realities*, New Haven and London: Yale University Press, p.2.

also attracted much attention and controversy in academic and policy circles. The hegemonic stability theory proposes that the existence of hegemonic powers can bring relative peace and stability to the international system, while "the relative decline of the national power of the United States and restraint in the use of force lead to an era of unstable coexistence among superpowers."²⁶ The unipolar stability theory is the inheritance and development of the hegemonic stability theory, which holds that the post-Cold War world is a stable unipolar system led by the United States, and that the unipolar system can bring lasting peace. "Doing too little is a greater danger than doing too much ... given the distribution of power, the U.S. impulse toward interventionism is understandable. In many cases, U.S. involvement has been demand-driven, as one would expect in a system with one clear leader."²⁷ This theory is a

²⁶ Robert Gilpin, *War and Change in World Politics*, London: Cambridge University Press, 1981, p.145, 242.

²⁷ William Wohlforth, "The Stability of a Unipolar World", *International Security*, Vol, 24, No.1 Summer 1999, p. 5-41.

reflection of America's position in the world and international power dynamics after the Cold War, and a theoretical interpretation of American foreign interventionism.

In addition, the democratic peace theory is also considered to be an important basis for the United States to seek military hegemony in the name of democracy after the end of the Cold War. The central argument of the theory is that there is little or no war between democracies, so the promotion of democracy can promote world peace and stability.²⁸ The eastward expansion of NATO that began in the 1990s, the U.S.-led NATO air strikes on Yugoslavia in 1999 with the claim "human rights above sovereignty," the overthrow of Libyan leader Muammar Gaddafi by force in 2011 in the name of "responsibility to protect," and other military operations are all manifestations of the Ameri-

²⁸ Ni Shixiong, *Contemporary Western Theories of International Relations*, Fudan University Press, 2004, pp.

can "liberal and democratic values."

In fact, none of these theories can stand the test of history. No matter how these theories are phrased, they all defend and serve the U.S. military hegemony and interests. At their core are U.S. imperial thoughts built on militarism, expansion, intervention, and moral whitewashing. This thinking will continue to exert a profound influence on its way to promote military hegemony.

1.3 Fundamental motives of U.S. military hegemony

The maintenance and expansion of military hegemony by the United States can be viewed from the perspective of three fundamental motives—interests, strategy, and domestic politics.

—**Interests: the nature of capital expansion**

Based on the experience of ancient Greece, the Greek historian Thucydides said the only reliable bonds between men and countries are those

of shared interests. George Washington, founder of the United States and its first president, established it as a general principle for the government: for the vast majority of people, interests are the governing principle.²⁹

According to Marxism, economy is the basis of politics, and politics is the reflection of economy. According to Marxist theory, capitalist societies cannot find within themselves an adequate market for their goods and an adequate place for investment of their capital, and thus they tend to enslave non-capitalist and even capitalist areas, so as to find markets for surplus products and investment opportunities for surplus capital.

The U.S. military hegemony as a political phenomenon is a product of the economic system on which it depends, that is, capitalism. The path of

²⁹ [U.S.] Written by Hans Morgenthau, [U.S.] Revised by Kenneth Thompson, *Politics among Nations: The Struggle for Power and Peace (Concise Edition)*, translated by Xu Xin, Hao Wang, and Li Baoping, annotated by Wang Jisi, Peking University Press, 2012, pp. 14-15.

its hegemony roughly coincides with that of capital expansion: after it gained independence, the United States pushed its frontiers westward and southward, robbed land and resources, obtained a vast domestic market, and completed industrialization, urbanization, and agricultural mechanization, which provided favorable conditions for it to become a capitalist power. It has subjected the Western Hemisphere under its influence with the "Monroe Doctrine" and occupied the "golden countries" that are rich in resources on the fringes of the empire. In 1898, the Spanish- American War broke out, and the colonies were again carved up. The United States has acquired commercial control over the Pacific Ocean and its coastal islands and lands. With the "Open Door Policy" in 1899 as a symbol, it competed with Europe for interests in Asia. Then the United States, through World War I and World War II, held the world market and the lifeline of economy in its hands. In order to protect the stra-

tegic resources needed for military hegemony, it has controlled regions with resources such as oil and minerals, especially the Middle East, which is rich in energy reserves.

Here are some examples: It instigated the independence of Panama, thereby seizing excavation rights and a permanent lease of the Panama Canal. It helped overturn the democratically elected government of Iranian Prime Minister Mohammad Mosaddegh, thereby benefiting its oil companies for expansion in the Middle East. With its long-term military presence in Saudi Arabia, Kuwait, Qatar, Bahrain and other Middle Eastern countries, it launched the Gulf War and Iraq War to deal with "disobedient" countries, established the order in the oil industry, and consolidated its energy security. It stationed troops in Syria illegally for opportunities to control Syrian oil and gas wells and major grain production areas. It sent shipboard aircraft and even carriers to patrol the Strait of

Hormuz, in order to choke the world's important energy transportation channel.

In the view of the United States, a hegemonic country must control raw materials, sources of capital and markets, and win a competitive advantage in high value-added production. It is the easiest to obtain resources and markets by military means, "because conquest can help increase manpower and materials that can be used in further competition with other great powers."³⁰

—Strategy: pursuing absolute power, security

In the global system envisioned by the United States, it is at the center of a universe with interwoven components. In such a universe, power is exercised through constant haggling, dialogue, communication and search for formal agreement, although the power ultimately emanates from the same source—

³⁰ [U.S.] Jack Snyder, *Myths of Empire: Domestic Politics and International Ambition*, translated by Yu Tiejun et al., Peking University Press, 2007, p. 3.

Washington, where games are being played according to the rules of the United States.³¹

From the perspective of American rulers, military dominance is of great significance to their pursuit of absolute power across the world, and the growth of power can in turn nourish their military hegemony. According to Thomas Barnett, senior adviser to Secretary of Defense Donald Rumsfeld in the Bush administration, the expansion of the U.S. security structure since 2001 has turned the U.S. into a "military behemoth" whose main global function was to take charge of world politics and the economy and protect the American "core" by "exporting security" and punishing the unruly and restless parts of the post-colonial region.

The security structure demanded by the United States, like that for many empires in history, is a

³¹ [U.S.] Zbigniew Brzezinski, *The Grand Chessboard: American Primacy and Its Geostrategic Imperatives*, translated by China Institute of International Studies, Shanghai Century Publishing Group, 2007, p. 24.

symbol of excessive expansion. They believe that national security can only be maintained through expansion, and that threats can bring other countries into submission. The United States has adhered to the idea that security is obtained through expansion on the road towards military hegemony.

With no country able or willing to challenge U.S. dominance in the world, its military expansion continues. NATO's eastward expansion will be given here as an example. As a product of the Cold War, NATO should disappear with the end of the war. In order to maintain its global hegemony and pursue absolute security, the United States has led five eastward expansions by NATO, and increased the number of member states from 16 to 30. The pace of expansion has never stopped, and new expansion plans are underway. It has even extended its influence to the Asia-Pacific region to promote "NATO globalization." Data show that the military expenditure of the United States accounted

for 38 percent of the world's total in 2021, and exceeded the sum of that of other countries in the top ten. The military expenditure of the United States and its NATO allies together accounted for 55 percent of the world's total. The proportion would rise to 61 percent if America's allies in the Pacific, namely Australia, Japan, New Zealand and South Korea, were included.³²

The pursuit of absolute security, political exclusion and military containment against a specific party will not help establish a security framework, but lead to a dilemma and even turmoil.

—Domestic politics manipulated: the military-industrial complex

"War is simply the continuation of political intercourse with the addition of other means," Carl von Clausewitz said about the relationship between

³² Data from the annual report of the Stockholm International Peace Research Institute, Sweden, April 25, 2022, <https://www.sipri.org/yearbook/2022/08>

military and politics in his book *On War*.

The U.S. military expansion and hegemony have their own unique political market. In turn, the various powers and interest groups in the political market will affect the U.S. military hegemony. As part of the U.S. ruling class, the military-industrial complex has hijacked U.S. policy and pushed forward the U.S. "chariot system."

The expression "military-industrial complex" was proposed by U.S. President Dwight D. Eisenhower in his "farewell address" on January 17, 1961. It refers to the marriage between the powerful military organization and the arms industry of the United States. The military-industrial complex now mainly includes four entities: military security departments, defense-related enterprises, the Congress, and academic institutions. The media, lobbying organizations and other units have also been included.

It is a huge alliance of super interest groups.

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Each part has complementary interests and together they constitute a comprehensive relationship of interdependence and cooperation. They have a great demand to promote U.S. military hegemony, and they are capable of exerting huge political influence and sharing the fruits of hegemony. In March 2022, Franklin Spinney, a former official of the U.S. Department of Defense, wrote that over the past 30 years, the U.S. military-industrial complex has colluded with the U.S. media, think tanks, academia, and intelligence agencies. Everyone on the interest chain will earn a lot of money from the conflict between Russia and Ukraine.³³

³³ Franklin Spinney, How the Narcotic of Defense Spending Undermines a Sensible Grand Strategy, Counterpunch, March 2, 2022, <https://www.counterpunch.org/2022/03/02/how-the-narcotic-of-defense-spending-undermines-a-sensible-grand-strategy/>

Chapter II Acts and Means of the U.S. in Maintaining Military Hegemony

In his 1941 article announcing the advent of the "American" century, Henry Luce, an American publisher and co-founder of *Time*, said that it is necessary "to exert upon the world the full impact of our influence, for such purposes as we see fit and by such means as we see fit."

Military supremacy depends on enduring control. To maintain military hegemony all over the world, the United States has not only exercised direct control by explicit means such as launching or involving itself in wars and laying out global base networks, but also used implicit means such as alliance systems, rules and mechanisms to exercise indirect control. It has developed a new intervention model, military and concepts for operations in accordance with the new situation, so as to control any potential competitor and prevent it from

becoming a power that rivals the United States or challenging the United States' supremacy.

2.1 Explicit control: wars and bases

—War and military operations are the most direct means for the United States to maintain its military hegemony.

"War has become an integral part of the history of this country. The United States is not so much a long-term participant in war since its founding as a product of war. The wars the United States fought made the country what it is today, and will shape its future," French historian Thomas Rabino said in describing the "unbreakable" relationship between the United States and war.³⁴

It was shaped in war, expands in war, and dominates in war. The rise of the United States to the pinnacle of power over the past 240 years or so

³⁴ [France] Thomas Rabino, *De la guerre en Amérique*, translated by Chen Qin, An Kang and Hu Maojin, Shanghai Academy of Social Sciences Press, 2013, p. 1.

can be attributed to the endless wars including the American War of Independence, Indian War, Mexican-American War, Civil War, Spanish-American War, World War I, World War II, Korean War, Vietnam War, Kosovo War, Afghanistan War, Iraq War, etc. The U.S. hegemonic chariot has thundered across the world.

Through wars, the United States has expanded its territory, captured strategic locations, and enlarged its sphere of influence. The territory of the United States has increased more than 10 times from about 800,000 square kilometers at the beginning of its founding to about 9.37 million square kilometers now. By means of military intervention, coups, and proxy wars, the United States treats Latin American and Caribbean countries as its "backyard" and exerts geopolitical control over the Middle East and other Eurasian countries.

With wars, the United States has occupied sea transportation lines and resource-critical areas. The

United States has annexed many islands in the Pacific Ocean such as Hawaii and Wake Island, colonized the Philippines, forced the construction of the Panama Canal, divided up interests in China with other imperialist powers, stationed troops in Africa and controls vital resources and materials through military action.

With wars, the United States has united allies and eliminated dissidents. After the September 11 attacks, the United States has launched wars or military operations in 85 countries around the world under the banner of "anti-terrorism." The U.S. National Security Agency, Central Intelligence Agency and other agencies are constantly "creating" enemies, overthrowing other governments through illegal, secret operations, and assassinating foreign leaders that are against the United States.

The endless wars to defend and enhance its supremacy, including short-term wars, long-term wars, world wars, the Cold War, secret wars, proxy

wars and anti-terrorism wars, are turning the United States into a Spartan state and dragging it into a perpetual state of war.

—The military bases all over the world are the strategic anchors for the United States to control the world.

Military bases are the frontiers for the United States to impose deterrence and military intervention. With military bases as anchors, the United States exerts military hegemony throughout the world from the Arctic to the Cape of Good Hope, and from the Atlantic to the Pacific.

The number of U.S. military bases overseas increased significantly during World War II. In September 1940, the United States offered Britain, its ally on the edge of bankruptcy, 50 destroyers from World War I in exchange for its control over sea and air bases in British colonies. It reflects the ambition of the United States to strengthen its military presence around the world. In 1943 and

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1944, U.S. military planners drew up plans for building a system of overseas bases that presupposed the U.S. hegemonic power across both the Atlantic and Pacific Oceans.³⁵ During World War II, the U.S. military built and occupied about 2,000 bases on all continents, with about 30,000 military installations.³⁶

After World War II, its military bases overseas turned into an ever-extending "strategic frontier," and delineated a large area under U.S. "de facto sovereignty." During the Cold War, the United States encircled and contained the Soviet Union with a large number of troops and military bases as close to the country as possible. After the end of the Cold War, American politicians still believed that overseas military bases were crucial to the global security of the United States. They made the military always remain in a state of readiness, and also

³⁵ Melvyn Leffler, *The American Conception of National Security and the Beginning of the Cold War*, *American Historical Review*, Vol. 89, No. 2 (Apr. 1984), p.349.

³⁶ David Vine, *The United States of War: A Global History of America's Endless Conflicts, from Columbus to the Islamic State*, Oakland, California: University of California Press, 2020, p.3.

shaped an offshore defense belt for the United States. For example, the Bush administration claimed that overseas bases "maintained peace," while the Obama administration believed that "moving bases forward and deploying U.S. troops are meaningful and necessary."

After the September 11 attacks in 2001, the United States established a powerful network of military bases in Afghanistan and the entire Middle East and Central Asia in the name of "anti-terrorism," thereby establishing its own military, geostrategic, geopolitical and geoeconomic bridgeheads in the heart of Eurasia.

After ushering in the 21st century, the United States began to adjust its overseas military base deployment strategy, and moved to build smaller and more flexible "forward operating bases," or "lily pads," to reduce the U.S. military's reliance on large Cold War-style bases. These "lily pads" are seen in Colombia, Kenya, Thailand and many other

places, generally located in areas where there was little military presence in the past, and thus within easy reach.

Over the years, the United States has built a network around the world by signing bilateral and multilateral documents such as military base agreements, status of forces agreements, and security cooperation treaties with other countries. According to a 2021 study conducted by the Quincy Institute for Responsible Statecraft, the United States currently has 750 military bases in 80 countries and regions overseas, which is almost three times the number of U.S. embassies, consulates and missions. These bases cost 55 billion U.S. dollars every year.³⁷ Since 2001 alone, overseas military bases have provided support for the United States in launching wars or military operations in at least 25 countries. Some analysts believe that the es-

³⁷ David Vine, Patterson Deppen and Leah Bolger, "Drawdown: Improving U.S. and Global Security Through Military Base Closures Abroad" , <https://quincyinst.org/report/drawdown-improving-u-s-and-global-security-through-military-base-closures-abroad/>

establishment of overseas military bases by the United States and the emergence of wars in other countries where the bases are located seem to follow the law of cause and effect. Military bases are more likely to bring about wars, and wars ask for the establishment of more military bases.³⁸

2.2 Implicit control: alliances and rules

—**The alliance system is the main pillar for maintaining U.S. military hegemony.**

The alliance system indicates a formal or informal security cooperation relationship between two or more countries. Compared with "tangible" wars and military bases, the alliance system established and dominated by the United States can be seen as implicit control to maintain hegemony.³⁹

The U.S. hegemony is underpinned by a delicate system of alliances and allies around the globe.

³⁸ David Vine, *The United States of War: A Global History of America's Endless Conflicts, from Columbus to the Islamic State*, Oakland, California: University of California Press, 2020, p.3.

³⁹ Stephen Walt, *The Origin of Alliances*, Ithaca and London: Cornell University Press, 1987, p.1.

The main way for the United States to establish and maintain military hegemony is to form alliances and establish an alliance system with itself at the core. It will thus help the United States achieve its strategic goals.

Marked by the establishment of NATO in 1949, the United States began to establish military alliances. It then established alliances with Japan, South Korea, Australia, and the Philippines to form a global alliance network centered on the United States. During the Cold War, its global alliance system played a major role in helping the United States win the Cold War against the Soviet Union. The Cold War turned the United States into the superpower of the Western world, or actually the head of alliances. After the end of the Cold War, these alliances with the United States at the center were not dissolved, but were instead strengthened. For example, through the "new strategic concept of NATO," the United States changed its function

from collective defense to global intervention, and turned it into a political and military tool to maintain its hegemony. In the wars that the United States participated in after the Cold War and the global anti-terrorism cooperation after the September 11 attacks, the United States' alliance system played a substantial role and acted as the major pillar for the country to maintain its global military presence and hegemony.

The United States has built the military alliance system based on three considerations: first, to deter opponents by means of garrisons, joint military exercises, and military assistance; second, to gain an overall military advantage through alliances and maintain its own security and interests; third, to keep allies at bay as an incidental goal. Statistics show that in the fiscal year of 2011, the U.S. Pacific Command led a total of 146 military exercises involving the U.S. military and its allies and the U.S.-led NATO conducted 88 military exercises in

2020.⁴⁰

On the whole, the U.S. military alliance system is a hierarchical system among countries. The United States with its leading role sets the agenda and exerts hegemony with others subject to asymmetric and unequal conditions.

In recent years, the United States has taken the lead in promoting the transformation of the bilateral alliance system towards trilateral and multilateral development, from the U.S.- Japan- Australia and the U.S.-Japan-Philippines alliances to the U.S.-Japan- India- Australia "Quadrilateral Security Dialogue," forming the U.S.-UK- Australia trilateral security partnership, in an attempt to strengthen the alliance against potential threats and challenges. With the eastward shift of the U.S. strategic military center, the Indo- Pacific region has become increasingly important. The United States is making

⁴⁰ Richard Halloran, "Sharpening the Spear", Air Force Magazine, February 2011, p.73, <https://www.airandspaceforces.com/PDF/MagazineArchive/Documents/2011/February%202011/0211spear.pdf>; Key NATO and Allied exercise in 2021, NATO Factsheet, March 2021, https://www.nato.int/nato_static_fl2014/assets/pdf/2021/3/pdf/2103-factsheet_exercises.pdf.

great efforts to build the "Indo-Pacific alliance system" in an attempt to utilize the alliance system to integrate regional strategic resources, which will help improve the efficiency of U.S. operations in the region. The U.S. "Indo-Pacific Strategy" truly aims to maintain its hegemonic system.

—American rules and mechanisms are used to maintain the dominant position of U.S. military hegemony.

First, export control is employed.

Its world-leading military technology is an important basis for the U.S. military to occupy the dominant position. On the one hand, it is attributed to the excellent scientific research capabilities and strong manufacturing industry of the United States. On the other hand, it is related to various export control measures introduced by the United States. The measures are important tools for expanding military superiority and seeking military hegemony. During the Cold War, the export control policies of

the West played an auxiliary role in isolating, containing, and ultimately dragging down the Soviet Union.

The U.S. export control policy has a history of more than a century and can be dated back to the Trading with the Enemy Act of 1917. It was strengthened during World War II and the Cold War, with the purpose of maintaining a military technological edge over its opponents. Specific practices are as follows: Laws and regulations such as the Export Administration Regulations and the Arms Export Control Act were consulted to build dual-use and military export control systems. Legislation was conducted in specific areas, covering the Atomic Energy Act and the Nuclear Non-Proliferation Act. Multilateral mechanisms were set up or driven forward such as the "Coordinating Committee for Multilateral Export Controls," the "Missile Technology Control Regime," and "The Wassenaar Arrangement on Export Controls for Conventional

Arms and Dual-Use Goods and Technologies."

The existence of these international rules and mechanisms essentially serves the security interests of the United States.

In order to maintain its hegemony, the United States is willing to suppress and sanction its allies, as shown in the Toshiba incident. During the 1980s, Toshiba Machine Co., Ltd. in Japan exported 9-axis CNC machine tools to the Soviet Union, an action seen by the United States as a threat to its military superiority and national security. Consequently, the United States imposed sanctions on Toshiba Machine Co., Ltd. and used this incident to pressure Japan regarding its new-generation fighter jet program, ultimately forcing Japan to make concessions to the United States. The Toshiba incident laid bare the United States' hegemonic mentality and behavior from the start to the end of this incident.

Second is arms control.

According to the traditional view, the arms control agreements between the United States and the Soviet Union during the Cold War were made to increase transparency, reduce the risk of nuclear conflict, and enhance strategic stability, preventing the nuclear arms race from spiraling out of control and ultimately contributing to the peaceful end of the Cold War. However, the U.S. government's core objective in pursuing arms control was to establish and maintain its military technological superiority over the Soviet Union.

Thomas Countryman, former U.S. acting under-secretary of state for arms control and international security, has stated that " (arms control agreements) are a vital tool that can constrain other nations' ability to act against our interests, while still allowing the freedom of action that is necessary to defend U.S. interests and those of our close allies. In other words, arms control agreements are not a concession made by the United States, nor a favor

done for another nation; they are an essential component of, and contributor to, our national security."⁴¹

By utilizing the arms control mechanisms in a flexible manner, the United States can achieve three key benefits. First, it can allocate more funds toward enhancing military capabilities in other areas. For instance, the Anti-Ballistic Missile Treaty signed with the Soviet Union in 1972 allowed the United States to save billions of dollars; second, another advantage of leveraging arms control agreements, such as the New Strategic Arms Reduction Treaty, is the transparency and verification measures they provide. This enables the United States to gather and analyze intelligence on its adversaries' military capabilities, which can help its effective planning and management of nuclear forces; a third advantage of arms control mechanisms is the ability to restrict

⁴¹ Thomas Countryman, "Why Nuclear Arms Control Matters Today", *The Foreign Service Journal*, May 2020, <https://afsa.org/why-nuclear-arms-control-matters-today>.

adversaries' advancements in critical areas, while also forcing them into an unwinnable arms race in areas where the United States holds an advantage. For instance, the Intermediate- Range Nuclear Forces Treaty signed in 1987 by the United States and the Soviet Union was not aimed at sea- or air-based intermediate- range missiles, where the United States had significant advantages in technology, geography, and allies compared with the Soviet Union.⁴²

In February 2021, the U.S. government extended the New Strategic Arms Reduction Treaty with Russia, which largely reflects considerations of "playing to one's strengths and avoiding weaknesses." Jon Wolfsthal, who previously served as senior director for Arms Control and Nonproliferation on the National Security Council during the Obama administration, warned in 2020 that

⁴² Jon Brook Wolfsthal, Why Arms Control, *Daedalus*, Volume 149, Issue 2, Spring 2020, p.101-115. Michael Krepon, "The Rise and Demise of Arms Control", *Bulletin of the Atomic Scientists*, <https://the-bulletin.org/2021/11/the-rise-and-demise-of-arms-control/>.

Russia was close to completing its strategic nuclear modernization cycle. If the New Strategic Arms Reduction Treaty were to expire, the United States could fall behind Russia in terms of strategic nuclear forces due to the uncertainty of the U.S. nuclear modernization program. Therefore, extending the treaty would allow the United States to maintain a limit on and monitor Russia's strategic nuclear arsenal while advancing its own nuclear modernization projects.⁴³

The third is the misinterpretation and misuse of international law.

The United States has long relied on a strategy of selectively applying international law when it serves its interests while ignoring it when it doesn't, which is a consistent approach of U.S. hegemonism. The most blatant example of this in the military field is the misinterpretation of the United Nations

⁴³ Jon Brook Wolfsthal, *Why Arms Control*, *Daedalus*, Volume 149, Issue 2, Spring 2020, p.101-115.

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Convention on the Law of the Sea (UNCLOS), which it leverages to maintain its naval hegemony through the implementation of "freedom of navigation" actions based on its own standards.

Starting in 1979, the United States has been carrying out what it terms "freedom of navigation" operations, which it claims are meant to "preserve lawful commerce and U.S. military global mobility."⁴⁴ However, these actions are designed to ensure that the United States can possess unrestricted and unimpeded power projection capabilities. Several American scholars have said that the United States' persistent "freedom of navigation" operations in the South China Sea are a crucial means by which the U.S. military sustains its presence in the region.⁴⁵

In its "freedom of navigation" operations, the United States recklessly deploys large combat ships

⁴⁴ Annual Freedom of Navigation Report, Fiscal Year 2021, https://policy.defense.gov/Portals/11/Documents/FON%20Program%20Report_FY2021.pdf

⁴⁵ International Strategic and Security Studies Bulletin, Center for International Security and Strategy, Tsinghua University, <http://ciss.tsinghua.edu.cn/info/Latest/1049>

to challenge coastal nations' sovereignty and jurisdiction over their territorial waters, exclusive economic zones, archipelagos, and straits. The U.S. refusal to comply with requests from coastal countries for prior notification or permission and its arbitrary entry into foreign territorial waters underscores its military hegemony. The fact that the United States has not yet ratified the UNCLOS but still selectively interprets and utilizes it as a means of maintaining its maritime hegemony reflects the hegemonic logic of "might makes right."

2.3 New models and trends

The world in which the United States exists today is vastly different from the past. The world is currently experiencing a new trend: emerging countries are rising rapidly, the military technology of major powers is gradually becoming more widespread, and the international balance of power is shifting towards a multipolar structure. In the face

of profound changes in the international landscape, however, the United States continues to cling to its hegemonic mentality and attempts various methods to maintain and reinforce its military dominance.

—**New model of military intervention**

The use of military force has always been a significant means for the United States to maintain its military dominance. However, after several wars that have drained its resources and damaged its reputation, there has been a decline in public support for U.S. military intervention abroad. As a result, the U.S. government and Congress have shown a reduced willingness to use military force outside their borders. Against this backdrop, in the conflict between Russia and Ukraine, the United States, together with its allies, has relied on providing a large amount of military aid and intelligence support to manipulate the situation without openly deploying personnel to intervene in the conflict. This may indicate a new model for future U.S.

military interventions abroad.

This kind of military intervention has three new characteristics.

First, military assistance is highly targeted and can be supplemented and adjusted according to changes on the battlefield. Since the outbreak of the conflict between Russia and Ukraine, the United States has pledged to provide Ukraine with over 46 billion U.S. dollars in military aid,⁴⁶ and the types of weapons offered have changed according to the situation on the battlefield and the needs of the Ukrainian military.

Second, the United States has used its intelligence advantage to the fullest extent. The intelligence information and battlefield situation awareness provided to the Ukrainian military by the United States have played a crucial role in enhancing Ukraine's combat capabilities. According to reports,

⁴⁶ This data covers the period from January 24, 2022 to January 15, 2023. How Much Aid Has the U.S. Sent Ukraine? Here Are Six Charts, Council on Foreign Relations, <https://www.cfr.org/article/how-much-aid-has-us-sent-ukraine-here-are-six-charts>

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such a large amount of intelligence shared with Ukraine, a non-ally, by the United States is almost unprecedented, and U.S. intelligence agencies have even modified 27 intelligence-sharing policies for this purpose.⁴⁷

Thirdly, the United States has employed new hybrid warfare tactics. The United States and its allies have launched a hybrid warfare campaign against Russia, which includes economic warfare, diplomatic warfare, and propaganda warfare. Although the U.S. military did not directly intervene in the conflict, it has been fully involved in the war in substance. Some scholars have pointed out that the U.S. involvement in the conflict has provided rules and models for future U.S. military interventions overseas.⁴⁸

⁴⁷ Warren Strobel, U.S. Has Eased Intelligence-Sharing Rules to Help Ukraine Target Russians, *The Wall Street Journal*, December 21, 2022, <https://www.wsj.com/livecoverage/ukraine-zelensky-biden-congress-washington-trip-russia/card/u-s-has-eased-intelligence-sharing-rules-to-help-ukraine-target-russians-6pgEkPNCQRX8z4KBu4V4>

⁴⁸ Phillips O' Brien, "The Future of American Warfare Is Unfolding in Ukraine," *The Atlantic*, November 25, 2022, <https://www.theatlantic.com/ideas/archive/2022/11/us-military-intervention-afghanistan-ukraine-war/672265/>

—Adjustment and upgrading of the alliance system

In light of the weakening of the United States' absolute military superiority and its strategic shift towards great power competition, the United States has been gradually breaking through geographical, structural, and technological limitations in its use of its military alliance system in recent years.

First, the United States has been encouraging its allies outside the region to intervene in Indo-Pacific security affairs. This is exemplified by NATO's inclusion of Indo-Pacific security issues in its strategic vision and its expanded military presence in the region. In 2021, a group of countries including Canada, the UK, France, Germany, and the Netherlands dispatched 21 naval vessels to the South China Sea to take part in joint maritime exercises with the United States and its allies in the Indo-

⁴⁹ William Hawkins, NATO Navies Send Strategic Signals in the Indo-Pacific, <https://www.usni.org/magazines/proceedings/2022/august/nato-navies-send-strategic-signals-indo-pacific>

Pacific region.⁴⁹

Second, in the Asia-Pacific region, the United States has shifted its military alliance focus from primarily relying on a bilateral military alliance in a "hub- and- spokes" model to more trilateral and multilateral approaches. Since taking office in 2021, the Biden administration has elevated the importance of the Quadrilateral Security Dialogue (Quad) mechanism among the United States, Japan, India, and Australia and established a trilateral security partnership with the UK and Australia. At the same time, the United States is further deepening its engagement in smaller multilateral security mechanisms such as the U.S.-Japan- Australia and U.S.-Japan-South Korea partnerships while actively encouraging allies to enhance their security co-operation.

Third, the United States is transferring advanced military technology to its regional allies to bolster their military capabilities. For instance, within the

framework of the trilateral security partnership among the United States, the UK, and Australia, the United States and the UK have agreed to assist Australia in constructing at least eight nuclear-powered attack submarines. This marks the first time the United States has shared its nuclear propulsion technology with another country since it did so with the UK over 60 years ago. This move may pose a risk of nuclear proliferation as it exploits loopholes in the Nuclear Non-Proliferation Act and could potentially undermine regional security and stability. The United States is departing from past limitations and conventions by transferring core military technologies and offensive weapons to regional allies, with the fundamental objective of increasing its competitiveness in the military race in the Indo-Pacific region.

—Application of new technologies and new operational concepts

On the one hand, the U.S. Department of

Defense attaches great importance to the strategic significance of new technologies such as AI and automation in future military competition. Given the research and development advantage and experience of U.S. commercial tech companies in related fields, the Pentagon has been making efforts in recent years to foster closer connections with such companies and continuously promote the research and development of new technologies such as AI and automation, as well as their application in weaponry and equipment.

On the other hand, the United States is creating military concepts to adapt to new circumstances. For instance, there is the "Mosaic Warfare" that highlights flexibility, dispersion, and network intelligence, and the concept of "Joint All-Domain Command and Control" that aims to integrate sensors and combat platforms, as well as enable real-time data and information transmission. In the 2022 version of the National Defense Strategy

released by the United States, the concept of "Integrated Deterrence" is identified as the core of the country's defense strategy. This requires a high level of integration of new technologies, operational concepts, and capabilities, the removal of boundaries between military branches and operational domains, and cooperation with allies.

Chapter III: Perils of U.S. Military Hegemony

In 1901, U.S. writer Mark Twain wrote "And as for a flag for the Philippine Province, it is easily managed. We can have a special one—our States do it: we can have just our usual flag, with the white stripes painted black and the stars replaced by the skull and cross-bones,"to condemn the imperialist actions of the United States in launching a war and carrying out massacres in the Philippines.

Founded through war and bloodshed and expanding through intervention and intrigue, the United States developed its military hegemony in pursuit of power and profit and maintains its military hegemony through domineering and bullying.

Walter Russell Mead, a distinguished scholar at the Hudson Institute and professor at Bard College, once observed that "the United States of America is the most dangerous military power in the history of the world."

Numerous facts have proved that U.S. military hegemony, which is the main source of global instability, poses the greatest challenge to human progress and runs counter to the trend of peace and development.

Such hegemonic actions have caused humanitarian disasters, violated the sovereignty of other countries, trampled on international rules, undermined the international order, and led to significant risks and dangers for other countries, and even the United States itself.

3.1 Humanitarian disasters

—**Massacring civilians**

Brandon Bryant, a former U.S. military drone operator, has recounted his personal experience to the media on several occasions. After firing a Hellfire missile at a building containing his target, he saw a child exit the building just as the missile struck. When he alerted his superiors about the situation

after reviewing the tape, he was told that it was just "a dog".⁵⁰

According to the Bureau of Investigative Journalism, headquartered in London, U.S. drone strikes in Afghanistan, Pakistan, Somalia, and Yemen have killed between 910 and 2,200 civilians, including 283 to 454 children, from February 2004 to February 2020.⁵¹

The Intercept, a U.S. non-profit news organization, in 2015 disclosed that during one five-month period of U.S. operation, nearly 90 percent of the people killed in airstrikes were not the intended targets.⁵²

The United States continues to violate the right to life, the most basic human right, and has caused innumerable humanitarian catastrophes

⁵⁰ Graig Graziosi, "Former US drone operator recalls dropping a missile on Afghanistan children and says military is 'worse than the Nazis' ", Independent, February 7, 2020,

⁵¹ The Bureau of Investigative Journalism, "Drone Warfare" , <https://www.thebureauinvestigates.com/projects/drone-war>.

⁵² Jeremy Seahill, "The Assassination Complex" , The Intercept, Oct 15, 2015, <https://legacy.theintercept.com/drone-papers/the-assassination-complex/>.

worldwide. The American Indian Wars directly wiped out millions of Native Americans, the Philippine – American War caused the death of 200,000 to 1 million Filipinos, the Korean War resulted in over 3 million civilian deaths, the Vietnam War led to 2 million civilian deaths, the war in Afghanistan caused over 100,000 civilian casualties, and the Iraq War killed between 200,000 to 250,000 civilians.⁵³ According to Costs of War, a project led by Brown University, as of September 2021, Washington's so-called "war on terror" since 2001 has directly caused the deaths of approximately 929,000 people, including 387,000 civilians, and has displaced 38 million people.⁵⁴

—**Trampling on human dignity**

The frequently reported scandals of systemic prisoner abuse by the U.S. military in recent years are evidence of blatant disregard for human rights

⁵⁴ Costs of War Project, Watson Institute for International and Public Affairs, <https://watson.brown.edu/costsofwar/>

and trampling on human dignity.

As far back as 2009, the UN Special Rapporteur on the promotion and protection of human rights and fundamental freedoms while countering terrorism reported to the 10th session of the Human Rights Council that the United States had established a comprehensive system of extraordinary rendition, long-term and secret detention, and practices that contravene the UN Convention against Torture and Other Cruel, Inhuman or Degrading Treatment or Punishment.

In the report presented to the 64th session of the UN General Assembly, the rapporteur pointed out that the United States, along with its private contractors, resorted to interrogation techniques against male Muslims detained in Iraq and other countries, including but not limited to, forcing detainees to strip naked, piling detainees on top of each other naked, and threatening them with rape and sodomy.

According to a report from the Costs of War Project at the beginning of 2022, following the 9/11 attacks, the United States, in the name of a so-called "war on terror," orchestrated a system of black sites in at least 54 countries and regions across the world. Over 100,000 people were detained at these sites, including Muslims, women and children.⁵⁵

Bedu al-Hamad is a former Iraqi detainee who was jailed by the U.S. army under the pretext of allegedly supporting terrorism and detained in Abu Ghraib prison, located west of Baghdad. Describing life in the prison as hell and saying that the food he was given was just barely enough to keep him alive, he said that one of the many horrific violations committed by U.S. troops was solitary confinement by imprisoning him for a month, preventing him from seeing anyone, and exposing him to extreme

⁵⁵ Costs of War Project, Watson Institute for International and Public Affairs, <https://watson.brown.edu/costsofwar/>.

cold or heat.⁵⁶

"The Americans were making the Iraqis torture each other, as they brought a detained policeman, and put him among the extremists. The militants tortured him, broke his hands and feet and tried to kill him, and this goes beyond violating human rights," al-Hamadsaid.

As a result of his prolonged confinement, al-Hamad experienced severe psychological trauma and was unable to recognize his family.

In addition to widespread abuse and torture at Guantanamo, U.S. personnel have tortured prisoners by desecrating the Quran and violating Islamic beliefs, including throwing the Quran into toilets, tearing it to pieces or burning it under the guise of searching for weapons, and having female guards spy on naked male prisoners in bathrooms, which has sparked collective protest and even caused

⁵⁶ "Feature: Iraqi ex-detainee recounts torture by U.S. troops", Xinhua News Agency, July 25, 2021, http://www.xinhuanet.com/english/2021-07/25/c_1310083865.htm.

mass suicide among the detainees.⁵⁷

—**Damaging ecology**

The U.S. military operations across the world have caused severe ecological crises.

Over 350,000 tons of explosive bombs and landmines were left by the U.S. military in Vietnam, and it is estimated that it would take another 300 years to completely clear them.⁵⁸ The massive use of depleted uranium ammunition in the U.S.-led NATO bombing of the Federal Republic of Yugoslavia has led to a surge in cancers and leukemia among the local population, causing serious damage to the local and even European ecological environment. From 2002 to 2016, there were at least 270 incidents of environmental contamination at three U.S. military bases in Okinawa, Japan, most of

⁵⁷ [China] "U.S. Commits Serious Crimes of Violating Human Rights in the Middle East and Beyond", China Society for Human Rights Studies, August 10, 2022. <https://english.news.cn/20220809/df33c619baf04b259981bcbba3961810/c.html>.

⁵⁸ Son Nguyen, "Vietnam eyes to clean up 350,000 hectares of UXO", Hanoi Times, February 28, 2023, <https://hanoitimes.vn/vietnam-eyes-to-clear-350000ha-of-land-from-unexploded-objects-323058.html>

which were not reported to the Japanese government.⁵⁹ The soil and underground water pollution of the U.S. military base which was returned to South Korea in Yongsan in May 2022 has far exceeded the standard for a park and is full of carcinogens, with total petroleum hydrocarbons exceeding the standard by 29 times, and benzene and phenols exceeding the standard by 3.4 and 2.8 times, respectively.⁶⁰

Furthermore, the U.S. military is the world's largest energy consumer of fossil fuel and its fuel consumption outsidewarime along with the resulting carbon emissions exceeds most countries'.

While the United States may verbally support environmental protection and carbon neutrality, the priorities of the U.S. military are its safety and

⁵⁹ Jon Mitchell, "Contamination: Documents reveal hundreds of unreported environmental accidents at three U.S. Marine Corps bases on Okinawa", *The Japan Times*, November 19, 2016, <https://www.japan-times.co.jp/news/2016/11/19/national/contamination-documents-reveal-three-u-s-bases-okinawa-slow-disclose-environmental-accidents/>

⁶⁰ U.S. military base returned to S.Korea full of carcinogens, *Xinhua News Agency*, May 19, 2022, <https://english.news.cn/20220519/efea50679abe42a6a05fc1c9fe0e5598/c.html>.

lethality. Every major weapon system, whether jet fighters or aircraft carriers, is carbon-intensive. In sum, no other nation's military can match the devastation of the U.S. military greenhouse gas emissions.

"The U.S. military's carbon footprint is so big it outranks that of most countries in the world," said a joint study published by Lancaster University and Durham University in 2019, adding that "the U.S. military is the 47th largest emitter of greenhouse gases in the world, when looking at emissions from fuel use."⁶¹ According to data from the Watson Institute for International and Public Affairs at Brown University, since the start of the so-called "war on terror" in 2001, the U.S. military has generated over 1.2 billion tons of greenhouse gases.⁶²

⁶¹ Oliver Belcher, Patrick Bigger, Ben Neimark, Cara Kennelly, "Hidden carbon costs of the 'everywhere war': Logistics, geopolitical ecology, and the carbon boot-print of the US military", *Transactions of the Institute of British Geographers*, Volume 45, Issue 1 p. 65-80.

⁶² Costs of War Project, Watson Institute for International and Public Affairs, <https://watson.brown.edu/costsofwar/papers/ClimateChangeandCostofWar>.

3.2 Violation of sovereignty

In 1648, when the Peace of Westphalia ended the Thirty Years' War and laid the foundation for the modern nation-state system, the principle of sovereignty was established.

Examples of the United States using military hegemony to violate the principle of sovereignty are commonplace. In addition to direct military invasions of other countries, the United States has also subverted lawful governments, exercised extra-territorial jurisdiction, and violated the airspace and territorial waters of other countries.

—**Adopting military intervention abroad**

Since the Declaration of Independence in 1776, U.S. foreign military interventions through direct invasion by force have spread across the globe.

Former U.S. President Jimmy Carter once referred to the United States as "the most warlike nation in the history of the world," adding that

it "has been at peace for only 16 of its 242 years as a nation."⁶³

According to a Tufts University report, "Introducing the Military Intervention Project: A new Dataset on U.S. Military Interventions, 1776-2019," the United States undertook nearly 400 military interventions globally between those years, 34 percent of which were in Latin America and the Caribbean, 23 percent in East Asia and the Pacific, 14 percent in the Middle East and North Africa, and 13 percent in Europe and Central Asia.⁶⁴ Currently, its military interventions in the Middle East and North Africa as well as sub-Saharan Africa are on the rise.

—Subverting lawful governments

The United States began subverting the lawful

⁶³ David Brennan, "Jimmy Carter Took Call About China From Concerned Donald Trump: 'China Has Not Wasted a Single Penny on War'", Newsweek, April 15, 2019, <https://www.newsweek.com/donald-trump-jimmy-carter-china-war-infrastructure-economy-trade-war-church-1-396086/>

⁶⁴ Sidita Kushi, Monica Toft, "Introducing the Military Intervention Project: A New Dataset on US Military Interventions, 1776 - 2019", Journal of Conflict Resolution, Volume 67 Issue 4, April 2023,p.752-779.

governments of other countries soon after its founding. In the Tripoli War from 1801 to 1805, the U.S. consul in Tunisia participated in intriguing the subversion of the Tripoli government with the authorization of then President Thomas Jefferson, which was the first time the United States conducted a subversive operation against a lawful government in a foreign country.⁶⁵

As the Boston College political scientist Lindsey O'Rourke wrote in her book "Covert Regime Change: America's Secret Cold War," from 1947 to 1989, the United States carried out 64 covert operations of subversion and six overt ones in other countries, regardless of whether they were enemies or allies, or what political system they had adopted.⁶⁶

Following the end of the Cold War, the United States undertook subversive operations in several

⁶⁵ George Herring, *From Colony to Superpower: U.S. Foreign Relations since 1776*, Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2008, p.100.

⁶⁶ Lindsey O' Rourke, *Covert Regime Change, America's Secret Cold War*, New York: Cornell University Press, 2018, p.2.

countries, including Haiti, Afghanistan, Iraq, Libya, Syria, and Venezuela.

In 2022, former U.S. National Security Advisor John Bolton publicly admitted that he had assisted in planning coups in other countries, alluding to the unsuccessful coup attempt in Venezuela in 2019.

—**Enjoying "extraterritorial jurisdiction"**

It is common for U.S. military personnel to violate the local laws of the countries in which they are stationed. However, the U.S. government has tried to avoid subjecting U.S. military personnel to the jurisdiction of local governments, causing serious violations of judicial sovereignty of the countries in which they are stationed.

A recent study conducted by Asif Efrat, "Facing U.S. Extraterritorial Pressure: American Troops in Foreign Courts during the Cold War," showed that the involvement of U.S. troops overseas in crime was far greater than previously known, and suggested that in countries dependent on U.S.-

provided security, U.S. troops were less likely to face trial, with over 360,000 criminal cases involving U.S. military personnel and their families from 1954 to 1970, but only about one-third of these cases were tried in the courts of the countries where they were stationed.⁶⁷

A South Korean media outlet reported in 2017 that the non-prosecution rate for crimes committed by U.S. military personnel stationed in South Korea stands at a whopping 70.7 percent and the figure for violent crimes, including murder, rape and robbery, is even higher at 81.3 percent.⁶⁸

—Invading airspace and territorial waters

During the Cold War, the United States took advantage of its technological superiority to conduct high-altitude reconnaissance and other military activities, violating the airspace of other countries.

⁶⁷ Asif Efrat, Facing US Extraterritorial Pressure: American Troops in Foreign Courts during the Cold War, *The Journal of Politics*, Volume 84, Number 1, January, 2022, p.242-258.

⁶⁸ Korea not exercising jurisdiction over most USFK crime, *The Korea Herald*, October 10, 2017, <https://www.koreaherald.com/view.php?ud=20171010000870>

From June 1956 to December 1959, the CIA used U-2 high-altitude reconnaissance aircraft to conduct more than 250 overflight and peripheral reconnaissance missions in Europe, the Soviet Union, the Middle East and East Asia to gather imagery and signal intelligence.

After the Soviet Union shot down a U-2 reconnaissance aircraft in May 1960, the CIA shifted the focus of its high-altitude reconnaissance activities to Latin America and East Asian countries, and the reconnaissance activities in East Asia, including China, continued until 1974.⁶⁹ Since the 9/11 attacks, the United States, under the pretext of the so-called "war on terror," has launched large-scale drone strikes in Pakistan and other countries, violating the airspace sovereignty of these countries

⁶⁹ CIA U-2 Collection of Signals Intelligence, 1956-1960, National Security Archive, <https://nsarchive.gwu.edu/briefing-book/intelligence-nuclear-vault/2022-03-08/cia-u-2-collection-signals-intelligence-1956>; The Secret History of the U-2 — and Area 51, National Security Archive, <https://nsarchive2.gwu.edu/NSAEBB/NSAEBB434/>.

while causing a large number of civilian casualties.⁷⁰

In order to preserve its freedom to conduct military deployment worldwide, the United States began implementing "freedom of navigation" in 1979 to threaten and undermine the sovereignty of other nations' territorial waters.

According to Annual Freedom of Navigation Reports, an annual report released by the U.S. Department of Defense (DoD), the United States used military options to challenge the sovereignty or jurisdiction of more than 70 coastal states and regions over territorial waters, exclusive economic zones, archipelagos and straits between 1990 and 2021, including its traditional allies such as Japan, South Korea, Italy and Saudi Arabia.⁷¹

⁷⁰ U.S. drone strikes violate Pakistan's sovereignty: U.N., March 16, 2013, <https://www.reuters.com/article/us-un-drones-idUSBRE92E0Y320130316>; Biden can reduce civilian casualties during US drone strikes. Here's how, <https://www.brookings.edu/articles/biden-can-reduce-civilian-casualties-during-us-drone-strikes-heres-how/>

⁷¹ DoD Annual Freedom of Navigation (FON) Reports, U.S. Department of Defense, <https://policy.defense.gov/OUSDP-Offices/FON/>.

3.3 Disruption of Order

Stanley Hoffmann, an international relations professor at Harvard University, has stated that the world order is an idealized model for establishing peaceful relations between nations. It serves as an important condition for friendly coexistence between states and provides a set of rules for normative behavior, as well as an effective means for resolving disputes and conflicts while promoting international cooperation for common development.⁷²

The United States, relying on its military hegemony, has consistently refused to abide by the basic principles of international law and the basic norms governing international relations, and has deliberately acted in opposition to them.

The prohibition of the unlawful use of force or threat of force, a fundamental principle of inter-

⁷² Stanley Hoffmann, *Primacy or World Order: American Foreign Policy since the Cold War*, New York: McGraw-Hill, 1978. Michael Ledeen, *Primacy or World Order*, by Stanley Hoffmann, *Commentary*, <https://www.commentary.org/articles/michael-ledeen/primacy-or-world-order-by-stanley-hoffmann/>.

national law, has been consistently ignored by the United States, a country that has repeatedly and brazenly launched wars against sovereign countries. The creation of an independent Space Force and the establishment of a Space Command have accelerated the testing of U.S. space weapons and military exercises, seriously contradicting the concept of the peaceful use of space. Moreover, scandals of systemic prisoner abuse at the Guantanamo Bay prison proved the U.S. military has trampled on the UN Convention against Torture and Other Cruel, Inhuman or Degrading Treatment or Punishment.

In September 2022, during the official negotiating conference of the State Parties to the Biological Weapons Convention held in Geneva, Switzerland, the Russian delegation made public a series of documents alleging that the United States had violated the Convention. One of the disclosed documents described a patent technology, named "Toxic Mosquito Aerial Release System," which involves

the use of drones to transport a large number of mosquitoes with toxins to specific areas. These mosquitoes are then released with the intention of infecting the targeted population with deadly diseases, achieving a "low-cost dissemination of lethal diseases," and incapacitating the adversary. The document added that once "legal restrictions are adjusted or removed," the technology could be used immediately for military purposes and become a more lethal "tool" than the most advanced weapons available.⁷³

The Biological Weapons Convention was opened for signature in 1972 and entered into force in 1975, with 185 States Parties and four Signatory States now. It serves as the foundation of global governance for biological security.

However, the United States, as one of the States Parties to the Convention, has been con-

⁷³ [China] "U.S. bio-militarization activities raise concerns at multilateral international conference", Xinhua News Agency, September 11, 2022, http://www.news.cn/world/2022-09/11/c_1128995185.htm.

ducting dangerous biological experiments in countries such as South Korea and engaging in human experimentation in its own country for a long time, while being exclusively opposed to the establishment of a relevant multilateral verification mechanism, which has stalled the negotiation on verification protocol to the convention until now.

It has been the consistent practice of the United States to be selective in its approach to international laws, norms and organizations, complying when it serves its interests and withdrawing when it does not.

Statistics show that since the 1980s, the United States has withdrawn from 17 international organizations or agreements, including the UN Human Rights Council, the World Health Organization, UNESCO, the Paris Agreement, the Joint Comprehensive Plan of Action, the Arms Trade Treaty, the Intermediate- Range Nuclear Forces

Treaty, and the Open Skies Treaty.

Meanwhile, there have been situations in which the United States has withdrawn and then later rejoined these organizations or agreements, only to withdraw again.

Despite the current U.S. administration having made high-profile claims that "America is back" and returned to some international organizations and agreements, the United States has not abandoned its "America first" doctrine. It continues to withdraw from or violate agreements that are not considered to be in line with the U.S. interest, such as the Open Skies Treaty.

Noting that "these are now the unwritten rules of the road for our planet. They represent the real American exceptionalism," Alfred McCoy, a U.S. historian, has pointed out that Washington will continue to violate national sovereignty through old-style covert as well as open interventions and insist on rejecting international conventions that

restrain its power.⁷⁴

3.4 Backlash

The U.S. military hegemony of launching wars and invading other countries has brought disaster to the world while also causing serious damage to the United States itself.

French historian Thomas Rabino, in his book "De la guerre en Amérique," pointed out that almost every generation in the United States has suffered the consequences of political, economic, and social turmoil caused by wars.

—Domestic Casualties

The wars launched and participated in by the United States have resulted in the deaths of many U.S. soldiers.

According to statistics from the DoD, approximately 36,000 U.S. soldiers were killed and over

⁷⁴ Alfred W. McCoy, "The real American exceptionalism", *Le Monde diplomatique*, February 25, 2015, <https://mondediplo.com/openpage/the-real-american-exceptionalism>.

100,000 were wounded in the Korean War, while 58,000 U.S. soldiers were killed and over 150,000 were wounded in the Vietnam War.⁷⁵

The Costs of War project showed that more than 7,000 U.S. soldiers and around 8,000 U.S. defense contractors have died in the wars launched by the United States after the 9/11 attacks.

In addition, U.S. veterans who have served in Iraq and Afghanistan have higher rates of suicide, PTSD, drug and alcohol dependency, divorce and child abuse rates than ordinary people. More than 30,000 U.S. soldiers committed suicide in the post-9/11 wars, four times the number killed in combat.⁷⁶

—Economic cost

The exorbitant military spending to maintain its military hegemony has placed a heavy burden on the taxpayers in the United States.

⁷⁵ Defense Casualty Analysis System, U.S. Department of Defense, <https://dcas.dmde.osd.mil/dcas/app/conflictCasualties>.

⁷⁶ Costs of War Project, Watson Institute for International and Public Affairs, <https://watson.brown.edu/costsofwar/costs/human>

Origins, Facts and Perils of U.S. Military Hegemony

According to data adjusted for inflation to 2011 dollars, U.S. military spending on the Vietnam War (1965- 1975) amounted to 737 billion U.S. dollars, which had a severe impact on the U.S. economy, resulting in high inflation and huge deficits, ultimately leading to the collapse of the Bretton Woods system.⁷⁷

The United States has spent over 5.8 trillion dollars on wars since 2001. According to a U.S. media report in 2019, the United States has spent more than 350 billion dollars on medical and disability care for veterans of the wars in Afghanistan and Iraq. And studies predicted that another 2.2 trillion dollars have to be invested in the same field in the next 30 years.⁷⁸

⁷⁷ Costs of Major U.S. Wars, Congressional Research Service; Edwin Dale Jr, "What Vietnam Did to the American Economy", The New York Times, January 28, 1973, <https://www.nytimes.com/1973/01/28/archives/what-vietnam-did-to-the-american-economy-worsening-payments-deficit.html>; Art Pine, "War in Vietnam Started 13-Year Spiral of Prices", The Washington Post, October 25, 1978, <https://www.washingtonpost.com/archive/politics/1978/10/25/war-in-vietnam-started-13-year-spiral-of-prices/e b322c1f-d1a2-4e40-bfbd-bccae51a9efc/>.

⁷⁸ Sarah Almukhtar, Rod Nordland, "What Did the U.S. Get for \$2 Trillion in Afghanistan", The New York Times, December 9, 2019, <https://www.nytimes.com/interactive/2019/12/09/world/middleeast/afghanistan-war-cost.html>; Costs of War Project, Watson Institute for International and Public Affairs, <https://watson.brown.edu/costsofwar/figures/2021/BudgetaryCosts>

U.S. military spending from the post- 9/11 wars could have provided health care coverage through adulthood and two years of early education for 13 million U.S. children living below the poverty line, public college scholarships for 28 million students, 20 years of health care coverage for 1 million veterans, and 10 years'worth of salaries for 4 million clean energy industry workers.⁷⁹

—**Credit crisis**

The U.S. military has a history of resorting to deception and falsehoods to justify the initiation and extension of wars, from the "Gulf of Tonkin" incident to the fabrication of weapons of mass destruction in Iraq, and from the "Pentagon Papers" to the "Afghanistan Papers."

Moreover, the U.S. military is accustomed to concealing the truth when it comes to the various atrocities committed by it in foreign conflicts such

⁷⁹ David Vine, *The United States of War: A Global History of America's Endless Conflicts*, from Columbus to the Islamic State, Oakland, California: University of California Press, 2020, preface.

as the No Gun Ri massacre during the Korean War, the My Lai massacre during the Vietnam War, the abuse of prisoners during the Iraq War, and the indiscriminate killing of innocent civilians by drones during the so-called "War on Terror."

As a result of its successive lies and deceptions, the credibility of the United States continues to erode.

Nicholas Burns, the current U.S. ambassador to China and a former professor at Harvard University, acknowledged in 2010 that the war in Iraq was a strategic misjudgment and the single greatest blow to its power and prestige since the Vietnam War, adding that Abu Ghraib prison and Guantanamo Bay prison did lasting damage to America's reputation among more than 1 billion Muslims worldwide.⁸⁰

⁸⁰ Nicholas Burns, "Iraq War Damaged US Credibility", The Boston Globe, December 21, 2011, <https://www.bostonglobe.com/opinion/editorials/2011/12/21/iraq-war-damaged-credibility/CU9B64xgfdGGhzG8NTWqJL/story.html>.

A poll released by the Pew Research Center in 2019 showed that the international reputation of the United States has declined significantly from 2013 to 2018, with foreigners who view U.S. power and influence as a serious threat rising from 25 percent in 2013 to 45 percent in 2018.⁸¹

The U.S. military hegemony of starting wars and invading other countries has created and strengthened extremist groups, to the detriment of its own security situation.

The 9/11 attacks in 2001 are a typical example, causing the death of nearly 3,000 people in the worst domestic terrorist attack in U.S. history.

Following the 9/11 attacks, the United States has invoked the term "war on terror" to justify its interventions and exertion of military hegemony, which has resulted in the development of extremist

⁸¹ More people around the world see U.S. power and influence as a 'major threat' to their country, Pew Research Center, <https://www.pewresearch.org/fact-tank/2019/02/14/more-people-around-the-world-see-u-s-power-and-influence-as-a-major-threat-to-their-country/>.

groups like ISIS and instability in many regions.

At the same time, these actions have backfired on the United States itself, as evidenced by the 2012 attack on the U.S. consulate in Benghazi, the 2013 Boston Marathon bombing, and the New York City truck attack in 2017.

—**Divided society**

The prolonged foreign wars have also exacerbated domestic unrest in the United States. During the Vietnam War, the casualties and atrocities committed by the U.S. military in Vietnam, as well as the U.S. government's conscription and tax increases, caused strong anti-war sentiment and distrust of the government at home. In May 1970, the Ohio National Guard shot at students who were protesting against the Vietnam War at Kent State University in Ohio, resulting in four students being killed and nine others injured, which is considered a symbol of the deep political and social divisions that existed in the United States during

the Vietnam War. Harry Haldeman, then White House Chief of Staff, later said that this incident was a turning point for then President Richard Nixon and the beginning of his Watergate scandal.⁸²

Nearly half a century later, with U.S. constitutional freedoms violated by legislation and intelligence work, the U.S.-led so-called "war on terror" has led to the erosion of basic social and political rights domestically while the militarization of the U.S. police also increased significantly after the 9/11 attacks. During the two-decade war on terror, U.S. law enforcement departments have acquired a significant amount of military weapons and surveillance equipment from the military, which has led to changes in law enforcement's organizational culture, training, and tactics, as well as a rift in the relationship of trust between law enforcement officers and the public, and a correlation between U.S.

⁸² Harry Haldeman, Joseph DiMona, *The Ends of Power*, New York: NYT Times Books, 1978, p. 107.

police officers' access to military equipment and their use of force has also been noted.⁸³

Moreover, according to the Costs of War project, the U.S. government may continue to increase inequality in U.S. society by borrowing trillions of dollars to pay for the war while cutting taxes.⁸⁴

Stephen Walt, a professor of international relations at Harvard University, argues that the connection between U.S. "imperialistic ventures" abroad and domestic turmoil cannot be ignored. Through its "endless wars" abroad, the United States has unleashed a series of political forces such as militarism, strengthened executive power, xenophobia, pseudo-patriotism, and demagoguery, all of which run counter to the civic morality upon which a healthy democracy relies.⁸⁵

⁸³ Rashawn Ray, "How 9/11 helped to militarize American law enforcement", The Brookings Institution, September 9, 2021, <https://www.brookings.edu/articles/how-9-11-helped-to-militarize-american-law-enforcement/>.

⁸⁴ Costs of War Project, Watson Institute for International and Public Affairs, <https://watson.brown.edu/costsofwar/costs/social>

⁸⁵ Stephen Walt, "America's Forever Wars Have Come Back Home", Foreign Policy, March 3, 2021, <https://foreignpolicy.com/2021/03/03/americas-forever-wars-have-come-back-home/>.

Conclusion

The United States of America was founded in war, expanded in war, and gained hegemony in war.

Over the past 240 years since its independence, the United States, with its deeply rooted imperial ideology, has transformed itself from an isolated country in a corner of North America into a global military hegemony and gained dominance in a unipolar world through wars and military expansions, including but not limited to the Mexican-American War, Spanish-American War, World War I, World War II, and the Cold War.

Thus the United States has built an American-style democracy, or "Ameri-cracy" upon a foundation of hegemony and bullying other countries.

The United States has never been satisfied with its dominant position and has spared no effort in seeking to expand its military hegemony. Its

actions were motivated not only by capitalism's natural greed for expansion and profit, but also by its ambition and paranoid quest for power, as well as manipulation via domestic politics and interest groups.

For an extended period, the United States has used starting or intervening in wars and building a global network of military bases as overt means, and the alliance system and U.S.-dominated world order as implicit means to maintain its global military hegemony. When the situation changes, it applies new models, technologies and concepts to prevent any potential challenger from overturning the U.S. hegemony.

Facts have proved that the U.S. military hegemony of bullying and domineering poses severe dangers to the world. Presenting unprecedented challenges to human society, it could not foster peace and security, but only create war and disaster; it could not bring equality and freedom, but only

slavery and oppression; it could not offer development and cooperation, but only cause conflicts and division.

The world today is going through profound changes unseen in a century, while the United States is still expanding its military hegemony, bringing instability and harm to our shared future.