



Ellias Aghili Dehnavi

Foreign Policy of The 50 Stars

Different Angles of The U.S Foreign
Policy

To All the People who broke my heart!

Listen:

It beats even stronger!

And hey!

I'm still here!



Copyright © 2021 Ellias Aghili Dehnavi

Publisher: tredition GmbH, Halenreie 40-44, 22359
Hamburg, Germany

ISBN

Paperback: 978-3-347-25818-1

Hardcover: 978-3-347-25819-8

eBook: 978-3-347-25820-4

Printed on demand in many countries

All rights reserved. No part of this publication may be reproduced, distributed, or transmitted in any form or by any means, including photocopying, recording, or other electronic or mechanical methods, without the prior written permission of the publisher, except in the case of brief quotations embodied in critical reviews and certain other noncommercial uses permitted by copyright law. For permission requests, write to the publisher.

Preface

Systems and hypotheses help us sort out the climate of administration in a perplexing territory like international strategy. An assortment of ways of thinking exist about how to move toward international strategy -and specifically, foreign policy -, each with various thoughts regarding what "ought to" be done and finished.

These methodologies additionally shift when it comes to the human instincts, the number of different nations engaged with the U.S. foreign policy notions, and what the tenor of unfamiliar policymaking should be. They assist us with arranging the current U.S. ways to deal with numerous international strategy challenges' around the planet.

In the current book I have tried my best to represent and analyze different facets and nuances of the U.S foreign policy in a new way!

Enjoy reading; don't forget to drink your hot cappuccino!

E.A. Dehnavi

Part I

FORCE AND FOREIGN POLICY

Today there is a mistaken belief that force no longer serves America's interests well. This belief has three variants. First is the view that military power is less relevant because the terms of state competition now turn on economic rather than on military matters. The health and the competitiveness of the American economy are now the prime American interests, and they require economic, not military solutions. Too great a concentration on military power drains scarce resources and intellectual energy away from these vital matters. Second is the view that military power is less needed, because developments such as economic interdependence, the spread of democracy, and international institutions have rendered interstate relations, especially among the great industrial powers, more benign and easier to manage. These factors serve as functional equivalents for military power and make state relations much less dependent on it. Third is the belief that the dissolution of the Soviet Union has rendered an American forward defense posture anachronistic. Because the nation no longer faces an overarching military threat and because none is on the horizon, the United States no longer needs either its alliances with Japan and Western Europe or its troops in Eurasia.

If these three views are correct, then America's military power can be relegated to a largely residual role, good mostly for defending American territory. All that then needs to be said about an American grand strategy is this: bring all the troops' home, construct a good military defense of the homeland, and be done with the matter; If, however, military power has more versatility than the residual role of homeland defense, if it can be used to support a wider range of interests in peacetime as well as in war, if a forward defense posture still remains prudent, then grand strategy becomes more pivotal to American

interests, more complex in its design and implementation, and therefore more important to get right.

I take the second position, not the first. True, military issues no longer dominate the American foreign policy agenda, but that does not make military power of less value. True, threats to American interests are not as severe and intense as they once were, but that does not mean American interests are threat-free. True, economic issues loom larger than they previously did, but that does not mean that military power is wholly useless in dealing with them. Also, true, democracy is spreading, economic interdependence is growing, and international institutions are flourishing, but they cannot wholly fill the political vacuum created by the absence of an effective world government and the military power that would accompany it. For these reasons, I hold to two propositions contrary to the emerging conventional wisdom. I maintain, first, that military power is as vital to American statecraft as it has always been and, second, that a forward defense posture is as essential as it previously was.

In this article, my intent is not to argue that military power is the most important instrument of statecraft. That would be absurd. There is no "most important instrument." Rather my goal is to show that arguments about the severely diminished utility of military power are both wrongheaded and dangerous. They are wrongheaded because they misunderstand the subtle ways in which force influences politics; they are dangerous because, if acted upon, they could cripple American statecraft and grievously harm American interests.

There are two fundamental reasons why military power remains more essential to statecraft than is commonly thought. First, in an anarchic realm (one without a central government), force is integral to political interaction. Foreign policy cannot be divorced from military power. Second, force is "fungible." It can be used for a wide variety of tasks and across different policy domains; it can be employed for both military and nonmilitary purposes. If force is integral to statecraft and useful in many

policy domains, then military power will continue to play an important role in America's foreign policy, even when economic factors have become more salient and there is no clear and present danger to the United States.

In order to develop these points, I proceed in the following manner. First, I make the argument that force is fungible because of the central role that coercion plays in politics in general and in foreign policy in particular. Second, I present a counterargument, which asserts that military power is not all that fungible, and then show why it is wrong. Third, I analyze the two fundamental ways that force achieves its fungibility. Fourth, I draw some conclusions about what the United States can expect from its military power in today's world.

FORCE AND THE STATE WHERE LAW IS MISSED

In the state of Anarchy, force is integral to foreign policy because military power can be wielded not only forcefully but also "peacefully." The forceful use of military power is physical: a state harms, cripples, or destroys the possessions of another state. The peaceful use of military power is intimidating: a state threatens to harm, cripple, or destroy, but does not actually do so. To use military power forcefully is to wage war; to use it peacefully is to threaten war. Only when diplomacy has failed is war generally waged. Mainly in the hope that war can be avoided are threats usually made. For any given state, war is the exception, not the rule, in its relations with other countries, because most of the time a given state is at peace, not war. Consequently, states use their military power more frequently in the peaceful than in the forceful mode.

When used forcefully, the effects of military power are easy to identify. A state unleashes its military forces, and it either achieves its objectives or fails to. The adversary is defeated and coerced; or it remains victorious and unbowed; or the battle is fought to a draw. Used in war, force is a blunt instrument, but it can achieve decisive results if wielded properly. When used peacefully, states employ their military power in more subtle, and therefore in less well-defined ways. Used peacefully, military power is held at the ready, and its exact influence on political outcomes becomes more difficult to trace. The war-waging use of military power is akin to a powerful flood: it washes away all before it. The peaceful use of military power is akin to a gravitational field among large objects in space: it affects all motion that takes place, but it produces its effects imperceptibly. The effects of floods are dramatic and easy to pinpoint; those of gravity seem more mundane and are harder to discern. A flood demonstrates its effects by its presence; a gravitational

field, by its absence. Most of the time the effect of military power looks more like gravity than a flood; therefore, the usefulness of military power should not be equated simply with its physical use. Short of waging war or playing chicken in a crisis, then, military power shapes outcomes more by its peacetime presence than by its forceful use. Thus, to focus only on the physical use of military power is to miss most of what most states do most of the time with the military power at their disposal.

The peaceful use of military power may be less decisive than its wartime use, but that does not mean the peacetime effects are insignificant. To the contrary: the peaceful use of military power explains why it remains central to statecraft. Lurking behind the scenes, unstated but explicit, lies the military muscle that gives meaning to the posturing of the diplomats. Especially for great powers, but for the lesser ones, too, military power undergirds the other instruments of statecraft. Diplomacy is the striking of compromises by states with differing perspectives and clashing interests. There are many factors that go into the fashioning of diplomatic agreements, but central to each is fear about the consequences of failure. Fear of failure, combined with the knowledge that force can be used if agreement is not reached, help produce agreement. It is the ultimate ability of each state to use its military instrument that disciplines the diplomats. In this fashion the threat to use force plays the same role in bargaining among nations that the threat to strike plays in labor-management negotiations. The threat of either a destructive war or a prolonged strike represents a catastrophic breakdown that the parties would prefer to avoid. The fear of breakdown, together with the desire to avoid it, work to prevent it. Environments where nothing exists to prevent catastrophic breakdowns from occurring, other than the will of the parties, are called permissive realms. In such realms, the fear of failure becomes an essential ingredient for success.

In permissive realms the threat of breakdown need not be made explicit, but can be left implicit and still be effective. The threat to use force (or to strike) need not be articulated because all parties understand that it is an integral part of the situation. The threat cannot be disowned. The right to strike is an inherent feature of collective bargaining; similarly, the right of every state to resort to force is part and parcel of international politics.

In permissive realms, moreover, threats often can be more effective if left implicit. When one state makes an explicit threat, it raises the pressure on the state against which the threat has been directed to follow suit. Threat spawns counterthreat and, in turn, another threat, and so on. Voluntary agreement may be stymied in this escalatory process because threats stiffen the bargainers and harden their positions. Implicit threats, on the other hand, have a better chance of avoiding the escalatory dynamic and can more easily produce agreement, but only if the desire of both parties to avoid breakdown is strong. Whether explicit or implicit, threats remain an integral feature of statecraft, and it is these threats that produce the gravitational effect of military power. That in turn imparts to the other instruments of statecraft more "punch" than they would otherwise have. In short, in a permissive realm like anarchy, where implicit threats in here, force bolsters diplomacy.

This is an insight too often forgotten. It is also too often dismissed as no longer applicable because international conditions have supposedly changed. To dismiss the central role of force in a permissive realm is wrong, however, because force is an integral component of all political realms, whether permissive like international politics, or nonpermissive like domestic politics. To make the point, let us consider the role that force plays in the domestic realm and then compare its role there to the international realm. The comparison will show that governance domestically and statecraft internationally both require coercion based on force, but the latter realm needs more of it than the former.

Three factors produce effective governance within a state: legitimacy, commonality of interests, and coercion. Legitimacy means that the government, together with its rules and procedures, are widely accepted by the citizenry. Commonality of interests means that the citizenry share many of the same values and goals. Coercion means that the state possesses the power to punish transgressors of the rules. The exact blend of legitimacy, shared goals, and coercion varies among states and even within a given state over time. For our purposes what matters is not the various blends, but rather that there is an element of coercion in each of them. Force helps to create and maintain the political framework within which political interactions occur. Within a state, the law does not automatically enforce itself. Behind the force of the law lies the coercive power of the state. If the law did not require coercion, the state could disband its police force. The state may need to use its policing power infrequently and only against a small number of its citizens who break the laws. This does not mean, however, that the policing power is marginal to domestic order. People obey the laws they have legislated because they believe them to be both legitimate and enforceable. For our analysis, enforceability is key: the bulk of the citizens obey the laws because they believe that the few who do not will be caught and punished. Otherwise, if punishment were absent, the number of transgressors would grow, because the benefits of breaking the law would increase while the benefits of observing it would decline. To be good in a world when others are bad and when there is no sanction for being bad is to be at a severe competitive disadvantage. Therefore, the bulk of the citizens will obey the laws because they expect that the bulk of citizens will obey the laws. The policing power of the state helps create this expectation. It is the state's ultimate ability to coerce its citizenry that helps preserve the rules, the norms, and, most importantly, the 'predictable expectations which, in turn, mold everyday political behavior within its borders.

Coercion, therefore, is to a political framework what a political framework is to a market: the necessary, but not

the sufficient precondition for its effective functioning. An efficient market depends upon the expectation by its participants that the rules governing their economic interactions will be stable and fair. It is the political framework in which markets exist that provides these rules. Without such a framework, markets function poorly. If, for example, seizure of assets is arbitrary and frequent, private investment will be discouraged. If a state can alter the prices of goods at will, investments will be skewed. If no punishment exists for stock market fraud, then either fraud will become rampant, or would-be buyers of stock will need to hire their own stock fraud screeners. To function well, then, free markets must be embedded in a political framework that enforces the rules for stable economic exchanges. As the British historian E. H. Carr put it: "The science of economics presupposes a given political order, and cannot be profitably studied in isolation from politics."

Similarly, the study of politics cannot be profitably studied in isolation from coercion. Political structures, domestic or international, cannot exist apart from it. Within a state, if any group can get its way through the use of force, then public order will break down, might will make right, mafiosos will replace government, and constant warfare will ensue until lines are drawn, power balances are established, and uneasy peace ensue. When the coercive power of government breaks down, force becomes privatized. When force is privately held, it creates gangsterism; when publicly held, it creates government. It is a state's legitimate monopoly on the use of force that creates the bedrock condition for a stable domestic political order.

Thinking about the role that coercion plays in domestic affairs therefore helps us to understand why it plays an even larger role in a permissive realm like international politics. If force is an important element in politics within nations, then it must be all the more so for politics among nations. When interests clash domestically, matters usually do not get out of hand, because all sides know

that there is the ultimate discipline of forceful coercion by the state. When interests clash internationally, reasonableness, persuasion, and logic carry much less weight than they do domestically, because there is no central government standing in the background to enforce them. Instead, there are separate states, each of which possesses its own coercive power, although in varying amounts. International politics is not gangsterism, but it resembles it in at least one respect: all states have the need to be privately armed because there is no legitimate, public coercive authority above them. As Kenneth Waltz aptly put it: "In politics force is said to be the ultima ratio. In international politics force serves, not only as the ultima ratio, but indeed as the first and constant one." In domestic politics force has been subjected to central governmental control; in international politics it has not. Consequently, states in anarchy cannot dispense with something that even national governments cannot do without.

Thus, the fact that the great powers in this new era of international politics may physically resort to military power less frequently than in past eras does not mean that it is less useful to them. To believe that is to conflate the physical and peaceful uses of military power and to equate effect (infrequent physical use) with cause (little utility).

INSTRUMENTS OF POWER AND DIFFERENCES BETWEEN THEM AND SOLVING THE MISUNDERSTANDINGS ABOUT THEM

So far I have argued that force is integral to statecraft because international politics is anarchic. By itself, that fact makes force fungible to a degree. Exactly how fungible an instrument is military power, however, and how does it compare in this regard to the other power assets a state wields? In this section, I answer these questions. First, I make a rough comparison as to the fungibility of the main instruments of statecraft. Second, I present a counterargument that force has little fungibility and then critique it.

HOW TO LEARN ABOUT THE DIFFERENCES AND SIMILARITIES OF THE INSTRUMENTS OF POWER

Comparing the instruments of statecraft according to their fungibility is a difficult task. We do not have a large body of empirical studies that systematically analyze the comparative fungibility of a state's power assets. The few studies we do have, even though they are carefully done, focus on only one or two instruments, and are more concerned with looking at assets within specific issue areas than with comparing assets across issue areas. As a consequence, we lack sufficient evidence to compare power assets according to their fungibility. Through a little logic, however, we can provide some ballpark estimates.

Consider what power assets a state owns. They include: population—the size, education level, and skills of its citizenry; geography—the size, location, and natural resource endowment of the state; governance—the effectiveness of its political system; values—the norms a state lives by and stands for, the nature of its ideology, and the extent of its appeal to foreigners; wealth—the level, sources, and nature of its productive economy; leadership—the political skill of its leaders and the number of skillful leaders it has; and military power—the nature, size, and composition of its military forces. Of all these assets, wealth and political skill, look to be the most versatile; geography and governance, the least versatile, because both are more in the nature of givens that set the physical and political context within which the other assets operate; values and population, highly variable, depending, respectively, on the content of the values and on the education and skill of the populace; and military power, somewhere between wealth and skill, on the one hand, and geography and governance, on the other hand, but closer to the former than to the latter. In rank order, the three most fungible power assets appear to be wealth, political skill, and military power.

Economic wealth has the highest fungibility. It is the easiest to convert into the most liquid asset of all, namely, money, which in turn can be used to buy many different things—such as a good press, top flight international negotiators, smart lawyers, cutting-edge technology, bargaining power in international organizations, and so on. Wealth is also integral to military power. A rich state can generate more military power than a poor one. A state that is large and rich can, if it so chooses, generate especially large amounts of military power. The old mercantilist insight that wealth generates power (and vice-versa) is still valid.

Political skill is a second power asset that is highly fungible. By definition, skilled political operators are ones who can operate well in different policy realms because they have mastered the techniques of persuasion and influence. They are equally adept at selling free trade agreements, wars, or foreign aid to their citizens. Politically skillful statesmen can roam with ease across different policy realms. Indeed, that is what we commonly mean by a politically skillful leader—one who can lead in many different policy arenas. Thus, wealth and skill are resources that are easily transferable from one policy realm to another and are probably the two most liquid power assets.

Military power is a third fungible asset. It is not as fungible as wealth or skill, but that does not make it illiquid. Military power possesses versatility because force is integral to politics, even when states are at peace. If force is integral to international politics, it must be fungible. It cannot have pervasive effects and yet be severely restricted in its utility. Its pervasive effects, however, can be uniformly strong, uniformly weak, or variable in strength. Which is the case depends on how military power affects the many domains, policy arenas, and disparate issues that come within its field. At the minimum, however, military power is fungible to a degree because its physical use, its threatened use, or simply its mere

presence structure expectations and influence the political calculations of actors. The gravitational effects of military power mean that its influence pervades the other policy realms, even if it is not dominant in most of them. Pervasiveness implies fungibility.

In the case of military power, moreover, greater amounts of it increase its fungibility. Up to a reasonable point, more of it is therefore better than less. It is more desirable to be militarily powerful than militarily weak. Militarily powerful states have greater clout in world politics than militarily weak ones. Militarily strong states are less subject to the influence of other states than militarily weak ones. Militarily powerful states can better offer protection to other states, or more seriously threaten them, in order to influence their behavior than can militarily weak ones. Finally, militarily powerful states are more secure than militarily weak ones. To have more clout, to be less subject to the will of others, to be in a stronger position to offer protection or threaten harm, and to be secure in a world where others are insecure—these are political advantages that can be diplomatically exploited, and they can also strengthen the will, resolve, and bargaining stance of the state that has them. Thus, although military power ranks behind wealth and skill in terms of its versatility, it can be a close third behind those two, at least for those great powers that choose to generate large amounts of it and then to exploit it.

TO COMBINE THE STATE OF HAVING ENOUGH AND THE ABILITY TO EX- CHANGE SOMETHING

The view argued here—that military power possesses a relatively high degree of fungibility—is not the conventional wisdom. Rather the commonly accepted view is that put forward by David Baldwin, who argues that military power is of restricted utility. Baldwin asserts:

Two of the most important weaknesses in traditional theorizing about international politics have been the tendency to exaggerate the effectiveness of military power resources and the tendency to treat military power as the ultimate measuring rod to which other forms of power should be compared.

Baldwin's view of military power follows from his more general argument that power assets tend to be situationally specific. By that he means: "What functions as a power resource in one policy-contingency framework may be irrelevant in another." If assets are situationally or domain-specific, then they are not easily transferable from one policy realm to another. In fact, as Baldwin argues: "Political power resources...tend to be much less liquid than economic resources"; and although power resources vary in their degree of fungibility, "no political power resource begins to approach the degree of fungibility of money."

For Baldwin, two consequences flow from the domain-specific nature of power resources. First, we cannot rely on a gross assessment of a state's overall power assets in order to determine how well it will do in any specific area. Instead, we must assess the strength of the resources that it wields in that specific domain. Second, the generally low fungibility of political power resources explains what Baldwin calls the "paradox of unrealized power": the fact that a strong state can prevail in one policy area and lose in another. The reason for this, he tells us, is simple: the

state at issue has strong assets in the domain where it prevails and weak ones where it does not.

On the face of it, Baldwin's argument is reasonable. It makes intuitive sense to argue, for example, that armies are better at defeating armies than they are at promoting stable exchange rates. It also makes good sense to take the position that the more carefully we assess what specific assets a state can bring to bear on a specific issue, the more fine-tuned our feel will be of what the state can realistically accomplish on that issue. To deny that all power assets are domain-specific to a degree is therefore absurd. Equally absurd, however, are the positions that all assets are domain-specific to the same degree, and that a gross inventory of a state's overall power assets is not a reliable, even if only a rough, guide to how well the state is likely to do in any given domain. Assets are not equal in fungibility, and fine-tuning does not mean dramatically altering assessments.

What does all this mean for the fungibility of military power? Should we accept Baldwin's view about it? I argue that we should not. To see why, let us look in greater detail at what else he has to say.

Baldwin adduces four examples that purport to demonstrate the limited versatility of military power. The examples are hypothetical, but are nonetheless useful to analyze because they are equivalent to thought experiments. These are the examples:

Possession of nuclear weapons is not just irrelevant to securing the election of a U.S. citizen as UN secretary-general; it is a hindrance.

.... the owner of a political power resource, such as the means to deter atomic attack, is likely to have difficulty converting this resource into another resource that would, for instance, allow his country to become the leader of the Third World.