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ON THE TYPES OF BALANCING BEHAVIOR

by

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Additionally, the presence of nuclear weapons provides small states with the ability to balance against great powers. This may lead them to abandon their traditional reliance on alliances with great powers as the primary means for providing for their security.

The European states system in the period 1856-1878 is used as a case study. Findings suggest that those states with the capability to balance internally do so. Using that knowledge, it is predicted that in the current era internal balancing will also be apparent, with the proliferation of weapons of mass destruction as a consequence.

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ON THE TYPES OF BALANCING BEHAVIOR

by

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ABSTRACT

The structure of the international system underwent a fundamental change with the end of the cold war. The shift from bipolarity to multipolarity has loosened many of the constraints on the balancing behavior of the states that make up that system. Using neorealist theory, this paper examines the balancing choices of states in a multipolar world. Neorealism is clear in suggesting that under bipolarity, the great powers' balancing choice was inclined toward internal balancing—the development of one's own economic or military power. In a multipolar system, however, great powers will have greater opportunities for external balancing—allying with other powers.

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EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

The structure of the international system underwent a fundamental change with the end of the cold war. The shift from bipolarity to multipolarity has loosened many of the constraints on the balancing behavior of the states that make up that system. This paper uses neorealist theory to attempt to predict whether the states in a multipolar system are more likely to balance via internal (developing military and/or economic capability) or external (forming or strengthening existing alliances or weakening those of an opponent) methods. Neorealist theory is clear in suggesting that under bipolarity, the great powers' balancing choices are principally oriented toward internal balancing—the development of one's own economic or military power. In a multipolar system, however, great powers will once again have increased opportunities for external balancing—forming or strengthening existing alliances or weakening those of an opponent.

While neorealist theory joins other balance of power theories in predicting that systemic factors will drive states to balance against power rather than bandwagoning with it, there has not been any clear statement concerning that choice. Using neorealist theory, this paper develops hypotheses concerning the balancing choices of states in a multipolar world. Additionally, as the presence of nuclear weapons provides smaller powers the ability to balance the great powers efficiently and effectively, it is suggested that this may lead

smaller powers to abandon their traditional reliance on alliances as the primary means for providing for their security.

Structural theory holds that international political outcomes are not determined by what a state is like but rather by the constraining and disposing force of the system on the units. The structure of the system is taken to be that of anarchy—the absence of a central authority which states are obligated to obey. The condition of anarchy suggests that the primary goal of states is achieving their own security, and that the use of force is an option for achieving that goal. States are therefore concerned not only about their own power, but about the level of that power relative to other states in the system. The actions taken by states to preserve their security and relative position result in the formation of balances of power.

The European states system in the period 1856-1878 is used as a case study. That period was selected for its similarity to the current era. In both cases the structure which had constrained the actions of the great powers in those systems has undergone a significant change. In the nineteenth century this re-structuring was do to the breakup of the Concert System, whose end was signalled by the Crimean War. In the current era the restructuring of the system is the result of the end of the cold war—punctuated by the dissolution of the Soviet Union. Both cases also find a single predominant power (Great Britain and the United States, respectively) within an array of great powers whose balancing choices will have a significant impact on its security.

Findings from the nineteenth century case suggest that great powers are sensitive to the non-economic costs of alliance: uncertainty, abandonment, entrapment and the loss of sovereignty. Accordingly, those states with the capability to balance internally are likely to eschew alliance. That a state could do so is related to its ability to provide for its own security by internal means.

Using that knowledge, it is predicted that in the current era internal balancing will also be prevalent. If states which possess the capability to provide reasonably for their own defense prefer to forego alliances, the implication is for a loosening of the current alliance structure which is a holdover form the bipolar era. In addition, the presence and probable proliferation of weapons of mass destruction provides the necessary means to achieve this internal balancing to an increasing number of states. An examination of those states which did not have security guarantees from one of the superpowers during the cold war shows that fifty percent of them either did or were suspected of trying to develop weapons of mass destruction. As a consequence, it is predicted that if states chose to balance against the hegemony of the United States acquisition of WMD will be one of the means by which they will do so. Structural factors may, however, be underdeterminate in the nuclear era, and other determinants of a state's security policy (domestic political factors, bureaucratic politics, the impact of international treaties or organization) may have primacy in a state's decision to develop or not to develop WMD.

I. INTRODUCTION

As long as there have been systems of states, those persons who have thought about international relations have recognized the tendency of the actors within those systems to form balances of power. Thucydides, for instance, writing in the fifth century BC, referred directly to the maintenance of such a balance between the Greek city-states as being among the main causes of the Peloponnesian War when he wrote "The growth in the power of Athens, and the alarm which this inspired in Lacedemon, made war inevitable."[1] Balance of power was similarly recognized by Machiavelli, Hobbes and Montesquieu, but "[these] writers themselves only nibbled at the edges of the subject,"[2] rather than systematizing or developing a full theory of it. Further attempts to do so were made, with varying degrees of success, by David Hume, A. F. Pollard, Edward Gulick, George Liska, and Hans J. Morgenthau, among others,[3] and yet, although the discourse was extensive, the subject remained elusive.

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[1]Thucydides. *History of the Peloponnesian War.* Translated by Crawley. New York: Modern Library, 1951. Book I, paragraph 24 [Chapter I, Modern Library edition, p. 15].

[2]Gulick, Edward Vose. *Europe's Classical Balance of Power.* Ithaca, NY: Cornell University Press, 1955. p. *vii.*

[3] David Hume (1742), "Of the Balance of Power,"in Charles W. Hendel (ed.), *David Hume's Political Essays* (Indianapolis: Bobbs-Merrill, 1953). A. F. Pollard,· "Balance of Power," *(Journal of the British Institute of International Affairs*, II [March 1923]). Edward Gulick, *op cit.* George Liska, *Nations in Alliance: The Limits of Interdependence* (Baltimore: Johns Hopkins Press, 1962). Hans J. Morgenthau, *Politics Among Nations* (New York: Knopf, 1948). See also Stanley Hoffman, *The State of War* (New York: Praeger, 1965), Morton Kaplan, *System and Process in International Politics* (New York: Wiley, 1957) and Richard Rosecrance, *Action and Reaction in World Politics* (Boston: Little, Brown, 1963).

One of the problems in balance of power theory lay in developing an adequate definition of the phenomenon. As A. F. Pollard noted, balance of power "may mean almost anything; and is used not only in different senses by different people, or in different senses by the same people at different times, but in different senses by the same person at the same time."[4] Hans J. Morgenthau, for instance, who devotes an entire section of his realist classic *Politics Among Nations* to the subject, defines it in four ways: " . . . (1) as a policy aimed at a certain state of affairs, (2) as an actual state of affairs, (3) as an approximately equal distribution of power, (4) as any distribution of power."[5] The inability to define the term coherently meant that "Morgenthau was unable to create a consistent and convincing theory."[6]

A leading theory in international relations today is neorealism, particularly those ideas put forth by Kenneth N. Waltz in *Theory of International Politics*.[7] In his work he explicitly attempts to "cut through" the "confusion" surrounding this issue.[8] "If

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[4] quoted in Gulick, p. *v*.

[5] Morgenthau, p. 167*n*.

[6] Keohane, Robert O., ed. *Neorealism and its Critics*. New York: Columbia University Press, 1986. p. 13.

[7] Although Waltz's work is a landmark, it is not without critics. See Robert O. Keohane, ed. *Neorealism and its Critics*. (New York: Columbia University Press, 1986). Barry Buzan, Charles Jones and Richard Little develop a theory of structural realism in *The Logic of Anarchy: Neorealism to Structural Realism* (New York: Columbia University Press, 1993) which, although it uses Waltz as a jumping off point, comes to somewhat different conclusions.

[8] Waltz, Kenneth N. *Theory of International Politics*. New York: Random House, 1979. p. 117.

there is any distinctively political theory of international politics," Waltz writes, "balance of power theory is it."[9] Waltz, by focusing on the "competitive, anarchic nature of world politics as a whole,"[10] develops his theory based on the international **system** rather than on the character or motivations of the actors within it. His central arguments are based on the structure of the system and both the constraints which it imposes on those actors and the affect of the interactions of the units on that structure. Waltz uses this framework of systems and structure to develop a theory of balance of power which "will account for the recurrent formation of balances of power in world politics, and tell us how changing power configurations affect patterns of alignments and conflict in world politics."[11]

Perhaps the most important concept associated with this, as with any other, theory of balance of power is that of balancing itself. The theory holds that states will "behave in ways that result in balances forming,"[12] and that such behavior can take the form of either internal (increasing a state's own economic or military capability) or external (strengthening or enlarging one's own alliance or weakening the opposing one) efforts. Although Waltz's theory represents a significant enhancement of the concept of balance of power, it has a shortcoming in that it does not offer substantive hypotheses about which method of balancing a state will adopt or why.

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[9] Ibid.

[10] Keohane, p. 13.

[11] Ibid, p. 15.

[12] Waltz, 1979. p. 125.

A. PURPOSE

"The fundamental problem of international relations in the contemporary world," writes Robert Gilpin, " is the problem of peaceful adjustment to the consequences of the uneven growth of power among states, just as it was in the past."[13] He goes on to say that "Throughout history the primary means of resolving the disequilibrium between the structure of the international system and the redistribution of power has been war. . . "[14] The world now finds itself in a period that may be characterized in that way. The unification of Germany, the increasing economic power of Japan, the economic potential of China, and the dissolution of the Soviet Union—leaving the United States as the system's only superpower—are all indicators of just such an uneven growth of power and of dis-equilibrium in the system. A clearer understanding of the response of states to these obstacles would play an important role not only in the determination of policy, but in the preservation of peaceful relations among them. The leading theory of international politics does not, however, offer an adequate tool for understanding of those responses.

The purposes of this paper are to address that shortcoming and to attempt to fill that *lacuna* in neorealist theory. It will do so by examining the major works of neorealism in order to determine which method of balancing states are likely to employ in an anarchic, multipolar system. Specifically, the goals are to (1) try to

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[13] Gilpin, Robert. *War and Change in World Politics.* Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1981. p. 180.

[14] Ibid., p. 197.

make a contribution to international relations theory in an area which may not have received adequate attention, and (2) try to enhance the usefulness of international relations theory as a policy tool in a period during which the international system is in a state of flux.

B. RESEARCH METHODS AND PROCEDURES

The methodology for this work is straightforward. It begins with an examination of neorealist theory and its predictions about the behavior of states. Its dominant conclusions about balance of power and balancing behavior are drawn out from this theoretical investigation and discussed. Hypotheses are then generated based on this examination of the theory which, it is hoped, will more completely explain the balancing behavior of the actors in the system. Those hypotheses will then be tested against an historical case which, as discussed below, should provide a rigorous test of them. Appropriate conclusions will be drawn and applied to an examination of the post-cold war international system with a view toward predicting the behavior of the states which make up that system.

The principal historical data will be an investigation of the actions of the European powers in relation to Great Britain—the predominant power during the mid-nineteenth century—in the period from the end of the Crimean War, seen as marking the end of an effective "Concert System" on the continent[15], and the Berlin

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[15] By Gordon Craig, among others. See "The System of Alliances and the Balance of Power" in *The New Cambridge Modern History,* Vol. 10. *The Zenith of European Power, 1830-70*, J. P. T. Bury, ed. (Cambridge, 1960, p. 267).

Conference of 1878 which achieved a settlement of the Russo-Turkish conflict of 1877-78. The second area of inquiry will be the actions of rising powers relative to, and the responses of, the United States in the post-cold war era. Nominally beginning with the opening of the Berlin Wall in 1989, the case will focus on current events as well as offer prediction about future ones. The central questions are: (1) Which of the hypotheses provides the greatest explanatory power for the balancing behavior of states? and (2) Are there conditions which can be identified which affect which type of behavior is to be expected (i. e., which hypothesis is most likely to apply)?[16]

1. Theory

The primary body of theory will be, as discussed above, that of neorealism—more fully discussed in Chapter II. The major advance from traditional realist thinking is the concept of structure and the use of structural effects to explain the actions of the actors within the system. Hypotheses will be based on neorealist theory, primarily that postulated by Waltz, as well as that of the security dilemma, collective goods, theories of alliance formation and the changes wrought by nuclear weapons.

Waltz's refinement of balance of power theory leaves out a critical element. Although he states that balancing may occur either internally or externally, he shows little theoretical preference for either. That does not mean, of course, that the issue does not receive any attention—it does. It is not, however, fully developed. The

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[16] These same questions are asked by Stephen M. Walt concerning his hypotheses in *The Origins of Alliances*, p. 11.

prevalence of internal balancing in a bipolar world is noted and in fact it is this internal balancing which allows Waltz to maintain that balance of power theory applies in a system dominated by fewer than three powers.[17] Waltz also discusses the implications of external balancing extensively and generates hypotheses about whether states will join weaker or stronger coalitions. His omission of similar in depth discussion of the choice between internal and external balance perhaps shows favoritism toward the external but does so without theoretical grounding.[18] Now that the bipolarity of the cold war has passed, however, the question of internal vs. external balancing needs to be revisited.[19] This is particularly important for the United States. As the preeminent power among the world's actors, it should find itself the one against which most of this balancing should occur.[20]

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[17] Waltz, 1979. p. 118.

[18] Waltz, 1979. pp. 126-127 and 164-165.

[19] That the system is no longer bipolar is a view held by many, but not by Waltz himself. Waltz maintains that "bipolarity endures, but in an altered state. Bipolarity continues because militarily Russia can take care of itself and because no other great powers have yet emerged." ("The Emerging Structure of International Politics," *International Security*, 18:2, p. 52) Samuel Huntington characterizes the world as "uni-multipolar" with the US as the sole superpower in the company of six other major powers. ("America's Changing Strategic Interests," *Survival*, 33:1, p. 6) Christopher Layne characterizes the system as unipolar, but warns of the rise of other great powers in "The Unipolar Illusion: Why New Great Powers Will Rise," *International Security*, 17:4, pp. 5-51.

[20] A point argued by Christopher Layne in "The Unipolar Illusion," where he writes: "states balance against hegemons, even those like the United States that seek to maintain their preeminence by employing strategies based more on benevolence than coercion." (p. 7).

Other balance of power theorists have focused on the external balance —primarily the formation of opposing coalitions—perhaps because the phenomenon is more readily observable and quantifiable. Stephen M. Walt, for instance, states in *The Origins of Alliances* that "When confronted by a significant external threat, states may either balance or bandwagon. *Balancing* is defined as allying with others against the prevailing threat; *bandwagoning* refers to alignment with the source of danger."[21] Admittedly his work is about alliances, but it is curious that the idea of internal balancing has been removed altogether by his definition.[22]

Nuclear weapons also will play an important role in determining the actions of states. Their introduction provides a radically new method for internal balancing. Here states have a new opportunity to provide for their own security which is relatively cost-effective. As Waltz points out, nuclear weapons "make estimating the strategic strength of nations a simple task, and make balancing easy to do."[23] Under the bipolar alliance structure, nuclear weapons were less necessary due to the nuclear guarantees provided by the superpowers. The breakup of that structure should not only increase their desirability but also their obtainability as more weapons-grade

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[21] Walt, Stephen M. *The Origins of Alliances*. Ithaca, NY: Cornell University Press, 1987. p. 17.

[22] A criticism also leveled by Glenn H. Snyder, "Alliances, Balance and Stability, *International Organization*, 45:1 (Winter 1991), pp. 121-142. Snyder writes that "A fully developed theory of alliances would have to deal with choices between alliances and other means to security . . . ." (p. 128).

[23] Waltz, Kenneth N. "The Emerging Structure of World Politics," *International Security*, Vol. 18, No. 2 (Fall 1993), p. 74. Also see Waltz's *The Spread of Nuclear Weapons: More May Be Better*. Adelphi Papers, No. 171. London, IISS, 1981.

material becomes more available, as the technical means for weapons production diffuses, and as the constraining influence of the superpower "parent states" wane. The impact of nuclear weapons on balancing will be discussed more fully in Chapters IV and V.

2. Cases

Criteria for case selection included both relevance and rigor. Relevance in the current case is self-evident. The answers to questions about what actions, if any, states will take to balance American predominance in the international system may have far-reaching consequences for the United States and for the system as a whole. In the historical case, relevance derives from the similarities of that era to the current one, of which there are several.

Britain had by around 1860 probably "reached its zenith in relative terms,"[24] and so faced the re-ordering of its system over the ensuing decades as both the predominant power of its era and, as hindsight shows, as a power in relative decline. The United States also has passed its apogee in terms of relative power, although history has yet to bear out any ultimate decline.[25] Despite that observation, both

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[24] Paul Kennedy. *The Rise and Fall of Great Powers*. New York: Random House, 1987. p. 151.

[25] I refer here to the fact that the US share of world economic production is no longer near the peak values achieved in the decades following the Second World War. Paul Kennedy show that as late as 1960 the United States still accounted for 26% of the Gross World Product, while by 1980 this figure had fallen to 21.5%. (Kennedy. *Rise and Fall of the Great Powers*, New York: Random House, 1987. p. 436.) As Prof. John Arquilla has pointed out to me, however, the magnitude of the recent Soviet/

countries are predominantly economic powers, although the US adds unquestionable military potential to the equation. For Britain in the period in question however ". . . the size of [its] economy in the world was not reflected in the country's fighting power."[26] In addition, the power of Great Britain, in many ways like that of the United States, rested in no small part on "its insular position, . . . ,industrial and commercial preeminence, fiscal strength, and an unchallenged and inexpensive paramountcy in many areas of the world. . . ."[27]

Tough testing stems from choosing cases where balancing behavior ought to be prevalent. In order to meet this test a case was chosen where one power predominated in the international system, and where the old ordering principle had been recently abandoned. "A structure," according to Waltz, "is defined by the arrangement of its parts. Only changes of arrangement are structural change."[28] The ordering principle of the current system has changed from bipolarity to one of multipolarity. The nineteenth century case, while multipolar both before and after the Crimean War, also underwent a structural change and should show active balancing behavior as the Concert System, which had governed relations among the great

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Russian reverses may have outweighed any U. S. decline, resulting in a relative *increase* in U. S. security.

[26] Kennedy, 1987. p. 153.

[27] Paul Schroeder. "Historical Reality vs. Neo-realist Theory," *International Security*, Vol. 19, No. 1 (Summer 1994). p. 145. Schroeder, however, argues on the whole *against* the idea of a British hegemony during this period.

[28] Waltz, 1979. p. 80.

powers for the previous four decades, broke down. It should prove useful to examine the behavior of states in a historic multipolar structure to predict actions in the emerging structure.

Limiting the period of the historical study (in addition to making the problem somewhat more tractable) contributes to this study in part because of the **lack** of great power warfare (although there were four wars fought between the great powers in the period—Franco-Austrian War of 1859, Austro-Prussian War of 1866, Franco-Prussian War of 1870, Russo-Turkish War of 1877).[29] That is, it is not surprising to observe states both making preparations for war and forming alliances when a major war is on the immediate horizon as such a war could threaten the very existence of the state. Although, as Waltz wrote, "Among states, the state of nature is a state of war,"[30] what states do in the absence of a direct and unmistakable threat to their sovereignty is perhaps more revealing about the general behavior of states. Avoiding the decades immediately prior to the First World War should remove the bias which might result from states acting to balance against imminent threat, rather than simply against potential ones. Given the reduced danger of superpower conflict following the dissolution of the Soviet Union conclusions drawn from the nineteenth century should be revealing. Although violence among and within states has not been curtailed by the end of the cold war, and may have been in some cases encouraged by it, it is

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[29] Although Turkey was no longer a great power in 1877 I classify the conflict as a great power war due to the intervention of the other powers at the Berlin Congress to prevent Russian control of the Straits.

[30] Ibid. p. 102. an idea expressed earlier by Thomas Hobbes.

generally accepted that the threat of "great power" war has, for the time being receded.

Of course, given the length of history and the consequent number of choices available, one case can hardly serve as an adequate test of the ideas here presented. The case will, however, provide several "mini-cases" as the reactions of several states to nineteenth century British predominance will be examined. It is hoped that they will shed light both on the merits and the faults of what is predicted in the discussion of the current era.

a. Britain and the European Powers: 1856-1878

To test a theory of balance of power against a case of Europe in the nineteenth century may at first appear less useful, as the period is sometimes viewed as being the height of the balance of power. Given that, it should not therefore, not be surprising to find out that balancing occurs in a balance of power system. For the purposes of this investigation, however, a period in which there is plenty of balancing to observe is appropriate. Observing the operation of "balance-of-power theory during the era of its greatest popularity and most general application"[31] will increase the number of opportunities to see by what means states balanced. Additionally, by focusing the investigation on the decades following the Crimean War, which event effectively signalled the end of the Concert System in Europe, the balancing should be even more predominant as states attempted to restore or renew the balance

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[31] Gulick, p. *viii*.

among them. As an indication of that sort of balancing behavior, William L. Langer writes of the period, "Among other preparations statesmen began to devote themselves more and more to the business of finding allies, and alliances came to be the accepted thing in international relations. . . . the great coalitions of modern history were almost always made just before the outbreak of war or during the course of the conflict itself. There are few instances of alliances which extended over long periods of years and were based upon written agreements which specified in detail what should be done in certain contingencies."[32] Yet during this period they were being made.

Secondly, the case is of interest from the perspectives of both historical investigation and contemporary problems. During the period in question, Great Britain found itself as both the predominant power in the system and in danger of losing that position as its relative power eroded. Balancing against a larger power should be most evident when that power is preponderant, or hegemonic. Concomitantly, the putative hegemon, were it to perceive its relative decline, would also be likely to engage in balancing behavior in order to arrest or reverse this decline as well as to answer the challenge of rising powers.[33]

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[32] William L. Langer. *European Alliances and Alignments 1871-1890.* New York: Knopf, 1956. pp. 5-6.

[33] Robert Gilpin, for instance, suggests that the hegemon's "first and most attractive option . . . is to eliminate the source of the problem" by launching a preventative war while it still possesses a military advantage. *War and Change in World Politics*, p. 191.

b. The United States in the Post-Cold War World

The second area of inquiry, focusing on the post-cold war era, while not providing the advantage of historical perspective is self-evidently rich with relevance. As it had when the Crimean War ended the effective functioning of the Concert System, the system which was characterized above all by the bipolarity engendered by the superpower standoff and which had governed the actions of the states of which it was made up has undergone a radical change. This restructuring is even more important than the striving for balances following the breakup of the Concert of Europe because it more clearly indicates a *systemic* change. Waltz writes that "[a]narchic systems are transformed only by changes in organizing principle and by consequential changes in the number of their principle parties."[34] A consequential change is one where the change in the number of actors significantly changes expectations about the way they will behave.[35] The international system of states, despite changes in the actors, had been multipolar from its inception until the end of the Second World War. Bipolarity then prevailed, bringing in a different set of assumptions. The eclipse of Soviet power has left the United States as the predominant power in a world which is once again re-ordering itself with the future form, whether uni- or multipolar remains unknown. The form of any future system will be determined by the actions taken by these actors in the coming years. Will the United States take steps to consolidate its hegemonic position, or is this indeed

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[34] Waltz, 1979. p. 161.

[35] Ibid. pp. 161-162.

possible? Or will the future see the rise of other "great powers," either as individual states or in coalition against the predominant power of the United States?

Clausewitz wrote that, "Theory should be study, not doctrine,"[36] and it is in this spirit that this investigation is undertaken. It is not intended to answer specific policy questions, whether for the United States or any other nation. Nevertheless, Jervis holds that "We cannot make sense out of our environment without assuming that, in some sense, the future will resemble the past."[37] Therefore it is hoped that this investigation will ask some pertinent questions and arrive at some conclusions from the examination of past history which may help guide future policy-makers.

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[36] Carl von Clausewitz. *On War.* Trans. and ed. by Michael Howard and Peter Paret. Princeton: Princeton University Press, 1976. Book II, Chapter 2, p. 141.

[37] Robert Jervis. *Perception and Misperception in International Politics*, Princeton: Princeton University Press, 1976. p. 217.

II. NEOREALISM

A prominent theoretical framework for understanding international relations has long been that provided by realism, whose basic assumptions are: "(1) states (or city states) are the key units of action; (2) they seek power, either as an end in itself or as a means to other ends; and (3) they behave in ways that are, by and large, rational, and therefore comprehensible to outsiders in rational terms."[38] While a useful interpretive framework, "these premises do not, by themselves, constitute the basis for a science."[39] Kenneth Waltz goes far toward bridging that shortcoming with his development of structural, or neorealism, particularly in his *Theory of International Politics,* which "is generally considered a major advance on the classical version of Hans Morgenthau and others."[40] The main proposition of structural realism is that broad outcomes of international politics can be best understood as resulting from

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[38] Keohane, *Neorealism and Its Critics,* p. 7.

[39] Ibid.

[40] Paul Schroeder, "Historical Reality vs. Neo-realist Theory," *International Security*, Vol. 19, No. 1 (Summer 1994). p. 108. The standard work of classical realism is Morgenthau, *Politics Among Nations: The Struggle for Power and Peace* (New York: Knopf, 1948). Other neorealist works by Waltz include *Man, the State and War: A Theoretical Analysis* (New York: Columbia University Press, 1959); "The Origins of War in Neorealist Theory," in Robert I. Rotberg and Theodore K. Rabb, eds. *The Origin and Prevention of Major Wars* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1989), pp. 39-52; and "The Stability of a Bipolar World," *Daedalus*, Vol. 93, No. 3 (1964), pp. 881-909. Other applications of realist and neorealist theory can be found in Stephen M. Walt, *The Origins of Alliances* (Ithaca, N. Y.: Cornell University Press, 1987); Barry R. Posen, *The Sources of Military Doctrine: France, Great Britain and Germany Between the World Wars* (Ithaca, N. Y.: Cornell University Press, 1984); and Robert Gilpin, *War and Change in World Politics* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1981).

structural constraints imposed on the states by the states system rather than from unit behavior.[41] A structural approach leads one to different assumptions about the functioning of the units and the system than those of classical realism, discussed below. Understanding the nature of the system of which the states are members leads one to greater understanding of their actions within that system. Structure is not, of course, the sole determinant of the actions of states in the system. Other writers have emphasized the primacy of domestic political structures, interests and institutions in driving security policy.[42] This paper, however, focuses only on the structural aspects. A review of the main ideas underlying neorealist theory is necessary to understand the conclusions that it reaches and on which this work is based.

A. STRUCTURE AND THE STATES SYSTEM

"Most studies that we call 'international relations'," as Robert Jervis notes, "are really studies of foreign policies, analyzing as they do the causes of an individual

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[41] Schroeder, 1994. p. 108.

[42] A variety of approaches to defense and foreign policymaking have stressed the importance of domestic factors. This evidence is especially strong in the literature on bureaucratic politics, pioneered by Graham T. Allison, *Essence of Decision: Explaining the Cuban Missile Crisis* (Boston: Little, Brown and Company, 1971) and Morton Halperin, *Bureaucratic Politics and Foreign Policy* (Washington DC: Brookings institution, 1974.) More recently, a number of writers have examined US defense policymaking form the standpoint of electoral politics and other American government perspectives. See Daniel Wirls *Buildup: The Politics of Defense in the Reagan Era* (Ithaca, NY: Cornell University Press, 1992). For another classic assessment of domestic influences on foreign policy, see James N. Rosenau, ed., *Domestic Sources of Foreign Policy* (New York: The Free Press, 1967).

state's actions. There is nothing wrong with this, but focusing upon the international system and patterns of interaction can be equally illuminating."[43] Neorealism is a systems, or third-image theory. A systems theory, as opposed to a reductionist one, holds that international-political outcomes are not determined by what states are like but rather by the constraining and disposing force of the system on the units.[44] Or, as Robert Powell describes it, "[i]n a situation entailing strategic interdependence, such as that of the great powers, an actor's optimal strategy depends on the other actors' strategies."[45] The system in question—the international states system—is composed of both the interacting units, in this case the states, and its structure. The structure, in turn, is defined by its ordering principle, the functional differentiation or non-differentiation of the units, and by the distribution of capabilities across the units.[46]

Ordering principles can be either anarchical or hierarchical. The ordering principle of the international system in neorealism is assumed to be that of *anarchy*.[47]

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[43] Robert Jervis, "Systems Theories and Diplomatic History," in Paul Gordon Lauren, ed. *Diplomacy: New Approaches in History, Theory and Policy* (New York: Free Press, 1979) p. 212.

[44] Waltz, 1979. pp. 61-72.

[45] Robert Powell, "Anarchy in International Relations Theory: The Neorealist-Neoliberal Debate," *International Organization*, Vol. 48, No. 2 (Spring 1994). p. 315.

[46] Waltz, 1979. pp. 100-101.

[47] There are, of course, also hierarchy-oriented theories of international relations. Gilpin suggests a theory of hegemonic transition in *War and Change in World Politics*, while others have suggested "long cycles," and "cycles of leadership" as structural systems. Even in power transition worlds, however, balancing plays an important role.

The condition of anarchy is one in which the realm is formally unorganized. That is, there is an absence of central rule and "[n]o one by virtue of authority is *entitled* to command; no one, in turn, is *obligated* to obey."[48] Robert Art and Robert Jervis expand and clarify the concept by writing that "[s]tates can make commitments and treaties, but no sovereign power ensures compliance and punishes deviations. This—the absence of a supreme power—is what is meant by the anarchic environment of international politics."[49]

The problem with the assumption of anarchy, as Waltz says, is "how to conceive of an order without an orderer and of organizational effects where formal organization is lacking."[50] It can, however, be done by making an assumption about the basic motivation of the units within the structure. This basic assumption of classical realism is that the primary motivation of states is the quest for power in an absolute sense. Joseph Grieco, however, holds that "[g]iven its understanding of anarchy, [structural] realism argues that individual well-being is not the key interest of states; instead, it finds that *survival* is their core interest."[51] Ensuring their own

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[48] John Gerard Ruggie, "Continuity and Transformation in the World Polity," in Robert O. Keohane, ed. *Neorealism and Its Critics* (New York: Columbia University Press, 1986) p. 134.

[49] Robert Art and Robert Jervis. *International Politics*. (Boston: Little, Brown, 1973) p. 1.

[50] Waltz, 1979. p. 89.

[51] Joseph M. Grieco, "Anarchy and the Limits of Cooperation: A Realist Critique of the Newest Liberal Institutionalism," *International Organizations*, Vol. 42, No. 3 (Summer 1988), p. 498.

survival underlies the search for power. Taking that survival as a basic motive leads to different assumptions being derived. The survival motive is a useful one because it allows one to then construct a theory which "important consequences" can be inferred.[52] Survival is also the prerequisite for a state to achieve any other aim which it might have, and therefore can be seen as the basic motivation. The organizational effects which derive from the necessity of survival under the condition of anarchy are, then, *self-help* and the preference for *relative* over *absolute gains*.

B. SELF-HELP

Because there exists no central authority states are required to provide for their own interests as best they can—the familiar idea of self-help. As Waltz says, "[t]o achieve their objectives and maintain their security, units in a condition of anarchy—be they people, corporations, states, or whatever—must rely on the means they can generate and the arrangements they can make for themselves. Self-help is necessarily the principle of action in an anarchic order."[53] It may not be clear why this must be so. If, as Waltz says, ". . . the condition of insecurity—at the least, the uncertainty of each about the other's future intentions and actions—works against [the states'] cooperation,"[54] how *exactly* does the structure of the system constrain states from seeking the mutual benefits could be achieved through cooperation?

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[52] Waltz, 1979, p. 91.

[53] Waltz, 1979, p. 111.

[54] Ibid., p. 105.

Although "[n]ations could mutually enrich themselves by further dividing not just the labor that goes into the production of goods but also some of the other tasks they perform, such as political management and military defense, . . . [t]he structure of international politics limits the cooperation of states in two ways."[55] First, "each of the units spends a portion of its effort, not in forwarding its own good, but in providing the means of protecting itself against others."[56] Second, "A state also worries lest it become dependent on others through cooperative endeavors and exchanges of goods and services."[57]

That is, lacking the constraint of a central authority, states must first be concerned with not only their own gains but must sacrifice some absolute economic gain in deference to relative gains by potential opponents. Additionally, they must give up some of the benefits of cooperation because specialization may lead to vulnerabilities such as a dependence on foreign materials or goods. States are thus reduced to self-help in matters of security. Note especially that these fears do not arise from any particular set of circumstances, or against another particular state, but from the basic scarcity of security in the international system.

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[55] Ibid.

[56] Ibid.

[57] Ibid., p. 106.

C. ABSOLUTE AND RELATIVE GAINS

The question of absolute vs. relative gains is an important one for neorealist theory. Traditional realist theory, as mentioned at the beginning of this chapter, holds that the primary motivation of states is the acquisition of power. The natural extension of this idea is that states will attempt to maximize their power. Neorealism posits that the quest for survival is the basic motivation of states and that power is only one of the means of achieving that end; an assumption that would make states sensitive to *relative* gains rather than absolute ones. This proposition can be demonstrated either negatively, by showing that states do **not** seek to maximize their power under ordinary conditions, or positively by showing how the question of relative gains relate to their security.

Robert Keohane states the first (negative) argument best when he writes:

> States concerned with self-preservation do not seek to maximize their power when they are not in danger. On the contrary, they recognize a trade-off between aggrandizement and self-preservation; they realize that a relentless search for universal domination may jeopardize their own autonomy. They moderate their efforts when their positions are secure. Conversely, they intensify their efforts when danger arises, which assumes that they were not maximizing them under more benign conditions.[58]

By simply pointing out that states generally are capable of producing more power, such as by mobilizing their economies for war, they are *de facto* not maximizing that power under normal circumstances.

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[58] Keohane, 1986. p. 174.

On the positive side, Waltz states his position directly: "In the anarchy of international politics relative gain is more important than absolute gain."[59] The structural causes of this superiority are related to their core interest in survival and the scarcity of security. The foundation of security for a state is the power of that state **relative** to that of the others, not the absolute value of that power. As Grieco puts it: "Driven by an interest in survival, states are acutely sensitive to any erosion of their relative capabilities, which are the ultimate basis for their security and independence in an anarchical, self-help international context."[60]

Robert Jervis reiterates the point:

> In international politics it is particularly true that wealth is not the primary national goal. Not only will states pay a high price to maintain their security, autonomy, and the spread of their values, but the calculus of economic benefit is affected by the international context. While economic theory argues that the actor should care only about how the outcome of an economic choice affects him, those who fear that they may have to fight need to worry about relative advantage as well as absolute gains[61]

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[59] Kenneth N. Waltz. *Man, the State, and War.* (New York: Columbia University Press, 1987) p. 198.

[60] Grieco, p. 498.

[61] Robert Jervis. "The Future of World Politics," *International Security*, Vol. 16, No. 3 (Winter 1991/92) p. 50. Jervis cites: Waltz, *Theory of International Politics*; Arthur Stein, "The Hegemon's Dilemma: Great Britain, the United States and the International Economic Order, *International Organization*, Vol. 38, No. 2 (Spring 1984), pp. 355-36; Jervis, "Realism, Game Theory, and Cooperation," *World Politics*, Vol. 40, No. 3 (April 1988), pp. 334-336; and Joseph Grieco, "Anarchy and the Limits of Cooperation: A Realist Critique of the Newest Liberal Institutionalism," *International Organizations*, Vol. 42, No. 3 (Summer 1988), pp. 485-507, among others.

One cannot simply be happy about a gain in power regardless of the gains of others, as one could be in the field of economics. The gains of others have far greater implications in matters of security than simply "keeping up with the Jones's" In an anarchic world the power of others may be used against you, and only your own power can prevent that eventuality. If the first's power doubles while the second's triples, the security position of the first has degraded no matter the size of the absolute gain.

Anarchic orders commit states to self-help. Given the primacy of security in a self-help system, what behavior should predominate among states in the international system? The answer given by structural realism, as stated by Fareed Zakaria, is that "[t]he logic of competition under anarchy suggests that states, jealous of their independence, will balance against a rising, threatening great power, rather than jump on its bandwagon."[62] The balancing is the dominant behavior is assumed by neorealism and it is taken as a given in this paper.[63] Balancing is the action states take in order to maintain their position in the system. No state can afford to let

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[62] Fareed Zakaria. "Is Realism Finished?" in *The National Interest*, No. 30 (Winter 1992/93). p. 23.

[63] That assumption is not, however, unchallenged. See John Arquilla, "Balances without Balancing," paper presented at the annual meeting of the American Political Science Association, Chicago, Illinois, September 1992. See also Paul Schroeder, "Historical Reality vs Neorealist Theory" (*International Security*, 19:1, Summer 1994, pp. 108-148); Randall Schweller, "Bandwagoning For Profit" (*International Security*, 19:1, Summer 1994, pp. 72-107); and Thomas J. Christenson and Jack Snyder, "Chain Gangs and Passed Bucks: Predicting Alliance Patterns in Multipolarity" (*International Organization*, 44:2, Spring 1990, pp. 137-168).

another actor develop a preponderance of power as such a preponderance is in and of itself threatening

Balancing behavior is the subject of the next chapter, and the method of balancing is the subject of Chapter IV. Also in Chapter IV, hypotheses will be developed about the relative efficacy of internal vs. external balancing behavior. Before turning to the central issue of balancing, it is probably necessary, however, to comment on which units of the system which are under consideration.

D. GREATER AND SMALLER POWERS

Although an effective theory encompasses all of the actors within the system, neorealism focuses on the actions and interactions of the great powers of the era under consideration. For neorealism, therefore, great powers become the key units of analysis not, as under classical realism, all the states or city-states. As Waltz puts it, "[t]he theory, like the story, of international politics is written in terms of the great powers of an era. This is the fashion among political scientists as among historians, but fashion does not reveal the reason lying behind the habit. In international politics, as in any self-help system, the units of greatest capability set the scene of action for others as well as for themselves. In systems theory, structure is a generative notion; and the structure is generated by the interactions of its principal parts."[64] If structure is

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[64] Waltz, 1979. p. 72. Robert Gilpin also writes that "In every international system the dominant powers in the international hierarchy of power and prestige organize and control the processes of interactions among the elements of the system." *War and Change in world Politics* (Cambridge: Cambridge Press, 1981) p. 29.

in part defined by the distribution of power, and the bulk of that power in concentrated in a few units, it makes sense to focus on those units in developing theory.

The lesser powers, of course, are not by their limited role in the development of the theory excluded from its tenets, but given that "the world is a large matrix of interactions in which most of the entries are very close to zero"[65] their impact is not as relevant as those of the great powers. Great powers, of course, interact with the lesser powers and "because it has commitments all over the world, a great power is at least slightly affected by most changes in relations of other states."[66] Even if the role of smaller powers has been somewhat limited they, too, exhibit balancing behavior and will be considered in the case studies. Because of the presence and probable proliferation of weapons of mass destruction, moreover, the impact of smaller powers on the international system as a whole is expected to be greater in the current era than it has historically been.

Rather than enter the argument about what constitutes power here, and who, therefore is a great power, I will (gratefully) rely on the work of others to determine which states will receive the focus of my attention. The first case study is that of Great Britain and the European powers in the period 1856-1878. In that period, six states receive the appellation of "great power." These are: Austria-Hungary, France,

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[65] Jervis, 1979. p. 215.

[66] Ibid.

Great Britain, Prussia, Russia and Italy.[67] International influence, in this period, was "still largely a function of [a state's] military power. But that, more than ever before, was now in turn a function of its economic maturity and financial strength."[68] Hence, this factors which go into this list are more readily measurable (and consequently more likely to be agreed upon) and shows the strong influence of the process of industrialization and the development of international trade.

The second "case"— the United States and the post-cold war world—is not as simply solved if for no other reason than the concept of power, never easily grasped, has become all the more elusive. Additionally, as the case is primarily projective, some states will be considered on the basis of their potential for great power status. Inclusion of the United States should be unchallenged, but the inclusion of any others might well be. Waltz considers a list of requirements for great power status which seems fairly comprehensive, (size of population and territory, resource endowment, economic capability, military strength, political stability and competence) but against

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[67] Waltz names these six powers in *Theory of International Politics*, as does Paul Kennedy in *The Rise and Fall of the Great Powers*. While the positions of the first five as great powers is generally agreed upon, the inclusion of Italy is less clear. Jack S. Levy dates Italy's inclusion as a great power from after its unification in 1861.)*War in the Modern Great Power System, 1495-1975.* Lexington: University Press of Kentucky, 1983. p. 41.) William Langer, in *European Alliances* includes Italy, but says (in reference to the Russo-Turkish conflict of 1877) that "Italy was not a sufficiently important factor to decide the course of European diplomacy." (p. 122) A. J. P. Taylor in *The Struggle For Mastery in Europe 1848-1918* (Oxford: Clarendon Press, 1954) expresses similar reservations when he admits Italy to the circle of powers in 1861, but describes the change as "more nominal than real." (p. xxiii).

[68] Matthew S. Anderson. *The Ascendancy of Europe* (Totowa, NJ: Rowman and Littlefield, 1972) p. 22.

whose scrutiny perhaps only the United States would stand up.[69] Yet one could hardly deny that other great powers exist. For the purposes of this paper I will include such states as fulfill most of those requirements, even if they are lacking in others. Such a list of powers would include: Russia, Germany (with or without a United Europe), Japan, and China.[70] China, it seems, as the state about which the greatest doubt arises, now takes the place of Italy in the circle as the state which ought to be a great power, but whose inclusion is problematic. On the basis of its size, population, expanding economy, nuclear weapons, and its permanent seat on the UN Security Council, I cannot discount it. Great Britain and France, while not the powers they once were, still merit consideration much the same reason and will be discussed in the context of the potential for a united Europe.

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[69] Waltz, 1979. p. 131.

[70] Reflecting the dissension, or confusion, over great power status, each entry has its proponents and detractors. Waltz, in "the Emerging Structure of World Politics," is quite confident about Germany/Europe, Japan and China, but denigrates Russia's status, pointing out its economic weakness by saying that "great powers do not gain and retain their rank by excelling in [only] one way or another." (p. 50) Richard Rosecrance cites three "major centers of power . . . the United States, Russia and the European Community," leaving out Japan and China and doubting the status of Germany without the rest of Europe ("A New Concert of Powers," *Foreign Affairs*, Vol. 71, No.2, p. 75). Hedley Bull, in *The Anarchical Society* (New York: Columbia, 1977) includes the US, USSR and China, but describes Japan and a combination of Western European powers as "potential . . . great powers." (p. 102). Christopher Layne in "The Unipolar Illusion: Why New Great Powers will Rise," (*International Security*, Vol. 17, No. 4, pp. 5-51) posits that the United is the only great power left, though he warns of the rise of others which might include Russia, Germany, Japan and China (p. 5*n*). Samuel P. Huntington agrees that the US is the only superpower, but includes the Soviet Union, Japan, China, Germany, the UK and France as major powers in "America's Changing Strategic Interests," *Survival*, Vol. 33, No. 1 (Jan/Feb 1991), p. 6.

III. BALANCES AND BALANCING

The premise, as stated in Chapter II, from which I begin is that states, and in particular great powers, tend to balance against power rather than bandwagon with it. The logical extension of that argument is that if states balance against power, overwhelming power should in particular generate balancing behavior. Hegemonic power should prompt counter-balances. As Waltz says, "[i]n international politics, overwhelming power repels and leads other states to balance against it."[71] It is not the intent of this paper to enter the argument about whether the dominant behavior of states is balancing, bystanding or bandwagoning. Rather, balancing is assumed, and the dependent variable is how (internally or externally) states balance. This chapter, in support of that goal, will explore some of the ideas on which the assumption of balancing is made. Participation in the balancing/bandwagoning/bystanding debate, for the purposes of this paper, will therefore be limited to an attempt to show the theoretical grounding and imperatives of balancing behavior and, thereby, its importance. With balancing thus grounded, the choice of type of balancing behavior can be usefully pursued.

Before proceeding, some discussion of the term "balance of power" is necessary in order to define what is meant by balancing behavior. Inis Claude provides an excellent starting point for such a discussion. The term balance of power,

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[71] Kenneth N. Waltz, "America as a Model for the World? A Foreign Policy Perspective, " *PS,* December 1991, p. 669. Quoted in Christopher Layne, "The Unipolar Illusion: Why New Great Powers Will Rise," *International Security*, Vol. 17, No. 4 (Spring 1993) p. 7.

as already noted, suffers from a plethora of definitions which, rather than clarifying, have served to obfuscate its meaning. For Claude, the varied definitions of balance of power can be separated into essentially three categories which he describes as balance of power as a **situation**, balance of power as a **policy**, and balance of power as a **system**.[72] As a situation, balance of power is a descriptive term referring to an equilibrium (or lack thereof) of power between states or groups of states. As a policy it refers to the active attempt of states either to create or maintain such an equilibrium. As will be explained, below, neither of these usages is adequate from the perspective of developing useful structural theory. It is balance of power as a system, that is "a certain arrangement of the operation of international relations in a world of many states,"[73] that is under consideration.

When viewed as a system of international relations balance of power seeks to explain "the results of states' actions, under given conditions, and those results may not be foreshadowed in any of the actors' motives or be contained as the objectives of their policies."[74] The particular result which it seeks to explain is that recurrent formation of balances of power. Were balance of power limited to its descriptive function it would have no explanatory power. Either the system would be balanced, or it would not be.

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[72] Inis Claude. *Power and International Relations*. (New York: Random House, 1962) pp. 13-25.

[73] Claude, p. 20.

[74] Waltz, 1979. p. 118.

Similarly, balance of power when viewed as a policy again offers little system-wide explanatory power. On the level of foreign policy, as it is, balance of power would be a second image theory which due to the ecological fallacy cannot provide third-image explanations. This is not to say that states could not choose, or have not chosen, the maintenance of a balance of power as a principle with which to guide their foreign policies. Such a policy is sometimes associated with those of Great Britain in the eighteenth and nineteenth centuries.[75] Such a policy is not necessary, however, for balances to occur. If it were, it would indeed be difficult to account for the historical recurrence of balances in the absence of such policies. If balances occur without the intent of the units within the system, there must be a reason beyond a second-image explanation.

It is only on the systemic level that balance of power can provide the explanatory power necessary for an international relations theory. An important concept of this theory should be reiterated: states do not have to **act** in order to produce the balance, the balance occurs as a **result** of the actions of states seeking to ensure their survival in an anarchic system. The action taken by states is to preserve their independence by providing for their security. under classical realism it was power which was the end toward which "rational" statesmen strove. Under neorealism power is a "possibly useful means" and therefore "sensible statesmen try to have an appropriate amount of it. In crucial situations, however, the ultimate

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[75] Waltz, 1979. p. 164.

concern of states is not for power but for security."[76] It is not necessary for a state to pursue a policy aimed at preserving an equilibrium of power for a balance to result, merely for it to pursue its primary goal of security.

Unintended consequences can result from the policies of individuals within a structure. Waltz offers several examples, one of which is related here:

> If one expects others to make a run on a bank, one's prudent course is to run faster than they do even while knowing that if few others run, the bank will remain solvent, and if many run, it will fail. In such cases, pursuit of individual interest produces collective results that nobody wants, yet individuals by behaving differently will hurt themselves without altering outcomes.[77]

Similarly, the pursuit of power as an end can in fact have negative consequences if balancing is the predominant behavior of states. "Excessive strength may prompt other states to increase their arms and pool their efforts against the dominant state."[78] Thus individual units in attempting to create a preponderance of power generate instead a balance.

If balance of power must be more than a descriptive term, and if balances do not necessarily derive from the policies of states, then balancing must result from structural causes. This statement must, to a degree, be qualified. John Ikenberry notes, correctly, that "structure is not, strictly speaking, a source of *causation*. The

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[76] Kenneth N. Waltz. "The Origins of War in Neorealist Theory," in Robert I. Rotberg and Theodore K. Rabb, eds., *The Origin and Prevention of Major Wars*. (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1989) p. 40.

[77] Waltz, 1979. pp. 107-108.

[78] Waltz, 1989. p. 40.

structures provide *limits on and possibilities for* state action; the state's interests themselves are not determined by structure. They emerge through the interplay of a state elite that is adapting and strategizing in the context of those structures. More precisely, the *formal* interests of states stem from the obdurate organizational predicament of the state's geopolitical and spatial position."[79] Structure, then, does not directly cause action on the part of the states, but its constraints provide limits on the actions which can be taken. Those limits or constraints are what determine that the actions of states will result in balances forming. The constraints, as mentioned in Chapter II, imposed by the system are those of anarchy and self-help.

Two additional concepts need to be introduced before proceeding in order to further undergird the concept of balancing behavior. These concepts will also be used for the discussion of internal vs. external balancing in Chapter IV. These concepts are the *security dilemma* and the concept of *collective goods*.

A. THE SECURITY DILEMMA

The security dilemma, simply stated, is that "many of the means by which a state tries to increase its security decrease the security of others."[80] This dilemma arises from the anarchic nature of the international system, and accounts for the scarcity of security in it for "even when no state has any desire to attack others, none

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[79] G. John Ikenberry. "The State and Strategies of International Adjustment," *World Politics*. Vol. 39, No. 1 (October 1986) p. 66.

[80] Robert Jervis, "Cooperation Under the Security Dilemma," *World Politics*, Vol. 30, No. 2 (January 1978) p. 169.

can be sure that others' intentions are peaceful, or will remain so. . . ."[81] Even among allies, it must always be borne in mind that "[m]inds can be changed, new leaders can come to power, values can shift, [and] new opportunities and dangers can arise."[82]

States therefore find themselves in a quandary. Efforts to increase their security lead at best to the same lack of security which it faced before and at worst to a decrease in its security if the other states take measures which exceed those of the first. "Individually," then, "states may only be doing what they can to bolster their security. Their individual intentions aside, collectively their actions yield arms races and alliances."[83]

At first blush, the security dilemma seems to refute the notion of balancing by suggesting that the game of security is one which cannot be won. If what one state sees as balancing is deemed a danger to a second, that state will respond. The response of the second, however will be threatening to the first, thus setting off a spiralling arms race. In fact, the security dilemma does not preclude balancing. If "winning" is problematic in international relations, losing can all but be assured. States that choose not to compete, as they are free to do, will fall behind those that do compete and eventually face the danger of elimination. This is the result of the emulation of the successful states by those "competitors". As explained by Waltz "[i]f

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[81] Glenn H. Snyder. "The Security Dilemma in Alliance Politics," *World Politics*. Vol. 36, No. 4 (July 1984) p. 461.

[82] Jervis, 1978. p. 105.

[83] Waltz, 1989. p. 43.

some [who do choose to compete] do relatively well, others will emulate them or fall by the wayside. Obviously, the system won't work if all states lose interest in preserving themselves. It will, however, continue to work if some states do."[84] States must therefore either compete or lose.

B. COLLECTIVE GOODS

The concept of collective goods also contributes to an understanding of how states will balance and which states are more likely to choose one behavior over the other. "*Collective goods*," by way of definition, "are those that, if acquired, benefit everyone whether or not he has contributed to their acquisition."[85] A frequently given example is that of national defense. "If the nation is defended, everyone is defended, whether or not he has paid his taxes.[86] Each person reaps the benefit of that defense, while only some have to bear the cost.

The concept of collective goods offers another example of the unintended consequences of individual rationality. Robert Jervis writes:

> If the hegemon is defeated, all states benefit, whether or not they participated in the coalition. Since joining the

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[84] Waltz, 1979. p. 118.

[85] Robert Jervis. "Systems Theories and Diplomatic History," in Paul Gordon Lauren, ed. *Diplomacy*. (New York: Free Press, 1979) p. 216.

[86] Ibid. p. 222. Michael Mandelbaum offers the same example, along with others in *the Fate of Nations*. (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1988) p. 355. For an in depth discussion of collective goods and international relations, see also Jeffrey A. Hart and Peter F. Cowhey, "Theories of Collective Goods Reexamined," *Western Political Quarterly* 30 (1977), pp.351-62.

> coalition is costly, the state's first choice would be to have the hegemon defeated without having to join in the opposition. In other words, the state would like to be the 'free rider,' taking advantage of the efforts of others. But since this is true of each of the states, there is a danger that no one will oppose the hegemon, even though all want it stopped.[87]

This concept not only applies in the actions of a state when faced with the threat of a hegemonic power, but in the international system in general. Since no individual state wants to bear the burden of providing security for others, the scarcity of security is worsened.

More importantly, the concept of collective goods provides a further insight into which states are likely to balance internally. Only great powers are capable of great tasks, and only great powers have system wide responsibilities. Great powers should, therefore, exhibit greater tendencies to balance internally since they have both more to lose and greater ability to affect the outcome. This also leads to the opposite conclusion about smaller powers, drawn by Jervis, that "[s]ince the participation of small states makes less of a difference in the outcome than does the participation of larger states, we would expect them to follow balance-of-power prescriptions less frequently and to be more subject to domino dynamics than are the larger powers."[88]

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[87] Jervis, 1979. p. 216.

[88] Ibid.

C. BALANCING BEHAVIOR

States do not, of course, have to balance although neorealism holds that they do. Recall that the international system is an anarchic, competitive, self-help system, and that the primary motivation of states is survival—a motivation which manifests itself as the quest for security and the sublimation of all other goals, such as the acquisition of power in the absolute rather than relative sense, to that quest. Waltz argues that "Because power is a means and not an end, states prefer to join the weaker of two coalitions."[89] As discussed above, gains in power can result in unintended negative consequences. As Waltz points out, "[i]n international politics, success leads to failure. The excessive accumulation of power by one state or coalition elicits the opposition of others."[90] Thus if a state joins the bandwagon of a rising power it would only exacerbate the condition which will provoke a counter-coalition.

To illustrate the point, Waltz offers the evidence of the break up of war-winning coalitions. States seeking to maximize power would, if bandwagoning held, remain combined in order to "increase the extent of their power over others."[91] Instead, we see the victors "squar[ing] off and look[ing] for allies who might help them."[92] For

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[89] Waltz, 1979. p. 126.

[90] Kenneth N. Waltz. "The Origins of War in Neorealist Theory," in Robert I. Rotberg and Theodore K. Rabb, eds. *The Origin and Prevention of Major Wars.* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1988) p. 49.

[91] Waltz, 1979. p. 126.

[92] Ibid.

example, "Almost as soon as their [World War II] wartime alliance ended, the United States and the Soviet Union found themselves locked in a cold war."[93]

In one argument for bandwagoning behavior, Randall Schweller holds that "[t]he aim of balancing is self-preservation and the protection of values already possessed, while the goal of bandwagoning is usually self extension: to obtain values coveted. Simply put, balancing is driven by the desire to avoid losses; bandwagoning by the opportunity for gain." [94] Although he posits that bandwagoning is not the antithesis of balancing but rather a viable strategy for a revisionist rather than a status quo power, his conclusion can be countered. While a state may receive short-term benefits from bandwagoning, the long term effects are deleterious. For, as Stephen Walt notes, "To ally *with* the dominant power means placing one's trust in its continued benevolence."[95] By contributing to the increasing power of its ally, the bandwagoner has only worsened his own security position.

Also, even if a revisionist state should succeed in making whatever gain it achieved, it would not long remain a revisionist state, but would become instead a status quo power. The exigency of emulation will overcome them and they will be socialized into the system. The constraints of the system will compel them begin to behave in the manner of those states which have in the past been successful. Waltz

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[93] Waltz, 1993. p. 45.

[94] Randall L. Schweller. "Bandwagoning for Profit," *International Security*, Vol. 19, No. 1 (Summer, 1994) p. 74.

[95] Walt, 1985. p. 5.

offers the example of the Soviet Union, which was once a revisionist state, but upon achieving great power status was compelled to compete according to the "rules of the game".[96]

Stephen M. Walt writes that "The proposition that states will join alliances in order to avoid domination by stronger powers lies at the heart of traditional balance of power theory."[97] Alliance, however, involves costs in the form of constraints on the actions of the partners to the agreement. Concessions of sovereignty also cut against the primary goal of preserving one's independence. As for seeking guarantees of safety, a state should bear in mind that there are no guarantees.

According to Zakaria, "While realists debate how strong systemic influences are on state's foreign policies, most agree that *in crises* and *in the long run* they tend to dominate other factors."[98] Those systemic influences suggest "that states, jealous of their independence, will balance against a rising, threatening great power, rather than jump on its bandwagon."[99] The theoretical grounding of these assumptions, while perhaps not unchallengeable, seem firm enough to proceed. Balancing is an appropriate option for states in an anarchic system which offers them long-term protection of their primary interests. Whether states balance by internal means

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[96] Waltz, 1979. pp. 127-128. For his discussion of the socialization effect see pp. 74-77.

[97] Stephen M. Walt. "Alliance Formation and the Balance of World Power," *International Security*. Vol. 9, No. 4 (Spring 1985) p. 5.

[98] Zakaria, p. 23.

[99] Ibid.

(increasing their own economic or military capability) or through external means (enlarging or strengthening one's own alliance or weakening the opposing one) remains an open question. The preference for one type or the other "emerge[s] in the struggle to find ways for the state to assert itself in the adjustment process,"[100] and is the subject of the next chapter.

[100] Ikenberry, p. 66.

IV. INTERNAL VS. EXTERNAL BALANCING

Accepting, then, the premise that balancing is the theoretically most likely behavior, the main question of this work arises: How do states they balance? Or, more precisely, given a range of options for balancing, which option[s] should a state choose? Realism hold that states " are unitary actors who, at a minimum seek their own preservation and, at a maximum, drive for universal domination. States, or those who act for them, try in more or less sensible ways to use the means available in order to achieve the ends in view. Those means fall into two categories: internal efforts (moves to increase economic capability, to increase military strength, to develop clever strategies) and external efforts (moves to strengthen and enlarge one's own alliance or to weaken and shrink an opposing one)."[101] Although neorealism is clear in predicting balancing, it is not clear in predicting which behavior should predominate.

Waltz does, of course, discuss balancing, although the nature of that balancing is at best a secondary issue. Where it is discussed, it is in the context of the different nature of balancing between bipolar and multipolar systems, rather than as a stand-alone concept. The nature of this balancing would seem to have relevance, however, in a complete theory of international relations. Will balancing result in the formation of new alliances and/or the disruption or break up of current ones, or will it primarily be in the form of the development of internal capabilities? These are questions which

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[101] Waltz, 1979. p. 118.

deserve answers, and whose answers could prove to be important determinants of policy for the units in the system.

It should perhaps be reiterated that predictions of by balancing behavior are not to be confused with attainment of power equivalences between the states. As Ruggie points out, "the theory predicts balan*cing*, not balance*s*, of power, where balances are defined as equivalences. Whether actual balances form, and even more whether any specific configuration or alignment forms, will only in part be determined by positional factors; it will also depend upon information and transaction costs, and a host of unit-level attributes."[102] That states will take actions that attempt to balance predominant power is what is predicted, not that they can succeed in doing so or that any such "success" is even necessary for the validity of the theory.

A. BALANCING: BIPOLAR AND MULTIPOLAR WORLDS

For Waltz, the type of balancing which predominates turns only on the polarity of the system. He notes, correctly, that "[b]alancing is differently done in multi- and bipolar systems. . . .Where two powers contend, imbalances can be righted only by their internal efforts. With more than two, shifts in alignment provide an additional means of adjustment, adding flexibility to the system."[103] Maintaining that internal means are the only ones available in a bipolar world does not however preclude their

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[102] John Gerard Ruggie. "Continuity and Transformation in the World Polity: Toward a Neorealist Synthesis," *Neorealism and Its Critics*. Robert O Keohane, ed. (New York: Columbia University Press, 1986), p. 137.

[103] Waltz, 1979. p. 163.

application in a multipolar one. Although Waltz does not say so directly, the implication of the omission of discussion of internal balance in a multipolar system is that external means will, or should predominate.

The international system has, after all, been multi-polar for the majority of its existence. The bipolarity associated with the cold war has thus far been the only example of bipolarity, and it has come to an end.[104] That Waltz developed his theory during the bipolar moment may explain the *lacuna*. Balancing behavior in a bipolar world was so strongly constrained by the structure that external balancing was essentially eliminated. In a multipolar world, however, external balancing has pertinence again. The theory therefore requires elucidation on this point.

Multipolar systems, of course, possess some different characteristics than bipolar ones. As Waltz describes them, "[i]nterdependence of parties, diffusion of dangers, confusion of responses: These are the characteristics of great-power politics in a multipolar world. Self-dependence of parties, clarity of dangers, certainty about who has to face them: These are the characteristics of great-power politics in a

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[104] Waltz maintains, however, that "bipolarity endures, but in an altered state. Bipolarity continues because militarily Russia can take care of itself and because no other great powers have yet emerged" ("The Emerging Structure of International Politics," p. 52). Others would disagree, although there is a general uncertainty about the polarity of the system. Samuel Huntington describes the world as "uni-multipolar," with the United States as the only superpower, but with six other major powers present ("America's Changing Strategic Interests," p. 6). Christopher Layne characterizes the system as unipolar, but predicts the rise of other great powers ("The Unipolar Illusion"). Robert Jervis raises, but does not answer, the question. "Is it unipolar because the United States is so much stronger than the nearest competitor, bipolar because of the distribution of military resources, tripolar because of an emerging united Europe, or multipolar because of the general dispersion of power?" ("The Future of World Politics," pp. 41-2.)

bipolar world."[105] Some characteristics of the international system and its units have not and do not, however, change with a change in polarity. These are the anarchic nature of the international system, and the basic motivation of the states for security and survival. Could these abiding characteristics not influence states to favor internal balancing in a multipolar situation as well as in a bipolar one? Systemic factors still act to constrain the behavior of states. It remains to be seen whether those constraints will act to favor internal balancing in a multipolar world as they did in a bipolar one.

Before proceeding it is necessary to mention the impact of nuclear weapons on balancing. While obviously not a factor in historical analyses, their existence and potential proliferation spread may have a significant impact on the future behavior of states. The impact of nuclear weapons in a systems theory is somewhat problematic. It may be unclear how it is that "the introduction of nuclear weapons, a unit-level change [has] a system-level effect."[106] If, however, "the structure of a system changes with changes in the distribution of capabilities across the system's units,"[107] the addition of a significant capability within a unit results in a structural change.[108]

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[105] Waltz, 1989. p. 48.

[106] Richard Ned Lebow, "The Long Peace, the End of the Cold War, and the Failure of Realism," *International Organization*. Vol. 48, No. 2 (Spring 1994), p. 254.

[107] Waltz, 1979. p. 97.

[108] Steve Weber makes a similar argument, perhaps more effectively, in "Realism, Detente, and Nuclear Weapons," *International Organization*. Vol. 44, No. 1 (Winter 1990), p. 61-64.

Nuclear weapons do represent a significant capability, which Waltz addresses. According to Waltz "[n]uclear weapons are not relative but absolute weapons."[109] The impact of these weapons on a state's balancing choices will be discussed in the hypotheses, but it is worth noting that Waltz assesses their impact when he notes that "[m]ultipolarity abolishes the stark symmetry and pleasing simplicity of bipolarity, but nuclear weapons restore both of those qualities to a considerable extent."[110]

B. INTERNAL VS. EXTERNAL BALANCING

Based on the foregoing discussion hypotheses have been developed concerning the propensity of states to balance internally or externally; three favoring either side of the argument. They are presented below *in toto*. The hypotheses will be considered (in opposing pairs) in light of relevant theory in an effort to answer the broader question of whether states are likely to pursue one method or the other. Waltz suggests the superiority of internal balancing in *Theory of International Politics* when he writes that "[i]nternal balancing is more reliable and precise than external balancing."[111] By examining each of my hypotheses I hope to both systematize that superiority and demonstrate its applicability to multipolar as well as bipolar systems.

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[109] Waltz, 1989. p. 51.

[110] Waltz, 1993. p. 74.

[111] Waltz, 1979. p. 168.

HYPOTHESES

1. The cost of alliance, in uncertainty (abandonment and/or entrapment) and in loss of sovereignty, will cause states to prefer internal balancing.

2. In the current period, and in the future, the availability of nuclear weapons will favor internal over external balancing.

3. The greater the power of state relative to the predominant power, the more likely it is to balance internally rather than externally.

4. The lower economic cost of alliance versus military expenditure will favor external balancing over internal.

5. The potential negative consequences of the acquisition of nuclear weapons will cause states to rely on external, rather than internal balancing.

6. The smaller the power of the balancing state relative to the hegemon, the more likely it is to balance externally rather than internally.

1. Hypotheses One and Four

> *1. The cost of alliance, in uncertainty (abandonment and/or entrapment) and in loss of sovereignty, will cause states to prefer internal balancing.*
>
> *4. The lower economic cost of alliance versus military expenditure will favor external balancing over internal.*

External balancing, for the purposes of this discussion means the seeking of alliances or the attempt to weaken an opposing alliance. I make no attempt to develop an alliance theory, but will make use of the work of others in order to develop the idea that the long-term risks of alignment outweigh the potential benefits. Those risks arise from uncertainty and loss of sovereignty.

Alliance is defined by Stephen Walt as "a formal or informal relationship of security cooperation between two or more sovereign states This definition assumes some level of commitment and an exchange of benefits for both parties; severing the relationship or failing to honor the agreement would presumably cost something, even if it were compensated in other ways."[112] Alliance formation is not, and cannot be as straightforward as Walt's definition suggests in an anarchic world. States enter into such agreements from different relative power standings, which implies unequal costs and benefits, and with no guarantee that an alliance partner will live up to its bargain.

Under multipolarity alignment becomes an option which was not available under bipolarity. The option of alignment implies a certain freedom, or flexibility in choosing alliance partners. That flexibility, however "means both that the country one is wooing may prefer another suitor and that one's present alliance partner may defect. Flexibility of alignment narrows one's choice of policies. A state's strategy must please a potential or satisfy a present partner."[113]

The necessity of pleasing potential or satisfying present partners leads one to the following conclusion: "A state which has no choice but to ally itself with another cannot exact much of a price for its commitment."[114] If a state has no alternative, the benefits it receives will consequently be lower, and/or the price it must pay will be higher. Its policy choices will be limited to those which satisfy potential alliance

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[112] Walt, 1987. p. 1 *note.*

[113] Waltz, 1979. p. 165.

[114] Ibid.

partners. This limitation is necessarily a limitation or infringement on the sovereignty of that state. Jervis offers the following example:

> A state trying to rally others to a coalition against what it perceives to be a grave menace faces a dilemma. In order to persuade others to join, the state will want to stress the danger that the adversary constitutes to them all and its commitment to the common defense. But to do this is to acknowledge that it believes it imperative to form an alliance, thus allowing others who are, or pretend to be, less alarmed to exact a higher price for their cooperation.[115]

Aside from the potential cost of entering an alliance, "Bargaining among more than two parties is difficult. Bargainers worry about points at issue. With more than two parties, each also worries about how the strength of his position will be affected by combinations he and others may make. If two of the several parties strike an agreement, moreover, they must wonder if the agreement will be disrupted or negated by the action of others."[116] Not only do states have to be concerned with outside parties disrupting an alliance, they must also be concerned with the potential that their alliance partners with abandon them.

Abandonment can take two forms. First, a partner may simply defect, leaving a state in the lurch as it were. More dangerously, an alliance partner could fail to live up to its word in the event of a conflict. Such "[f]ears that allies might defect (perhaps to the opponent) if insufficiently supported have always afflicted policy makers in an

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[115] Ibid. p. 225.

[116] Waltz, 1979. p. 174.

anarchic international system,"[117] as Glenn H. Snyder points out. He goes on to say that "States in a multi-polar system, . . . , may lack confidence of being supported if attacked because the strategic interests of other states are ambiguous."[118]

The concomitant alliance problem is that of entrapment. An alliance may commit a state to a policy which it might not have otherwise pursued, such as entering into a war. Although the junior partner in an alliance could be the initiator of such an action (emboldened by the major partner's support) "[i]n general, entrapment is a more serious concern for the lesser allies than for [a superpower] because they share only a portion of the latter's global interests, because the superpowers have a much greater capacity for taking initiatives . . . and because the allies' capacity to restrain the superpowers is much smaller than vice versa."[119] The mutual dependence which results from alliances is fraught with dangers, and, as John Ruggie writes, "remains problematic and therefore is a source of vulnerability to states."[120]

Some states may choose to accept these costs as being less than the economic cost of providing for its own defense, and some states may have little choice. At the height of the Second World War, the United States spent nearly forty-

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[117] Glenn H. Snyder. "Alliances, Balance and Stability," *International Organization*. Vol. 45, No. 1 (Winter 1991), p. 124.

[118] Glenn H. Snyder, 1991. p. 127.

[119] Glenn H. Snyder. "The Security Dilemma in Alliance Politics," *World Politics*. Vol. 36, No. 4 (July 1984), p. 484.

[120] Ruggie, 1986. p. 137.

two percent of its GNP on defense.[121] If such a figure were sustainable (a doubtful prospect at best), only seven other countries in 1991 could have matched the defense expenditure of the United States. Using the United States as a target is, of course, absurd, but even if the target country was a medium power such as Canada, only fifty-five countries could hope to match its expenditure. At a more reasonable (but probably still unreasonable) defense spending level of twenty percent of GNP, that list contains only thirty-nine countries, and at ten percent, twenty-five.[122] Such costs could make even those states which could afford such an expenditure balk. Alliance provides a means to achieve greater defense at lower cost.

Any alliance, however, increases the already significant uncertainty in the international system. As Waltz points out, "[s]tates are less likely to misjudge their relative strengths than they are to misjudge the strength and reliability of opposing coalitions."[123] Stephen Van Evera provides an example of the uncertainty which inheres in coalition when he notes that "the greater complexity of multipolarity increase the possibility that defending states will underestimate how much effort is necessary to balance against aggressors, and will therefore do too little or act too late. This can happen if defending states exaggerate the willingness of other

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[121] $87.4 billion out of a GNP of $210.1 billion. *Historical Statistics of the United States, Colonial Times to 1970* (U. S. Census Bureau, 1975).

[122] Military expenditure and GNP data from *World Military Expenditures and Arms Transfers, 1991-1992.* (Washington, D. C.: U. S. Arms Control and Disarmament Agency, 1991).

[123] Waltz, 1979. p. 168.

defenders to balance, and fail to make military preparations of their own adequate to compensate for this unwillingness."[124]

A state in imminent danger, or without the means to provide for its own defense, may, however, have no other choice than to enter into an alignment with another. No other choice, that is, than extinction. The Pollyanna prescription for such a state is not to find oneself in that position. Such a statement in and of itself is of course of little value, but it has an underlying truth. States which are self-reliant in matters of security are in a better position than those which are not. While not all states can be self-reliant, those in a position to achieve self-reliance have incentives for doing so. Alliances can be effective in meeting short-term security needs. "Alliances, however," as Organski and Kugler point out, "cannot in the long run alter secular trends."[125]

2. Hypotheses Two and Five

> *2. In the current period and in the future the availability of nuclear weapons will favor internal over external balancing.*
>
> *5. The potential negative consequences of the acquisition of nuclear weapons will cause states to rely on external, rather than internal balancing.*

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[124] Stephen Van Evera, "Primed For Peace: Europe After the Cold War," *International Security*. Vol. 15, No. 3 (Winter 1990/91), p. 35.

[125] Organski, A. F. K. and Jacek Kugler. *The War Ledger*. (Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 1980), p. 27.

Nuclear weapons have a significant effect on the ability of states to balance, as well as having an alliance inhibiting function. As their acquisition and employment are internal means the presence of nuclear weapons, and their probable proliferation, will therefore favor internal balancing among those states which possess them as well as those which desire them. Waltz and others have discussed this point extensively.[126] The main arguments are presented, below.

The first way in which nuclear weapons affect balancing is by increasing the potential costs of war with a nuclear-armed power. As Waltz posits "in weighing the chances of peace, the first questions to ask are questions about the ends for which states use force and about the strategies and weapons they employ. . . . War becomes less likely as the costs of war rise in relation to the possible gains."[127] Balances are easier to achieve, and more certain, if a power has nuclear weapons because few would doubt the costs of a potential conflict.

That is all well and good for nuclear powers, but where does that leave lesser ones? It leaves them desiring nuclear weapons because "In a nuclear world, . . . , the connection between a country's economic and technological capability, on the one

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[126] See especially Waltz *The Spread of Nuclear Weapons: More May Be Better.* Adelphi Paper No. 171 (London: International Institute for Strategic Studies, 1981. For similar views, see John Lewis Gaddis, "The Long Peace," *International Security*, Vol. 10, No. 4 (Spring 1986), pp. 99-142; and John J. Mearsheimer, "Back to the Future: Instability in Europe After the Cold War," *International Security,* Vol. 15, No. 1 (Summer 1990), pp. 5-56.

[127] Waltz, 1989. p. 48.

hand, and its military capability, on the other, is loosened."[128] Whereas the size of a country's population and its economic base were once the primary determinants of its war-fighting capability, much smaller states can now achieve a greater degree of security with more limited resources and at smaller expense. In fact, Waltz holds that "Because nuclear weapons alter the relation between economic capability and military power, a country with well less than half of the economic capability of the leading producer can easily compete militarily if it adopts a status-quo policy and a deterrent strategy. Conversely, the leading country cannot use its economic superiority to establish military dominance, or to gain strategic advantage, over its great power rivals."[129]

The cost effectiveness of nuclear weapons has another important result. By providing powerful deterrents at limited expense, they allow a countries to "concentrate attention on their economies rather than on their military forces,"[130] and therefore provide them with additional means to achieve an internal balance.

In addition to the cost effectiveness of nuclear weapons, Waltz also holds that they inhibit the formation of alliances. As he points out: "Nuclear forces do not add up. The technology of warheads, of delivery vehicles, of detection and surveillance devices, of command and control systems, counts more than the size of forces.

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[128] Waltz, 1993. p. 51.

[129] Ibid. p. 53.

[130] Ibid. p. 52.

Combining separate national forces is not much help."[131] That is, once a certain level of force is attained (taken to be secure second strike capability), additional force does not significantly alter the balance achieved, thus obviating the need for alliance. De Gaulle, it seems, may have been correct.[132]

One criticism that has been applied to neorealist theory in general, and which would therefore apply to this work, is that it relies on rationality and rational decision-making more than Waltz or other neorealists might suggest. Keohane, for instance, writes that "The desire for self-preservation makes states that are behind in a struggle for power try harder, according to Waltz and leads states allied to a potential hegemon to switch coalitions in order to construct balances of power. Neither of these processes on which Waltz relies to maintain a balance—intensified effort by the weaker country in a bipolar system and coalition formation against potentially dominant states in a multipolar system—could operate reliably without this motivation."[133]

This criticism needs to answered, and its answer contributes to the idea that the proliferation of nuclear weapons is likely. Waltz contends correctly that states are above all interested in self preservation—the basic function of the state. States that

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[131] Waltz, 1979. pp. 181-182.

[132] Waltz, 1981. p. 3. In reference to French withdrawal from NATO's unified military command de Gaulle often said that the *force de frappe* made alliances obsolete. Wilfrid Kohl quotes de Gaulle as saying that France "is equipping herself with atomic armament, the very nature of which precludes her integration [in NATO]." *French Nuclear Diplomacy*. (Princeton, Princeton University Press, 1971), p. 253.

[133] Keohane, 1986. p. 173.

don't regard this interest will simply be eliminated, regarding this interest is imitative of states which succeed.[134] That is, some states will necessarily be more successful in the international system to the detriment of the others. The success of those actors will cause the other actors to imitate those successful policies. Thus even allies of the United States (Britain and France) have taken steps to develop their own strategic weapons, imitating the success of their alliance partner. This imitative effect will also contribute to the probable acquisition of nuclear weapons by other potential great powers, with all the effects that such acquisitions entail.

3. Hypotheses Three and Six

> *3. The greater the power of state relative to the predominant power, the more likely it is to balance internally rather than externally.*
>
> *6. The smaller the power of the balancing state relative to the hegemon, the more likely it is to balance externally rather than internally.*

The third hypothesis pair in some ways builds on those which precede it. If internal balancing is more certain than external balance, and entails less cost, those states which can successfully balance internally should. In order for a state to balance successfully, it must be able to develop an amount of power which, compared to that of the state which it is balancing against, is significant. Those states would logically be the greater powers in the system. The greater the potential threat, or the

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[134] Waltz, 1979. p. 118.

greater the capability of the hegemon (recalling that the security dilemma holds that threat *inheres* in capability) the less the relative power of the other actors.

Small powers may have little choice but to enter into alignments as a means for ensuring their security, even if internal balancing is a superior method. As Ikenberry notes "[t]he preference function predicts what states will seek to achieve; structural constraints will determine what is possible."[135] Large powers, however have options that smaller powers do not. Jervis, in reference to alliance choices, holds that "a state's bargaining power is determined largely by the availability of alternatives rather than by its economic and military resources or its contributions to the common cause."[136] The ability to eschew alliances altogether would, however, seem to be a significant alternative which *is* determined by a states resources. That the costs (loss of sovereignty, abandonment, entrapment) inherent in alliance are costs that a state with such an option would prefer not to pay seems logical. Glenn Snyder comes to much the same conclusion when he writes that "a multipolar system structure in which capabilities are distributed evenly does not by itself imply any alignments."[137] This is due in part to the hope that others may provide the collective good of standing up to a potential aggressor as well as the desire not to contribute to the security of others by providing that collective good themselves.[138] The" ideal" of a multipolar system with

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[135] Ikenberry. p. 65.

[136] Jervis, 1979. p. 224.

[137] Glenn Snyder, 1991. p. 124.

[138] Ibid.

capabilities evenly distributed is more closely approximated by states whose power is more nearly equal relative to the hegemon.

As an additional factor, in some ways the hegemon itself provides the means for internal balancing against it. As Waltz describes it the "sameness effect" is caused by competition among the states which "produces a tendency toward the sameness of the competitors."[139] The weapons and strategies of the more successful states are emulated by their challengers so that they "begin to look much the same all over the world."[140] Gilpin supports that contention in *War and Change in World Politics* when he writes that "there is a historical tendency for the military and economic techniques of the dominant state or empire to be diffused to other states in the system or, more especially, to states on the periphery of the international system in question. That is to say, through a process of diffusion to other states, the dominant power loses the advantage on which its political, military, or economic success has been based."[141] A single example may serve to illustrate this point. John Lewis Gaddis, in referring to the recent Iraqi invasion of Kuwait, points out that:

> It was Iraq's integration into the international market in sophisticated military technology that made it possible for Saddam Hussein to perform this act of aggression. His arsenal of chemical and biological weapons, to say nothing of his surface-to-air-missiles, Scuds, Mirages, the nuclear weapons he probably would have had if the Israelis had

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[139] Waltz, 1979. p. 127. Christopher Layne uses the term "sameness effect" in "Unipolar Illusion," p. 21.

[140] Waltz, 1979. p. 127.

[141] Gilpin, 1981. p. 176.

> not bombed his reactor in 1981 and the long-range artillery he certainly would have had if the British had not become suspicious of his orders for very thick "oil pipes" early in 1990—all of this hardware was not forged by ingenious Iraqi craftsmen, working tirelessly along the banks of the Euphrates. Saddam obtained it, rather, by exploiting an important consequence of integration, which is the inability or unwillingness of highly industrialized states to control what their own entrepreneurs, even those involved in the sale of lethal commodities, do to turn a profit.[142]

Several factors seem to favor internal over external balancing, particularly for the larger powers, and it is the larger powers which "set the scene of action for others as well as for themselves."[143] In particular, the costs associated with alliance formation in terms of loss of sovereignty, as well as the dangers of abandonment and entrapment should favor internal balancing for those who can accomplish it. The presence of nuclear weapons expands the list of powers that can. Mutual dependence in an anarchic world is problematic at best. The security dilemma and flexibility of alignment both work to ensure that the capabilities of today's alliance partner carry an inherent threat for tomorrow. Faced with short-term threats, or hegemons of such relative power that a state's very existence is threatened, however, states may have little choice but to seek alliances in order to provide for their security.

In the quest for that security, one will see that "[s]tates accumulate power in many ways; the most prominent methods are by armament, territorial aggrandizement,

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[142] John Lewis Gaddis. "Toward the Post-Cold War World," *Foreign Affairs*. Vol. 70, No. 2 (Spring 1991), pp. 110-111.

[143] Waltz, 1979. p. 72.

and alliance formation."[144] Before concluding that internal balancing is indeed, in the long-term a superior choice, it is necessary to test that idea against a case study.

[144] Glenn Snyder, 1984. p. 461.

V. CASES

A. THE CASE FOR THE CASES

In order to test the hypotheses generated in Chapter IV, a case study is employed. The choice of the case was guided by the desire to provide a rigorous test as well as by its relevance to the current international system. If states are going to balance, that is, if balancing behavior is to be prominently displayed, that behavior should be most pronounced in the presence of a dominant power or hegemon. It follows that if states balance, they will be more likely to balance when the threat is greatest. They are also most likely to balance in an international system characterized by uncertainty. The case selected was that of Great Britain and the European States System in the decades following the Crimean War, specifically the period from 1856-1878. The conclusions drawn from that case will be used in an attempt to analyze the current situation and predict the possible future character of the international system.

When choosing comparative cases, one must either choose cases which elucidate a common point due to their similarities, or due to their differences. In this work, the nineteenth century case has been chosen primarily for its similarity to the current international situation. In both cases, there exist several states which could be one characterized as great powers, and a single state which was predominant. It is generally accepted that in the late nineteenth century there existed five or six great powers—Great Britain, Prussia, Russia, Austria (after 1867 Austria-Hungary), France

and Italy (after 1861)— at the core in the European states system.[145] Similarly, in the post-cold war era, there exists an unquestioned great, or super, power—the United States—and a similar array of significant powers which includes Russia, Germany with or without a united Europe, Japan and China.[146] Despite the diffusion of power across the system, however, in both cases a single power was the predominant one. The predominant power in the decades following the Crimean War was Great Britain and in the current international system it is the United States. A hegemonic power, it is predicted, should be the one against which balancing is most likely to occur.

Also, in both cases, the international system was in a state of flux. In the historic case, this flux was generated by the end of the Concert system which had governed European affairs since 1815. As Michael Mandelbaum put it, "If the Concert of Europe can be said to have begun at the Congress of Vienna, the Crimean War of 1854-6 marked its end, at least as a set of quasi-formal procedures that the great powers felt some ongoing obligation to follow."[147] Now the state of flux in the system

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[145] On great powers and the status of Italy see note 67, Chapter II.

[146] Current great powers are discussed in note 70, Chapter II.

[147] Michael Mandelbaum, *The Fate of Nations: The Search for National Security in the Nineteenth and Twentieth Centuries*. (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1988), p. 26. Others share his view. Norman Rich writes that "The most permanent result of the Crimean War was the disruption of the Concert of Europe," in *Why the Crimean War? A Cautionary Tale* (Hanover, NH: University Press of New England, 1985), p. 199. Matthew S. Anderson writes of the conflict that "it was this struggle far more than the spectacular upheavals of 1848 which ended the Europe of 1815, that of Castlereagh, Metternich and Alexander I." *The Ascendancy of Europe*. (Totowa, NJ: Rowman and Littlefield, 1972), pp. 22-3. Richard Rosecrance says simply "After Paris the Concert collapsed." *Action and Reaction in World Politics*. (Boston: Little, Brown, 1963), p. 117.

is the result of the break-up of the Soviet empire and the consequent end of the cold war. The bipolar structure of the cold war had guided great power politics, as had the Concert of Europe, for over four decades. The drawing down of the cold war, punctuated by the dissolution of the Soviet Union, marked the end of that system and the beginning of a new international structure. In both cases, changes in the behavior of the states in the system are to be expected because, as Waltz argues, the "structure of a system changes with changes in the distribution of capabilities across a system's units. And changes in structure change expectations about how the units of the system will behave and about the outcomes their interactions will produce."[148]

1. British and American Hegemonies

"A state's utility in structural realism," says Robert Powell, " is at least partly a function of some relative measure like power."[149] Developing a system for measuring power is not the purpose of this work, but some measures will be presented.[150] For the period in question for Great Britain, William B. Moul finds that "the mean of the percent shares of iron production, steel production, energy consumption, numbers of military personnel and military expenditures held by each great power provides the

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[148] Waltz, 1979. p. 97.

[149] Robert Powell. "Absolute and Relative Gains in International Relations Theory," *American Political Science Review*, Vol. 85, No. 4 (December 1991), p. 1303.

[150] Among those who have developed systems for quantifying power is William B. Moul, "Measuring the Balances of Power: A Look at Some Numbers," *Review of International Studies*, Vol. 15, No. 2 (April 1989), pp. 101-121; and A. F. K. Organski and Jacek Kugler in *The War Ledger*. Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 1989.

best measure of power capabilities,"[151] and for each year in the period Great Britain shows the greatest power capability. Paul Kennedy comes to a similar conclusion based on much the same evidence:

> Around 1860, which was probably when the country reached its zenith in relative terms, the United Kingdom produced 53 percent of the world's iron and 50 percent of its coal and lignite, and consumed just under half of the raw cotton output of the globe. With 2 percent of the world's population and 10 percent of Europe's, the United Kingdom would seem to have had a capacity in modern industries equal to 40-45 percent of the world's potential and 55-60 percent of that in Europe.[152]

The position of the United States as the predominant power is in the current international system is perhaps unchallengeable. as Christopher Layne points out, "There are other states that are formidable militarily (Russia) or economically (Japan and Germany). However, because only the United States possesses imposing strength in all categories of great power capability, it enjoys a preeminent role in international politics."[153] As Samuel P. Huntington puts it, "The United States is clearly the only country that could be called a superpower."[154]

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[151] Moul, p. 116.

[152] Kennedy, 1987. p. 151.

[153] Layne, "Unipolar Illusion," p. 5.

[154] Samuel P. Huntington. "America's Changing Strategic Interests," *Survival*, Vol. 33, No. 1 (January/February 1991), p. 6.

B. CASE ONE—BRITAIN AND THE EUROPEAN STATES SYSTEM

Although by no means a complete history of the two decades which followed the Crimean conflict, this case covers the major diplomatic events of those years. From the hypotheses, several behaviors are expected. First, in cases where alliances were sought, states should show sensitivity to the ideas of abandonment and entrapment as well as to the potential sovereignty costs of forming an alliance. Second, and as a result, the greater powers should exhibit the tendency to balance internally rather than externally. Conversely, where they play a role at all, the lesser powers should tend toward external behavior as a consequence of their limited options. Finally, as the largest power in the system, the balancing exhibited should be directed in the main against Great Britain. Each of these predictions will be discussed in turn.

1. The Costs of Alliance: Sovereignty, Abandonment and Entrapment

Among the great powers, the period from the end of the Crimean War until the Berlin Congress is remarkable for its lack alliances between the great powers. Other than various mutual guarantees of the independence of smaller states, the great powers themselves entered into only two alliances among themselves: The Convention of Schönbrunn in 1873 (Austria-Hungary and Russia), and the "Three Emperor's League." In the event, neither proved to be either very effective or particularly binding. Other attempts at forming alliance, primarily associated with the major conflicts of the period, were variously contravened by the costs involved.

Potential policy limitations are in evidence in the failure of France and Russia to come to an alliance following the Crimean War. Both states were interested in revision—France in the West and Russia in the East—but could not come to any agreement. As Bridge and Bullen relate:

> Napoleon III in the late 1850s was, like Polignac in the late 1820s, anxious to link Russian dissatisfaction in the Near East with French dissatisfaction in Europe. In one important respect, however, he modified the legacy of Polignac: whereas the latter had wanted a Franco-Russian alliance directed against England and Austria, Napoleon strove to maintain good relations with England at the same time as he attempted to establish closer relations with Russia. This meant that he could not offer the Russians a direct and brutal bargain: French support for Russian revision in the Near East in return for Russian support for French revision in the west. The most he could offer was French support to rid Russia of the Black Sea clauses at another five-power congress. In fact, therefore, the two powers could not agree to work together; all they could do was promise not to work against each other.[155]

Policy limitations also prevented Austria from finding allies, either in war or peace. Specifically, Austria's commitment to maintaining its sovereignty in all of its provinces left it unable to find allies. In 1859, both Prussia and Russia were sought as allies against the French. The Prussian price for alliance was recognition of its dominance in Germany, the Russian price was Austrian support for Russian advances in the Near East, but ". . . the Austrians would not modify their policy of defending the empire in its entirety."[156] Alliance hopes therefore foundered on Austrian

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[155] Bridge and Bullen, p. 88.

[156] Ibid., pp. 91-2.

unwillingness to compromise their policy. The result of that unwillingness was that "[a]fter 1856 the Austrians were forced to rely on their own strength and their treaty rights to maintain their empire in its entirety."[157]

Similarly, fears of entrapment also hindered alliance formation. France searched for an ally against Prussia prior to the Franco-Prussian War. Austria, following its defeat in the Seven Weeks War, looked to be an excellent partner. In fact, "[i]n the event of a French victory, Beust [foreign minister] was prepared to join the wining side to revise the settlement of 1866, but he was determined to avoid another defeat for Austria. In his negotiations with the French Beust wanted friendship without binding commitments."[158] "The French had also expected the goodwill of Russia; this too was denied them."[159] Its potential allies' fear of being caught on the losing side prevented France's balancing externally.

Fears of abandonment were not groundless, as abandonment was a part of the international relations of the day. In the War of 1859, France was the ally of Sardinia in its attempt to secure from Austria the province of Venetia. That support had been duly paid for with the promise that Sardinian possessions of Nice and Savoy would be ceded to France. The French, however, shaken by their losses at Solferino, and lacking public support, decided unilaterally to quit the war. "Without consulting his ally, then, Napoleon began secret negotiations with the Emperor of Austria and,

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[157] Ibid., p. 89.

[158] Ibid., p. 107.

[159] Ibid., p. 110.

finding him as eager to abandon the war as he had been to bolt it, concluded an armistice with him at Villafranca on July 11."[160] Under the terms of the treaty, Austria retained Venetia, and thus violated the agreement with Sardinia—" the Italians," according to Langer, " never quite forgave him for his defection."[161]

This sort of behavior could perhaps be described (charitably) as flexibility of alliance. Although not so stark a defection, France again demonstrated its flexibility prior to the Seven Weeks War. French and German discussions had taken place at Biarritz in October 1865, and "while no formal agreement was made, there seems to have been an understanding that France would remain neutral in the case of a German war."[162] In June of 1866, however, they negotiated with an agreement with Austria, under the terms of which "they [the Austrians] agreed to cede Venetia to the French who in turn transferred it to Italy. This belated recognition of the realities of the plight which faced Austria brought little in the way of consolation; the Italians still entered the war to fulfill their alliance obligations to Prussia and the French made no positive offers of support."[163] The French thus pledged neutrality to Prussia, made an agreement with Austria to support them in exchange for Venetia, and then, in the end, did nothing.

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[160] Gordon A. Craig. *Europe, 1815-1914*, (Fort Worth: Holt, Rinehart and Winston, 1971), p. 197.

[161] Langer, p. 6.

[162] Craig, p. 211.

[163] Bridge and Bullen, p. 104.

That "flexibility" worked to the disadvantage of the French in the Franco-Prussian War, however. Although "it was felt in Paris in 1870 that Austria and Italy could be counted upon if a crisis arose,"[164] Austria, as discussed above, could not chance another defeat by Prussia. As for Italy, "even though many Italians were grateful to Napoleon for his services to their country, they were unwilling to commit themselves to go to war for a government whose troops still denied them the possession of Rome. Since Napoleon dared not alienate Catholic opinion in France by withdrawing the garrison that had protected the pope since 1849, the Italian alliance, like the Austrian one, went aglimmering."[165] Italy paid the French back for 1859 when "[i]nstead of coming to the assistance of the French the Italians consoled themselves with the occupation of Rome."[166]

Russia also played the game. Prior to the Russo-Turkish War of 1877, Russia secured "Austrian neutrality, which was more important than anything else for the Russians"[167] with the Treaty of Budapest. "The price had been high, but Austrian abstention was hardly less than a *sine qua non* for waging the war at all."[168] The terms of that treaty were completely revoked by the Treaty of San Stefano, which, in part precipitated the Congress of Berlin.

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[164] Langer, p. 7.

[165] Craig, p. 235.

[166] Langer, p. 11.

[167] Ibid., p. 122.

[168] Ibid.

2. Internal Efforts

If the costs of alliance proved high to the great powers of the mid-nineteenth century, internal efforts to enhance their power would be an option on which they could rely. Since the power of Great Britain was to a large extent based on "modern, wealth producing industry, with all the benefits which flowed from it,"[169] efforts by the other powers in increasing their industrial output would be one way to measure their reliance on that option (see Table 1)[170].

	1856	1878	% change
Great Britain	28.1	47.3	68%
Austria[171]	---	---	---
France	38.1	47.4	24%
Italy	32[172]	44	38%
Prussia	11	28	254%
Russia	8.8[173]	18	105%

Table 1. Indices of Industrial Production (1913=100)

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[169] Kennedy, 1987. p. 152.

[170] Data from *European Historical Statistics, 1750-1970*, by B. R. Mitchell (New York: Columbia University Press, 1976).

[171] Data for Austria unavailable.

[172] Data from 1861.

[173] Data for 1860.

Although an index of industrial production does not measure industrial output relative to other powers (rather it measures a states level of industrialization relative to itself) the pace of each country's industrialization can be shown to be increasing. That increase was especially rapid in Germany, the power which more than any other challenged Britain's hegemony directly. Anderson notes that "Germany's economy expanded spectacularly in the middle 1850s; and though the rate of growth fell somewhat in the 1860s it remained very high."[174] That fact meant that, due to its internal growth, the Prussian government "need not fear the financial strains of war; the campaign against Denmark in 1864 was paid for out of ordinary government revenues."[175] "Britain," as Layne notes, " was the first world power and it was the model other rising powers sought to imitate as they climbed to great power status. In other words, the sameness effect was very much in evidence."[176]

Given that there was no practical way to dramatically increase the population of a state through the natural process, the other way to balance "internally" was through territorial aggrandizement. Acquisition of additional territory would increase the landmass as well as the population of a state, both important determinants of a states power. It should not be surprising, then that each of the powers was interested at a minimum in the protection of its territories, and most attempted to expand them.

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[174] Anderson, p. 28.

[175] Bridge and Bullen, p. 97.

[176] Layne, "Unipolar Illusion," p. 21.

France acquired Nice and Savoy, and desired at various times Belgium and Luxembourg. Austria's insistence on maintaining those provinces which were under its control led to the War of 1859, contributed to the Seven Weeks War, and determined its policy in the Balkans. The most successful "aggrandizers" in Europe were, however, Prussia and Italy.

According to Moul's power capability index, Prussia was the smallest of the European powers in 1856, but by the Congress of Berlin had surpassed Austria and Russia, and was effectively the equal of France.[177] As a result of the Seven Weeks War, Prussia was "larger, more populous and richer than all the other German states combined."[178] The further annexations of Alsace and Lorraine after the Franco-Prussian War meant that by 1871, "[i]n terms of material power, Germany was dominant on the continent."[179]

The story of Italy is similar, though it was not as successful as Germany. Through its efforts in achieving national unification, however, Italy became recognized as a great power when it had until that time only been a geographic expression. Where the population of the largest Italian state, the Kingdom of Naples, was less than seven million in 1857, united Italy represented some twenty-eight million persons by 1878. Although "Italy was the most recently recognized great power and

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[177] Moul's power capability percentage shares are given in the appendix to "Measuring the Balances of Power."

[178] Bridge and Bullen, p. 105.

[179] Rosecrance, 1963, p. 125.

the one whose status was the most in question as a result of her unhappy military past,"[180] her internal efforts were what brought her to that point. The result to the balance of power of both of these efforts was that "[t]wo major peoples of Europe, the Germans and the Italians, had come together in nation states, and could now be counted as forces for stability rather than disruption."[181]

3. Balancing Against Britain

The tendency of the great powers in the mid-nineteenth century was to act alone, and the states which provided for their own security most effectively did so through internal efforts. "For the protection of their essential interests," according to Professor Craig, "the powers preferred to rely on their own resources."[182] It is held that the effect of the system is that the actions of those states in providing for their own security should result in their power balancing against that of the hegemon—in this case Great Britain. Because the theory is clear that this result should occur independently of the policies of the balancers, the concept is difficult to measure. One indication, however, in spite of that specification, would be examples of an appreciation, or fear, of that power.

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[180] Craig, p. 250.

[181] Michael Howard. *War and the Liberal Conscience*. (New Brunswick, NJ: Rutgers University Press, 1978), p. 52.

[182] Craig, p. 248.

France exhibited just such an appreciation. France desired control of Belgium, Russian support for which could have been purchased by French support for revision of the treaty of 1856. England, however, had its interest in the maintenance of Belgium's independence, and France was "[d]enied this opportunity by fear of England."[183] Russia too, appreciated Britain's power. As Bridge and Bullen note, "[s]ince the Crimean War, the Tsar was convinced that he was facing a British offensive on a world-wide scale."[184] The result was that "[i]n the fifteen years after the Crimean War the British and the Russians ceased either directly or indirectly to cooperate."[185] Russian efforts in the Caucasus, Central Asia, and over the Straits were all directed against British power.

The case of Prussia/Germany is clearer. According to Christopher Layne, "Germany's rise to world power status was most obviously a direct response to Britain's hegemony. . . ."[186] According to William Langer, "[t]he Germans came to resent British power and even British efforts to maintain their position unimpaired."[187] The British, too, felt the threat which was posed by Germany and the others. In reference to German victories in 1871, Disraeli said "The balance of power has been

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[183] Bridge and Bullen, p. 88.

[184] Ibid., p. 117.

[185] Ibid., p. 89.

[186] Layne, "Unipolar Illusion," p. 21.

[187] William L. Langer. *The Diplomacy of Imperialism, 1890-1902*, 2d ed. (New York: Alfred A. Knopf, 1965), p. 416. Quoted in Layne, "Unipolar Illusion," p. 22.

entirely destroyed, and the country which suffers most, and feels the effects of this great change most, is England."[188] England was also acutely conscious French and Russian activities. As Kennedy relates, "Russia, recovering from the Crimean war, seemed [to the British] as restless in Asia as she was ambitious in the Balkans. . . [and] France's moves over Egypt gave fresh grounds for concern as the construction of the Suez Canal steadily progressed."[189]

C. CASE TWO—THE U. S. AND THE POST-COLD WAR WORLD

The nineteenth century case showed the preference of great powers toward internal balancing, while the lesser powers played a limited role in the international system. Two factors which were not present in the mid-nineteenth century should work to redress that imbalance somewhat. First, "[t]he accepted norms of international conduct in the postwar restrict the use of direct force against the weak states. . . "[190] (also limiting the nineteenth century option of territorial aggrandizement). Second, the presence of nuclear weapons offers states a new means to achieve security that is disproportionate to their population/GNP. From the theory, then, the expected behavior of states is to balance internally, given the means.

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[188] Langer, 1955, p. 14.

[189] Paul Kennedy. *The Rise of the Anglo-German Antagonism, 1860-1914.* (London: George Allen & Unwin, 1980), p. 17.

[190] Handel, p. 176. See also Appendix B, pp. 265-276.

Those means now include developing weapons of mass destruction, a capability that expands the group of countries that possess the means to balance internally.

Testing the behavior of states in the post-cold war international system presents several problems. In spite of the break up of the Warsaw Pact, the world's alliance structure still reflects that of the cold war. NATO is still in place and Japan is still under the security wing of the United States, accounting for five of the seven great powers. It is difficult to measure the balancing choices of the great powers in a multipolar world given that the structure of the bipolar one is still, to some degree, in place. In addition, the post-cold war international system has only been in place for five years which, due to the time lag in statistics being made available, creates a problem in data acquisition.[191] The break up of the Warsaw Pact and the dissolution of the Soviet Union have already, however, created new balancing choices for several countries and any loosening of the security ties of the West could create many more. The choices made by these "balancers" could have a significant impact on the future of international relations.

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[191] I prefer to use the sweeping changes in Europe of 1989 as a starting point. Given that, the first post-cold war data points should appear in 1990—yielding four years of data. The most recent published statistics (World Bank's *World Tables, 1994* and the UN's *Statistical Annual*) are, however, those for 1991 thereby cutting the available data to two years. That time span is too short and too close to the cold war to provide meaningful measures of post-cold war behavior.

1. Costs of Alliance

The nineteenth century case showed the non-monetary costs associated with alliance. In the current era the monetary cost can be more readily assessed. States were chosen and grouped according to three criteria. First, the sample was limited to the upper fifty per cent of states based on GNP rank order.[192] Second, that sample was reduced by limiting inclusion to those states with some significant level of industrialization, defined as industrial production making up at least twenty-five per cent of GDP. Not surprisingly, there was a high degree of correlation between GNP and industrialization. Both of these steps were taken in order to produce a sample that was not only manageable, but which also represented states of some level of power, and possessing some potential for production of sophisticated weaponry. These states were then grouped according to whether they were in a security alliance or not.

Military expenditure as a percentage of Gross National Product (ME/GNP) was selected as a reasonable measure of a state's internal effort to provide for its security, and 1991 data was used. That cost was then compared between states that are part of defensive alliances and states which are not. Data for Iraq, Kuwait, Saudi Arabia,

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[192] Data on GNP and ME are primarily from *World Military Expenditures and Arms Transfers, 1991-1992* (Washington, U. S. Arms Control and Disarmament Agency, 1992). Level of Industrialization measures are taken from *World Development Report, 1993* (published for the World Bank in, Oxford: Oxford University Press, 1993). Information on alliances is drawn from several sources, including: *Treaties in Force, 1994* (Washington: U. S. Department of State, 1994), *Lambert's Worldwide Directory of Defense Authorities* (Washington: Lambert, 1984), and *The Statesman's Yearbook, 1994-95* (Brian Hunter, ed. New York: St. Martin's, 1994).

and the UAE were not considered in order to control for the Gulf War. Data for the Ukraine, Belarus and Kazakhstan were not available.

The data shows that the mean spending of aligned countries was 2.85% of GNP, and those of non-aligned countries was 4.20%. This difference is even more pronounced if the neutral states of Austria, Sweden and Switzerland are excluded; raising the mean spending of non-allied countries to 4.67%. It seems clear then, from this "snapshot" of data, that there are economic benefits from joining defensive alliances.

Fears of abandonment and entrapment, however, still exist. The fear of entrapment certainly is playing a role in the hesitancy of the West to extend security guarantees to the former members of the Warsaw Pact as well as former Soviet Republics. Asmus, et al, show the nature of that fear by offering an example: "A situation in which a country like Germany would extend a security commitment to Poland through the WEU, but not through NATO, could destroy the Atlantic Alliance. For Washington it would create a situation like that which existed among the European powers prior to World War I—where the entangling commitments of a country enjoying an American security guarantee could draw the United States into a conflict over which it had little if any control."[193]

Abandonment also plays into a state's decision making processes. The motivation for the French development of their independent nuclear force was at least

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[193] Ronald D. Asmus, Richard L. Kugler and F. Stephen Larrabee. "Building a New NATO," *Foreign Affairs*, Vol. 72, No. 4 (Sept/Oct 1993), p. 35.

partially fear of abandonment. Wilfrid Kohl, in explaining that development writes that "a growing French awareness of the dangers created by excessive strategic dependence on the United States" was a contributory factor.[194]

2. Balancing in the Nuclear Age

The idea that states will develop nuclear weapons to provide internal balance in the nuclear multipolar age is a difficult one to test. The emerging multipolarity has as of yet not developed to the point where any prediction that it will or will not happen can be proven, but that is the nature of prediction. As a method of testing, the tendency for non-allied states to develop or not to develop WMD as a method of balancing will be looked at. Difficulty again appears. The pervasiveness of the superpower struggle ensured that one or both superpowers at one or another time coveted nearly every state, but currently none of these states is in an unequivocal security alliance. Again disregarding declared neutrals and stipulating the same level of industrialization, The following states were coded as being non-aligned: China (PRC), India, Taiwan, Poland, Indonesia, Czech Republic, South Africa, Romania, Iran, Israel, Hungary, Algeria, Bulgaria, Libya, Egypt, Nigeria, Morocco, North Korea, Iraq and Tunisia. The question is, what is the tendency of these states to develop WMD? Of this list, ten are known, or suspected of either possessing or be attempting

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[194] Wilfrid Kohl. *French Nuclear Diplomacy*. (Princeton: Princeton University Press, 1971), p. 3.

to develop WMD.[195] Statistically, a fifty percent distribution is meaningless, but in the real world, a fifty percent chance that a country would seek WMD as a security alternative could be very meaningful. It may be too soon to tell what the former Soviet clients/Republics will do in the long-run. Movement toward NATO has been their general characteristic, but, particularly if rebuffed by the West, those "[f]ormer Soviet clients may at once be more desperate (lacking a superpower patron) and more autonomous (lacking a superpower to restrain them)."[196]

3. Balancing Against the United States: The Breakup of NATO?

Glenn Snyder wrote in 1984 that "It follows that those who see NATO's current crisis as heralding its collapse tend to confuse cause and effect. Although the disagreements have arisen from a variety of proximate causes, they persist largely because the alliance *cannot* break up. Since NATO is a product of the bipolar structure of the system, it cannot collapse or change basically until that structure

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[195] China, India, Taiwan, South Africa, Iran, Israel, Libya, Egypt, North Korea and Iraq. All except Egypt have, had, or tried to develop nuclear weapons. See Lewis A. Dunn, "Containing Nuclear Proliferation," *Adelphi Papers 263* (London: Brassey's for the IISS, 1991), pp. 6-16. According to the Central Intelligence Agency list (as reported in *Newsweek*, September 19, 1988, p. 30) all also have or all developing chemical weapons. The "born proliferators" in the former Soviet Union (Ukraine, Kazakhstan and Belorus) also possess nuclear weapons, although they did not "choose" to develop them. Choosing to keep them, however, would give the same indication.

[196] the quote is from Jervis, 1991/92, p. 63. Poland, the Czech Republic, Slovakia, Hungary, Lithuania and Albania have applied for NATO membership. *London Times*, 9 January 1994, p. 14, col. f.

changes."[197] His 1984 observation is interesting because that bipolar structure has broken up, nullifying Snyder's condition.

George Liska notes that "[a]lliances are against, and only derivatively for, someone or something,"[198] an idea that is supported by both Walt's contention that states ally to balance against threats rather than against power alone"[199] and by Waltz's ideas concerning the breakup of war-winning coalitions.[200] Keohane criticizes the threat/capability "ambiguity," between Walt's and Waltz's theories, but the security dilemma tells us that threat *inheres* in capability.[201] The security dilemma refutes the notion that the benign nature of US hegemony will in some way constrain states from balancing against it.

The reduction, therefore of the threat which was posed by the Soviet Union will likely lead states, if not to become antagonistic toward it, to reduce their degree of commitment to the US, as they were driven into these arrangements as part of a balancing against that threat. "Already," notes Robert Hunter, "economic bargaining

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[197] Glenn Snyder, 1984, pp. 494-5.

[198] George Liska. *Nations in Alliance: The Limits of Interdependence*. (Baltimore: Johns Hopkins University Press, 1962), p. 12.

[199] Walt, 1987, p. 5.

[200] Waltz writes: "If two coalitions form and one of them weakens, perhaps because of the political disorder of a member, we expect the extent of the other coalition's military preparation to slacken or its unity to lessen. The classic example of the latter effect is the breaking apart of a war-winning coalition in or just after the moment of victory." (Waltz, 1979. p. 126).

[201] Robert O. Keohane. "Alliances, Threats, and the Uses of Neorealism," *International Security*, Vol. 13, No. 1 (Summer 1988), p. 171.

across both the Atlantic and the Pacific oceans has lost a key ingredient: the special weight in the scales, favoring the U. S. position, that was so for long provided by America's once-leading export, security."[202]

Robert Jervis notes that "[a] parallel—and more disturbing—test will be whether Germany and Japan, freed from the security and constraints of the cold war, will seek nuclear weapons, following the previous rule that great powers seek the most prestigious and powerful military weapons available even in the absence of a clear threat."[203] Michael May holds that "[t]here is no doubt that Japan could develop and field survivable nuclear forces. given its technological prowess, Japan technically could play the nuclear deterrence game as well as anyone."[204] Certainly Germany could also. Britain and France already possess the nuclear capability which would allow them to chart a more independent course.

If active balancing against the United States by its current allies is not yet apparent, Zakaria offers this reason: "America and, to a lesser extent Great Britain, followed policies that concentrated on essentials, building economic power at home and commercial links abroad. Each was the most important power of its time but did not try to destroy other great powers."[205] This does not change the fact, however, that

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[202] Robert E. Hunter, "Starting at Zero: U. S. Foreign Policy for the 1990s," *The Washington Quarterly*, Winter 1992, p. 32.

[203] Jervis, 1991/92, p. 47.

[204] Michael M. May, "Japan as a Superpower?" *International Security*, Vol. 18, No. 3 (Winter 1993/94), p. 185.

[205] Zakaria, p. 25.

"[m]any of the basic generalizations of international politics remain unaltered: it is still anarchic in the sense that there is no international sovereign that can make and enforce laws and agreements. The security dilemma remains as well, with the problems it creates for states who would like to cooperate but whose security requirements do not mesh."[206]

Dean Rusk said that "America's alliances are at the heart of the maintenance of peace, and if it should be discovered that the pledge of America was worthless, the structure of peace would crumble and we would be well on our way to a terrible catastrophe."[207] While it is not held here that America's pledge is worthless, the durability of America's alliances may be endangered from the systemic forces at play in the emerging multipolarity. Remember from the chapter on balancing, that states do not have to act with the motive or intent of balancing against the United States. The action of a state in an anarchic system to ensure its own survival will produce the balance.

"Even if the American economic position had not declined relative to its major allies," write Tucker and Hendrickson, "America's power would be diminished in a world in which economic power gradually displaced military power as the *ultima ratio* of state relations."[208] The economic success of America's current and potential rivals is in some ways the result of successful American hegemony. That hegemony,

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[206] Jervis, 1991/92, p. 46.

[207] Walt, 1987, p. 3.

[208] Tucker and Hendrickson, p. 6.

"though still unrivalled, has already begun eroding, largely from forces beyond its control—the uneven nature of international growth, the pace of technological change, and the free-rider advantages for other countries."[209] As more countries find themselves in a position to challenge that hegemony, more will.

[209] Zakaria, p. 27.

VI. CONCLUSIONS

This paper set out to examine the concept of balancing from the perspective of neorealist international relations theory. "[B]alance of power theorists from Ranke forward have persistently and persuasively shown that states facing an external threat overwhelmingly prefer to balance against the threat rather than bandwagon with it. This is primarily because an alignment that preserves most of a state's freedom of action is preferable to accepting subordination under a potential hegemon."[210] While neorealist theory joins other balance of power theory in predicting that systemic factors will drive states to balance against power, rather than bandwagon with it, it does little to explain whether a state would do so through internal or external means. The theory is quite clear is that in a bipolar situation internal balancing is the preferred option for the great powers. In a multipolar situation, however, those powers have the option of balancing externally through the mechanism of alliance formation.

With the current international situation moving from the period of bipolarity which was engendered by the cold war to one of multipolarity, the choices made by the great powers are once again open. The cold war not only provided the motive force for the balance of power which operated for its decades, but also constrained the actors of the second tier of states from developing their full capabilities. The necessity of maintaining alliance ties to either the United States or the Soviet Union

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[210] Walt, 1985, p. 15.

restricted the sovereignty of those states and now those restrictions will be less binding. Whether these states balance internally or externally could have far-reaching consequences for the future of the system.

Additionally, it was argued that nuclear weapons (and other weapons of mass destruction) serve to open up the balancing choices of lesser powers. Generally, as Handel argues, "[t]he attempt of a weak state to augment its own internal strength with external strength—that of another state, usually a more powerful one—is the result of necessity, not preference."[211] These new weapons, however, may allow the preference function to come into play for small as well as large states.

The nineteenth century case showed that great powers in a multipolar system tend to balance internally. Because the costs of alignment in terms of lost sovereignty and the fear of either abandonment or entrapment were frequently higher than those states were willing to pay, on the whole alliance was eschewed. That those states could do so was related to their ability to provide for their own security through internal means.

Related to that assertion, the data on defense spending shows that, at least for that snapshot look at it, that those states in alliances spend less on defense than those which are not. A more systematic look at defense spending in and out of alliances over a period of several decades would go farther to validate that point. The importance of that point, however, is this: the cost of balancing internally is greater

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[211]Michael Handel. *Weak States in the International System*. (Totowa, NJ: Frank Cass, 1981), p. 121.

than that of balancing externally. Given that, there will be states who, regardless of their preference, simply do not have the resources to effectively provide for their own security. That assertion, however, has different ramifications in a nuclear world.

In a nuclear world, it is held, more security can be purchased for one's defense dollar. No attempt was made to operationalize that particular concept, and such an attempt by another would certainly serve to clarify this position. What was done, however, was to look at those states which were outside the bipolar system during the cold war to see whether those states opted for nuclear weapons. The reasoning behind that is these states are internal balancers (if only by default) and had to decide what method would be the most effective for providing security. It was found that fifty percent of those states looked at either did develop, or were suspected of developing, weapons of mass destruction. If other states choose to balance internally, therefore, there is an indication that they too will seek WMD as a means of defense. Structural level analysis may, however, be underdeterminate in the case of Japan and Germany. In both instances domestic and international political forces could stay their hand.

The cases presented have, of course, shortcomings. The period selected for the nineteenth century case may not have been encompassing enough to present a clear picture of great power behavior. Alliance formation did, of course, play an ever-larger role in great power politics in the decades which followed the period in question. These events were not excluded with the intent of skewing the conclusions to show a preference for internal balance, but their exclusion may have done so. An

examination of that period in light of the hypotheses presented would be another useful test of the ideas presented herein.

The case of the current era presented its own set of problems. With the cold war only recently over, there are only a few data points available for observation. When coupled with the persistence of the alliance pattern established under bipolarity, it becomes very difficult to predict the balancing choices of the states in the system. Should the Western alliances continue for some period into the future, or if Russia or China were to enter into security guarantees with the United States, it would be safe to say that the theory's predictions about the preference for internal balance were incorrect. Both of those powers, along with Britain and France, are already able to provide for their own defense in some measure. Japan and Germany, though not currently in possession of nuclear weapons, clearly possess the capability to develop similar power.

Paul Kennedy wrote (in 1987) that

> [a]lthough the United Sates is at present still in a class of its own economically and perhaps even militarily, it cannot avoid confronting the two great tests which challenge the *longevity* of every major power that occupies the "number one" position in world affairs: whether, in the military/strategical realm, it can preserve a reasonable balance between the nation's perceived defense requirements and the means it possesses to maintain those commitments; and whether, as an intimately related point, it can preserve the technological and economic bases of its power from relative erosion in the face of the ever-shifting patterns of global production.[212]

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[212] Kennedy, 1987, p. 514.

What may be a more relevant question is whether it might want to. If states balance, they should balance all the more against preponderant power. If that balancing takes the form of the breakup of the current alliance structure (due to states preference for internal balancing) and the proliferation of WMD (due to their perceived cost effectiveness) the security position of the United States will not be enhanced.

Waltz points out that "[t]hrough all of the changes of boundaries, of social, economic, and political form, of economic and military activity, the substance and style of international politics remains strikingly constant."[213] Balancing in a multipolar world means that other great powers will continue to emerge and the capabilities, both economic and military, of lesser powers will continue to develop. The fact of easier WMD accessibility ensures that the actions of those smaller powers will have an ever increasing impact on the security of the United States.

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[213] Waltz, 1986, p. 329.

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