



Withdrawing Empire

**A test of Structural Realism and Neoclassical Realism to
explain the withdrawal of US military presence**

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MA Thesis in International Affairs

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Abstract

Little work has been done to explain why the United States, a great power, would willingly withdraw its military presence from a much smaller country. In this thesis I attempt to explain why this happens in three cases by testing two major International Relations theories, Structural Realism and Neoclassical Realism. I provide two hypotheses based on each theory in the cases of Vietnam, Panama and Uzbekistan. Structural Realism is heavily based on behavior being influenced by capabilities and the pursuit of security and so I base my Structural Realist hypothesis on contracting capabilities. Neoclassical Realism argues that the pursuit of security is distorted by the domestic political system and pressures and so I base my Neoclassical Realist hypotheses on the perception of statesmen and domestic pressures. I find that the Structural Realist theory is inadequate to explain why the United States would withdraw from the countries studied, as its contracting capabilities in all cases are at most marginal. The Neoclassical Realist theory is much better equipped to explain these cases as domestic pressures and the perception of statesmen play a key role in the decision making in each case.

Útdráttur

Lítil vinna hefur verið gerð í að útskýra afhverju stórveldi eins og Bandaríkin hafa yfirgefið hernaðaraðstöðu sína frá mun minni og valdaminni löndum. Í þessari ritgerð er gerð tilraun til þess að útskýra við hvaða aðstæður þetta gerist í þremur völdum tilvikum með því að reyna á tvær vel þekktar kenningar alþjóðasamskipta; Nýraunhyggju og Nýklassíska raunhyggju. Gerðar eru tvær tilgátur við hvert valið tilvik, Víetnam, Panama og Úsbekistan. Nýraunhyggja er að stórum hluta byggt á að hegðun ríkja sé að miklum hluta stýrð af getu og ásókn í öryggi og því er Nýraunhyggjutilgátan byggð á samdrætti í getu. Nýklassísk raunhyggja byggist á að ásóknin í öryggi verði fyrir áhrifum stjórnmálakerfisins og innlendum þrýstingi og því er Nýklassíska raunhyggjutilgátan byggð á skynjun og skilningi ráðamanna, stjórnmálakerfisins og innlendum þrýstingi. Niðurstöður ritgerðarinnar er sú að Nýraunhyggjukenningin er óheppileg til þess að útskýra hegðun Bandaríkjanna þegar kemur að yfirgefa hernaðaraðstöðu í minni ríkjum þar sem í öllum tilvikum er samdráttur í getu Bandaríkjanna í mesta lagi minniháttar. Nýklassíska raunhyggjan er mun betri til þess að útskýra tilvikin þar sem innlendur þrýstingur og skilningur ráðamanna spilar oft lykilhlutverk í ákvörðunartöku málanna.

Preface

This thesis is submitted in partial fulfillment of the requirements for the degree of Master of Arts in International Affairs at the University of Iceland. It comprises 30 ECTS credits. My gratitude goes to my instructor, Professor Bradley Alfred Thayer for his advice, inspiration and constructive comments. I would also like to thank Jónatan Þór Halldórsson, Þórhalla Rein Aðalgeirsdóttir, Sverrir Steinsson, Óskar Örn Eggertsson and Gísli Freyr Eggertsson for their advice and for constructively commenting on drafts of this thesis. All remaining errors are my own.

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1. Introduction

The United States is by most accounts the world's most powerful state and has held that position unequivocally since the fall of the Soviet Union and arguably since before the Second World War. For the second half of the 20th century the United States and the Soviet Union were stuck in a Cold War with each other, an unparalleled stare-down between most powerful countries in the history of mankind. The Cold War between them made it clear who their real enemies were and for them both it was the most powerful and possibly the most destructive entity on the planet. Huge investments were required to gain any advantage over the enemy, so large that it often strained the economies of the superpowers (Boyle 1993, 201). But along the obviously strenuous relationship between the superpowers there were other conflicts and points of interests for both sides that demanded attention and presence. However, both during and after the Cold War between the superpowers they both saw fit to withdraw their military presence in often strategically vital countries (Gravel 1971, 662-664).

Why would a superpower withdraw its military presence from a country when under pressure to maintain its presence around the world? There are plenty of examples where both great-powers and superpowers withdraw their resources from a country that would seem a strategic asset. This thesis intends to explore these reasons through the lenses of two major theories of International relations (IR), Kenneth Waltz's theory of Structural Realism and Gideon Rose's theory of Neoclassical Realism. The primary aim of this thesis is to try to explain why in the cases examined the United States withdrew and to see which of the theories are better suited to explain their reasoning.

These two theories have two significantly different ways of looking at the realist explanation at how and why states behave the way they do. Neorealist theories is great at explaining the behavior of states and therefore the US on the basis that they are under great pressure from the anarchic system of the world to preserve their security to the best of their capabilities (Waltz, Theory of International Politics 1979, 103). The withdrawal of the United States presence from some of these countries while the Cold War was in full swing would therefore suggest a decrease in capabilities. The Neoclassical realist theory however, suggests that while under an anarchic system it is not the international system itself that dictates its behavior but rather the domestic politics of the country in question (Rose 1998, 147).

According to this theory the foreign policy can be influenced by the perceptions of capabilities by the political elite rather than by actual relative capabilities. By establishing what stated reasons are given by policy makers, economic and military resources of the time and in what historical context these decisions are made I will be able to test the theories on which one is better suited to explain the behavior of the superpower.

I will explain the cases in significant detail individually and the international situation surrounding each one. Then I will analyze the reasoning for withdrawal first with Structural Realist theory in foreground and then with Neoclassical realism, after which I will conclude in each case which is better suited to explain the withdrawal of the United States from the country. The theory of this thesis is that when it comes to a superpower withdrawal from a strategically viable location during a great power struggle the capabilities of the superpower are generally enough to maintain its presence but the domestic dynamics and the perceived capabilities will restrain the country and pressure a withdrawal. Therefore, in most cases the Neoclassical realist theory will be better suited to explain the withdrawal of a great power.

Under the presidency of Harry S. Truman, it became clear that the policy of the United States was to contain the Soviet Union and a large effort went into increasing US presence around the world (Boyle 1993, 60). There was significant military presence in places such as Vietnam and Panama and yet when still under the influence of the Cold War the presence of the US was withdrawn, albeit under significantly different circumstances. Then in the early 90s the Soviet Union collapsed under internal pressures leading to a completely different security environment. For a powerhouse such as the United States which had geared basically all of its security readiness towards preparing for a Soviet attack, this constituted almost as an identity crisis. The security environment also suddenly changed in the early 00s with the 9/11 attacks on US territory and a base in central Asia became very attractive. A new US base was opened in Uzbekistan but after being in use for only several years it was suddenly closed. In all these cases the US saw a reason to have a significant military presence and yet also withdrew it later on.

In the case of Vietnam, the United States fought a long and demanding war in order to maintain its presence in that part of the world and to obstruct the increasing influence of the Soviet Union. Despite significant losses and drain on resources the US was able to keep out the communist forces until they withdrew in 1973 as part of an effort to hand over the fighting

over to the South Vietnamese (Girling 1975, 325). The Panama case centered mostly on the agreement which was struck between the Carter and Torrijos administrations in 1977. The closure of the Panama Canal Zone was the most immediate effect resulting in the US handing the region surrounding the canal over to the government of Panama in 1979, although the final parts of the agreement was not implemented until 1999. This was still during the Cold War and the states in Latin America were still generally thought to be vulnerable to communist influence (Atkins 1989, 320). After the 9/11 attacks on the World Trade Center and the Pentagon there was suddenly great interest in establishing a presence in Central Asia for supporting military action in Afghanistan. Military presence was established in Uzbekistan shortly after the attacks and played a significant role as a hub for both military and humanitarian missions. The US paid significant and an important amount to the Uzbek government for the use of the base and yet were told to vacate the base in 2005 within a 6-month period (BBC News 2005). The cases of Vietnam, Uzbekistan and Panama were chosen because the US withdrawal from these countries all happened within different timeframes and in different context. This should give a wide enough variety of explanations for the US withdrawal and put the theories to a comprehensive test to explain the reasons for US withdrawal from these countries.

In recent years there has been risen a possible new challenger to the US as the sole superpower in the world. The economic rise of China has increased their weight in international politics by a huge margin and a number of people have predicted that the world is again heading into bipolarity and possibly a new Cold War. For this possibly new cold war the United States would have been likely to benefit from military presence on two flanks of China and its own southern flank. Even at the time China was an antagonistic, authoritarian major power and in the case of hard security it would seem from the outside that leaving these aforementioned places could have significant consequences.

This thesis will be divided into chapters where I will first explore and explain the theories of Structural Realism and Neoclassical realism. These theories are important as Structural Realism has often been considered one of the most, influential international relations theory and Neoclassical realism is arguably the most serious counterweight within the realist camp. What I shall do is to take these theories and try to use them to explain historical explanation of these cases. Second Chapter will be looking at the cases where the theories will be applied

and an attempt to evaluate which of the theories better explain the behavior of the United States in withdrawing from the aforementioned countries. In the last chapter the conclusion of the thesis will be presented and how it answers the research question, I will show which theory is better suited to explain the behavior of the US in these cases and hopefully show a method to accurately predict its behavior in the future towards similar cases.

2. Methodology

This thesis takes a look at three historical cases with two goals in mind. The first goal is to make an attempt to answer the question of why the United States, a great power, would withdraw from a smaller country that could have strategic value. In an attempt to answer that question, I will draw upon two major realism IR theories; Structural Realism and Neoclassical Realism. The secondary goal of this thesis is to answer the question of which one of these theories is better suited to answer the primary goal. In order to answer why the United States withdrew from these much smaller and weaker countries it is necessary to ask: what event caused the outcome in these cases?

There has been some criticism over the use of case studies because of the data collected is entirely subjected to the judgement of the researcher. In an attempt to counter this criticism, I have made an effort to use several accepted methods to increase the validity of the thesis, such as to use multiple sources where possible, and the use of established theories and the replication of tests between cases where it is applicable (Yin 2009, 41).

To answer whether “X was the cause of Y in case of Z” it is practical to employ a method of process tracing. Using pieces of evidence analysts can make inference to support or overturn descriptive and explanative hypotheses. These evidence can be causal-process observation such as the conditions necessary for an outcome to happen. The methodology of causal-process observations in conjunction with generalization is called process tracing (Mahoney 2012, 571). To evaluate a hypothesis about the causes for a specific outcome in a particular case two tests are very useful, so-called *hoop tests* and *smoking gun tests*. A hoop test proposes that a specific observation must be present for a theory to be valid; if they are missing then the theory is invalidated. However, if the observation is present then that does not definitively validate the hypothesis, although it might support it. A smoking gun test is quite the opposite; it suggests that given a specific evidence or observation, that hypothesis must be valid. However, if it is missing then it does not invalidate the hypothesis (Van Evera 1997, 31).

A major component of the Structural Realism theory is “*Capabilities*” and I will use combination of economic and military data collected from official organizations to determine whether the capabilities of the US are in decline. This determination of relative capabilities will be the major test of the structural theory (Mearsheimer, Structural Realism 2013, 78). The

Structural Realist theory will therefore in a sense be tested by the hoop test standards where if the evolution of the capabilities is not in line with the hypothesis then it must be invalid. To study the capabilities of the US during certain periods a statistical observation will be applied with the Structural Realist theory in the foreground. Integral to the theory of Neoclassical Realism is domestic politics and policy leader preferences (Taliaferro, Lobell and Ripsman 2009, 5) and to test these factors I will look at the domestic situations in light of the political system and the presidents and his closest staff's reasoning for the decisions made. The process tracing method and smoking gun test standard is much more applicable for the subjective kind of tests where if the domestic political system has profound effects on the process then it must be valid.

There are a number of limits to my thesis. Firstly, my narratives of the cases are simpler and more abstract than many others due to the focus on particular information and explanation rather than description. This may lead to simplification when looking at the causal-process observation (Kacowicz 2004, 108). Secondly this thesis may suffer from case selection bias since it takes a look at the United States foreign policy and is a product of society that is a long-term ally of the US. To combat any biases an attempt was made to select cases with strong explanatory strength. Thirdly this thesis is wholly reliant on secondary sources which makes the finding reliant on the accuracy on the sources used (Yin 2009, 42). As put forth above, attempting to counter this I used several sources when applicable. Fourthly the hypotheses I put forth are simplified and general which makes them useful for explanation but more prone to vagueness and counter examples (George and Bennet 2004, 130).

3. Theoretical framework

For the understanding of this thesis it will be essential to grasp the International Relations theories of realism and in this chapter I shall outline the two realist theories that I will be using to evaluate the behavior of the United States. I will start by going shortly into the background, assumptions, conclusions and internal logic of IR realist theory. Then I shall analyze further the key differences in Structural Realism and Neoclassical Realism and present a hypothesis from both sets of realist theories for the purpose of this thesis. In this hypothesis I will argue why a superpower might withdraw its military resources from a strategically important state from the theories point of view.

3.1. Realism

A good place to start is by shortly explaining the classical theory of realism to better understand the theories of Structural Realism and Neoclassical Realism. The realist theories have been around for a long time and are often connected to such historical figures such as Machiavelli and Carl von Clausewitz. It gained serious prominence after the Second World War when it seemed like IR theories, such as idealism, had resulted in a horror. It was elevated to its status with advocates such as Hans Morgenthau. In realist theory the states are the most influential players in the world system and the most important actions and outcomes happen in the context of competition between states (Haynes, et al. 2011). Conflicts and wars are a cold hard fact of life and according to classical realists, something that is impossible to banished or ignored, and will continue to happen because the system of the world is perpetually in a state of anarchy (Lebow 2013, 60).

Central theme to the realist theory, amongst many other theories, is the idea of anarchy. Anarchy in the context of International Relations is not supposed to mean chaos, disorder or riots in the street as it is often framed and many may take to understand it. Anarchy is an ordering principle and what it means is that there is no central government in the world. Within countries borders there is a clear hierarchy where the state sits usually comfortably at the top and is the supreme authority within its territory. However, above the states is no supreme authority, there is no central authority of the world. There is no entity to refer the issues of grievances to or anyone to enforce the laws that are agreed to, and to guarantee order in the international system. The sovereign state is almost by definition the most powerful organized group; no other entity wields as much power as them within their

territory. There can be variation of power between the states themselves. Classical realism argues that the pursuit of power is part of the human nature; human beings have always been trying to take what their neighbours have and to do that have been on a quest to surpass them in power. The emphasis in classical realism is largely on the subjective view of the human nature and that the truth of the concepts can only be found through the *“situation-bound interpretations of the analyst and the statesman”* (Ashley 1984, 231).

3.2. Structural Realism

The school of Structural Realism agrees with Classical Realism’s emphasis on power, national interests and agency of the state but it has some failings in modern scientific standards. Classical Realism is far too reliant on subjectivity of actors and their capability to influence the system and also ignores the importance of economic processes and capabilities and focused on political-military capabilities of states (Ashley 1984, 230-231). To avoid having to keep returning to the descriptive level and to be able to make a logical and valid generalization to explain events rather than simply describe them, then the aims, policies and actions of individual states may not be the central attention of a study. Unit-level study that takes into account every situation, motive and characteristics of the actor will lead to infinite generation of variables, which will have to be selected subjectively at the judgement of the author (Waltz, *Reductionist and Systemic Theories* 1986, 53). Focusing less on subjective attributes, Structural Realism focuses on rational explanations. It describes the conditions in which states exist and how these conditions affect international relations. The theory does not bother with the internal dynamics of a state. The internal politics of a state does not affect the structure of international politics; all states may become democratic but they will still exist in an anarchic world (Waltz, *Structural Realism after the Cold War* 2000, 10). A state is in a constant competition with other states for power and security, which can be explained by these Structural Realist assumptions about the world system (Mearsheimer, *Structural Realism* 2013, 79):

- Great powers are the main actors in the international realm and the system they operate in is anarchic. They operate without a higher, hegemonic powerbroker to enforce rules and agreements.
- All states have offensive capability and are able to inflict some harm on other states even if asymmetry is apparent.

- States are never completely sure of the intentions of other states. There is no real way of knowing if other states seek to alter the balance of power through force or are satisfied enough to not seek change through force.
- States' main priority is always survival; they will seek to maintain territorial integrity and autonomy. Other goals can be pursued but they will remain less important as naturally, no other goals can be pursued without survival.
- States are rational actors that are capable of coming up with solid strategies to maximise their probability of survival. However, they often operate with imperfect information and this can result in miscalculations, sometimes with disastrous consequences.

When all these factors are combined, states are stuck in a trap, a perpetual competition for survival that can only be secured by accumulating power. That power can come in many different forms such as military, political, economic etc., but in the end they all contribute to the capabilities of the state to affect the behaviour of other states. The states in the system are all searching for power in order to secure themselves and there comes in the problem of relative power and cheating. Structural realists assume the position that the anarchic international system applies to all states, regardless of their domestic political arrangements and cultural differences and they can therefore be ignored (Mearsheimer, Structural Realism 2013, 78).

Relative power is central to the Structural Realist theory; it is not enough that the state gains power but it must gain more power than the other states. Absolute gains are good but it does not increase the security of the state if other states are gaining more power, and so relative power becomes key. Because relative power is more important in the international context then cooperation between states becomes difficult. Even if international cooperation becomes possible, there is no authority to enforce agreements and cheating becomes prevalent (Grieco 1988, 497). Not all international cooperation is impossible however, since there is one type which directly benefits the security of the state and that is alliance building. Since there is a lack of a central authority in the system to protect states against hegemonic powers, states will try to form alliances to balance against any state vying for hegemonic status (Waltz, Theory of International Politics 1979, 116). Great powers are aware that they are operating in a self-help world and ultimately they must work to ensure their own survival and

put their interests before allied states of the often referred international community (Mearsheimer, Structural Realism 2013, 80). Historically, there has been a significant amount of balances of power where states form blocks to curtail the power of other blocks. The concept of polarity describes the distribution of power in the world where multipolarity accounts for several great powers, bipolarity accounts for two great powers and unipolarity accounts for a single great power in the system.

But then a question is raised: when is a state powerful enough to be secure in its survival? Structural realism can be split into two central ideas that differ on how much power a state would need or should pursue: offensive realism and defensive realism. According to the ideas of Kenneth Waltz and other defensive realists, there is such a thing as too much power for a state. If a state accumulates too much power, other states will ally with each other to balance against the aspiring state. Other states will band together in order to ensure their own survival and the rising state will always struggle to become more powerful than a large alliance. Therefore, by acquiring too much power the state has become less secure and might even face the possibility of destroyed. They also argue that the costs almost always outweigh the benefits, military struggle is risky and expensive and often with unsure results. There is also the factor of nationalism and other ideological factors make conquest and occupation even more costly, and an uprising of the native population will always remain and put pressure on the occupying state (Mearsheimer, Structural Realism 2013, 81).

On the other hand, offensive realists argue that having overwhelming power over possible threats is the best way to ensure survival. The pursuit of hegemonic status should be made if the possibility of acquiring it is realistic. An alliance against aggressive rising states is inefficient and will always be less than the sum of its parts. A coalition of states has a tendency of passing on difficult responsibilities or *buck-pass* them. An example of buck-passing might be a great power choosing to remain on the side-lines in a war in order to preserve its strength, while other great powers bear the costs of keeping a powerful adversary in check. This buck-passing could easily be used to the advantage of the aspiring state to create opportunities. Offensive realists also argue that the great power that starts hostilities is more likely to come out on top in the conflict. They argue further that a victorious state does not necessarily need to occupy a conquered state to gain advantage over it, they might simply break it up into smaller pieces (Mearsheimer, Structural Realism 2013, 81-82).

Structural realism on the other hand is not supposed to explain foreign policies of individual states but rather explain dominant patterns and tendencies in international relations (Waltz, Structural Realism after the Cold War 2000, 38-39). Structural realism differs significantly from classical realism on the front that classical realism requires a dizzying amount of information to explain the foreign policy of states, i.e. on individual statesmen and political condition of the case. However, Structural Realism does not, it tries to make large assumptions on the general behaviour of all states based on limited information. So Structural realism is not ideal to explain specific events or policies (Waltz, Theory of International Politics 1979, 72) but the structure of the international system as a whole and some might disagree that this method would tell us much about the theory or US policy. However, because in the thesis I will examine three cases of US foreign policy specifically, I believe it will be possible to examine if the behaviour of the Superpower conforms to the expectations of the Structural realism theory.

Structural Realist hypothesis: *A significant drop in the relative capabilities of the United States puts pressure to withdraw from bases that are not paramount to the security of US homeland.*

3.3. Neoclassical Realism

Kenneth Waltz explains in his book *The Theory of International Politics*, in which structural realism was originally introduced, that structural realism can only explain why states behave in a similar way, but cannot explain why states do not behave in identical ways (Waltz, Theory of International Politics 1979, 72). The theory leaves us unable to understand how international threats are assessed by policy makers, how ideas are translated into foreign policy and why states do not always show response to systemic incentives. Some scholars argued that while anarchy in the international system was present and affected behavior of states, the individual and the state was also present and also affected the behavior of states and that needed studying. Gideon Rose later dubbed them “Neoclassical realists” and they argued that anarchy is an important, yet permissive condition and not an independent causal force (Taliaferro, Lobell and Ripsman 2009, 7). Effectively this means that states are compelled

and incentivized by anarchy and distribution of power to pursue similar strategies creating patterns and making Structural realist predictions correct over the long term but uncertain at best in the short term.

As Gideon Rose explains; according to Neoclassical realism states foreign policy is shaped first and foremost by its rank in the international system and perhaps more explicitly by its relative power capabilities and that is what makes the theory realist. The theory also argues that the power capabilities impact on a state's foreign policy is significantly more complex than argued by Structural realism. That is because the systemic pressure must go through intervening variables at the unit level, and that explains why the theory is considered neoclassical (Rose 1998, 146).

Neoclassical realist assumption is that states are not on an endless quest for increased security but rather they assume that states are responding to anarchy by trying to control and shape the external environment in which they reside. Regardless of how states define and decide on their interests they are much more likely to want more external influence than less and therefore pursue ways to achieve it and to the extent that they are able to do so (Rose 1998, 152). The theory of Neoclassical realism argues that anarchy actually gives considerable leeway for states to define their security interests and the relative distribution of power simply sets guidelines for a state's grand strategy. Anarchy affects the foreign policy of states and perhaps pushes them in certain directions but it does not dictate it and the policy could be any of several choices with significantly different results. The assessment of power and intentions of others will still rest in the hands of people and that will always be difficult and any miscalculation can have long reaching consequences (Taliaferro, Lobell and Ripsman 2009, 7). So the theory argues that the relative amount of their capabilities will influence and shape the ambition and size of their foreign policy. As their relative power, or the perception of it, increases they will seek more external influence and as it shrinks they will scale back their ambitions and activity (Rose 1998, 152).

The problem is that there is no clear or immediate "transmission belt" linking the capabilities of a state to foreign policy as is assumed by the theory of Structural realism. Although the scope and ambition of the foreign policy is driven predominantly by the relative capabilities of the state but that the systemic pressure must be translated through intervening unit level variables such as policy makers, perceptions and state structure (Taliaferro, Lobell

and Ripsman 2009, 5). Foreign policy choices are made by leaders and the elites i.e. people, and it is their perception of the capabilities that are more important rather than the actual and physical resources and capabilities (Rose 1998, 147). Decisions on the behavior of the state will be made by people and therefore what they think the state is capable of is what dictates the behavior rather than its actual capacity. This might lead to the state overreaching and undertake operations that are beyond its capabilities but that sometimes happens in foreign policy. As an example of overreaching it is easy to point to ambitious invasions of foreign states that result in failure, such as the German invasion of the Soviet Union or the Iraqi invasion of Iran.

The perception will however in all likelihood follow actual capabilities in some regard as their perception will be based on reports and descriptions by specialists, so their information is unlikely to stray too far from the truth. Neoclassical theory argues therefore the importance of both independent and intervening variables that combine to produce particular foreign policies (Rose 1998, 153). The theory argues that states highest policy priority is national security and that those charged with making the national security policy are the *de facto* top level policy makers within a state (Taliaferro, Lobell and Ripsman 2009, 25).

This group of top level policy makers is often referred to as the *executive*, that will in all likelihood consist of the head of government, key ministers and key officials, and they will have access to information that would be unavailable to most others and in a unique position to assess the capabilities and restraints of the state. While the executive is often largely autonomous from the rest of society it will usually be compelled to bargain with other domestic actors to be able to enact policies or utilize resources (Taliaferro, Lobell and Ripsman 2009, 26). These domestic actors are much more perceptible to the media and general feelings of the society and therefore in the short term and in a crisis situation, objective information might be unavailable and the margin of error therefore larger.

The executive will have privileged access to information such as of national threats and capabilities and therefore will have different focus and preferences even from their own social group that is outside the government or even just outside the executive. The political arrangement of state will also affect its behavior since it will influence how easily the executive will be able to enact policy or access the societal resources required to implement foreign

policy (Taliaferro, Lobell and Ripsman 2009, 281). It should be much easier for an authoritarian government with a strong hold on power to make a quick and possibly more effective foreign policy decision than an unpopular democratic minority government that has to bargain its way through anything less than an imminent existential threat. For a government like the United States which has separation of powers and checks and balances ingrained not only into the constitution but also into the mindset of its people, the domestic political situation might require a significant brokering before a foreign policy is implemented.

Neoclassical realism hypothesis: *The domestic political system of the United States restrains the foreign policy making, turning perceived weakness of US capabilities into withdrawal of US military presence.*

Table 3-1

Theory	Epistemology and methodology	View of International system	View of the Units	Underlying Causal logic	Dependent Variable
Classical Realism	Deductive theorizing;	Somewhat important	Differentiated Non-Monolithic	Power distributions & Internal Factors > Foreign policy	Foreign Policies of states
Neorealism	Deductive theories; competitive hypothesis testing using qualitative and sometimes quantitative methods	Very important; inherently competitive and uncertain	Undifferentiated Monolithic	Relative power distributions > International Outcomes	International political outcomes
Neoclassical Realism	Deductive theorizing; competitive hypothesis testing using qualitative methods	Important; implications of anarchy are variable and sometimes opaque to decision makers	Differentiated Non-Monolithic	Relative power distribution > Domestic constraints and elite perceptions > Foreign policy	Foreign policies of states

(Taliaferro, Lobell and Ripsman 2009, 20)

3.4. Capabilities

The capabilities of states in the realm of realism is a highly uncertain category that can be very difficult to define. Capabilities are also often regarded as very volatile equation and often simple numbers can be deceiving. Good example of that is that number of tanks or soldiers might look intimidating but the tanks might be obsolete and the soldiers might lack training

and suffer from low morale. There is also the need to look at the capability of sending supplies to the where it is needed; tanks and planes become useless without fuel and soldiers can spend an excessively large amount of ammunition in a frightfully short amount of time, and without which their usefulness drops by an awful lot. In an attempt to quantify and predict the power and capabilities of a state we will be relying on severable variables; military expenditure, number of military personnel, gross domestic product (GDP), relative GDP to the gross world production and relative growth of GDP.

Military expenditure and the number of military troops will be included because the number of people that an army can field tells a lot about its capacity to project force and military expenditure relative to the number of troops tells a significant story about the quality and quantity of equipment and training that said troops will receive. GDP will be included because that tells a lot about what structural realists dub latent power (Mearsheimer, Structural Realism 2013, 78). Latent power acknowledges that there is more to power than just the soldiers and the equipment that they carry, that is the socio-economic components that go into creating the military power wielded by a state. This latent power is essentially the potential a state has to create military power and for that the GDP is a very useful tool to evaluate the status of the country's wealth and its capacity to build war materials. GDP is the sum of the gross value by all producers resident in the country's economy, plus any product taxes and minus any subsidies that are not included in the value of the product (World Bank 2016). There are generally two kinds of GDP calculated, current and constant. Current GDP is the value of the GDP calculated at the selected years currency value, so the current GDP in of a selected country in the year 2000 would be calculated at the value of whatever currency is being used in the year 2000. Constant GDP then is the value of the GDP at a constant rate, so if looking at a country's GDP in the year 2000 but using the constant value of 2014 would produce different results because the value of the GDP would be calculated in the value of whatever currency selected in the year 2014. Having these two indicators can be useful when considering the effects of inflation on the economy.

GDP relative to the world is measured since realism emphasizes that relative power is essential and not absolute power (Mearsheimer, Structural Realism 2013, 79-80). In most cases the GDP relative of a great power relative to its great power rivals would be sufficient. With a global superpower such as the US however with the largest economy in the world by

far it would also be appropriate to compare it to the entire GDP of the world. GDP growth is important for the purposes of Neoclassical Realism because slow growth or recession can have severe domestic affects as many economic variables are conditional on the continued growth of an economy. Slowing growth or recession is very likely to affect the availability of jobs and opportunities leading to social and political pressures (Brydsten, Hammarström and Sebastian 2016, 2) which in a democratic society such as the United States is likely to constrain the capability of the political elite and policy leaders to form and implement foreign policy.

4. The Case of Vietnam

4.1. The Case

In 1883 a treaty was signed that formally ended Vietnamese independence and Vietnam became a French colony. French settlers gained control of the most productive farmlands and native farmers were either evicted from their land or made into laborers, the French created government monopolies in many necessities and even profited from opium sales to the Vietnamese resulting in widespread addiction (Isserman and Bowman 2009, 11). During the Second World War, the French were defeated by the Germans in Europe. During the period Japan was an ally of Germany and used the opportunity to station troops and naval resources in the French Indochina and finally take full control over the country (Karnow 1983, 126). Even before the war, nationalism was growing in Vietnam. After the war it had reached new heights and France was incapable of quelling the calls for independence. Communist forces fought a guerilla campaign against the French and were able to reach favorable ceasefire agreement in 1954. The following Geneva Accords achieved independence for Vietnam from the French that same year. As part of the agreement the country would be divided in two with Communist led government in the north and a loyalist government under the Emperor in the south. The two halves were then to be united after a unified government election in 1956 (Asselin 2011, 173). Before the reunification election was possible, there was a referendum in the south in 1955 which effectively made such as an election impossible. The referendum turned the south into a republic, removing the emperor fully from power and a few days later declaring the south an independent country with no intention of honoring the agreement reached in the Geneva accords. The new South Vietnam government favored American sponsorship over the French and the last French troops were withdrawn in April 1956 (Karnow 1983, 213-214).

Beginning in 1955, the South Vietnam government started an anti-communist campaign with arrests and executions. Around the same time, small-scale communist anti-government fighting began but with little overall impact on the country. Within several years however, the fighting intensified and the government forces were often out-fought by significantly smaller communist guerrilla forces called the National Front for the Liberation of South Vietnam, also known as the Viet Cong. In March 1965, the United States started a bombing campaign of North Vietnam after an attack on a small base and later in the same month dispatched a force of marines to the Vietnam, signaling the start of offensive US ground

operations in Vietnam (Davidson 1988, 345). The fighting in Vietnam kept escalating until it hit its high mark with the Tet offensive in early 1968, when the North Vietnamese army alongside the Viet Cong attacked over 100 urban areas. Although initially shocked at the scale of the attack, the South Vietnamese forces, alongside the Americans, were able to fight them off with thousands dead on both sides. At the time of the Tet offensive, the US military had nearly half a million soldiers, marines, airmen and sailors in Vietnam fighting alongside 685.000 military personnel of the South Vietnamese government, half of which were army regulars (Villard 2008, 1).

During the 1968 presidential election, President Lyndon B. Johnson did not seek reelection after the Vietnam War had sapped his popularity significantly. Richard Nixon won the election and took over as president in 1969 on a ticket of de-escalation in Vietnam and an end to the military draft in the US (Karnow 1983, 612). Both peaceful and violent protests against the war were almost commonplace in the US by that time, especially in the colleges and universities, sometimes even resulting in the shutdown of entire state university structure (Buzzanco 1999, 106-107). Nixon believed that by ending the draft he would remove one of the more antagonistic points of the Vietnam policy for young men and therefore reducing the tensions within the United States (Nixon 1978, 356). The United States needed to get out of the war but they could not simply leave and loose the South Vietnamese to communist forces. The Nixon doctrine, or the policy of Vietnamization as it was also called, was beginning to be implemented. The Nixon doctrine was policy of strengthening the South Vietnamese forces so that they would be capable enough to take over the defense of South Vietnam territory by themselves (Girling 1975, 325).

Nixon also started to decrease troop numbers and in 1970 he announced that his administration would bring the troop numbers down by roughly half by early 1971. In the 1972 presidential election, the Vietnam War became once more a central elections issue and Nixon's opponent, George McGovern, campaigned on a platform of complete withdrawal. Nixon however won the election quite comfortably, taking 49 of the 50 states and more than 60% of the popular vote (Peters and Woolley 2016). Peace negotiations were ongoing in 1972 and by the end of the year an unsteady agreement had been reached. Soon though, both sides demanded changes to the agreement and the deal fell through. To force the government of North Vietnam to the negotiations table, an extensive bombing campaign on the North's

economic and industrial capacity was initiated and at the same time pressure was exerted on the South's government to agree to any negotiated deal. New agreement was reached in 1973 where the territorial integrity of the country was guaranteed, national elections in both North and South were to be called designed after the Geneva accords of 1954 and the US would withdraw within a timeframe of two months (Young 1991, 279).

The North government was allowed according to the agreement to keep supplying the Viet Cong but only on a one-to-one basis, i.e. to replace expended materials. The Communist government thought that the deal favored them with the US gone but just before the agreement came into effect the US gave a large amount of resources and materials to the South Vietnamese government (Davidson 1988, 730). The last US combat troops then left Vietnam on March 29th 1973, roughly two months after the peace agreement was signed (Treaster 1973). Soon however, the North Vietnamese were able to stem the tide and at the end of the year were in a position to launch an offensive. By early 1974 they had retaken much of the ground lost in earlier years and even though the South Vietnamese government had significant material advantage, much of their war materials, such as tanks and armored cars could not be used, partly because of the high price of oil due to the war of Yom Kippur at the bottom of the Mediterranean. Corruption within the South Vietnam military was rife and after the US forces left, so did much of the work and social agitation in the largest urban areas soon became plenty. Because of these successes and advantages, the North Vietnamese military launched a decisive attack in March 1975 and by April 30th Saigon had fallen (Karnow 1983, 660-669).

4.2. Testing the Structural Realist Hypothesis

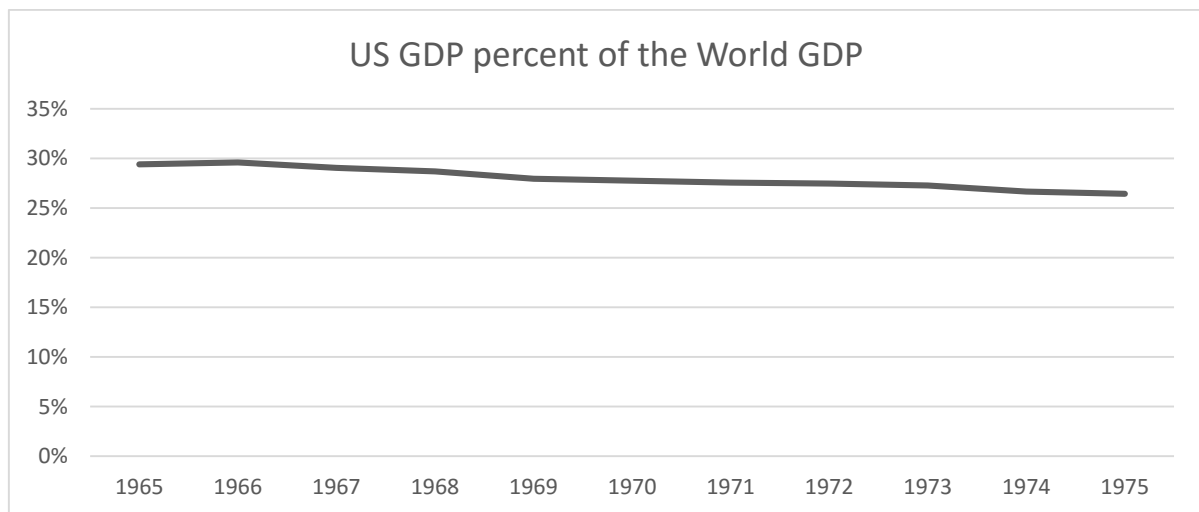
Hypothesis: *The structural theory argues that the relative capabilities of the US in the 1970s were less than in the 1960s and to save resources and shore up the security of the United States homeland a withdrawal was the rational action.*

The structural realist hypothesis argues that the Vietnam was a drain on the diminishing capabilities of the United States and therefore a decrease in security for the state. Withdrawal was a way to save resources that could be used elsewhere to improve the security of the US

against their superpower rivals, China and especially the Soviet Union. To confirm this hypotheses, we need to take a look at the capabilities of the US and whether it was diminishing in reality or whether the United States was capable of supplying their ally in the Southeast Asia and maintaining a military presence.

Taking a look at the economic capacity of the United States, it is evident that it was not in a recession during these years. In the period of 1965 to 1975, the GDP of the United States when counted at both current and constant (2005) United States Dollar (USD) increased significantly (World Bank 2016). When counted in current US dollars the economy grew from 744 billion USD in 1965 to 1.430 USD in 1973. When counted at constant rate the economy of the US grew every year from 3.568 billion USD in 1965 to almost 4.984 billion USD when it withdrew in 1973 but was starting to stagnate at 4.953 billion USD in 1975 when Saigon fell (World Bank 2016). With the economy increasing by almost 40% in size at the end of the conflict, it becomes hard to argue that the United States was experiencing any kind of economic recession or diminishing economic capabilities. When considering the relative aspect of the economic power of the US's great power rivals, the GDP of the Soviet Union in grew from 468 billion USD in 1970 to 587 billion USD in 1975 (United Nations Statistics Division 2015). This mean the Soviet economy grew significantly in the five-year period but still more or less maintains the same relative size to the economy of the US in 1970 and 1975 or roughly 12% of the US GDP. The People's Republic of China grew from 120 billion USD in 1970 to more than 159 billion USD in 1975 (United Nations Statistics Division 2015), which also marks a significant economic growth but relative to the US only a slight increase relative to the US GDP. The US economy relative to the size of the rest of the world GDP contracted marginally from 29% 1965 to 27% in 1973 at the time of withdrawal and to 26% in 1975. The US therefore was not experiencing an economic decline in the period, not in absolute terms and marginal relative to its rivals.

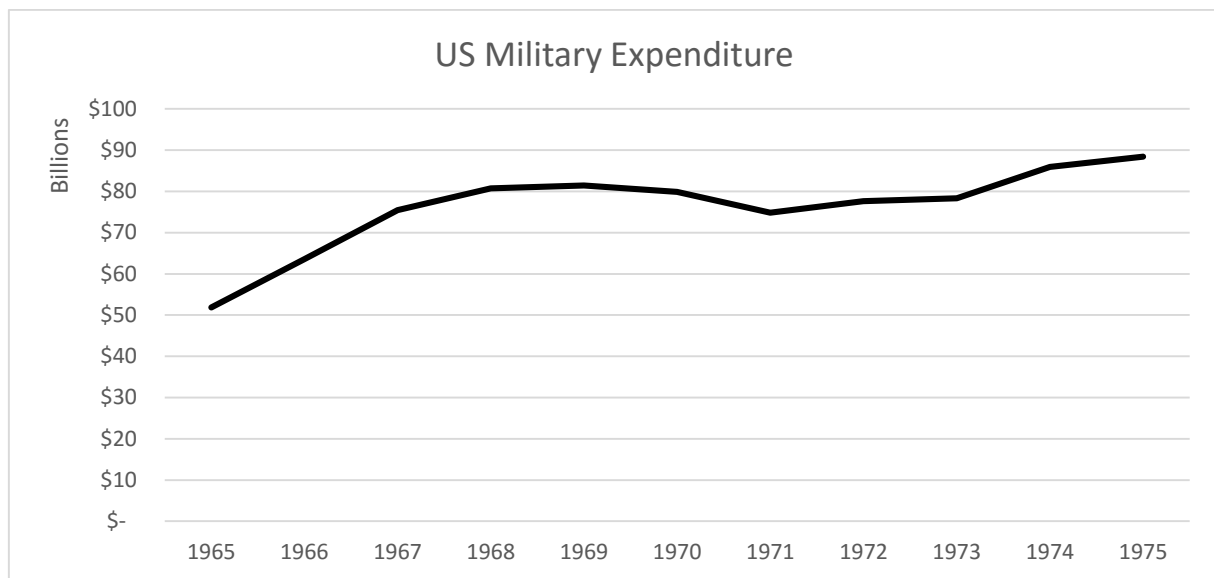
Graph 4-1



(World Bank 2016)

Military expenditure of the United States during the period of 1960 to 1975 increased significantly from the 45.4 billion USD (2011 constant) to 88.4 billion USD (Stockholm International Peace Research Institute 2015). During the period the most increase happened during the period of 1965 and 1969 when the expenditure grew from 51.8 billion USD to 81.4 billion USD or 57% in just 5 years. It should be noted that 1965 marks the year when US started offensive ground operations and 1969 was the year when Nixon took over as president of the United States. Military expenditure of the US then decreased slightly in 1970 and again in 1971 to a low of 74.8 billion before increasing again in 1972 (Stockholm International Peace Research Institute 2015). Although the military expenditure's slight decrease in these two years might be considered a momentary weakness, the subsequent increase in the following years show that at worst it was a very short lived weakness and still a noticeable increase since the 1965 expenditure when US offensive ground operations began in Vietnam. With some estimates at roughly 14 billion USD for the bombing and ground campaign in Vietnam combined in 1968 (Davidson 1988, 430). The 14 billion constituted 17.5% of the military expenditure for the year but only 0.15% of the US total GDP that year so although a significant portion of the available funding to the military it was hardly a drain on the US economy. The military personnel of the US had significant upswing in the period as well with less than 2.5 million people on active duty in 1960 but reaching a high point in 1968 with more than 3.5 million people on active duty before decreasing to less than 2.2 million in 1975 (Defense Manpower Data Center, Department of Defense 2015).

Graph 4-2



(Stockholm International Peace Research Institute 2015)

In the case of Vietnam, it is perhaps more importantly to the structural realism theory the capacity of the US military to defeat the enemy military. During the 1965-1973 the US was winning its battles by a frighteningly large margin and for example defeating the Tet offensive by the Viet Cong and the NVA in 1968 relatively efficiently (Davidson 1988, 475). Despite being a complete surprise the US and South Vietnam forces destroyed more than half the attacking forces, killing 35 to 45 thousand enemy soldiers while losing only 4 thousand themselves (Henkin 2014, 316), majority of which were Vietnamese with little over a thousand US troops losing their lives (Davidson 1988, 591). The US and South Vietnamese were also able to repulse the Easter offensive in 1972 with the US using almost exclusively only air and naval power with devastating effect on the NVA forces (Davidson 1988, 704-705). The US lost a total of 58 thousand people in Vietnam during the years 1964-1975 (Department of Veterans Affairs 2015) while the North Vietnam forces lost between 1-3 million in 1965-1975 to the war (Hirschman, Preston and Loi 1995, 807).

4.2.1. Structural Realist Theory Finding; ***Rejected***

The Structural realist theory maintains that states are the only unit that is worth looking at, they are rational and that which is most important for states is security and that security is

attained only through power and capabilities. If the US is a rational actor then the need to keep South Vietnam as an ally was a rational decision made to stop the spreading of communism throughout the Southeast Asia and beyond, to further the security of the US and increase the capability of its armed forces. The withdrawal of US forces from South Vietnam in 1973-75 becomes hard to explain by the theory of structural realism. The economy of the US was growing and during the period of 1960-1975 the GDP of the US more than tripled, the military expenditure increased significantly and the number of military personnel was increased as the demand increased. There was no decrease in capabilities in the US and it won battle after battle, inflicting almost 20 kills on the enemy for every US soldier lost. The capabilities and the relative power of the US was much greater than that of the North Vietnam. If the North Vietnamese government was capable of keeping the war going indefinitely then so was the US government on much larger scale. The structural theory must therefore be considered insufficient in explaining the withdrawal of US forces from Vietnam and the effective abandonment of its ally.

4.3. Testing the Neoclassical Realism Hypothesis

Hypothesis

The US domestic political system put too much constraints on their capabilities and allowed perceived weakness by the population to influence the president and other policy leaders resulting in an unwinnable war where withdrawal was the only perceived solution.

The Neoclassical realist theory argues that the state of anarchy and the capabilities of the United States pushed it in a certain direction but it was the constraint of the domestic politics that determined the outcome of the Vietnam case.

The commander in chief of the United States armed forces is almost by definition a capable politician and aware of how to sway the masses. The Presidents of the US are acutely aware that a prolonged military intervention in foreign country can be very costly in both material and political terms. They know that the rally effect is temporary, unreliable and that staying in a foreign war with no immediate security threats to the mainland US will almost without a doubt turn against them (Dueck 2009, 144). President Nixon was aware that even

though opinion surveys showed that most voters were willing to give him opportunity to deal with Vietnam, popular support would quickly erode as the war dragged on (Karnow 1983, 594). As with any democratic state, the executive in the US is forced to engage with any number of interest groups, normative considerations, electoral pressures and, especially relevant in the case of Vietnam, public opinion. Within the US the constraints of domestic politics on foreign policy can be especially apparent with the political system deliberately divided between the executive and the legislative and there is a noticeably healthy civil society there (Dueck 2009, 147).

However even with the combination of these constraints the policy leaders in the US have considerable room to maneuver, although congress can set the final limits in which the foreign policy must be guided, these limits are usually generous and rather flexible. In a military intervention the president automatically will be in a superior position to any domestic opponents in terms of information, position and prestige. The president of the United States is usually successful in building up domestic support for any major military enterprise and in the early phase of an intervention a significant part of the American people will follow the president's lead (Dueck 2009, 147-148). The president is therefore neither completely constrained nor completely free to conduct his foreign policy but rather somewhere in between. The president cannot be said to have been forced into any major foreign policy decision since he is given a fair amount of room to operate. It cannot be said that it is primarily for domestic reasons either, circumstances put pressure on him but the way to go forward has to be chosen, they do not happen automatically (Dueck 2009, 149-150).

Lyndon B. Johnson had been a hawkish spokesman as vice-president in the Kennedy administration and he believed that the United States had to exhibit strength, avoid appeasement and more importantly, contain communism where possible (Dueck 2009, 157). Preventing a communist takeover in South Vietnam became an established objective for his administration but as the environment in Vietnam kept deteriorating, this objective dictated that escalation was the only way forward (Dueck 2009, 158). In the context of the Cold War, America and Congress during the early 60s communism was viewed with concern and distrust and the president's strong stance on containing communism in Vietnam was very likely to garner support. However President Johnson was afraid that an all-out war in South East Asia would undermine his reelection and his efforts in the domestic sphere, as he himself put it he

did not want “that bitch of a war” to destroy “the woman I really loved – The Great Society” (Kearns 1976, 251).

In order to try and diffuse any major political backlash that a full out war would have the buildup in Vietnam became gradual and piecemeal, the bombing campaign was tightly restrained and any action in Vietnam came with a caveat. He knew that the voters were unenthusiastic about the prospects of war in Vietnam and during the election campaign in 1964 he played down any US involvement South East Asia but waited until after elections to make preparations for military escalation in the region (Dueck 2009, 161). Due to these restrictions that the policy makers set for themselves in order to retain support of the voters the US was not able to bring its full military potential to Vietnam and bring the conflict to quick ending. This in turn set the stage for a grinding war that seemed without an end and a slow but never-ending stream of US body bags coming from a country half-way across the world.

The first battles of the war seemed to have all the markings of great victories, the communist forces lost around two thousand men to the US losses of three hundred. The enemy was crippled and General Westmoreland was sure that his search-and-destroy missions would grind down the enemy forces. His reasoning was flawed however since the US public did not equate the lives of the Vietnamese with their own. This stream of dead young men who were often drafted into the army, was inevitably going to invoke passion and anger in the American people (Karnow 1983, 480). What made the domestic situation worse was that many of these men were draftees and often did not want anything to do with war or war making. This is exemplified in the fact that after the Nixon regime stopped the draft, demonstrations against the war were noticeably much less enthusiastic (Davidson 1988, 729).

The war effort was however marred by continuous protesting in the US against the war and due to the political system in the US the president had to keep at least one eye on the antiwar movement within his own borders (Karnow 1983, 479). There were several factors why this war was especially marred by demonstrations rather than much costlier wars such as the Second World War or the Korean War. There was no sense of winning, no clear end goal in this war and hence there was no sense of getting closer to the end. Even the Joint Chiefs argued that under the restrictions put on the military there was no hope of winning (Davidson 1988, 514).

Already in the first days of the Nixon regime the focus was not on how to win the conflict but on how to get out of it (Davidson 1988, 587). This simply seemed like a war where men were fighting and dying in an effort to allow a corrupt South Vietnamese government to desperately hold on to power (Karnow 1983, 323-324). Congress was under serious pressure to put a halt in the war effort and was coming ever closer to crossing the line and legislating the US out of the war effort entirely on the terms available, hampering Kissinger's ability to negotiate (Davidson 1988, 714-715).

Probably the single most influential variable in the equation however was the media, having almost unrestricted access to warzones they painted a grim picture of life in Vietnam. The media held such power over the course of the war that one US general reportedly said that the single largest mistake of the war was not imposing censorship on the news media (Davidson 1988, 489). One noticeable example of this is the Tet offensive, a large scale offensive by the Viet Cong in tandem with the NVA and was met with South Vietnamese and US ground troops and US bombers. The US media painted a picture of defeat of the South Vietnamese and horrendous losses by the United States (Davidson 1988, 484), in reality the South Vietnamese were able to stop and repulse the attacks after overcoming the initial shock and US air power proved decisive and overwhelmingly powerful against the enemy. The images streaming directly into American living rooms showed war in all its brutality. Since the television crews were American, the only side images the people at home got was of US troops, with occasional South Vietnamese, receiving the brunt of the attacks and getting killed (Horten 2011, 35).

The North Vietnamese were very well aware of the effects this was having the United States homeland and although the Tet offensive and many others were tactical defeats, they could be considered strategic victories for North Vietnam. The *dich van* program (action among the enemy people) of the North Vietnam government saw the antiwar dissidence in the US as another front in the war (Davidson 1988, 590). President Nixon believed that the domestic antiwar movement in the US was not just having political effects but also having significant effect on the war capabilities of the military, effectively draining the morale of the army as the draft brought in more and more soldiers that had been "infected by antiwar attitudes" (Nixon 1978, 356). Whether this was true or not is up for debate but it is clear that

this influenced his attitude towards the war and the need to both bring it to a closure and to further insulate the military from such unwanted influence.

Major theme in every presidential election in the US during the Vietnam conflict was on how to end the conflict. None of the solutions offered was about defeating the communist Vietnam but rather on what grounds to leave the South Vietnam, abandonment or attempts at graceful withdrawal. The Nixon campaign won the election on the graceful withdrawal ticket but without any concrete plan on withdrawal and only came forward four months after taking office (Davidson 1988, 587). Already giving up demands that the NVA would withdraw from the South before the US would start recalling troops and started pushing for so-called "*Vietnamization*." *Vietnamization* referred to strengthening the South Vietnam government to be able to resist the communists and allow the US to withdraw and save face in the international community (Karnow 1983, 593).

The perception became that the US was fighting a disastrous war but unlike the general population, the president and the policy leaders were in an exclusive position to access information about the goings of the conflict. They knew that US military was much more capable than the NVA and had much clearer picture of what was going on and the overall success rate of battles (Taliaferro, Lobell and Ripsman 2009, 26). It must be argued therefore that much rather than the capabilities or the perception of capabilities for the president and the top policy makers what shaped their decision was the domestic political system of the United States that constrained and shaped their decisions. The president must have been fully aware that the United States was winning the battles and was quite capable of holding North Vietnam at bay in the South if the troops there were given the support that was well within the grasp of the US economic juggernaut. The domestic political situation at home did neither allow for enough time to build up the South Vietnamese nor for the continued stay of US troops in Vietnam (Karnow 1983, 480). The earlier experiences were also important in this and it is important to note that in the early stages of the conflict president Johnson was reluctant to use the full capability of the United States in the Vietnam conflict. He hesitated because only a decade earlier the United States had drawn China into conflict by behaving rashly and throwing their full weight around and he wanted to avoid another such scenario (Boyle 1993, 153).

4.3.1. Neoclassical Realist Theory Finding:

Affirmed

The United States had the capabilities to stay and to combat the NVA indefinitely unlike the NVA, however the conflict became a major issue in domestic politics in the US. Electing against a full out war against the North Vietnamese but in favor of a small, slow buildup of forces in an effort to hold onto his political currency which resulted in a much more prolonged war. The political system of the US gives the voice of the population significant power over their policy leaders through the division of power and a vast, active and well-funded civil society.

Although initially not being such a hot issue but as the conflict stretched on and the media images started to pour in the population inevitably began to turn against the conduct of the war. The president had make concessions on the conduct of the conflict in order to push through other domestic matters which he believed to be of more importance than a far-away conflict that was creating the headlines and getting the attention. The constraints put on the war effort created the perception of an unwinnable war with only one solution, withdrawal.

5. The Case of Panama

5.1. The Case

In 1903 the United States supported a revolt for the independence of Panama from the government of Colombia and even going so far as to block government ships from sailing to suppress the revolt. When Panama gained independence later that year the US was quick to recognize the new government and make a deal to build the Panama Canal. Part of the deal was also taking over administration and defense of the Panama Canal Zone, which is to say the immediate area around the canal, indefinitely. The Panamanians protested this agreement quite vigorously but to no avail because if they had refused to sign it then the US would have withdrawn its support and signed an alternative agreement which would have meant the end of an independent Panama (Carter 1982, 152-153).

This issue was hotly debated in Panama and many there fervently opposed it and argued that this was a clear breach of sovereignty. The United States formally took over the building of the Panama Canal project from the French in 1904 and in little over ten years later it was finished, formally opening on August 15th 1914. During the Second World War the US had built a number of military installations outside the Canal Zone to protect the canal from the attack and after the war had ended they signed an agreement with the government allowing them to keep it but there was strong popular opposition and the Panama National Assembly refused to ratify the treaty, forcing the Americans out of the installations outside the Canal Zone (Atkins 1989, 331). The Americans saw the canal as a national pride, a gift from the US to the world but the Panamanians saw the Canal Zone as a constant reminder of inequality between the US and Panama and their respective peoples (Conniff 1992, 96-97). Then on January 30th the whole situation culminated with a riot that was met by US soldiers stationed in the Canal Zone. When the riots could finally be put down and the crowds dispersed, dozens of Panamanians and four US soldiers were dead (Byrne 2014). The opinion in Panama was clearly not in favor of the northern behemoth as those Panamanians who were killed in the riots were labeled as martyrs fighting against the imperialism of the United States (Conniff 1992, 121). Many within the US policy elite were also convinced that the riots were organized and coordinated by agents from Moscow as many in Washington were worried about communist influence ever since Cuba had fallen to the Soviet side of things (Mora and Hey 2003, 67)

This event resulted in the breaking of diplomatic relations between Panama and the United States and although it was reestablished a few months later the relationship was increasingly strenuous. In 1974 negotiations started between the US and Panamanian governments on the handover of the Panama Canal. In 1977 an agreement was finally struck according to which the US would incrementally hand over responsibilities to the Panamanians. The Panamanians would instead however guarantee the neutrality of the canal permanently (US Department of State 1987, 3). One of the first steps was to hand over security in the Panama Canal Zone and the withdrawal of US military personnel and in 1979 the Panama Canal Zone ceased to exist. Finally, in 1999 the US formally handed over the canal and the last of its properties in what had previously been the Panama Canal Zone, all in all the US handed over a territory spanning 1500 km² and some 7.000 buildings including military facilities.

5.2. Testing the Structural Realism Hypothesis

Hypothesis

The Structural Realist hypothesis is that the United States acted in a way that maximizes their security, unable to maintain their presence suggests diminishing capabilities to protect the canal against hostile surroundings and therefore withdrew from Panama.

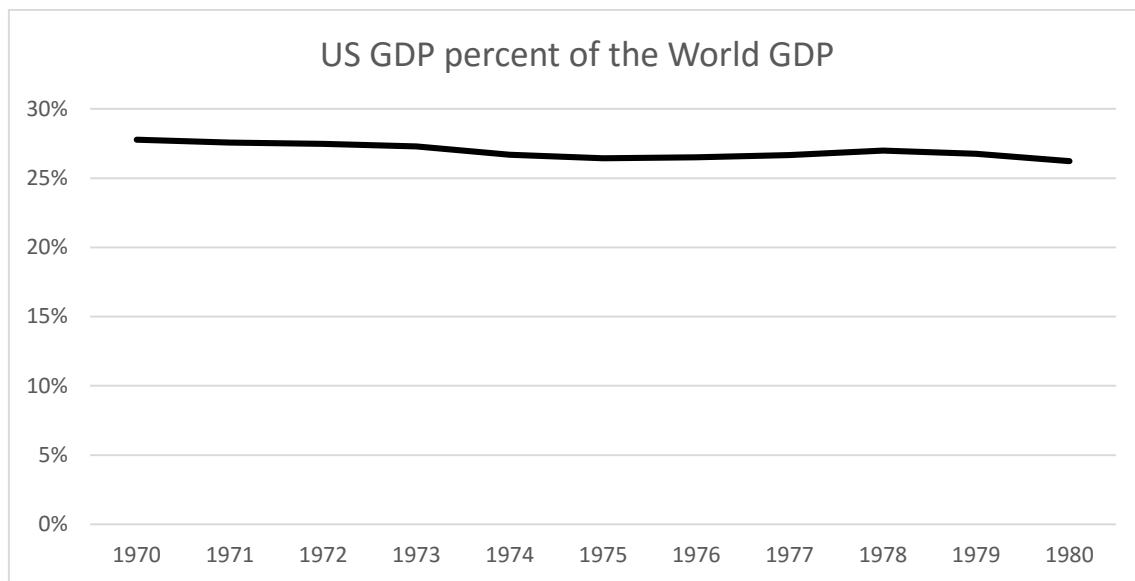
To see whether the Panama Canal Zone was a drain on already diminishing US capabilities in relative terms as before we must take a look at the GDP of the US in relative terms and therefore also their great power rivals. The difference for the case of Panama however is the reason for the US presence, the Canal. The canal itself is of major interests to the US, both economic and military as it facilitates much easier travel between the Atlantic and the Pacific Ocean. This helps trade between harbors in their respective oceans immensely as otherwise they would need to traverse the seas south of Cape Horn in Chile.

The shortened travel time for trade is not purely economic but also had military applications as also shortens the travel time for US navy vessels traveling in support of fleets in the other ocean. This however became more limited during the second half of the 20th century as the US navy's capital ships became too large for the canal (Conniff 1992, 101). The main rival of the US at this period was the Soviet Union and for most part it suffered from lack

of access to year-round good access to the oceans. The Soviet Union did however still have large naval harbors in both the Pacific and the Atlantic, not to forget the main Soviet conventional threat was in the Atlantic while the communist China was in the Pacific. So keeping easy, quick and secure travel time between the oceans was imperative for both latent power reasons and security reasons. The canal itself however was very vulnerable to attack of any sort, not just organized military attack but also to sabotage by guerilla organizations and to maintain its security in a hostile environment. The US military agreed that it could not be defended to any serious degree without either the goodwill and assistance from the Panamanian government and populace or a serious increase in the size of the garrison several times over and even then it would be uncertain (Carter 1982, 155).

Taking a look at the GDP of the United States during the period it was in an overall economic growth enjoying a considerable increase in size of the economy. In the 1970s decade the US economy grew from 1.075 billion USD in 1970 to almost three times that at 2.862 billion USD in 1980 in current USD, and growing from 4.34 billion to 5.93 billion USD in 2005 constant (World Bank 2016). But the period was also confronted with a significant inflation problem and suffered from a recession in the years 1974 and 1975 contracting by about 0,8% in two years (World Bank 2016). During the same period the Soviet Economy grew from about 433 billion USD to 940 billion USD at current prices (United Nations Statistics Division 2015) which translates to that the Soviet economy was 40% of the US economy in 1970 but only 32% the size of the US economy in 1980. Relatively to the Soviet economy the US was growing stronger during the 70s period and a CIA paper issued in 1977 showed that the US was aware of the Soviet economies falling behind and it predicted stagnation of their economy in the 80s (CIA Directorate of Intelligence 1977). As part of the world economy the relative economic power of the US went from 28% in 1970 to little over 26% in 1980 and so the economic power of the US relative to the world was in decline during the period (World Bank 2016).

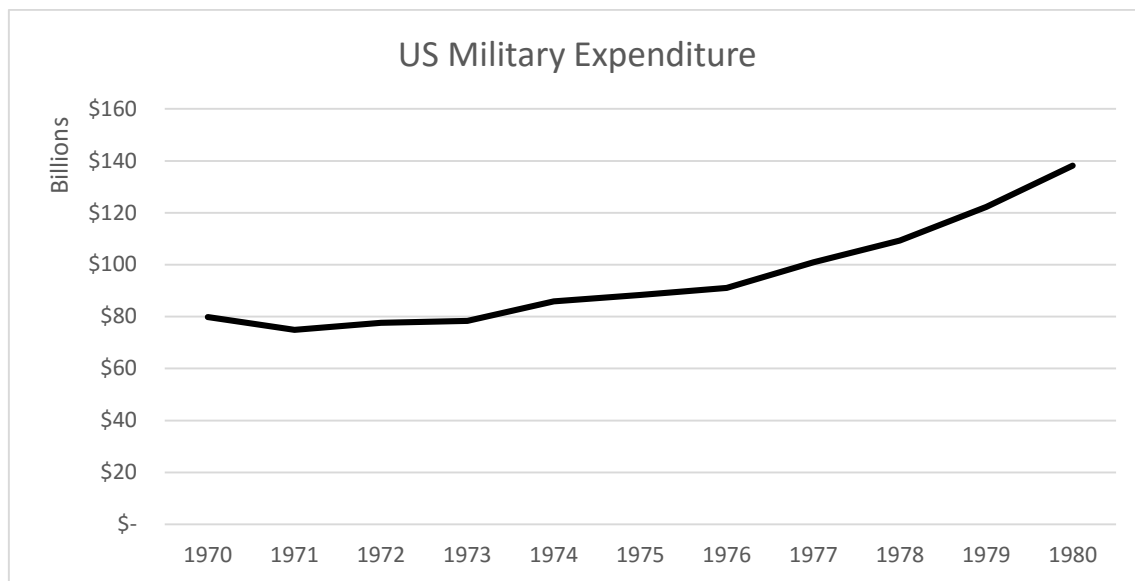
Graph 5-1



(World Bank 2016)

The US military expenditure in the period was increasing in the period of 1970 to 1980 but contracted slightly in 1971 and was not at 1970 level until 1974 (Stockholm International Peace Research Institute 2015). This contraction could be explained away by the US withdrawal of ground troops from the Vietnam conflict during those years. However, the CIA reports also indicate that their general perception of the Soviet military was that the Soviet Union had caught up and overtaken the United States in military expenditure during the early 1970s and by the year 1977 was outspending the US at a rate of 180 billion USD to the US 117 billion USD (CIA National Foreign Assessment Center 1981). The US's active military personnel decreased also during the period although as with the expenditure it can be explained by winding down of the Vietnam conflict and in fact is probable to be a major reason behind the decrease in military expenditure. In 1970 the US military had almost 3.1 million military personnel on active duty but had decreased to 2.7 million already in 1971, in 1974 it was little less than 2.2 million and by 1980 it had reached little over 2 million (Defense Manpower Data Center, Department of Defense 2015).

Graph 5-2



(Stockholm International Peace Research Institute 2015)

The positioning of the military installations in Panama was also significant due to the increased communist activity in Latin America region. During the 60s and 70s there was significant pressure on number of governments in the region by communist or socialist fighters (Stuart and Tigner 1975, 30-31) and for that reason keeping a military presence there could provide valuable resources. Washington increasingly saw Panama as another chess piece in the superpower-play between them and Moscow (Mora and Hey 2003, 66). The US Department of Defense was willing to give up the canal but pushed for keeping the military installations as part of any agreement made (Conniff 1992, 121). It would therefore be easy to interpret that the US military saw significant value in having military capabilities in the region despite the limited use of the canal itself. That being said, as mentioned above, the military also agreed that keeping the military facilities would be difficult when surrounded by an unfriendly government and populace.

5.2.1. Structural Realism Theory Finding; ***Affirmed***

The United States was going through an economic slump in the late 70s period. Despite having grown in absolute terms during the decade the structural realist theory argues heavily for relative capabilities rather than absolute. The Soviet economy was becoming relatively smaller

but the period also exposed weakness in the US economy. The Soviet military expenditure had also overtaken the US's by a significant margin according to US intelligence. During the timespan observed the US military was also experiencing a large decrease of personnel. By the end of the decade the US military in term of active duty personnel had shrunk by third, most of which happened during the first years of the decade. The hemisphere was under increased pressure from communist forces but the canal itself was becoming of less strategic value than in the early 20th century. Keeping the Panama Canal Zone in US hands was antagonizing the US from the Panamanian government and peoples, requiring more resources from US's contracting resource-pool to keep it.

5.3. Testing the Neoclassical Realism Hypothesis

Hypothesis

The Neoclassical Hypothesis claims that the perception of weakness and reduced capabilities of the United States by the President and the top policy makers influenced them to reduce US involvement that did not provide immediate security to the US homeland.

The 1970s was not a good decade for the United States, during the early 70s the US economy shrunk for the first time since the end of the Second World War and perhaps looked as if it stood on a much shakier ground than before. That the economic good years and the favorable international mood with détente was perhaps nothing more than another political smoke and mirrors by the Nixon White House (Boyle 1993, 177). Soon after the US finally was able to withdraw from the Vietnam conflict, their South Vietnamese ally crumbled before the onslaught of the much more capable communist North Vietnam, despite the South having received a significant amount of US military and economic aid (Hunt 2015, 213). The idea of US invincibility and unparalleled strength was definitely damaged at this point and President Jimmy Carter entertained the thoughts that holding onto the Panama Canal Zone was antagonizing the peoples and government of Panama due to the unfair nature of the agreement made in 1903 (Carter 1982, 155). This resonates quite well with the theory of Neoclassical realism and the hypothesis arguing that the ideas of policy leader and the executive has significant impact on the behavior of states.

The relationship between the US and Panama had already been souring due to the US ownership of the Canal Zone and had already been able to demand two amendments to the original agreement but after the Riots in 1964 the Panamanians took a much more antagonistic stance towards the US (Atkins 1989, 331). President Carter was also convinced by the argument that the security of the canal was next to impossible with a hostile government and population surrounding the canal and even with a garrison of hundred thousand soldiers, its security would still be uncertain (Carter 1982, 155). This gives the impression that the president as a policy leader did not have much faith in the power of the United States, that even the US was incapable of guaranteeing the security of the canal.

After the riots in 1964 it was decided that it would be unthinkable and unacceptable that Panama was allowed to turn into another Cuba and to have another pro-communist state in the western hemisphere. To prevent this development the US president Lyndon B. Johnson decided that the US-Panama relationship based on the 1903 agreement needed to be fundamentally altered (Mora and Hey 2003, 67). In early 1974 the US and Panama made a statement of principles to serve as guidelines towards a further and final agreement. The statement had a very cold reception in the US senate where it was called as unnecessarily giving away an important possession of the United States, their battle cry being: *"We bought it, we paid for it, it is ours"* (Atkins 1989, 332). President Jimmy Carter was faced with significant opposition in the US senate where they proposed a resolution that would have directly contradicted any agreement that could have been made with the Panamanian government such as giving up US sovereignty over the Canal Zone (Carter 1982, 155).

The idea of giving away such a prestigious symbol of American power and engineering was definitely not a popular one and the public in the US was vehemently opposed to any such designs on the Canal (Carter 1982, 159). The administrations in Washington was much rather worried about being sabotaged from within their own government rather than by any outside influence and so special effort was made by the negotiations team at the outset to garner support from the Pentagon (Conniff 1992, 131). For this purpose, officials from the state department had regular meetings with Pentagon officials when working out the complexities of any new agreement made with the Panamanians on the Canal Zone. The Neoclassical realism theory argues that the policy leader and the executive must work within the domestic political system, usually by bargaining and compromise. In this case however it seems that the

Carter administration forced the issue through. This was despite heavy resistance from the congress and also as a very unpopular move in the eyes of the general public. Although the theory does not dismiss the possibility that a policy leader could force an issue through but this would be unlikely unless it was of imminent security concern. The canal was still considered of significant economic importance but the military had however already dismissed the canal as of any grave security concern as the US navies capital ships got too large for the canal (Mora and Hey 2003, 69-70).

There were at least two terms that the US under the Carter administrations could not and would not give up or compromise on and that was priority for US shipping through the canal and that the US would reserve the right to defend the canal from external threats at all times indefinitely (Carter 1982, 157). The Panamanians opened relations with the pro-Moscow government in Cuba when the negotiations were grinding to a halt in 1974, launching several theories that there were communist influences in the Panamanian government (Conniff 1992, 132). However during the period there was noticeably less tensions in the Cold War setting as the policy of *détente* was allowing for some breathing room when it came to foreign policy (Mora and Hey 2003, 69). The *détente* period began under the Nixon government and continued up to the late 70s although by the time Carter had taken office from Ford, this policy seemed to be giving way (Boyle 1993, 182-183). Because of this *détente* policy the Panamanian government was not subject to stop any communist flirting by brute force as the US government could allow themselves a bit more humane approaches that might not antagonize the entire region. Despite this any communist government with pro-Moscow outlook could not be permitted in Panama City especially with the canal there, the Cuban situation was trouble enough. This suggests that although the anarchic system was prevalent through the period the policy outcome was also significantly affected and molded due to the domestic political developments in each country.

5.3.1. Neoclassical Realist Theory Finding:

Affirmed

The belief in the unshakable strength of the US had clearly been shaken which could be explained by what was happening surrounding the period. The US was recovering from an

economic slump in 1977 and recently lost an ally in South Vietnam even though plenty of lives and materials had been spent there. President Jimmy Carter talks about how he had been convinced by the military that the US was incapable of providing security for the canal without compliance from the Panamanians themselves. These variables support the Neoclassical Realist theory which gives weight to the policy leader and his views, in this case President Jimmy Carter. The policy outcome was forced through the domestic political system despite the canal being of little imminent security concern, but rather worries of Panama becoming another pro-Moscow communist state in the western hemisphere drove the withdrawal. This resonates well with the Neoclassical Realist theory which suggests that the domestic political situation affects the international scene.

6. The Case of Uzbekistan

6.1. The Case

The case of Uzbekistan really begins on a very memorable day in the year 2001, September 11th to be more exact. After the 9/11 terror attacks in the US on the World Trade Center in New York and on the Pentagon in Washington, DC there was a decision made to invade Afghanistan in an effort to bring the mastermind of the attacks to justice. Suddenly this remote country in a remote region became of significant geopolitical interest and as part of this, some support had to be made available. Uzbekistan occupied an ideal location and of the countries in the region had relatively friendly relations with the United States.

Seeing how the US was going to need a base close to Afghanistan and seeking favor from the US the Uzbek leadership chose to give them access to an old Soviet base within their borders (Pikalov 2014, 306). The US gained access to a military airbase in Karshi-Khanabad, also known as K2, in 2001 to support the military venture in Afghanistan. Before the 9/11 attacks the administrations of Clinton and Bush respectively included the issue of human rights into their relations with the Uzbek government; that changed dramatically however after the attacks and with the subsequent war on terror (Grodsky 2004, 331).

Since independence Uzbekistan was not afraid of pursuing a multi-vector foreign policy in an effort to protect its sovereignty from increased Russian influence (Pikalov 2014, 303). During the 1990s the power of Russia greatly diminished and was simply incapable of protecting the Uzbek state from internal threats such as Islamic Movement of Uzbekistan (IMU) or external threats such as the growing power of the destabilizing Taliban in neighboring Afghanistan. In 1998 the Russian security forces stationed in the country were accused of meddling in the internal affairs of Uzbekistan, that coupled with the waning power of Russia were reasons enough to start looking elsewhere for a great power protector (Spechler and Spechler 2009, 363). It has participated in several western led initiatives such as NATO's partnership for peace and OSCE as part of this effort, to allow access to further points of contact and cooperation beyond Russia. Indicative of this, in Russia's 1999 published defense doctrine, it promoted a military cooperation with US, EU, Japan, China, Commonwealth of Independent States (CIS) and NATO (Tolipov and McDermott 2003, 3), excluding specifically mentioning Russia. Uzbekistan and the United States enjoyed a relatively harmonious relationship for a few years during the early years of Operation Enduring Freedom in

Afghanistan. The years 2003 and 2004 saw the colored revolutions in Georgia and Ukraine respectively but more importantly for the Uzbek government, it saw these revolutions received support from the United States. Its newfound ally clearly could not be relied on in the case of domestic turmoil (Pikalov 2014, 307).

The democratic institutions in Uzbekistan such as free elections and an active opposition within the political system have largely been absent and weak. The Uzbek government is largely authoritarian and are not above using force to stay where they are and has made it clear that they would curtail any further collaboration with state that pushed for democratic change within their borders (Weitz 2006, 161). In May 2005 there was an incident at a small city at the border with Kyrgyzstan, Andijan, that soon ballooned into a major protest, with the colored revolutions still fresh in mind this protest was ruthlessly put down with some estimates that several hundred people were killed by government security forces (ODIHR 2005, 7-8). After this event the relationship between the two governments started to sour fast and then only a few months later, the Uzbek government suddenly gave the US forces a demand to have the military base vacated in less than six months (BBC News 2005). The United States withdrew within the time limit but much of the resources and operations at the K2 base was moved to an already operating base in neighboring Kyrgyzstan. The US kept their base in Kyrgyzstan open until 2014, nine years after closing the base in Uzbekistan.

6.2. Testing the Structural Realism Hypothesis

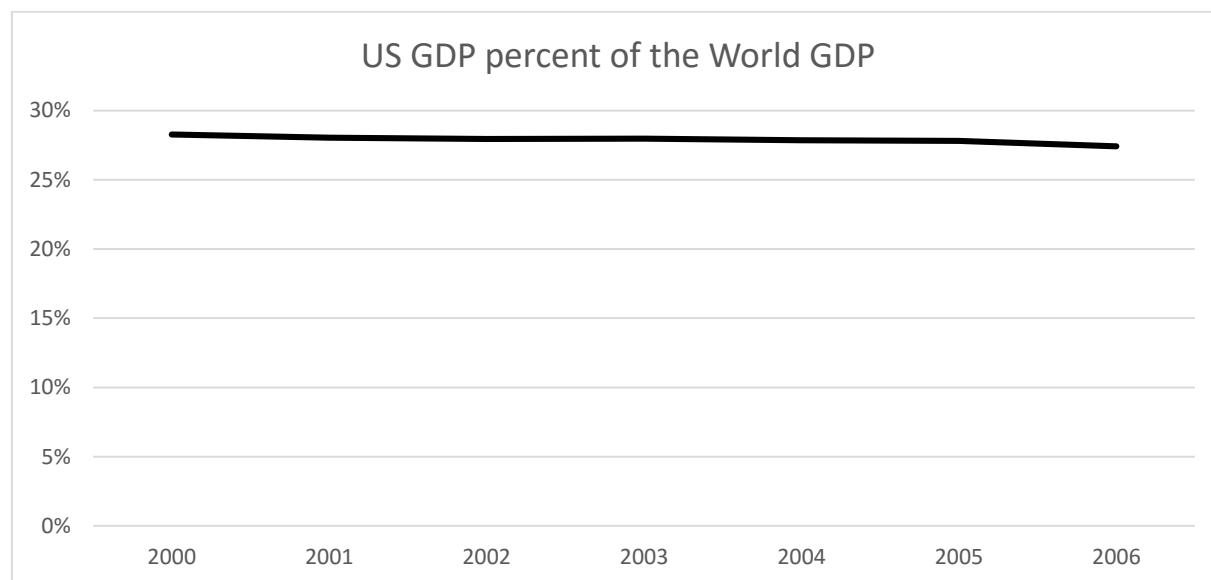
Hypothesis

The Structural Realist hypothesis argues that the United States was forced to withdraw from Uzbekistan because its relative strength was declining and was forced to withdraw as its presence there decreased the security of the mainland United States

After recovering from the initial shock of the economic impact of the 9/11 terrorist attacks in 2001 the US economy showed little sign of contracting and in fact during the period of 2001 to 2006 the US economy was growing at a healthy rate. In 2001 the US GDP only grew by little less than 1% but from 2002 and until 2006 it grew on average by about 2.9% when calculated at constant 2005 rate (World Bank 2016). Considering that, when calculated at the constant

2005 rate, the GDP of the United States grew from 12.83 trillion USD to 14.79 trillion USD or roughly 15% in a span of just six years it should be thought of as a very robust economic growth. In current USD the economy grew from 10.28 trillion to 13.09 at the time of withdrawal in 2005. The US GDP (constant) relative to the world in years 2000 to 2006 went from 28% to 27%, a very marginal decrease (World Bank 2016). A look at the relative power of the United States to its great power rivals has to be made like before, however unlike the case of Vietnam and Panama the Soviet Union is no longer in existence. The great power rival of the United States after the fall of the Soviet Union is first and foremost The People's Republic of China, however Russia as the heir to the Soviet Union and with its extensive influence in the region has to be taken into consideration as well (Blum 1992, 362). The Chinese economy has famously been growing at rapid rate in the last several decades and the period in question is no different. In the years from 2001 to 2006 the GDP of China grew from 1.54 trillion USD to 2.56 trillion USD calculated at a constant 2005 USD (World Bank 2016). This is an increase of 66% during the aforementioned period with an average of 10.22% growth rate per year, significantly higher than the growth rate of the US.

Graph 6-1

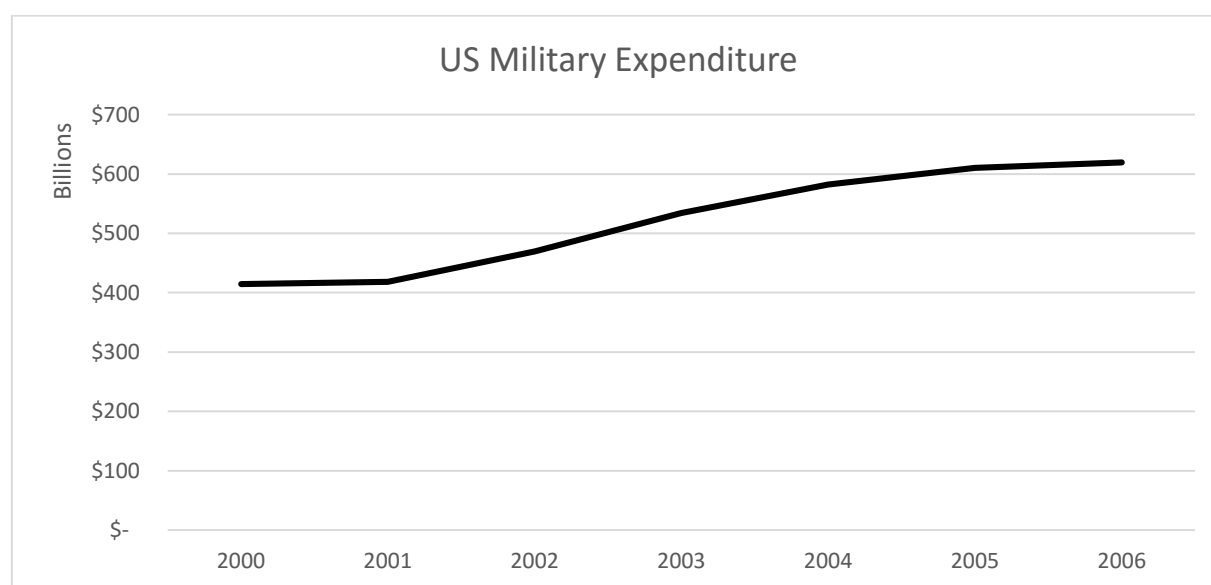


(World Bank 2016)

During the same period the military expenditure saw a significant growth, much of this can be explained by the US military campaigns in Afghanistan and Iraq during these years. The military expenditure of the United States during the period grew from 418 billion USD 2001 at a constant rate (2014) to more than 619 billion USD in 2006 (Stockholm International Peace

Research Institute 2015). This constitutes a growth of more than 48% in just 6 years which by any measurement must be considered a major growth. The number of military personnel saw little shift however during this period; in 2001 it stood at 1.385.116 people working for the US armed forces, it reached a high point 2003 at 1.434.377 people and then gradually receded to 1.384.968 in 2006 (Defense Manpower Data Center, Department of Defense 2015). This means the largest difference in military manpower of the US amounted to 3.5%, but more or less a difference of 0.01% between 2001 and 2006. For all point and purposes therefore the military manpower of the US was constant throughout the period and did not suffer any significant decrease. In absolute terms the capabilities of the US grew significantly during the period with a rather considerable increase in both military expenditure and economic terms, the military manpower remained constant but with the increase in expenditure it could be argued that the hardware they received was either of higher quality or in more quantity.

Graph 6-2



(Stockholm International Peace Research Institute 2015)

The military expenditure of China grew even more at the time from 52 billion USD (2014 constant) in 2001 to over 92 billion in 2006 (Stockholm International Peace Research Institute 2015) which means the Chinese were spending 77% more on their military in 2006 than they were in 2001, also a noticeably more increase than from their US counterparts. The Chinese economy was considerably smaller than the US's at a ratio of 1:5 but growing at a much faster rate and if the trend continues will have caught up with the US GDP in two or three decades. The military spending of China is also much smaller but growing at a faster rate

in the period as well albeit to a less degree. Much of the expenditure growth for the US can however be explained by their military venture in Afghanistan and Iraq which would not equal increased capabilities. The Chinese did however not engage in any military action during the period and so it is easy to come to the conclusion that their increased spending will result in increased military capabilities.

The Russian economy had shrunk considerably at the fall of the Soviet Union; in 1990 the size of the Soviet GDP was little less than 1.2 trillion USD (2005 constant) and in 1991 the Russian Federation GDP was at 844 billion but by 1998 it reached a low point of 484 billion USD (United Nations Statistics Division 2015). In 2001 the Russian GDP stood at 596 billion USD but grew considerably in the period to 826 billion USD, a growth of 38% with an average of 6,4% growth per year (World Bank 2016). Like the Chinese economy, the Russian one is much smaller than the economy of the US but growing at a noticeably faster rate.

The Russian military inherited much of the Soviet military infrastructure and weapon systems but the military expenditure shrunk frightfully by the fall of the superpower. From 269 billion USD (2014 constant) by the Soviet Union in 1990 to 57 billion by the new Russian Federation in 1992 but reaching a low point in 1998 at 19 billion, a mere fraction of the Soviet military budget in 1990 (Stockholm International Peace Research Institute 2015). It however started to grow after that and in 2001 it was at 31 billion USD and grew to 47 billion USD in 2006, a growth of 51% in the period. The military of the Russian Federation at the time, especially during the early part of the time span looked at, must be viewed within context of the fall of the Soviet Union. The Soviet Union left a huge arsenal behind of both conventional and nuclear nature but the contraction in available funds meant much of it lay unused and in poor condition. The military expenditure of the Russian Federation at the time was, as with its Chinese counterpart, much smaller than the US's but growing at a much faster pace.

It is worth noting that due to how much more recent this information is it becomes easier to compare them with other sources. Some of these sources might differ on some numbers such as the military expenditure due their secretive nature for regimes such as Russia and China. Like the numbers used above they also paint a picture of significant growth during the period but perhaps more importantly they also show capabilities far less significant than that of the United States (IISS 2002) (IISS 2008).

6.2.1. Structural Realist Theory Finding:

Rejected

The capabilities of the United States were and still are significantly greater by any of these standards than that of either China or Russia. The Structural realist hypothesis however argues that the relative capabilities of the United States was in decline which it was, the Chinese economic and military machine was growing at a much faster pace than that of the United States. The Russians at the time were in a period of fast recovery from the disaster that fell on them with the fall of the Soviet Union both in economic and military terms. What has to be considered as well is that strategically Uzbekistan is in the backyard of both China and Russia which would have much less trouble moving and sustaining a large fighting force in the region than for the United States. However even for both parties to overtake the United States in terms of GDP or military expenditure, even if combined, was still decades away.

It was no secret either that Russia did not enjoy having a US military base within the borders of the former Soviet Union, what Moscow essentially regards as its sphere of influence (Trenin 2009, 4). Keeping a military presence there was definitely creating tensions in the long run but that does not seem to have been the deciding factor. Even if under significant pressure from a rising China and an emerging Russia, the United States kept a base for 9 more years in neighboring Kyrgyzstan. Russia and China were unlikely sources of the Uzbekistan's sudden disfavor since they already rejected Russia before. Even if the Russian state was stronger than before and it could offer more than it could before, it was nowhere near the resources and options that the US could offer.

6.3. Testing the Neoclassical Realism Hypothesis

Hypothesis

The United States policy leaders were confronted with major humanitarian situation in Uzbekistan and their response was incompatible with Uzbek domestic politics which suddenly saw the US forces as a problem rather a solution and cast them out.

Before the 9/11 terrorist attacks in 2001 the interests the United States had in Uzbekistan and the Central Asia region in general could best be described as limited. At the fall of the Soviet Union almost all of the attention on Uzbekistan was in regards to nuclear proliferation. After the nuclear worries had faded, whenever Uzbekistan was mentioned in Washington, and that was not often, it was almost always to criticize them on their less than glowing humanitarian track record (Pikalov 2014, 306). After the terrorist attacks this attitude towards Uzbekistan changed as it became the main benefactor of US's increased attention in the region due to some unique characteristics giving the Uzbek regime significant economic benefits and also allowed the president of Uzbekistan to shore up his domestic political standing (Naumkin 2006, 132).

The humanitarian rights situation in Uzbekistan caused some apprehension in the US administration but still not enough to block the warming of relations. The new found friendship between the states culminated in 2002 with a Declaration on Strategic Partnership, which meant that the US guaranteed the security and territorial integrity of Uzbekistan. This in turn allowed the regime some security from its neighboring states and proved very worthwhile when the US decapitated the government's most imminent security threat, the Taliban regime in Afghanistan (Naumkin 2006, 133). As the war in Afghanistan dragged on the majority of the fighting began to gravitate towards the south of the country, making the K2 base in Uzbekistan less valuable to the US forces (Spechler and Spechler 2009, 367). Then as the base became even more marginal as the attention of the US started to shift towards Iraq the pressure for democratic political reforms and human rights started to increase from the newfound allies (Pikalov 2014, 306-307).

The United States had started a financial aid for both humanitarian and military purposes, considerably more generous than to Uzbekistan's neighbors in Central Asia (Tolipov and McDermott 2003, 12-13). As the strategic significance of Uzbekistan to the Afghanistan campaign diminished, the pressure started to shift to withholding aid to the regime and after the killing of civilians in Andijan the US showed signs of withholding even more aid to the Uzbek government (BBC News 2005). This was all unfolding as the aforementioned colored revolutions were happening in former Soviet states even as close as within neighboring Kyrgyzstan and with the newfound allies all but rooting for the revolutionaries, they clearly

could not be relied on in case of internal '*upheaval*'. The regime in Uzbekistan as a result of these colored revolutions started to take a very close look at the new relationship, and after Andijan became borderline paranoid that Islamist groups were being organized from abroad (Naumkin 2006, 134-135). There is little evidence to suggest there was any western or even foreign backing for the protests but this was definitely the perception of the government in Uzbekistan (Fumagalli 2007, 257). As the Neoclassical realist theory argues what matters in making of the foreign policy is not really the actualities of the state but much rather perception of the executive that forms the foreign policy and it is clear that the government in Uzbekistan believed that the US government might be undermining the regime.

Unlike the sanctions put on Uzbekistan after Andijan by the western powers, the governments within the Commonwealth of Independent States (CIS), including Russia, sent support and as with these sanctions the best and in fact the only real option for arms was from Moscow (Naumkin 2006, 135). By taking note of the domestic political system in Uzbekistan and behaving accordingly the Russian government was able to reestablish their influence there. To the credit of the US, the Russian domestic political system is probably much more forgiving in such a foreign policy and US policy makers were themselves under pressure to push for change in Uzbekistan's domestic political system.

6.3.1. Neoclassical Realist Theory Finding:

Affirmed

The United States policy of aggressively promoting human rights in Uzbekistan ignited fears in the Uzbek regime that the US as an ally could not be relied upon, at least not in the case of domestic problems. The colored revolutions happening around the old Soviet sphere and the US support of them, worked against the United States as it heightened the worries within the Uzbek government even further. Then there was a clear promotion of pro-democratic NGO's going to Uzbekistan from the US, perhaps adding validity to the fears of the Uzbek government. The Uzbek regime was clearly corrupt and authoritarian in nature, it should have been obvious to the US government that it would not take kindly to these kinds of pressures. The financial aid given to a corrupt

government drops significantly in value if the government is ousted from power. If the regime is replaced with another, their personal access to the funds is removed and they receive no benefits from accepting the aid.

The Uzbek government also had other options than the United States as great power allies. Resource-hungry China was showing signs of interests in the Central Asia and the old ally Russia, was starting to regain strength and capacity to support. These great power allies perhaps did not have the resources or the equal capacity of the United States but they attached much less conditions to their aid. It is therefore shown quite clearly that the domestic political system played key role in the United States from Uzbekistan, the United States policy leaders were under pressure to promote democratic reform which would directly clash with the domestic politics of Uzbekistan. To have remained in Uzbekistan however despite the wishes of the Uzbek government is more than likely to have resulted in some very unpleasant clashes with Russia and China.

7. Conclusion

This thesis covers a subject that has received a relatively little attention in the academia, the withdrawal of a superpower not in decline from a relatively much smaller and weaker state. Much more attention has been given to the power play between superpowers and how they act or react to each other. Significant attention has also been given to the expansion of superpowers and why they expand their military reach to smaller and weaker states. The purpose of this thesis is the attempt to explain why great superpowers, which are still in their prime and not in a state of decline would withdraw from a much smaller state that would still have some strategic importance. In the attempt of explaining this I bring in two major theories of International Relations; Structural Realism and Neoclassical Realism, to gain an insight into whether this can be explained through the international system alone or if the domestic politics play a crucial role. Structural Realism, as the name implies, attempts to explain the behavior of states through the structure of the international system but the Neoclassical Realism takes the domestic politics and the individual policy maker into account.

I take these two theories and create two hypotheses to each case in an attempt to make the conclusions of each case approachable and understandable. This thesis takes three cases that are complex and have protracted aftermath and long history beforehand, the beauty of Structural Realism is its simplicity and the limited variables that are required to give a wholesome picture. The downside of the Structural Realist theory is that this limited information assumes too much and gives a simplistic depiction of events. It might be therefore unfair to apply it specific cases since its purpose is to explain the general patterns in behavior of states and in future research apply it in more general sense of superpower withdrawal. The advantage of the Neoclassical Realist theory is that it looks at what the Structural realist theory brings to the table but also takes into account the effects that the internal dynamics of a state can have on its foreign policy. Its problem is that the variables it can take into account in an attempt to explain the behavior of states can literally become numberless and it becomes subjective to each researcher to choose where to draw the line. Therefore, in future research it might give a better and more detailed picture of the behavior of states in these instances by allowing more variables into the equations.

In these three cases that are discussed in this thesis it becomes clear that Structural Realism struggles to find an answer to the question of why a superpower that shows limited

or no signs of decline would withdraw. In the case of Panama, it was applicable since it was evident that it better served the security of the canal and therefore of the United States to withdraw. In the case of Vietnam, the Structural Realist theory struggles as the United States was much more powerful and capable than its adversaries and had the capacity to remain in South Vietnam indefinitely. The Neoclassical Realist theory is much better at explaining this by taking into account that it was a deeply unpopular war and the policy leaders of the United States had to work within a restrictive domestic political system. The case of Uzbekistan has a similar explanation, the United States served the security of Uzbekistan plenty and it was in an ideal location for the support of the war in Afghanistan.

Table 7-1

Theory	Vietnam	Panama	Uzbekistan
Structural Realism	Rejected	Affirmed	Rejected
Neoclassical Realism	Affirmed	Affirmed	Affirmed

The political system of the United States and its popular ideology of promoting human rights and democracy was however intolerable for the domestic political system of Uzbekistan. In the end there were other security options for Uzbekistan that would not exert such pressure of domestic change. In the case of Panama both theories could realistically be applicable but on two different bases. The Structural realism theory could be applied since although still the largest economy in the world by far it was recovering from an economic slump and also that the security of the canal and therefore US interests would be best served by decreasing pressure and withdrawing from direct involvement. The Neoclassical realist theory could also be used to better explain the US withdrawal in the sense that the US was still suffering from the defeat in Vietnam and afraid of getting bogged down in another jungle war and President Jimmy Carter showed several signs of disbelief in the capability of the US military.

Final conclusion of the testing of these cases must therefore be that short term domestic politics and personal policies of the policy leader takes precedence over unclear long term security goals. When the outcome of all the cases are looked at together with the theories to see which is better at explaining this particular behavior it seems that in the cases

of a non-declining superpower withdrawing from an allied state, the domestic politics of the superpower play a particularly prominent role. It may be that when the short term security implications seem non-essential to the security of the homeland and the long term security implications are speculative and unclear, the domestic aspect starts to seem more important.

As such the Neoclassical Realism theory has a much easier job of explaining the behavior of a superpower such as the United States when it is withdrawing its military assets from a place of strategic importance. As previously mentioned many say the Structural Realism theory should be viewed in long term and general patterns, however in the long term it could be argued that the security of the mainland United States would be better served by maintaining its presence there. Example of this would be that in the latter years it has become evident that China is rising and having a strategic presence in Vietnam and an allied Uzbekistan would go long ways in encircling a potential great power rival. Another example of this is that Russia has become belligerent in the last few years at the time of writing and keeping Uzbekistan, the most populous states of Central Asia, as a friend and ally could go long ways in curbing the ambitions of Russia.

I propose two ways in which this research could be continued, both of which would give us a better understanding of the behavior of great powers withdrawing from strategic locations. There would be much validity of seeing if the same conclusions could be drawn from a less democratic superpower such as the Soviet Union and how much the domestic political system would influence the foreign policy. The second research idea would be to see if the Structural Realist theory could be better used by explaining a general pattern in similar withdrawals and so by increasing the number of cases could make the theory better applicable and provide better predictions of US withdrawals in future cases.

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