

Contention 1 is Proxy War

US military commitment is key to calming Saudi Arabia. **Sunik '18 of the German Institute of Global Studies** explains that as American commitment declines, Saudi assertiveness and militarization have increase as a direct result.

Indeed, **Roopera '17 of the Century Foundation** explains due to their profound fear and anxiety about Iranian hegemony, when Obama disengaged from the Gulf, Saudi Arabia adopted a hardline, aggressive foreign policy, starting a war and imposing blockades.

Sunik warrants that Iran challenges the Saudi leaderships' legitimacy through its demonstration of alternative forms of government, concluding that Saudi Arabia is willing to push back against any change to their power.

Toossi '18 of Princeton University furthers that today, because Saudi leaders feel they are the last Arab country standing in the way of total Iranian regional dominance, they believe any compromise is an acquiescence to Iran's regional power.

Thus, **McInnis '17 of the Daily Beast** writes that if America reduced military presence, Gulf states would be forced to contain Iranian influence themselves, concluding that because Saudi Arabia would not allow an Iranian proxy group on their border, Saudi Arabia would fund their own Sunni proxy forces to fight Iran.

History agrees. **Goldenberg '17 of Foreign Policy** confirms empirically that a lack of trust in the US led the Saudis to act more aggressively on their own out of a position of insecurity — arming groups in Syria, intervening in Bahrain, and launching their intervention in Yemen.

Overall, **Lovatt '18 of the European Council on Foreign Relations** finds there are 5 potential proxy conflict flashpoints across the Persian Gulf, including Qatar, Lebanon, Syria, and Iraq.

Any conflict escalation risks the lives of millions, as the **NRC '20** quantifies that any escalation in regional conflict would be deadly for aid lifelines on the brink of collapse, putting 42 million aid-dependent civilians at risk of death.

Contention 2 is Global Destabilization

Right now, the US has shown strong support for our allies. **Farouk '20 of Stanford University** reports that after the Soleimani strike, US credibility is renewed, even deepening cooperation with Saudi Arabia.

However, should the US pull from the Gulf, **Cook '19 of Foreign Policy** explains that reducing US presence would have global ramifications because it would force allies to doubt the reliability of the US, weakening our global alliances and partnerships that are required to compete with geopolitical rivals.

The Middle East is key to American power. **Trofimov '19 of the WSJ** finds that global leaders are watching America's behavior in the Middle East, with the region viewed as a litmus test for American power around the world.

Unfortunately, **Trofimov** concludes that if the US withdraws from the region, geopolitical rivals will expand: Russia will move into Ukraine and China will expand in the South China Sea.

Thus, there are 2 nuclear conflict scenarios that will erupt post-American withdrawal:

First is Ukrainian invasion

Stanovaya '19 of Foreign Policy reports that Russia has always wanted to take control of Ukraine, as it would both secure pro-Russia separatists in Eastern Ukraine and also block the country's Euro-Atlantic Integration.

Moreover, **Motyl '18 of the Atlantic Council** explains that although the faltering Russian economy cannot sustain a war, Putin cannot fathom the prospect of a good war going bad because he believes Russia is strong. Worse, in a bid to strengthen his legitimacy, his inner circle would easily convince him that a quick strike is imperative.

Unfortunately, **Motyl continues that**, if Russia invaded Ukraine, tens of thousands would die. Ultimately, the US would surely get involved, prolonging the war and separating Russia from the international economy. Economic disaster from the war would cause state failure within Russia.

Fisher '15 of Vox furthers that a Ukrainian invasion would likely become a larger conflict, concluding that a small war could escalate to nuclear conflict due to Russia's low bar for nuclear weapon use and because Putin is more dangerous than any Soviet leader since Stalin.

Second is the South China Sea

Romaniuk '19 of the Japan Times indicates that China's goal is to expand militarily and economically into the South China Sea, with the end goal of regional domination.

Unfortunately, **Owens '19 of the National Interest** finds that Chinese expansion into the South China Sea threatens the US's core economic and security interests, leading America to increase its military position and strength in order to combat China.

Problematically, **Kulacki '16 of the UCS** explains the lack of trust between the two could lead to the US or China to inadvertently escalate skirmishes to large military confrontations, concluding that one could launch a retaliatory nuclear attack if the other were to launch a conventional strike.

Overall,

Bressan '17 of Forbes quantifies that even a limited nuclear exchange would set off a global famine that could kill two billion people and effectively end human civilization by creating a nuclear winter by blocking all sunlight.

Thus, we negate: