

Is political security a critical research theme for frontier AI labs?

Should they anticipate and prepare for *hard* nationalization by patron States?

1. Frontier AI labs have proto-State features—even if they do not wish to supplant the sovereign State

The question of how States might progressively control AI labs is not novel¹, but the question of how AI labs might prepare for a *hard* nationalization by hegemonic patron States might be both novel and relevant. The question of why governments allow such a strategic and existential technology to remain in private hands is perplexing. Some argue² that government and Tech cooperate harmoniously in the ongoing AI-driven societal transformations. Yet, traditional—and declining³—sovereign States should be wary of frontier labs' capability to encode hard political power⁴, because of the latter's emerging sovereign proto-State features, such as these: “Anthropic’s 1,900% annual revenue growth runs 317× faster than India’s 6%; employees generate \$27M each (338× average American workers); reaching \$25-30B revenue in under a decade where States required centuries.”⁵ OpenAI’s March 2026 ‘[core infrastructure](#)’ framing signals proto-State thinking. AI labs operate with more rapidity and agility, and their battle-tested technology has revolutionized the speed of warfare⁶. There could be more strategic capability disparity indicators that further warrant broader categories of AI security research to substantiate why frontier AI labs should consider that States could nationalize them, and map out how co-founders, managers and teams could remain crucial in a *hard* State nationalization scenario. Even if it never happens, the question *is* relevant.

2. A necessary category in a broadening field of AI security research

Mainstream security functions at frontier AI labs encompass AI safety, cyber security, and corporate protection of people and assets. Yet a fourth category—**political security**—merits special attention. The recent public scolding of Anthropic’s CEO by the U.S. President and Secretary of War is but one example of such emerging political risks. These seem logical and plausible for AI labs to foresee and plan for.

The political security category effectively broadens the scope of AI security research to scenarios of how and *why* sovereign States wary of AI capabilities they do not own, could and might pursue *hard* nationalization instead of *soft* nationalization of AI labs to embed these capabilities into an evolved, hyper-powerful super-State. The **key question** in this most political moment ([Jack Clark](#), 2023) is: if the U.S. has in *America First* its core political doctrine, why would it tolerate *permanent* private control of capabilities essential to the Department of War’s *AI-First* doctrine?

3. Practical objectives and deliverables

The object of this applied research should be to (1) provide understanding of how frontier AI labs might themselves be victims of their own hyper growth at the hands of a mistrustful State monopoly they have broken by capability, and (2) supply them with strategic—and realistic—plans to position their leadership and teams in key roles in an evolved state-owned AI company, or a new government agency.

Through historical case studies of private-State technology transfers, threshold analysis of State intervention triggers, comparative governance model assessment, and *win-win* scenario planning, this research would provide strategic guidance for frontier AI labs to retain institutional relevance under *hard* nationalization—a scenario that becomes plausible if hegemonic nation-States prove unwilling to tolerate private capabilities that dramatically surpass their own in their domestic and geopolitical space. In the end, the nationalization scenario could resolve the perplexing mystery of why States have let AI labs stand up the technology alone.

¹ Cheng, D., & Katzke, C. (2024). Soft Nationalization: How the US Government Will Control AI Labs. *SuperIntelligence - Robotics - Safety & Alignment*, 1(1). <https://doi.org/10.70777/si.v1i1.10931>

² Farrell, H., & Newman, A. L. (2023). Digital Disintegration: Technoblocs and Strategic Sovereignty in the AI Era. *International Organization*, 77(4), 1009-1041. <https://doi.org/10.1017/S0020818323000279>

³ Dasgupta, R. (2021). *After Nations*. Penguin Random House. <https://www.penguinrandomhouse.com/books/536696/after-nations-by-rana-dasgupta/>

⁴ Clark, J. (2023, March 20). Import AI 321: Open-source GPT3; Giving away democracy to AGI companies; GPT-4 is a political artifact. *Import AI Newsletter*. <https://importai.substack.com/p/import-ai-321-open-source-gpt3-giving>

⁵ Analysis by Claude 4.5 (Anthropic, 2026) based on Anthropic financial disclosures and IMF economic data.

⁶ U.S. Department of Defense. (2026). *Artificial Intelligence Strategy for the Department of War*. <https://media.defense.gov/2026/Jan/12/2003855671/-1/-1/0/artificial-intelligence-strategy-for-the-department-of-war.pdf>