### Oil Prices

#### Oil Prices are low now, but International conflict can cause them to rise

Tom DiChristopher, ward-winning multimedia journalist who covers energy for CNBC.com, specializes in coverage on Oil prices, Oil prices are heading lower this year and even lower in 2019, JP Morgan forecasts, 8 June 2018 , <https://www.cnbc.com/2018/06/08/oil-prices-heading-lower-this-year-and-even-lower-in-2019-jp-morgan.html> ///AHS PB

Oil prices are heading for a downturn later this year and will sink even lower in 2019 as the fundamentals of supply and demand weaken, J.P. Morgan forecast in a research note on Friday. "While geopolitical tensions and lingering risks of large supply disruptions remain an upside risk throughout 2H18, we think that prices will be corrected downwards towards end of the year and remain capped in 2019," J.P. Morgan analyst Abhishek Deshpande wrote in the note. Despite oil prices recently rising to 3½-year highs, the investment bank left its forecast for international benchmark Brent crude unchanged at $69.30 a barrel. On Friday, Brent was trading at just under $77 a barrel, off its recent high of $80.50.

#### And cutting aid to Yemen destabilizes the region and hurts Saudi control, causes a price hike.

Posey, Madyson. research and administrative assistant for the Davis Institute for National Security and Foreign Policy."Ending U.S. Military Support For Saudi Arabia In Yemen Would Trigger Dangerous Consequences." The Heritage Foundation. December 6 2018 <https://www.heritage.org/middle-east/commentary/ending-us-military-support-saudi-arabia-yemen-would-trigger-dangerous/> ///AHS PB

The fighting between the Houthi rebels and Hadi government is symbolic of a much larger struggle between Iran and Saudi Arabia. Iran sees this war as an opportunity to undermine Saudi influence in the Arab world and increase its own. It is vital to U.S. interests that Iran’s influence be contained. Yemen’s geo-strategic importance cannot be ignored either. The country borders two U.S. allies and sits at the convergence point of the Red Sea and the Gulf of Aden, overlooking the Bab el Mandab Strait—a key trade route, particularly for oil. A daily 4.7 million barrels of oil are transported through that strait. At its most narrow point, the Bab el Mandab is only 18 miles wide, meaning that ships must pass closely together, usually only two at a time. Serious disruptions of this route could constrict the flow of Persian Gulf oil to Europe and the western hemisphere and raise world oil prices. Recent reports about Houthi rebel attacks against U.S. and other ships off Yemen’s coast have raised concerns about maritime security in the Red Sea. As the war continues and Iranian influence grows, Tehran may seek to expand its leverage by escalating the potential threat to ships passing through the waterways.

#### Further US Aid to Saudi Arabia acts as leverage to ensure prices stay low.

Vincenzo Bove, Reader in Politics and Quantitative Methods, University of Warwick, How the arms trade is used to secure access to oil, May 4, 2018, [https://theconversation.com/how-the-arms-trade-is-used-to-secure-access-to-oil-95089 ///](https://theconversation.com/how-the-arms-trade-is-used-to-secure-access-to-oil-95089%20///) SAO Found Cut AHS PB

The oil-rich country does not necessarily need to be the oil-dependent’s direct supplier, however, because disruptions in the production of oil are likely to affect oil prices worldwide. Violent events such as civil wars or terrorist incidents are often accompanied by surging oil prices, or more general insecurity in the supply of oil. This was the case in many recent wars, such as the Gulf War and the Iraq War, the political unrest in Venezuela in 2003, and the recent Iraq-Kurdistan conflict. So it does not matter how much oil the UK directly imports from Saudi Arabia for it to want the country to remain stable, which in turn keeps oil prices stable. In line with this, we found that a country with a recent discovery of new oil fields will increase its import of weapons from oil-dependent economies by 56%. Our results point consistently toward the conclusion that the arms trade is an effective foreign policy tool to secure and maintain access to oil. As such, the arms trade reveals national interests beyond simple economic considerations and the volume of bilateral arms transfers can be used as a barometer of political relations between the supplier and the recipient states. At the same time, we find that oil might play an even larger role in influencing economic and political decisions than is generally acknowledged.

#### And Rising Oil Prices cause Global and US Econ decline, the impact is catastrophic.

Tim Mullaney, national economics correspondent at USA Today from 2011 to 2014 and earlier served as E-Business Editor of BusinessWeek, Risks are rising that oil prices will cause next recession, Mon, 23 July 2018, <https://www.cnbc.com/2018/07/13/risks-rising-that-oil-prices-will-cause-next-recession.html> ///AHS PB

Oil gained more than 20 percent in the first half of 2018, and odds have been rising that higher crude oil prices will spark the next economic downturn. This should not come as a surprise for any investor who is a student of market history: The last five U.S. recessions were also preceded by a rise in oil prices. In July 2008, even when the Federal Reserve was still betting that it had a handle on the economy, Warren Buffett warned that “exploding” inflation — whether in the price of oil or steel — was the biggest risk to the U.S. economy. “Quickly rising oil prices have been a contributing factor to every recession since World War II,” said Moody’s chief economist Mark Zandi. Odds of a 2020 U.S. recession have risen to 34 percent, from 28 percent before this year’s spike in crude oil, Moody’s stated in a report. President Donald Trump’s tax cut, a deal on Capitol Hill to boost government spending, and a flattening of the difference between short- and long-term interest rates also are contributing to the elevated recession risk. “My recession odds for 2020 have significantly increased since late last year,” Zandi said. Oil seesawed in trading on Monday after President Trump’s tweet about Iran added to a geopolitical catalysts for oil. It started trading strong but trailed off by the end of the day. Recent swings in the price of oil — especially early last week, when Treasury Secretary Steve Mnuchin said some buyers of Iranian oil may be given extra time before sanctions hit, and Trump and Russian President Vladimir Putin discussed working together to regulate oil prices — show that the oil trade remains vulnerable to a downturn. Sanctions against Iran, reimposed as Trump repudiated his predecessor’s deal to halt Iran’s development of nuclear weapons, is playing a major role in crude oil prices. In late June the Trump administration signaled that oil buyers must stop buying Iranian crude by November, and shortly after, Trump said he had a deal with the Saudis to increase production, though doubts remain about the Saudis’ ability to increase production by as much as 2 million barrels. In June figures reported last week, Saudi production was up by 500,000 barrels as it tries to tame the recent growth in crude oil prices. But the Saudis also have also said they cannot raise oil production above that level this month. Earlier this month, Sanford C. Bernstein made a call that crude could reach $150 a barrel over the next several years. On Monday, as the U.S. and Iranian leaders ratched up their war of words, some analysts contended that oil could reach $200 a barrel if Iran shuts down the Strait of Hormuz or takes military action. The case for a short-term surge in crude prices is that the Trump sanctions would remove much, even all, of Iran’s 2.2 million barrels per day from a global market of just less than 100 million daily barrels, at the same time the global economic expansion has demand growing 1.7 percent annually, according to Bjørnar Tonhaugen, head of oil markets at Oslo-based consulting firm Rystad Energy. The market is already struggling with the loss of as many as 700,000 barrels a day of Libyan crude, and more from Venezuela, as those nations struggle with outdated or malfunctioning production systems and internal political turmoil. The math on how much higher oil prices hurt the economy “If we do get oil prices of $100, $125 or $150, you reach a severe pain threshold, and not just for the U.S.” said Bernard Baumohl, chief economist of the Economic Outlook Group in Princeton, New Jersey. “There’s nothing vague or ambiguous about it. You reach a pain threshold in the triple digits, and there is a much higher probability of a global downturn. … It would be cataclysmic.’’

#### Econ Collapse causes trump to launch diversionary war – he wants to divert attention.

Foster 12-19-2016 - professor of international studies and political science at the Virginia Military Institute (Dennis, “Would President Trump go to war to divert attention from problems at home?” *Washington Post*, <https://www.washingtonpost.com/news/monkey-cage/wp/2016/12/19/yes-trump-might-well-go-to-war-to-divert-attention-from-problems-at-home/?utm_term=.43745ac4c66c>

If the U.S. economy tanks, should we expect Donald Trump to engage in a diversionary war? Since the age of Machiavelli, analysts have expected world leaders to launch international conflicts to deflect popular attention away from problems at home. By stirring up feelings of patriotism, leaders might escape the political costs of scandal, unpopularity — or a poorly performing economy. One often-cited example of diversionary war in modern times is Argentina’s 1982 invasion of the Falklands, which several (though not all) political scientists attribute to the junta’s desire to divert the people’s attention from a disastrous economy. In a 2014 article, Jonathan Keller and I argued that whether U.S. presidents engage in diversionary conflicts depends in part on their psychological traits — how they frame the world, process information and develop plans of action. Certain traits predispose leaders to more belligerent behavior. Do words translate into foreign policy action? One way to identify these traits is content analyses of leaders’ rhetoric. The more leaders use certain types of verbal constructs, the more likely they are to possess traits that lead them to use military force. For one, conceptually simplistic leaders view the world in “black and white” terms; they develop unsophisticated solutions to problems and are largely insensitive to risks. Similarly, distrustful leaders tend to exaggerate threats and rely on aggression to deal with threats. Distrustful leaders typically favor military action and are confident in their ability to wield it effectively. Thus, when faced with politically damaging problems that are hard to solve — such as a faltering economy — leaders who are both distrustful and simplistic are less likely to put together complex, direct responses. Instead, they develop simplistic but risky “solutions” that divert popular attention from the problem, utilizing the tools with which they are most comfortable and confident (military force). Based on our analysis of the rhetoric of previous U.S. presidents, we found that presidents whose language appeared more simplistic and distrustful, such as Harry Truman, Dwight Eisenhower and George W. Bush, were more likely to use force abroad in times of rising inflation and unemployment. By contrast, John F. Kennedy and Bill Clinton, whose rhetoric pegged them as more complex and trusting, were less likely to do so. What about Donald Trump? Since Donald Trump’s election, many commentators have expressed concern about how he will react to new challenges and whether he might make quick recourse to military action. For example, the Guardian’s George Monbiot has argued that political realities will stymie Trump’s agenda, especially his promises regarding the economy. Then, rather than risk disappointing his base, Trump might try to rally public opinion to his side via military action. I sampled Trump’s campaign rhetoric, analyzing 71,446 words across 24 events from January 2015 to December 2016. Using a program for measuring leadership traits in rhetoric, I estimated what Trump’s words may tell us about his level of distrust and conceptual complexity. The graph below shows Trump’s level of distrust compared to previous presidents. These results are startling. Nearly 35 percent of Trump’s references to outside groups paint them as harmful to himself, his allies and friends, and causes that are important to him — a percentage almost twice the previous high. The data suggest that Americans have elected a leader who, if his campaign rhetoric is any indication, will be historically unparalleled among modern presidents in his active suspicion of those unlike himself and his inner circle, and those who disagree with his goals. As a candidate, Trump also scored second-lowest among presidents in conceptual complexity. Compared to earlier presidents, he used more words and phrases that indicate less willingness to see multiple dimensions or ambiguities in the decision-making environment. These include words and phrases like “absolutely,” “greatest” and “without a doubt.” A possible implication for military action I took these data on Trump and plugged them into the statistical model that we developed to predict major uses of force by the United States from 1953 to 2000. For a president of average distrust and conceptual complexity, an economic downturn only weakly predicts an increase in the use of force. But the model would predict that a president with Trump’s numbers would respond to even a minor economic downturn with an increase in the use of force. For example, were the misery index (aggregate inflation and unemployment) equal to 12 — about where it stood in October 2011 — the model predicts a president with Trump’s psychological traits would initiate more than one major conflict per quarter.

#### The risk under Trump is existential

Street 16 - Masters in War Studies from King’s College London, Senior Programme Officer on the Sustainable Security programme at Oxford Research Group and has worked for many years on the politics of nuclear disarmament and the arms trade (Tim, “President Trump: Successor to the Nuclear Throne,” *Oxford Research Group*, http://www.oxfordresearchgroup.org.uk/publications/briefing\_papers\_and\_reports/president\_trump\_successor\_nuclear\_throne)

The US President is solely responsible for the decision to use the near-unimaginably destructive power of the nation’s nuclear arsenal. Thus, as Bruce Blair—a former intercontinental ballistic missile launch control officer—makes clear, ‘Trump will have the sole authority to launch nuclear weapons whenever he chooses with a single phone call.’ The wider political meaning of the bomb for the world is aptly summarised by Daniel Deudney, who describes nuclear weapons as ‘intrinsically despotic’ so that they have created ‘nuclear monarchies’ in all nuclear-armed states. Deudney identifies three related reasons for this development: ‘the speed of nuclear use decisions; the concentration of nuclear use decision into the hands of one individual; and the lack of accountability stemming from the inability of affected groups to have their interests represented at the moment of nuclear use’. Similarly, Elaine Scarry has explained in stark terms in her 2014 book Thermonuclear Monarchy: Choosing between Democracy and Doom, how the possession of nuclear weapons has converted the US government into ‘a monarchic form of rule that places all defense in the executive branch of government’ leaving the population ‘incapacitated’. In response to this situation, Scarry argues that the American people must use the Constitution as a tool to dismantle the US nuclear weapons system, thereby revitalising democratic participation and control over decision-making. Scarry also outlines the incredible might the president wields, with each of the US’s fourteen nuclear-armed submarines alone carrying ‘enough power to destroy the people of an entire continent’, equivalent to ‘eight times the full-blast power expended by Allied and Axis countries in World War II’. Nuclear specialist Hans Kristensen has described how the US’s strategic nuclear war plan ‘if unleashed in its full capacity’ could ‘kill hundreds of millions of people, devastate entire nations, and cause climatic effects on a global scale’. This war plan consists of a ‘family of plans’ that is aimed at ‘six potential adversaries’ whose identities are kept secret. Kristensen understands that they include ‘potentially hostile countries with nuclear, chemical, and biological weapons (WMD)’, meaning China, North Korea, Iran, Russia and Syria as well as a terrorist group backed by a state that has conducted a catastrophic WMD attack. The ‘dominant mission’ for US nuclear weapons within these plans is termed counterforce, meaning strikes on ‘military, mostly nuclear, targets and the enemy’s leadership’. Despite these plans, the US’s nuclear arsenal is often described by mainstream commentators as being solely intended to ensure mutual assured destruction (MAD), i.e. as part of the ‘balance of terror’ with Russia, in order to prevent armed conflict between the two nations and to ensure a response in kind to a surprise nuclear attack. However, as Joseph Gerson and John Feffer explain, rather than deterrence just being about enough nuclear forces surviving a surprise first strike attack to ensure MAD, US military planners have also understood it to mean ‘preventing other nations from taking “courses of action” that are inimical to US interests’. David McDonough thus describes the ‘long-standing goal of American nuclear war-planners’ as being the achievement of the ability to launch a disarming first-strike against an opponent- otherwise known as nuclear superiority. This has been magnified in recent years as the US seeks to ‘prevent’ or ‘rollback’ the ability of weaker states—both nuclear and non-nuclear powers—to establish or maintain a deterrence relationship. Taking all this into account, the new commander-in-chief’s apparently volatile temperament thus raises deep concerns since his finger will be on the nuclear trigger as soon as he assumes office on 20th January 2017. Given his past experience, Bruce Blair’s statement that he is ‘scared to death’ by the idea of a Trump presidency is but one further reason why urgent discussion and action, both in the US and globally, on lessening nuclear dangers—and reviving disarmament—is vital. A recent report by the Ploughshares Fund on how the US can reduce its nuclear spending, reform its nuclear posture and restrain its nuclear war plans should thus be required reading in Washington. However, as the Economist has rightly noted, ‘It is not Mr Trump’s fault that the system, in which the vulnerable land-based missile force is kept on hair-trigger alert, is widely held to be inherently dangerous’ since, as they point out, ‘no former president, including Barack Obama, has done anything to change it.’ Over sixty years after the nuclear attacks on Hiroshima and Nagasaki, nuclearism thus remains very much embedded in the nation’s strategic thinking. Yet the election of Obama, and the rhetoric of his 2009 Prague speech, in which he stated ‘America's commitment to seek the peace and security of a world without nuclear weapons’ led many to think that a real change was on the cards. Obama’s visit to Hiroshima earlier this year to commemorate the bombings was thus a painful reminder of how wide the gap is between the rearmament programmes that the US and other nuclear weapon states are engaged in and the disarmament action that they are legally obliged to pursue under the nuclear non-proliferation treaty (NPT). Obama himself said in Japan that, ‘technological progress without an equivalent progress in human institutions can doom us. The scientific revolution that led to the splitting of an atom requires a moral revolution as well.’ For this statement to be meaningful it is necessary to identify who is responsible for the existing, highly dangerous state of affairs. In short, the US government’s recent record supports Scarry’s suggestion that a democratic revolution is what, in reality, is most needed if the US is to make substantial progress on nuclear non-proliferation and disarmament. Short-term reforms towards the democratic control and ultimate dismantlement of the US’s nuclear arsenal have been outlined by Kennette Benedict, who writes that the next administration should: place our nuclear weapons on a much lower level of launch readiness, release to the public more information about the nuclear weapons in our own arsenals, include legislators and outside experts in its nuclear posture review and recognize Congress’ authority to declare war as a prerequisite to any use of nuclear weapons. Assessing Obama’s nuclear legacy In order to properly appreciate what a Trump presidency may bring, we need to revisit the range and types of powers bequeathed to the commander-in-chief by previous administrations. Despite the military advances made by China and Russia in recent years, it is important to recognise that the US remains far and away the biggest global spender on conventional and nuclear weapons and plans to consolidate this position by maintaining significant technological superiority over its adversaries, which will, as is well appreciated, push Beijing, Moscow—and thus other regional powers—to respond. Yet spending on nuclear weapons alone is set to pose significant budgeting difficulties for future US governments. According to a 2014 report by the James Martin Center, the Departments of Defense and Energy plan to spend approximately $1 trillion over the next 30 years ‘to maintain its current nuclear arsenal and procure a new generation of nuclear-armed or nuclear capable bombers and submarines’ as well as new submarine launched ballistic missiles (SLBMs) and inter-continental ballistic missiles (ICBMs). Arms Control Today has found that total Defense Department nuclear spending ‘is projected to average more than $40 billion in constant fiscal year 2016 dollars between 2025 and 2035, when modernization costs are expected to peak’. Including costs for the Department of Energy’s National Nuclear Security Administration’s projected weapons-related spending during this period ‘would push average spending during this period to more than $50 billion per year’. If anywhere near these sums are spent, then the modest reductions to the US’s nuclear stockpile achieved during the Obama presidency will be entirely overshadowed. Moreover, as analyst Andrew Lichterman notes, the US’s continued modernisation of its nuclear forces is ‘inherently incompatible’ with the ‘unequivocal undertaking’ given at the 2000 NPT Review Conference to eliminate its nuclear arsenal and apply the ‘principle of irreversibility’ to this and related actions. For Lichterman, the huge outlays committed to the nuclear weapons complex were part of a political ‘bargain’ made by the Obama administration with Republicans. This ensured that the New START nuclear arms control treaty would pass in the Senate whilst also not disturbing the development of missile defense and other advanced conventional weapons programmes. New START is a bilateral agreement between Russia and the US, which Steven Pifer describes as ‘one of the few bright spots’ that exists in these nations’ relationship. Under the treaty Moscow and Washington must, by 2018, reduce their stockpile of operationally deployed strategic nuclear warheads to 1,550. Furthermore, both must keep to a limit of 700 deployed strategic launchers (missiles) and heavy bombers, and to a combined limit of 800 deployed and non-deployed strategic launchers and heavy bombers. Despite New START ‘proceeding smoothly’ according to Pifer, Hans Kristensen recently produced a report comparing Obama’s record with that of the previous presidents holding office during the nuclear age, which found that, hitherto, Obama has cut fewer warheads—in terms of numbers rather than percentages—than ‘any administration ever’ and that ‘the biggest nuclear disarmers’ in recent decades have been Republicans, not Democrats. Kristensen thus drily observes of this situation that, a conservative Congress does not complain when Republican presidents reduce the stockpile, only when Democratic president try to do so. As a result of the opposition, the United States is now stuck with a larger and more expensive nuclear arsenal than had Congress agreed to significant reductions. As his presidency draws to a close, presumably as a means of securing some sort of meaningful legacy in this area, it has been reported that Obama considered adopting a no first use (NFU) policy for nuclear weapons, something which, whilst reversible, could act as a restraint on future presidents. Yet this was apparently abandoned, according to the New York Times, after ‘top national security advisers argued that it could undermine allies and embolden Russia and China’. Furthermore, according to Josh Rogin of the Washington Post, the governments of Japan, South Korea, France and Britain all privately communicated their concerns about Washington adopting NFU. Defense Secretary Ashton Carter is also said to have argued that such a move would be unwise because ‘if North Korea used biological weapons against the South the United States might need the option of threatening a nuclear response’. However, as Daryll Kimball explains, the US’s ‘overwhelming’ conventional military advantage means that ‘there is no plausible circumstance that could justify—legally, morally, or militarily—the use of nuclear weapons to deal with a non-nuclear threat’. Such resistance to NFU is thus deeply disappointing given that, as Kimball goes on to note, this move would go some way to reassuring China and Russia about the US’s strategic intentions. It would also be an important confidence-building measure for the wider community of non-nuclear weapon states, showing that the US is willing to act in 'good faith' towards its disarmament obligations under the NPT. Thinking about the causes of proliferation more widely requires us to understand what drives weaker states to seek deterrents, if their reliance on them is to be reduced. For example, as Dr Alan J. Kuperman observes, NATO’s bombing and overthrow of Libyan leader Muammar Gaddafi in 2011 ‘greatly complicated the task of persuading other states such as Iran and North Korea ‘to halt or reverse their nuclear programs’. The lesson Tehran and Pyongyang took is thus that because Gaddafi had voluntarily ended his nuclear and chemical weapons programmes, the West now felt free to pursue regime change. When assessing the importance of the Iran nuclear deal, which is often hailed as one of Obama’s landmark achievements, and which the next President must not be allowed to derail, it is thus important also to consider carefully what behaviour by the most powerful states will enable existing or potential nuclear possessors to embrace disarmament and reduce their interest in seeking non-conventional deterrents. The inability of Washington to make substantial progress towards reducing the salience of nuclear weapons at home and abroad is all the more noteworthy when one considers the state of US and Russian public opinion on nuclear arms control and disarmament. As John Steinbrunner and Nancy Gallagher observe, ‘responses to detailed questions reveal a striking disparity between what U.S. and Russian leaders are doing and what their publics desire’. For example, their polling found that: At the most fundamental level, the vast majority of Americans and Russians think that nuclear weapons have a very limited role in current security circumstances and believe that their only legitimate purpose is to deter nuclear attack. It is highly consistent, then, that the publics in both countries would favor eliminating all nuclear weapons if this action could be taken under effective international verification. Another important measure which the US has failed to hitherto ratify is the Comprehensive Test Ban Treaty (CTBT). This is despite President Obama stating in 2009 that he intended to pursue Senate ratification of the treaty ‘immediately and aggressively’. Once more, there is notably strong public support–82% according to a 2010 poll by the Chicago Council on Global Affairs—for the US joining the CTBT but, again, the Republican-controlled Senate has blocked the treaty at every opportunity. Overall, the gap between the public’s will and the government’s inaction on nuclear issues is alarming and redolent of the wider democratic deficit in the US. On a more positive note, the fact that the citizenry supports such measures suggests that groups advocating arms control and disarmament initiatives should continue to engage with and understand the public’s positions in order to effectively harness their support. Stepping back from the brink In terms of priorities for the incoming administration in the US, stepping back from military confrontation with Russia and pushing the threat of nuclear war to the margins must be at the top of the list. Whilst much has been made of a potential rapprochement between Trump and Putin, the two have, reportedly, only just spoken for the first time on the phone and still need to actually meet in person to discuss strategic issues and deal with inevitable international events and crises, including in relation to Ukraine and Syria. As of now, whilst the mood music from both sides might suggest a warming of relations, as has been seen with previous administrations, unless cooperation is rooted in a real willingness to resolve problems (which for Russia includes US ballistic missile defense deployments in Eastern Europe and NATO expansion) then tensions can quickly re-emerge. Another related question concerns how Trump will conduct himself during any potential crisis or conflict with Russia or another major power, given the stakes and risks involved, as highlighted above. Whilst we must wait to find out precisely what the new administration’s approach to international affairs will be, in the past week, NATO’s Secretary General Jens Stoltenberg told the BBC that he had been personally informed by Donald Trump, following the election, that the US remains ‘strongly committed to NATO, and that the security guarantees to Europe stand’. Trump had previously shaken sections of the defence and foreign policy establishment by suggesting that NATO was ‘obsolete’ and that countries such as Japan (and by extension others such as South Korea and Saudi Arabia) ‘have to pay us or we have to let them protect themselves’, which could include them acquiring the bomb. One reason why some in Washington have, in the past, not wanted their regional allies to develop their own nuclear weapons is because the US might then become dragged into an escalating conflict. Moreover, if an ally in one region seeks the bomb, this may cause others elsewhere to pursue their own capabilities- an act of strategic independence that might make these states harder to influence and control. The US’s key relationships in East Asia and the Middle East illustrate why, if a future US President wishes to take meaningful moves towards a world free of nuclear weapons, then developing alternative regional political agreements, including strategic cooperation with China and Russia, will be necessary. As Nancy Gallagher rightly notes, the ‘weaknesses of existing international organizations’ thus requires ‘more inclusive, cooperative security institutions’ to be constructed regionally ‘to complement and someday, perhaps, to replace exclusive military alliances’, alongside progressive demilitarisation. Such confidence-building measures would also support efforts to halt missile and nuclear tests by states such as North Korea, which may soon be capable of striking the US mainland. Imagining the next enemy As well as mapping out the US’s current nuclear weapons policies and its regional relationships, it is important to reflect upon how domestic political dynamics under a Trump presidency might drive Washington’s behaviour internationally, particularly given the nuclear shadow that always hangs over conflicts involving the US. For example, in the near-term, Trump’s economic plan and the great expectations amongst the American working class that have been generated, may have particularly dangerous consequences if, as seems likely, the primary beneficiaries are the very wealthy. Reviewing Trump’s economic plans, Martin Wolf of the Financial Times concludes that ‘the longer-term consequences are likely to be grim, not least for his angry, but fooled, supporters. Next time, they might be even angrier. Where that might lead is terrifying’. Gillian Tett has also highlighted the ‘real risks’ that Trump’s policies could ‘spark US social unrest or geopolitical uncertainty’. Elsewhere, George Monbiot in the Guardian, makes the stark assertion that the inability of the US and other governments to respond effectively to public anger means he now believes that ‘we will see war between the major powers within my lifetime’. If these warnings weren’t troubling enough, no less a figure than Henry Kissinger argued on BBC’s Newsnight that ‘the more likely reaction’ to a Trump presidency from terror groups ‘will be to do something that evokes a reaction’ from Washington in order to ‘widen the split’ between it and Europe and damage the US’s image around the world. Given that Trump has already vowed to ‘bomb the shit out of ISIS’ and refused to rule out the use of nuclear weapons against the group, it goes without saying that such a scenario could have the gravest consequences and must be avoided so that the US does not play into the terrorists’ hands. Looking more widely, President-elect Trump’s existing and potential cabinet appointments, which Glenn Greenwald has summarised as ‘empowering…by and large…the traditional, hard, hawkish right-wing members of the Republican Party’ also point to the US engaging in future overseas conflicts, rather than the isolationism which many in the foreign policy establishment criticised Trump for proposing during the presidential campaign. William Hartung and Todd Harrison have drawn attention to the fact that defence spending under Trump could be almost $1trillion (spread over ten years) more than Obama’s most recent budget request. Such projections, alongside Trump’s election rhetoric, suggest that the new nuclear monarch will try to push wide open the door to more spending on nuclear weapons and missile defense, a situation made possible, as we have seen, by Obama’s inability to implement progressive change in this area at a time of persistent Republican obstruction. Conclusion The problem now, for the US and the world, is that if Trump does make good on his campaign promises then this will have several damaging consequences for international peace and security and that if Trump does not sufficiently satisfy his supporters then this will likely pour fuel on the flames at home, which may then quickly spread abroad. The people of the US and the world thus now have a huge responsibility to act as a restraining influence and ensure that the US retains an accountable, transparent and democratic government. This responsibility will only grow if crises or shocks take place in or outside the US which ambitious and extremist figures take advantage of, framing them as threats to national security in order to protect their interests and power. If such scenarios emerge the next administration and its untried and untested President will find themselves with a range of extremely powerful tools and institutional experience at their disposal, including nuclear weapons, which may prove too tempting to resist when figuring out how to respond to widespread anger, confusion and unrest, both at home and abroad.

**The oil disad turns and outweighs the case – A] economic pressure and nuclear war lead to all the impacts of the aff and more. They say the war in yemen leads to SA committing to strikes that kill the yeminese but that is nothing compared to massive death across the globe. B] Scope – impacts to not only the middle east but every country. Scope is an impact multiplier for how many people are affected which o/w under util because it determines how much pain there is**

**Now the uniqueness and link debate – The Reuters article is fantastic – the oil supply to the united states is stable now but cutting military aid screws up our supply. There is a mutual relationship – we give them aid and they give us oil. Saudi is the world’s top oil exporter so they can control the prices no matter what. if Saudi decides to increases prices it would screw over the US because there is no other way we could stablize the market.**

**The impact is global recession to global war – the US and the world at large will not be able to survive given those conditions. No oil no stability in the US which spills over to global war.**