

Mock 5: IR II

Q# 3

Theoretically Justify the Causes of Collapse of Soviet Union?

The Collapse of the Soviet Union in 1991 marked a historic turning point in the 20th Century, leaving a void in global politics and ending an era of superpower rivalry. This monumental event can be theoretically justified through a multifaceted examination of its underlying causes. While numerous factors contributed to the demise of Soviet Empire, key elements such as economic stagnation, political mismanagement, ideological fatigue, and external pressures played pivotal roles in unraveling the once-mighty superpower.

The Dissolution of the Soviet Union

The Dissolution of the Soviet Union on Dec 25, 1991, marked the end of the Cold War. The disintegration of the USSR began in the late 1980s, with growing unrest in the various constituent republics, and ended on Dec 26, 1991, when Supreme Soviet voted to dissolve.

① The End of Cold War led Collapse of Soviet Union — Theoretical Perspective

Almost as soon as he took office, President Richard Nixon began to implement a new approach to international relations. Instead of viewing the world as a hostile, "bi-polar" place, he suggested, why not use diplomacy instead of military action to create more poles? To that end, he introduced a number of policies which reduced the tensions between Soviet Union and USA. This period of relaxation ended with the Culmination of Ronald Reagan (1981-2001).

President Reagan: antagonized the Soviet Union by calling the country as the "Evil Empire". Like many leaders of his generation, Reagan believed that the spread of Communism anywhere threatened freedom everywhere.

As a result, he worked to provide financial and military aid to anticommunist governments and insurgencies around the world. This policy, particularly as it was applied in the developing world in places like Grenada and El Salvador, was known as the Reagan Doctrine. Reagan imposed economic sanctions against the Soviet Union when Leonid Brezhnev exercised his authority against Poland. Relations between superpowers were the worst they had been since the late 1940s.

② Mikhail Gorbachev's Glasnost and Perestroika Reforms:

In March 1985, a longtime Communist Party politician named Mikhail Gorbachev assumed the leadership of the USSR. He inherited a stagnant economy and a political structure that made reform all but impossible. Gorbachev introduced two sets of policies that he hoped would help the USSR become a more prosperous productive nation. These sets of policies can be studied under following captions-

i) Glasnost or Political Openness

The first of these was known as Glasnost or political openness. Glasnost eliminated traces of Stalinist repression, like the banning of books and the omnipresent secret police, and gave new freedoms to Soviet citizens. Political prisoners were released. Newspapers could point criticisms of the government. For the first time, parties other than the Communist party could participate in elections.

ii) Perestroika, or Economic restructuring

The 2nd set of reforms was as Perestroika or Economic restructuring. The best way to revive the Soviet economy, Gorbachev thought, was to loosen the Government's grip on it. He believed that private initiative would lead to innovation, so individuals and cooperatives were

allowed to own business for the first time since the 1920s. Workers were given the right to strike for better wages and conditions. Gorbachev also encouraged foreign investment in Soviet enterprises.

In a nutshell,

However, these reforms were slow to bear fruit. Perestroika had torpedoed the "Command Economy" that had kept the Soviet state afloat, but the market economy took time to mature. (In his farewell address, Gorbachev summed up the problem: The old system collapsed before the new one had time to begin working. Rationing, shortages and endless queuing for scarce goods seemed to be only results of Gorbachev's policies. As a result, people grew more and more frustrated with his government.

③ The Revolution of 1989 and Fall of the Soviet Union

"During the Coldwar, we lived in coded times when it wasn't easy and there were shades of grey and ambiguity"

- Jon De Carre

Gorbachev believed that a better Soviet economy depended on better relationships with the rest of the world, especially the US. He announced that he would withdraw Soviet troops from Afghanistan, where they had been fighting a war since 1979, and he reduced the Soviet military

presence in the Warsaw Pact nations of Eastern Europe.

This policy of Nonintervention had important consequences for the Soviet Union - but first, it caused the fastest European alliances to, as Gorbachev put it, "crumble like a dry saltine cracker in just a few months." The first revolution of 1989 took place in Poland, where the non-Communist Trade Unionists in the Solidarity movement bargained with the Communist Govt for free elections, in which they enjoyed great success. This, in turn, sparked peaceful revolutions across Eastern Europe. The Berlin Wall fell in November; that same month, the 'Velvet revolution' in Czechoslovakia overthrew that country's Communist government.

The atmosphere of possibility soon enveloped the Soviet Union itself. Frustration with bad economy combined with Gorbachev's hands-off approach to Soviet satellites to inspire a series of independence movements in the republics on the USSR's fringes.

One by one, the Baltic states (Estonia, Lithuania and Latvia) declared their independence from Moscow. Then, in early Dec, the Republic of Belarus, the Russian Federation and Ukraine broke away followed by eight of the nine remaining republics. (Georgia joined two years later) or last, the mighty Soviet Union had fallen. This dissolution

of Soviet Union in fifteen independent states in Dec 1991 marked the end of Cold war.

④ Consequences of disintegration of the Soviet Union (USSR)

1. The fall of the Second world
2. The period marked the end of many Communist regimes in response to mass protests.
3. End of Cold war: End of arms race, end of ideological confrontations.
4. Change in power equations: Unipolar world, Capitalist ideology, IMF, World Bank, etc.
5. Emergence of new countries and new alliances — e.g: Baltic Countries aligned with NATO.

⑤ Conclusion:

The disintegration of the Soviet Union took place b/w 1980 and 1991. After then, the USSR's political, economic, and ethnic fragmentation ended the Soviet Union's existence as a sovereign state. Former General Secretary Mikhail Gorbachev aimed to overhaul the Soviet political and economic structures. After WWII, Germany was divided b/w the Communist USSR and the Capitalist west. The fall of Berlin wall started a series of events that led to disintegration of the Soviet Union. led by the Economic weakness, Political stubbornness and the growth of nationalism were the cause of collapse of Soviet Union.

Q # 8

Critically evaluate different debates of reform of United Nations from theoretical lens of IR.

In the ever-evolving arena of international politics, the United Nation (UN) stands as a beacon of hope, a crucible of discord, and a crucible for change. The clamor for reform within this global institution has ignited a fiery debate, casting a spotlight on the theories of International Relations (IR) that underpin our world order.

As we step into this intellectual arena, we will unravel the complexities of UN reform through the lenses of Realism, Marxism, Liberalism, and Constructivism, each offering its own unique narrative for the future of global governance. Let's critically evaluate the debates surrounding the reform of the United Nations (UN) through the theoretical lens of International Relations.

10 United Nations Reforms:

COMPETING INTERESTS AND NOTIONS OF UN REFORMS:-

Towards the End of World War II

During 1945, the world was gripped in the throes of the devastating world war II. However, it was apparent that the Allies were on the verge of defeating the Nazi Germany. The Allies thus began preparing themselves and the world for the post war era. For these preparations, the heads of state of Allied powers, namely Joseph Stalin of the Soviet Union, Winston Churchill of the Great Britain and Franklin Roosevelt of the USA met at Yalta in Feb 1945. This meeting of the Big Three is remembered in history as the Yalta Conference. It was here that the organizational structure of the UN was finalized but more importantly it was here that the power of an 'absolute veto' was decided upon the powerful five. The actual creation of the UN was a long political process. It can be rightly said that the failure of the League of Nations as an effective International Organization to prevent large scale conflicts (WWII) was also the reason of need of formation of the UN.

② The Veto Power: Ensuring Power of the P5 :-

The need for Collective Security demanded for an international organization that would keep law and order under check and wipe off any large scale conflicts. This need materialized in the shape of United Nations Organization. The concept behind the formation of UNO was promoting peace, however, the veto power that was decided as P5, sowed seeds of contempt. The veto was a special feature which gave the powerful five, namely, USA, USSR, GB, France and China, the power to say 'No' to any action they opposed. This feature was to, as it became apparent later, safeguard the interests of the P5. Due to power that veto rendered to each of the reigning powers of the time, the UN platform could not be used to pass a decision against any of them.

This built an inherent weakness in the UN structure, since accountability for the actions of the powerful could go missing, and it would also be a rare occasion when the 5 would unanimously agree. The veto power made other nations, without this blessing, glance at P5 nations with dubious eyes. This would also serve as the propagator of many conflicts in the UN for years to come.

③ The UN Under the New Power Configuration of the world:

The ground realities have changed since UN was formed, no longer is the world host to only 5 Superpowers, rather the post UN-formation world is a much more competitive place. Many emerging powers are not only able to compete with the super powers but also play a major and influential role in the international sphere.

This new group of nations, in view of the veto powers of the P5, has its eyes set on permanent status in the UNSC as well as veto powers. This group known as the G4 and including Brazil, Germany, India and Japan, have non permanent members of the Security Council for quite some time now and their influence both economically and militarily on the world today cannot be taken for granted anymore. With the growth of their non-ignorable influences in their respective regions and beyond, they are also now aspiring for veto powers because they intend to use their new found influence as leverage to gain more power. Till now their path is always blocked by their competitors whether economic or political. However, in the time veto powers remain in the UN their aspirations will continue to grow only stronger.

5) KEY REFORM CAMPAIGNS

The structure of Security Council is not without problems. Japan and Germany are great powers that contribute substantial UN dues (based on economic size) and make large contributions to UN programs and peacekeeping operations yet they have exactly the same formal representation in the UN as tiny states with less than one-hundredth of their populations: one veto in the General Assembly and the chance to rotate onto the Security Council (in practice they rotate onto the Council more often than the tiny states). As global trading powers, Japan & Germany have huge stakes in the ground rules for international Security affairs and would like seats at the table. But including Japan and Germany as permanent Security Council members would not be simple. If Germany joined, three of the 7 permanent members would be European, giving that region unfair weight.

The three European seats could be combined into one (a rotating seat or one representing the European Union).

PROPOSED REFORMS :-

G4: It is an informal group, Japan, India, Germany and Brazil are members. They are bargaining for permanent membership of UN Security Council. Their main argument is that nature of balance of power

has changed from that at time of formation of UN, so, number of permanent members should be a reflection of today's world.

Unity For Consensus - UFC (Coffee Club): This is a caucus of 70 countries. No permanent member is a part of this. They are against veto. Argentina, Mexico, Pak, South Korea and many other states are part of this coffee club. They didn't demand veto or permanent membership. They demanded non-permanent members up to 20.6 from Africa, 5 from Asia, 4 from America and Caribbean countries, 3 from Western Europe and 2 from Eastern Europe.

The Elders (by Kofi Annan): UN had lost productive and administrative-bureaucratic efficiency with the time due to weak Secretariat. Elders should comprise of bureaucrats who served in UN. It should be acts as think tank as they have experienced of UN.

African Union: They demand enlargement of both permanent members and non permanent. Accepted model A with increase in 2 non-permanent seats of Africa.

DIC: They just demanded 2 permanent seats with veto.

Dilemma of UN Reforms

Theorizing UN Reforms:

The main problem with understanding the reform at the UN lies in fact that some regard or regard it impossible to achieve since the institution is only reflective of the existing power relations and some believe that it will always be short of the ideal model in their minds. These two perspectives also reflect the way theories of IR conceptualize change in International politics in general and the reform at the UN in particular. The theoretical frame work Cass puts forward in the "Twenty Years' Crisis reconciles idealist and realist perspective and formulates a third standpoint.

E.H. Carr and Sound Political Thinking

Reforms initiatives at UN in particular can best be conceptualized from the theoretical framework of E.H. Carr presented in the Twenty years' crisis as sound political thinking. To Cass, every political situation contains elements of utopia and reality of stability and power. He does not believe in an essential harmony. He believes in a constant struggle b/w the proponents of status quo and its enemies.

Politics is the struggle b/w change and status quo.

In the constant relationship b/w realism and utopianism, which makes up politics. Sometimes utopian thinking veils our ability to understand and evaluate the constraints of reality.

In that case, realist critique - the idea of relativity of thought - helps us to reveal underlying interests. And sometimes realist thinking leads us to determinism and inaction. In that case, we need utopianism to think of alternatives which will lead to political action. Sound political thinking rests on this constant relationship where utopia and reality keep correcting each other. No single realist or idealist model appears to offer a complete explanation for the case of reform process. They do not develop satisfying explanations for change and change in international organizations.

Admittedly, it is not easy to link realist and idealist explanations that would achieve theoretical precision beyond single case studies. In order to make further progress in developing such a bridge-building theory, what we need to do is to test model in other cases of institutional change.

Conclusion: - The reform of UN is a complex issue that can be analyzed from various theoretical perspectives within IR. Each perspective highlights different aspects of debates, ranging from power politics and cooperation to norms diffusion and social justice, providing a comprehensive framework for critical evaluation.

0#4

Concept of Clash of Civilizations often sounds to be an organized campaign to demean Islam. Discuss

In the ever-shifting landscape of global relations, the notion of a "Clash of Civilizations" has emerged as both a theoretical framework and a contentious battleground for discourse. While it purports to explain the dynamics of international conflicts along cultural fault lines, some perceive it as a subtle orchestration with a more sinister agenda: the systematic vilification of Islam. This perspective invites to delve into depths of this concept, where the clash of ideas about civilizations becomes as profound as the potential clash that

Let's now discuss the depths of concept through thesis of Samuel Huntington of Clash of Civilizations.

Thesis of Samuel Huntington

A number of literary contributions were made in explanation of Post-Cold war order. These include:

- 1) The End of History and the Last Man, 1992 by Francis Fukuyama

It debated the universalization of western liberal democracy and general acceptance of western system as homogenous state system.

- ii) The Clash of Civilizations and Remaking of World-order, 1993 by Samuel Huntington:

It debated the future perpetual clash between civilizations on the basis of culture and identities owing to increasing consciousness of identities and difference with western values and system.

- iii) Jihad vs. McWorld, 1985 by Benjamin Barber

It debated the struggle between globalization and Tribalism.

Genesis of Concept

Clash of Civilization was in actuality the rebuttal of Fukuyama's "The End of History". The theory was proposed by a political scientist named Samuel Huntington who was a white-house coordinator during Carter Administration and a professor at Columbia and Harvard Universities. This notion of clash of civilization is not original in Huntington's work. In a sort of classic orientalist gesture, he took it from a 1980 Atlantic Magazine article "The Roots of Muslim Rage" by Bernard Lewis.

It also suggested that Huntington's proposition was an attempt to academically validate the fictitious Lysian 'Green threat' fear the Sustenance of Euro-American military-industrial Complex. Samuel Huntington first presented the idea as a lecture at American Enterprise Institute in 1982.

Foreign Policy Magazine carried it as a long-read in 1983. Huntington later expanded it into a book in 1996. World politics, he declared is "entering a new phase" in which the fundamental source of conflict will occur between nations and groups of different civilizations.

Huntington's Classification of Civilizations

Huntington divided the world in 8 major civilizations in his book:

Western	Islamic	Latin-American
Confucian	Hindu	Africa
Japanese	Slavic-Orthodox	

If this theory was the post-Cold war conflict most likely would be due to clashes among Communism (e.g. the Soviet Union and the Communist bloc) and democracy (e.g. the Capitalist war led by the US) during the Cold war.

As he argued: The rivalry of the Superpowers is replaced by the Clash of Civilizations.

In this new world the most pervasive, important, and dangerous conflicts will not be slow racial classes, rich and poor, or other economically defined groups, but between peoples belonging to different cultural entities. This use of Civilization as the principal unit of analysis contrasts with the usual international relations emphasis on the classical notion of Sovereign State as the key unit of analysis. His policy prescription and warning was that western nations, collectively constituting a Civilization, would lose out to other Civilizations if they failed to recognize the irreconcilable nature of this new global competition.

Core States to Lead Respective Civilization

Each civilization, Huntington argued, had a core state - for example, India in Hindu Civilization, Russia in Slavic-Orthodox and China in Confucian - but nation-states were becoming less important sources of identity for people.

The future, then, would be one of ever-widening collisions among groups and countries from different Civilizations, such as the war in Chechnya that pit "Slavic-Orthodox" Russians against "Islamic" Chechens, or the Hindu-Islamic (India-Pakistan) clash over Kashmir.

Kin-Country Syndrome

Civilizational Conflicts, Huntington argued, would feature a 'Kin-Country Syndrome' in which members of a Civilization would try to help others from the same Civilization against their common foe. Thus, Muslim militants from many countries who joined the Afghan resistance to Soviet occupation after Moscow's 1979 invasion have reappeared in a variety of settings pitting Muslims against non-Muslims including Chechnya, Kosovo and Iraq.

In Iraq, for example, the militant Jordanian Abu Musab al-Zarqawi (1966-2006), deceased leader of the group Al Qaeda in Mesopotamia, frequently used non-Iraqi volunteers, "holy warriors" he called them, as suicide bombers against US forces and Shia civilians.

Examples of Civilizations' Clash

To support his case Huntington pointed to a number of events in global politics in 1993 that reflected growing tensions b/w countries in different Civilizations, assistance among people within the same Civilization, or potential alliances between certain Civilizations against others, especially the west. They included:

- i) Fighting among Croats, Muslims, and Serbs in Bosnia, western failure to help Bosnia's Muslims in an appreciable way, and Russia's support for Slavic Serbia in the Bosnian conflict.
- ii) Muslim and Chinese rejection of the West's version of universal human rights, suggesting a Confucian-Islamic alliance against the West.

iii) The voting along Civilization lines to hold the 2000 Olympics in Australia rather than China.

iv) China's sale of missile components to Pakistan, China's testing a nuclear weapon; and North Korea's effort to obtain nuclear weapons, suggesting a growing Confucian threat to the West.

v) America's 'dual containment' policy towards Iran and Iraq, and America's military preparations for two major regional conflicts against North Korea and Iran or Iraq.

vi) German limitations on admission of refugees.

vii) US bombing of Baghdad.

Let's now discuss the main Arguments of Huntington Thesis; through Concept map.

The cultural and religious identities of people will be the main cause of conflict from 1991 onward. Huntington identifies several 'Civilizations' and claims that a person's Civilization is her or her 'highest rank of cultural identity'.

The fault lines between Civilizations will be the battle lines of future

- (i) Misappropriating diversity into conflict
- (ii) Fault lines don't necessarily devolve into battle lines.

Civilization is the broadest concept of Cultural identity

- (i) Identities can traverse the boundaries of Civilization. (ii) People can, for example, be western Muslims, Latin American, Hindus, Japanese-Muslim

Increase in Intra-Civilization Consciousness due to increasing intercivilizational exchanges

- i) What about the inter-civilizational exchanges?
- ii) There is a healthy socio-cultural, economic and political exchange b/w civilizations, cutting across Huntington's 'battle lines'.

West, at Peak of its power confronts Non West's that increasingly have a desire the, will and resources to shape the world into non-western ways

- (i) There is a healthy socio-cultural, economic and political exchange b/w civilizations, cutting across Huntington's battle lines

Economic Regionalism is increasing among Civilizations. It can only succeed only when it's rooted in common Civilization.

Inter Civilizational trade organizations
Brics.

- (i) Trans-Pacific Partnership (ii) BRICS contains five diff Civilizations

From Arab Nationalism then Islamic fundamental manifested themselves

- (i) It is so called fundamentalism is a successor of Arab Nationalism
- (ii) Arab Nationalism was mainly anti-colonial in nature (iii) Islam has bloody borders, Classic example of Islamo-phobic bigotry.

Perception of an Organized Campaign Against Islam:

1) Selective Interpretation

Some individuals and groups perceive the 'Clash of Civilizations' theory as an organized campaign to demean Islam due to selective interpretation. They argue that it is often portrayed as a direct clash b/w the Islamic world and the west, overlooking other potential fault lines.

2) Media and Political Rhetoric

Media portrayal and political rhetoric in some cases have amplified the perception of an organized campaign against Islam. Certain narratives and news coverage may focus on conflicts involving Islamic countries, reinforcing the notion of a Civilization clash.

3) Historical Precedents

Historical conflicts and tensions b/w predominantly Muslim nations and western powers, such as colonialism and contemporary geopolitical disputes, can contribute to perception that the Clash of Civilization theory is being used to justify actions against Islam.

Concerns Related to This Interpretation:

1. Stereotyping and Bias

One significant concern is that framing conflicts in terms of a clash of civilizations can perpetuate stereotypes and biases against Islam and Muslims. It may lead to simplistic 'us vs them' mentality, which can hinder nuanced understanding.

2. Exacerbating Tensions

The perception of an organized campaign against Islam can exacerbate existing tensions and contribute to self-fulfilling prophecy, as parties involved may start to view the conflict through a civilizational lens, making peaceful resolution more challenging.

3. Undermining Multilateral Efforts

When international conflicts are framed solely as clashes between civilizations, it can undermine multilateral efforts, such as diplomacy and conflict resolution through international organizations like the United Nations. This can hinder peaceful solutions.

4. Potential for Radicalization

The belief in an organized campaign against Islam can also fuel extremism and radicalization, as some individuals may interpret it as a call to defend their faith against perceived threats.

Criticism:

(i) Huntington's thesis drew a fair amount of criticism to include the charge that his list of civilizations was simplistic, monolithic, and failed to take sufficient account of the tensions within 'civilizations'.

(ii) Most of these critics prefer to speak of state and society as units of analysis, focusing not on alleged clashes between or among civilizations, but rather on cultural, economic, social, and other similarities and differences. Purpose of critics is simply to note that viewing world politics from a human-geography perspective is useful but this requires an understanding of some of the major transitional trends that involve what we call identity politics.

(iii) His theory is more policy oriented than academic research. The end goal was to convince the decision makers to create a 'Western Block' by opposing in Latin America, Europe, Russia and Japan, against Confucian and Islamic states. (iv) It also urges west maintain western military superiority in East and South West Asia to exploit differences and conflicts among Confucian and Islamic states and to support in other civilizations, groups sympathetic to west, i.e. Divide and Rule.

Critical Evaluation

A critical evaluation of the 'Clash of Civilizations' theory in the context of demeaning Islam requires a nuanced examination of both the theory itself and its potential for misinterpretation or misuse. Here are key points to consider:

1) Huntington's Intentions:

Samuel P. Huntington, the originator of the theory, did not intend for it to demean any civilization, including Islam. He sought to provide a framework for understanding global conflicts in the post-cold war era based on cultural and civilizational differences.

2. Selective Interpretation

The theory has often been selectively interpreted and used by individuals, groups, and even governments to advance their agendas. This selective interpretation can lead to the perception that it is an organized campaign against Islam.

3. Stereotyping and Simplification

One criticism of the theory is that it oversimplifies complex global dynamics and reduces them to civilizational clashes. This can perpetuate stereotypes about Islam and Muslims as inherently in conflict with the west, which is a form of demeaning.

4. Media & Political Exploitation

Media outlets and politicians have sometimes exploited the theory for sensationalism or to justify military interventions. This has contributed to the perception that it is used as a tool to demean Islam.

5. Geopolitical Conflicts

The theory has been used to frame geopolitical conflicts involving predominantly Muslim countries such as the wars in Afghanistan and Iraq. In these cases, it can be seen as a legitimizing narrative for military actions, leading to concerns about demeaning Islam.

6. Impact on Muslim Communities

The belief that Islam is in conflict with the west, as suggested by the theory, can have real-world consequences for Muslim communities. It can lead to discrimination, bias, and even violence against Muslims, which can be considered demeaning.

7. Complexity of Islam

It's crucial to recognize the diversity within the Islamic world. Treating Islam as a monolithic entity in a clash with the west oversimplifies the rich tapestry of cultures, beliefs,

and histories within the
Muslim-majority countries.

Conclusion

In Conclusion, while the 'Clash of Civilizations' theory itself may not be inherently biased or intended to demean Islam, it has been interpreted and utilized in ways that raise legitimate concerns about stereotyping, tensions, and potential for radicalization.

It underscores the importance of critically examining and discussing international relations theories and their real-world implications, particularly when they involve sensitive issues like religion and culture.

Q#5

US Foreign Policy is full of contradictions. Discuss Promises and realities of Biden's foreign Policy from the theoretical lens of IR?

In the realm of international relations the landscape often resembles a complex puzzle, and the foreign policy of the US, under President Biden, is no exception. With promises that sparkle like guiding stars on the global stage, it is in the realities of diplomacy that we find the shadows of contradictions. Like the lenses of (IR) International relations' theories - Biden's foreign policy invites scrutiny, offering both harmony and dissonance in the ever-evolving symphony of international affairs.

Let's join a journey through these paradoxes as we explore how theory and practice entwine in the intricate dance of U.S. foreign policy.

U.S. President Joe Biden came into the office during a time of global and national crisis. He brought with him an ambitious agenda to address challenges including the coronavirus pandemic, climate change, and a rising China. Since taking office in Jan, U.S. President Joe Biden's administration has unveiled foreign-policy initiatives at breathtaking pace. From rejoining multilateral

organizations and reinvigorating alliances to donating vaccines, the Biden team has been the antithesis of its predecessor.

Biden's Foreign Policy, like that of any administration, can be analyzed through the theoretical lens of International Relations (IR). Let's discuss some of the promises and realities of his foreign policy in this context presented below:

From the lens of Constructivism:

President Joe Biden's entrance into office brought forth ambitious plans to confront the perceived existential threat of climate change, a departure from the policies of his predecessors. Within the realm of (IR) theory, this can be seen as a constructivist endeavor, aiming to reestablish American climate leadership on the global stage by emphasizing international norms and collective action. Central to his vision was the commitment to reducing the carbon emissions of the world's second-largest emitter by 2030, signifying a shift towards climate cooperation.

From the lens of Realism:

However, as his presidency approaches its two-year mark, this signature climate goal appears to be faltering. The domestic context has introduced complexities associated with competing national interests, power dynamics, and domestic political considerations, elements often examined through a realist lens in IR theory. At home, the President has encountered challenges in aligning his campaign promises with policy implementation, resulting in actions contrary to his original intentions. This disparity between the intended

Climate agenda and its practical realization underscores the intricate interplay of IR theories when addressing global issues like climate change.

Containment of China & Russia:

The shift in U.S. Foreign Policy away from emphasizing non-state actors towards great power competition with China and Russia, as witnessed through both the Trump and Biden administrations, can be analyzed in the context of IR theories. Considering Biden's promises and the practical realities.

(i) Biden's Promise through Realism

This reorientation aligns with realist principles in IR, emphasizing the pursuit of national interests and dynamics of power. However, it represents a slight departure from Biden's initial promise of multilateralism and diplomacy. Biden aimed to uphold international norms and cooperate with allies, reflecting a more liberal approach within the realist framework.

(ii) Security Dilemma and Russia

The Biden administration's perception of Russia as the biggest rival, particularly in the context of incidents like the invasion of Ukraine, can be seen as a manifestation of the security dilemma. Russia's actions have led to heightened security concerns and a perceived need for the U.S. to counterbalance Russian influence, aligning

with realist ideas of state competition.

(iii) China as a Threat:

Biden's characterization of China as the biggest threat to American security and relationships reflects a security-oriented realist perspective. It underscores the belief that China's rise poses a challenge to U.S. interests and necessitates a competitive stance.

(iv) Economic Considerations Tariffs:

The retention of Trump-era tariffs on China, despite internal debates and opposition, underscores the intersection of economic interests and foreign policy, particularly in the context of China's economic power. While some economists and officials question their impact, Biden's position may be seen as an effort to maintain economic leverage in great power competition, blending economic realism with foreign policy.

Uncertainty Prevails in the Middle East

The evolving dynamics of Biden's foreign policy, particularly in the Middle East and Asia, can be interpreted through lens of realism. While his campaign promises suggested a departure from the status quo, the realities of governing have led to a more pragmatic approach. This shift resonates with IR theories that emphasize the impact of domestic and international constraints on foreign policy decisions. In this context, the persistence of certain policies aligns with realist notions of stability and

the preservation of national interests. It reflects the challenges leaders face when navigating the complex interplay of global politics, often necessitating adjustments to initial promises in favour of a more nuanced and context-aware approach.

U.S. Troops Deployment in Conflict-Prone Area:

The apparent contradictions in the foreign policy approaches of both Trump and Biden concerning U.S. military deployments in conflict-prone regions can be analyzed. Initially, both leaders advocated for a reduction in the U.S. military presence, reflecting elements of realist thinking in IR, which emphasize national cost-benefit calculations and national interests. However, the limits to this approach became evident as security concerns and geopolitical realities took precedence. In response to Russia's invasion of Ukraine, Biden's decision to increase U.S. troop presence in Europe aligns with realist notions of balancing against perceived threats. Furthermore, his reversal of Trump-era withdrawal in Somalia demonstrates how domestic and international constraints can influence foreign policy. The contradictions in U.S. military deployments in conflict regions reflect the interplay of realist principles, pragmatic adaptations, and the impact of domestic and international factors.

JCPOA, An Unattained Aspiration

In contrast to Trump, Biden has pursued a distinct approach to one of the Middle East's most pressing issues: Iran's nuclear program. The Biden administration engaged in negotiations with Iran to revive the Obama-era nuclear agreement that Trump had dismantled, a move indicative of a more cooperative and multilateral approach in IR. This approach aimed to halt Iran's accelerated Uranium enrichment. However, these negotiations have encountered a deadlock. Significantly, Biden has chosen to uphold one of Trump's major actions: designating Iran's Revolutionary Guard as a terrorist organization. This decision, while an obstacle to forging a new agreement, reflects the intricate interplay of domestic politics, national security concerns, and the influence of past policies within the realm of IR, highlighting the complexities of addressing critical international issues like JCPOA.

The Trans-Pacific Partnership: A Fading Prospect

Biden and his political advisors demonstrate a keen awareness of the growing anti-free trade sentiment within the US, which Trump successfully leveraged to gain electoral support. This awareness has influenced Biden's approach to Trans-Pacific Partnership, a trade agreement involving 12 Pacific

Rim nations that aimed to enhance economic competition against China, while the agreement was initially championed by Obama as a means of shaping economic relations in the Asia-Pacific region. It faced rejection by Trump and Progressive Democrats. This cautious approach aligns with realist principles within IR, as it acknowledges the importance of domestic politics and the need to respond to protectionist sentiments.

Biden's Approach to European Allies and NATO

Biden's approach to European allies and NATO presents a departure from the Trump administration, particularly in the context of IR. Trump's tenure exhibited contradictory stances on Europe and Russia, with his praise of Vladimir Putin, criticism of NATO, and the withholding of military aid to Ukraine for political purposes. This period reflected elements of realist thinking within IR, emphasizing national interests and power dynamics. In contrast, Biden and his team have consistently emphasized the significance of trans-Atlantic alliances, aligning with more liberal IR perspectives that highlight cooperation, international institutions, and diplomacy. This Unity has facilitated joint actions, including the imposition of sanctions and the supply of weaponry

to support Ukraine against Russia.
The shift in policy underscores the intricate interplay of realist and liberal elements within the realm of international relations, as leaders navigate a complex geopolitical landscape.

Withdrawal of Troops from Afghanistan: ~ Biden's Decision:

Biden and Trump's decision to withdraw troops from Afghanistan reflects a response to the prevailing sentiments of most Americans, who had become fatigued by two decades of conflict. For Biden, this move also represents an opportunity to address past unresolved matters. During his tenure as a vice president, he had supported the idea of troop withdrawal, aligning with the Obama administration's goal to conclude long-running wars. However, this stance was met with opposition from US military leaders who argued for a continued presence in Afghanistan. In the context of IR theory, this situation highlights the interplay of domestic public opinion, military strategy, and political leadership within the realm of foreign policy decision-making.

Conclusion

The tradition of continuity between administrations is a product of the conventional ideas and groupthink arising from the bipartisan foreign policy establishment in Washington, which Ben Rhodes, a deputy national security adviser to former President Barack Obama, decisively called the Blob. But there is another argument that outside circumstances including the behavior of foreign governments, the sentiments of US voters and the influence of corporations also leave US leaders with a narrow band of choices. There's a lot of gravitational pull that brings it's still the same issues, it's still the same world. We still have largely the same tools with which to influence others to get to the same outcomes and it's still the same America.