

Trump, Biden, and U.S. Foreign Policy: Analyzing the Role of the Modern Presidency on America's Standing in the World

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トランプ政権、バイデン政権とアメリカ外交政策
——世界におけるアメリカの位置に近年の政権が与える役割に関する分析——

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Abstract:

This paper focuses on the current state of American politics and how the transition from the Trump presidency to the Biden presidency has affected U.S. foreign policy. This analysis begins with a detailed look at the 2020 U.S. presidential election results, and then considers what the U.S. political landscape may look like for the 2024 presidential election. This paper then demonstrates that while the stark contrast between the Trump administration and the Biden administration is obvious when it comes to domestic policy, it is not as evident when it comes to foreign policy. That is, while the Biden administration has taken a different foreign policy approach by employing a more conciliatory tone and by expanding America's commitment to international organizations, it has not differentiated itself from the Trump administration in terms of results, insofar as multiple international crises have created a perception of continuous unsteadiness in American foreign policy, and insofar as the Biden administration has thus far taken a similar approach to relations with China. This paper therefore ultimately suggests that hyperpartisanship in American politics may be contributing to a tumultuous foreign policy approach, which raises questions about when post-Trump U.S. foreign policy will return to pre-Trump era standards. All information in this article last updated on October 24, 2021.

要旨：本稿は、アメリカ政治における党派対立とトランプ政権およびバイデン政権にみられる不安定な外交政策に焦点を当て、これらがポスト・トランプのアメリカ外交政策からトランプ以前のスタンダードにいつ戻るのかを不確定にしていることを指摘している。トランプ政権とバイデン政権の政策の著しい相違は、国内政策においては明らかであるが、外交政策においてはそれほど明らかではない。バイデン政権は、トランプ大統領が行っていたような過激な言葉遣いを抑え、国際機関へのアメリカ合衆国の関与を拡大するという点ではトランプ政権とは異なる政策をとっている。しかし、複数の国際危機を通してアメリカ外交政策は依然として不安定であるという認識を与えたことや、これまでのところ中国との関係については似たような政策をとっている点に限っては、結果的にはバイデン政権はトランプ政権との違いを出していない。

Key words: U.S. Politics, Foreign Policy, International Relations

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I. Introduction

The United States presidential election is obviously one of the most noteworthy events in American politics, and has been especially so over the last two decades. The 2000 election, for instance, saw a long and drawn-out legal battle over a statistically miniscule number of ballots in the state of Florida that ultimately determined the outcome of the race in favor of George W. Bush. The 2008 election was historic as Barack Obama became the first African American man to be elected President of the United States. The 2016 election was perhaps most notable for the highly unorthodox approach of the race's eventual winner, Donald Trump, whose bombastic statements upended various norms and unspoken rules of presidential politics. Finally, and most recently, the 2020 presidential election took place while the United States struggled immensely with the COVID-19 pandemic, and the intensely polarized nation delivered a surprisingly close result, which in unprecedented fashion featured the defeated incumbent seemingly refusing to concede or acknowledge the legitimacy of his successor's victory. This last election merits additional attention, for the two major party candidates presented vastly different visions for the future of the United States, with the potential for far-reaching consequences domestically and internationally.

This paper therefore begins with a detailed analysis of the 2020 U.S. presidential election results in order to assess the political divide that defines contemporary American politics, and then examines selected state-by-state results of the 2020 contest in order to clarify just how narrow Biden's margin of victory actually was. Analyzing these results, in conjunction with the 2016 U.S. presidential election results and current polls about American attitudes toward potential 2024 candidates, makes it then possible to consider what the political landscape may look like in 2024. This paper then turns to the impact of hyperpartisanship in U.S. politics, and the impact of the Trump and Biden presidencies specifically, on U.S. foreign policy. The stark contrast between the Trump administration and the Biden administration is obvious in terms of domestic policy, as this analysis reveals, but is not as evident when it comes to foreign policy. Most notably, the Biden administration has taken a different approach by employing a more conciliatory tone and by expanding America's commitment to international organizations, but it has not differentiated itself from the Trump administration in terms of results, insofar as multiple international crises have created a perception of continuous tumultuousness in American foreign policy, and insofar as the Biden administration has thus far taken a similar approach to relations with China. This paper therefore ultimately suggests that while political infighting over domestic issues in the United States has often yielded typical, albeit intense, disagreements about policy approaches, the way that each party now seemingly seeks to discredit and delegitimize the other party is not only fostering hyperpartisan tensions domestically, but may also be contributing to a chaotic foreign policy approach—and it remains to be seen when post-Trump U.S. foreign policy will return to pre-Trump era standards.

II. Outlook for the 2024 U.S. Presidential Election

The 2020 U.S. presidential election featured a tense campaign between former Vice-President Joe Biden, the Democratic nominee, and the incumbent President Donald Trump, the Republican nominee. Pre-election polls steadily showed a significant advantage for Biden, and many polls

indicated that 2020 could end up being a Democratic wave election, whereby Biden would defeat Trump by a massive margin and Democrats would take firm control of the Senate and the House.¹⁾ Had the election turned out as the polls indicated, then the results would have served as a resounding repudiation of Trump and the direction of the Republican Party under his leadership. The actual results, however, did not feature a Democratic wave, but a narrow victory of the White House, the House of Representatives, and the Senate (by way of a fifty-fifty split, which gives Democrats control by virtue of the vice-president having the power to cast a vote to break a tie). With regard to the 2020 presidential election results, Joe Biden won by what seems like a comfortable margin, topping Trump 306 to 232 in electoral college votes, and topping Trump by seven million in the popular vote. Examining the results in states with narrow margins of victory, however, reveals that Biden's victory was closer than the nationwide results indicate. Biden won all three states that were decided by less than a percentage point: Biden prevailed to win Arizona's eleven electoral votes by 0.4%, Georgia's sixteen electoral votes by 0.3%, and Wisconsin's ten electoral votes by 0.6%. As for states decided by less than five percentage points, Biden won Michigan's sixteen electoral votes by 2.8%, Nevada's six electoral votes by 2.4%, Pennsylvania's twenty electoral votes by 1.2%, while Trump won North Carolina's fifteen electoral votes by 1.3% and Florida's twenty-nine electoral votes by 3.3%.²⁾ As these results show, Biden won six of the eight states decided by less than five percentage points, including the three that were decided by less than one percentage point. Biden's margin of victory in terms of the popular vote in the three states decided by less than a percentage point was just under 43,000 votes cumulatively. The electoral votes of these three states would have been sufficient to swing the election, meaning that Trump could have won the 2020 presidential election with the swing of a mere 43,000 votes out of over 155 million votes cast.

The 2016 presidential election outcome had some notable differences, but it was fundamentally quite similar to the 2020 outcome.³⁾ The most notable difference is of course that the Republican candidate prevailed, and did so despite losing the popular vote. Looking past these obvious differences, however, reveals a number of similarities. In 2016 the winner also finished with a sizeable lead in electoral votes, with Donald Trump topping Hillary Clinton 306 to 232, and once again a relatively small change in results in just a few closely contested states would have altered the presidential election's outcome. Unlike the 2020 election, which saw most of the states decided by narrow margins break in one candidate's favor, states decided by less than five percentage points in 2016 were more evenly divided between the two candidates. In 2016, Trump won Arizona's eleven electoral votes by 3.5%, Florida's twenty-nine electoral votes by 1.2%, Michigan's sixteen electoral votes by 0.2%, North Carolina's fifteen electoral votes by 3.7%, Pennsylvania's twenty electoral votes by 0.7%, and Wisconsin's ten electoral votes by 0.8%. Clinton won Colorado's nine electoral votes by 4.9%, three out of Maine's four electoral votes by 3.0%, Minnesota's ten electoral votes by 1.6%, Nevada's six electoral votes by 2.4%, and New Hampshire's four electoral votes by 0.4%. Most notably, Trump won three of the four states decided by less than a percentage point, meaning that a difference of less than a single percentage point in Michigan, Pennsylvania, and Wisconsin, which comes to just under 80,000 votes of the nearly 129 million votes cast in 2016, would have swung the election in Clinton's favor.

With regard to the 2024 presidential election, it could well present a rare instance of an

incumbent in his first term declining to run for re-election, or a rare instance of a former president running for a non-consecutive second term. President Biden was the oldest person to be sworn in as president, at seventy-eight years old, and so his age will likely become a serious point of discussion as 2024 approaches. Moreover, Biden's approval ratings by late 2021 were troubling. For instance, a Quinnipiac University National Poll conducted in October of 2021 showed 38% approval and 53% disapproval of Biden's job as president.⁴⁾ Similarly, a Gallup poll conducted in September of 2021 showed Biden with a 43% approval and 53% disapproval rating. It is of course premature to give much credence to poll numbers in a president's first year, but if poll numbers such as these hold even after the 2022 midterms, serious doubts will arise about Biden's viability as the democratic candidate for 2024. Though certainly not a forgone conclusion, it stands to reason that Vice President Kamala Harris would lead the Democratic ticket should Biden decide not to run, meaning that the main point of uncertainty for the 2024 Democratic ticket if Biden declines to seek a second term will likely center on who will stand as the running mate for Kamala Harris.

On the Republican side, the focus in 2021 has largely been on the prospect of former President Trump running in the 2024 presidential election, with polls indicating that the former president stood as the favorite to win the Republican nomination if he seeks it.⁵⁾ For instance, a Harvard CAPS-Harris Poll in September of 2021 found that 58% of Republican voters would support Trump as the 2024 Republican nominee. A CNN poll conducted by SSRS, released in September of 2021, found that 63% of Republicans and Republican-leaning independents believe that the former president "should be the leader of the Republican Party," though only 51% of respondents believe that "Republicans have a better chance of winning the presidency in 2024 if Donald Trump is the party's nominee."⁶⁾ A Quinnipiac University poll released in October of 2021 found that "78% of Republicans want to see Trump run for president in 2024."⁷⁾ Of course much can happen along the way to 2024 that could change Trump's prospects for winning the Republican nomination. For one thing, there is the question of Trump's health as he enters his late seventies, which Trump has allegedly told confidants would be the one factor that would lead him to decide against running again in 2024.⁸⁾ Further challenging Trump's re-election bid is the reality that he will likely remain barred from all major social media platforms, which will make it extraordinarily difficult for him to stay relevant with potential voters. Finally, there is also the simple reality that with each passing year, Republicans could increasingly sour on the Trump approach to politics as a new candidate garners growing support from conservative voters.

Turning to the 2024 presidential election, then, the outcome will likely once again come down to tight margins in a handful of contested states. If Biden and Trump end up in a rematch, polling indicates that the contest could once again be close, and perhaps even the popular vote could end up being close. A Harvard CAPS/Harris Poll from September of 2021, for example, found that 48% of respondents "have a favorable opinion of Trump" and 47% have an unfavorable opinion of the former president, while Biden fared slightly worse with 46% holding a favorable opinion and 49% holding an unfavorable view of the forty-sixth president.⁹⁾ Similarly, an Emerson College poll from September of 2021 found that 47% would favor Trump, while only 46% would favor Biden.¹⁰⁾ All told, then, the future of the presidency in 2024 is surprisingly uncertain, insofar as a first-term president could end up declining to seek re-election and a former president could end up seeking a second non-consecutive term, which differs significantly from the typical projections at this juncture

of a first-term president's time in office, which would typically prefigure the sitting president seeking re-election against new contender from the rival party.

III. The Polarization of U.S. Politics

A close election is not always particularly noteworthy, nor is the prospect of political power flipping from one party to another, but in the case of the United States, its current socio-political climate now makes election outcomes, particularly close ones, especially significant. For instance, following Trump's victory in 2016, thousands of demonstrators in various cities throughout the United States chanted, among other things, "not my president."¹¹⁾ The hostility between Trump and Democratic lawmakers was intense, and from the moment that Democrats won control of the House of Representatives in the 2018 mid-terms, there was talk of impeaching him—and ultimately he was impeached twice, and acquitted in the Senate twice. The 2020 election saw far more intense fallout when pro-Trump protestors managed to unlawfully enter the U.S. Capitol on January 6, 2021, which forced lawmakers to evacuate. While the 2016 protests appear to have been ideologically motivated, insofar as protestors seemed to reject Trump's political views, a speech by outgoing President Trump that claimed, without evidence, that fraudulent votes cost him the election, seems to have motivated the Trump supporters who unlawfully entered the Capitol to not only protest Biden on ideological grounds, but actually challenge his legitimacy. Though the Federal Bureau of Investigation (FBI) has not found significant evidence of the January 6 Capitol incident being the product of a coordinated plot to actually overthrow the 2020 presidential election results, this latter instance is nevertheless particularly worrisome.¹²⁾ This unlawful entry into the Capitol goes beyond protesting a leader's policies and ideological leaning, but rather, it actually represents a refusal to acknowledge an incoming leader's legal legitimacy. Coupled with outgoing President Trump's decision not to attend Biden's inauguration, the 2020 election represents a disquieting moment in the history of a country largely seen as the gold standard for the concept of the peaceful transition of power in democratic governance.

In his inaugural speech, Biden spoke of America's challenges and the way to overcome them: "It requires that most elusive of things in a democracy: Unity."¹³⁾ The country remains polarized, however, with disagreements about vaccine mandates, mask mandates, educational policies, social justice, government spending, and seemingly every other significant social and political issue hotly debated along ideological lines. Several Republican representatives in the House have introduced articles of impeachment against Biden, which in 2021 serves as a purely symbolic act given that Democrats still control the chamber, but it raises a very real possibility that Biden could face impeachment should Republicans re-take the House in the 2022 mid-terms. Given that Democrats impeached Trump twice, and given that some Republican lawmakers are already expressing willingness to impeach Biden for various issues if they re-take the House, ranging from his handling of the southern border to the way that he handled America's exit from Afghanistan, it appears that U.S. presidents may now continually face the prospect of impeachment when the opposing party controls the House. Furthermore, while it is standard practice for a new president to sign executive orders that reverse some of his predecessor's directives, Biden signed twenty-eight executive orders in his first two weeks as president, more than double the number of executive orders that Trump signed in his first month.¹⁴⁾ This could represent an escalation whereby when the presidency shifts

from one party to the other, the incoming president will seek to reverse as many of his predecessor's policies as possible, as quickly as possible, at rates not seen in previous transitions from one administration to the next.

Moreover, with some notable Democrats proposing an expansion of the Supreme Court in order to shift its current ideological makeup, proposing to eliminate the filibuster so that Democrats can pass legislation with simple majorities, and proposing to grant statehood to Puerto Rico and Washington, D.C., which would dramatically alter the electoral landscape in favor of Democrats, it is clear that the ideological divide now could put each party's electoral survival at stake. With Democrats proposing such measures, each election now raises questions about the future of the political process: should Democrats retain control of Congress in 2022, will this embolden the party to enact such measures; should Republicans take control of the presidency and congress in 2024, will fear of what Democrats may do in the future lead conservatives to pre-emptively pass legislation that could cripple Democratic efforts to re-take control of Congress and the presidency in future elections?

IV. U.S. Foreign Policy under Trump and Biden

The increasingly acrimonious partisanship on display in U.S. politics today is troubling for the international community. Even though party affiliation obviously impacts a president's approach to foreign policy to some extent, presidents have traditionally gravitated to the center once in office, meaning that a change in which party controls the White House did not lead to sudden, radical shifts from one administration to another. For instance, the Obama presidency was in many ways a repudiation of the George W. Bush approach to foreign policy, but changes under Obama were largely measured and gradual. In the wake of the 2016 election and the intensely hostile political atmosphere that now defines U.S. politics, however, presidents now face growing pressure to play to their base far more than in times past, and they have little incentive to take a centrist approach with such a polarized electorate, which can have a significant impact on foreign policy.

With the Trump presidency, some changes represented swift and significant departures from the traditional approach to foreign policy. For instance, Trump brusquely declared in his inaugural address: "From this moment on, it's going to be America First ... every decision on trade, on taxes, on immigration, on foreign affairs, will be made to benefit American workers and their families."¹⁵⁾ With Trump rejecting the principles of liberal hegemony and seeking to dismantle the grand strategies that have guided U.S. foreign policy since the end of the Cold War, it seemed as though the United States in one fell swoop now stood on the precipice of isolationist foreign policy.¹⁶⁾ Trump withdrew the United States from several high-profile international agreements, such as the Trans-Pacific Partnership (TPP), the Paris Agreement on climate change, the Joint Comprehensive Plan of Action (JCPOA) Iran nuclear deal, and even the World Health Organization (WHO) for the way it was handling the COVID-19 pandemic. Trump also struck a confrontational tone with some allies by repeatedly calling some out for not paying "their fair share." For instance, when he first met German Chancellor Angela Merkel in person, he bluntly declared that "many nations owe vast sums of money from past years, and it is very unfair to the United States—these nations must pay what they owe."¹⁷⁾ This kind of broadside, clearly aimed at Germany for its failure to meet its 2014 Wales Declaration on the Transatlantic Bond commitment, ran contrary to the measured language

and diplomatic protocols that have long defined U.S. foreign policy dealings in public.¹⁸⁾ President Trump similarly eschewed the kind of measured responses that have defined U.S. foreign policy when he responded to North Korean threats against the United States in 2017 with a blunt threat of his own, stating: “North Korea best not make more threats to the United States ... they will be met with fire, fury, and frankly power, the likes of which this world has never seen before.”¹⁹⁾

Biden has sought to strike a different tone with the international community, stating in his inaugural address: “So here is my message to those beyond our borders: America has been tested and we have come out stronger for it. We will repair our alliances and engage with the world once again.”²⁰⁾ In a speech two weeks later, Biden boldly proclaimed: “America is back. Diplomacy is back at the center of our foreign policy.”²¹⁾ Biden quickly reversed Trump’s decision to withdraw from the WHO and the Paris Agreement, which was likely a welcome decision by the international community—though this could serve as a reminder that international institutions and agreements laden with ideological symbolism may now become political footballs in America’s hyperpartisan politics. Despite Biden’s early statements on restoring America’s place in the world diplomatically, the first year of his presidency has not shaken the appearance of U.S. foreign policy as being relatively tumultuous. In a meeting in Alaska in March of 2021, for instance, top Chinese diplomats lectured America’s top diplomats in front of television cameras, and the exchange proved surprisingly tense for such high-level talks.²²⁾ The U.S. withdrawal from Afghanistan months later in August of 2021 represented additional foreign policy disarray, as the erratic civilian evacuation and exit of U.S. forces was reminiscent of the fall of Saigon, despite Biden stating a month earlier in July that there would be “no circumstance where you see people being lifted off the roof of an embassy.”²³⁾ Following the messy Afghanistan exit, the United States negotiated a security pact with Australia and the United Kingdom, known as AUKUS, and in the process precipitated a diplomatic row with France so intense that it recalled the French ambassador to the United States and the French ambassador to Australia in response.²⁴⁾ France’s anger apparently stemmed from not only the economic fallout of Australia suddenly reneging on a ninety-billion-dollar submarine contract for French submarines in favor of U.S. nuclear submarine technology, but the fact that it was not consulted or warned ahead of time, which calls Biden’s early emphasis on multilateralism into question given that the U.S. negotiated such a narrow Anglo-centric trilateral agreement. Finally, at a town hall in October of 2021, Biden responded “yes, we have a commitment,” when asked whether or not the United States would defend Taiwan if attacked by China.²⁵⁾ This statement clearly exceeds American obligations as outlined in the 1979 Taiwan Relations Act and goes against the strategic ambiguity approach that the U.S. employs to avert conflict over Taiwan. High-ranking Biden administration officials then went on to deny that Biden’s comments represent a shift in America’s position on Taiwan security. All told, Biden’s first months as president did not create the illusion that “America is back,” but rather reinforced the impression that U.S. foreign policy remains erratic, just as it was during the Trump presidency.

With regard to China, U.S. policy has not yet significantly changed from the Trump administration to the Biden presidency. That is, despite the radically different tone that the Biden administration has taken publicly, it has largely maintained a similar approach as that taken during the Trump presidency. With regard to the Trump administration, it pursued a number of initiatives to counter China’s growing regional influence. The Trump administration continued to expand

America's East Asian regional security framework beyond the traditional hub-and-spokes system by, for example, re-establishing the Quadrilateral Security Dialogue with Japan, Australia, and India in 2017.²⁶⁾ The United States under Trump also sought to push back against China's efforts to create new islands and construct bases in the South China Sea, where China has competing territorial claims with several countries, including Vietnam and the Philippines.²⁷⁾ One way that the Trump administration did this was by increasing the frequency of the U.S. Navy's Freedom of Navigation Operations, with nine such operations in the South China Sea in 2019 alone.²⁸⁾ Several U.S. agencies during the Trump presidency also shifted their focus toward dealing with China specifically. In 2020, for example, the Department of Defense's focus on China resulted in several changes, including: a new strategy management office that amalgamates the department's efforts to deter China; a new policy office designed to counter China; and a curriculum shift at the National Defense University so that half of its coursework focuses on China.²⁹⁾

While campaigning for the presidency, rival politicians accused Biden of potentially being soft on China, especially after his comments during an event in 2019, in which he stated: "China is going to eat our lunch? Come on, man. I mean, you know, they're not bad folks, folks. But guess what? They're not competition for us."³⁰⁾ In a speech shortly after his inauguration, however, Biden struck a very different tone, describing China as "our most serious competitor," and stating: "We'll confront China's economic abuses; counter its aggressive, coercive action; to push back on China's attack on human rights, intellectual property, and global governance."³¹⁾ Thus far, the Biden administration has indeed treated China as a serious competitor, and has pursued a number of initiatives that are similar to those under the Trump administration. For instance, the aforementioned AUKUS security pact that strained relations with France, and perhaps the European Union (EU) more broadly, is similar to the Trump administration's decision in its first year to strengthen its position in the Asia Pacific vis-à-vis China by reviving the Quadrilateral Security Dialogue. The AUKUS pact will, among other things, give Australia the ability to build nuclear-powered submarines, thereby bolstering a close U.S. ally's long-term military capabilities in the region. Additionally, the Central Intelligence Agency (CIA) launched a new China Mission Center, which, according to CIA Director William Burns, "will further strengthen our collective work on the most important geopolitical threat we face in the twenty-first century, an increasingly adversarial Chinese government."³²⁾ This approach is in line with an assessment by the Director of National Intelligence during the Trump administration, John Ratcliffe, that posits China as "the greatest threat to America today."³³⁾ The U.S. under Biden has also taken the same approach to dealing with tensions in the South China Sea as that taken during the Trump administration, with Secretary of State Antony Blinken declaring in a press statement: "The United States reaffirms its July 13, 2020 policy regarding maritime claims in the South China Sea."³⁴⁾ True to this commitment, the Biden administration thus far appears set on maintaining the increased frequency of Freedom of Navigation Operations in the South China Sea as was seen during the Trump presidency.

V. Conclusion

The United States has entered perilous waters with regard to its domestic politics. The American public seems bitterly divided on a wide range of issues, and views about topics ranging from social justice to health regulations relating to the COVID-19 pandemic seem to split largely

along ideological lines. Further complicating matters is the narrow margin of victory seen in the last two, bitterly fought, presidential election campaigns, which portends yet another closely fought 2024 campaign, one that could potentially even see a rare instance of a former president seeking a non-consecutive second term, and potentially see the incumbent abstain from seeking a second term. Should Trump stand as the Republican nominee, and certainly if he were to win the presidency, the United States could end up mired in even more intense socio-political conflict. Such extreme partisanship has seemingly led to a shift away from the relatively centrist approach to governing that has traditionally marked presidential administrations of past generations, with Trump and Biden each outwardly appealing to their base as opposed to gravitating to the center. On the surface, this means that when control of the White House changes from one party to the other, it could lead to potentially radical swings in approaches to foreign policy. This has indeed been the case with international institutions and agreements, marked by Trump withdrawing the United States from international agreements like the TPP, the Paris Agreement, the JCPOA, and even the WHO, followed by Biden quickly reversing Trump's decision on the Paris Agreement and the WHO.

The reality, however, is that U.S. foreign policy under Biden has in many ways not changed significantly from foreign policy under Trump in two notable ways. First and foremost, foreign policy under each president has been relatively tumultuous. This is particularly the case with European allies, with Trump having taken aim at the EU's leading economic power, Germany, for its insufficient defense spending, and Biden alienating the EU's leading military power, France, by signing a narrow Anglo-centric alliance that not only marginalized France's security role, but also cost it a ninety-billion-dollar defense contract. Moreover, the haphazard U.S. withdrawal from Afghanistan has seriously undermined international confidence in America's standing as the world's most dominant power, and seriously undermined Biden's claim that "America is back." Another way that foreign policy has not changed much from the Trump administration to the Biden administration is with regard to China, with both administrations steadfast in countering China's growing capabilities and international clout. In the end, then, the level of disarray under Trump and under Biden seems consistent thus far, and yet the approach to countering China's growing influence has been surprisingly steady and has not changed noticeably from the Trump to the Biden administration. Whether this level of tumultuousness in general, coupled with steadiness regarding China specifically, continues in the coming years of the Biden administration, and whether this continues following the 2024 presidential election, remains to be to be seen—but so far it appears that post-Trump U.S. foreign policy is unlikely to return to the pre-Trump standards anytime soon.³⁵⁾

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