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The point of departure for this integrative effort was an observation by Nanette Gantz, Program Director for the Arroyo Center’s Strategy and Doctrine Program at the time, that a number of individuals working in her program were grappling with similar kinds of questions concerning recent international changes and their implications for U.S. national security strategy. At her suggestion, I drew a large number of these individuals together in a series of workshops and informal meetings over the latter part of 1992 and first half of 1993 to stimulate discussion within RAND about strategy-related issues. This report is a product of these discussions. Both the discussions and this document were supported with concept development funds from the Arroyo Center’s Strategy and Doctrine Program.

We began with a workshop designed to identify the most important external events shaping the new strategic horizon. As expected, the list we came up with was long but contained few surprises. We quickly achieved a broad consensus about both global trends and key regional issues. The debate that ensued was not about these trends and issues, but about what they implied for U.S. strategy.

As I reflected on this debate, it became apparent that the differences of opinion regarding implications were a manifestation of something more fundamental: the differing prisms, or world views, through which people assay external developments. It is well understood that these fundamental differences are powerful and are rooted in basic disagreements about such issues as the transcendence of values, the utility of power, and the nature and behavior of nation-states. In the presence of some overarching threat, such as was generally per-
ceived to exist during the Cold War, these differences can be re-
solved. But in the current world setting, trying to resolve them is
virtually impossible, requiring a level of generality that renders any
attempt to arrive at operational implications largely meaningless.

I opted instead to highlight the differences. This approach might
seem somewhat surprising for an effort explicitly intended to be syn-
thetic in nature, but there was a purpose to this plan. By making the
fundamental differences explicit, the search for commonalities would
be not at the "meta-level" of world views, but down the ladder, at the
level of elements supporting the different perspectives. The expect-
tation was that although there are profound differences at the meta-
level, there might be consensus at the level of fundamental national
goals and on at least some of their related security objectives and op-
erational implications. And if the expectation proved correct, ele-
ments that were common across the perspectives might serve as the
basis for building a new strategic consensus, not weighted down by
the baggage of contending world views and sharp differences over
specific issues.

The participants were asked to group themselves according to four
broad world views and then develop a detailed strategy explicitly
linked to their perspective. Each group was charged with developing
a strategy that explicated its general world view, its view of funda-
mental U.S. goals and national security objectives, its sense of both
the major threats to and opportunities for advancing these goals and
objectives, and the specific strategy components (core, environment-
shaping, and hedging) that would help achieve the goals and objec-
tives identified. Each group was also charged with assessing its
strategy's respective strengths and weaknesses.

This report is the result of these efforts. It makes no pretense to be-
ing either representative or all-inclusive; legitimate views not repre-
sented here (such as those embraced by technological or economic
determinists) certainly deserve attention, as do alternative versions
of some of the views espoused. Moreover, a number of important is-
ues currently being debated in the U.S.—such as whether the U.S.
should pursue a "results-oriented" trade policy or adopt a domestic
industrial policy—are not addressed or are only alluded to. The ob-
jective was not to comprehensively cover every issue and school of
thought, but to identify and develop several broad alternative strate-
logic approaches that are analytically discrete, reflect important strains in the U.S. public debate, and in some way bound the spectrum of opinion. The hope was to contribute to the debate on national security policy by elucidating the principal differences in foreign policy orientations.

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James T. Quinlivan is Vice President for the Army Research Division and Director of the Arroyo Center. Those interested in further information about the Arroyo Center should contact his office directly:

James T. Quinlivan
RAND
1700 Main Street
P.O. Box 2138
Santa Monica, CA 90407-2138
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This report reflects the efforts of a group of RAND researchers in the latter part of 1992 and first half of 1993 to think about the implications of recent global and domestic changes for future U.S. national security strategy. Unlike efforts that address specific manifestations of strategy, the focus here was on the nature and composition of alternative strategies themselves and the potential for developing a broader consensus in support of a coherent U.S. national security policy. The dramatic international changes of the past several years have spawned growing confusion in the U.S. about fundamental goals and national security objectives and about appropriate U.S. roles for their furtherance. The purpose of this report is to help clarify those goals and objectives and to explore the implications of alternative definitions for U.S. national security strategy.

This report comprises three parts. The first part, Chapter One, provides a statement of the fundamental goals any U.S. national security strategy should serve and identifies four distinct security strategies—realism, multilateral security, democratic internationalism, and strategic independence—for securing these goals and related national security objectives. The second part consists of Chapters Two through Five, each of which describes and develops one of the four strategies from the perspective of its proponents. Each of these chapters also evaluates in a general way both the degree to which the strategy might succeed in securing U.S. goals and the associated costs and risks. The last part of the report, Chapter Six, then highlights the major differences between the strategies, as well as the key shared elements. These commonalities are then used to identify po-
tential strategy components around which a future U.S. national security strategy might be developed.

The explications of the alternative strategies are both conceptually and substantively rich and thus difficult to characterize in a short summary. Several broad conclusions do emerge from the exercise as a whole, however, that are relevant to U.S. policy.

First, **the U.S. needs a new national security strategy.** Without an accepted set of guidelines governing U.S. foreign political and economic policy and military strategy, it will be all but impossible to devise and implement coherent and effective responses to future challenges. At the same time, long-term interests will almost always be sacrificed to short-term, often parochial, objectives, and the domestic political support needed to sustain a consistent course in international affairs will be unattainable. The collapse of the Soviet Union, the increased complexity of international affairs, and the growing domestic competition for scarce resources all dictate efforts to develop a new, coherent strategic policy.

This task will not be easy, not simply because the issues involved are growing more complex, but because the differences between the proponents of the different strategies are profound. These differences are difficult to resolve because they stem not so much from divergent views of international trends or even of the most fundamental national goals, but from profoundly different world views and philosophical predispositions. These are reflected in the answers to such basic but usually unspoken questions as: What really matters in international affairs—ideas, institutions, or power? What drives the international system? What role should the U.S. play in ordering this system, and on what should it predicate its international efforts? Whether a particular action is considered to be in U.S. interests is largely determined by the answers to such basic questions.

The different world views underlying the strategies spawn a range of critically important differences on policy issues. The report describes these differences analytically in terms of five categories:

- **Maintaining the existing international system,** which includes such issues as how to handle NATO and other bilateral alliances, whether to retain a forward-deployed military presence, and
whether to seek to maintain the current international economic system.

- *Maintaining U.S. autonomy and control*, which involves such questions as whether the U.S. should maintain its status as the world’s only superpower, should ensure national control over key assets and technologies, and should guarantee U.S. influence over international organizations.

- *Using military force*, including when to intervene overseas, under what circumstances and in what regions, and by what means.

- *Renewing the U.S. economy*, particularly how to relate U.S. economic and political-military interests.

- *Extending democratic values, institutions, and practices abroad*, which includes such issues as the priority that should be placed on this objective, the principal geographic areas that should be emphasized in pursuing it, and the primary means that should be used to achieve it.

In addition to these analytical categories of differences, the report describes the strategies’ *major differences on a range of pressing country-specific issues*. These include the position the U.S. should take in dealing with Russia, potential global powers such as Germany and Japan, rising regional powers such as China, and the situation in the former Yugoslavia.

*In the absence of some new, overarching threat, it probably will not be possible to bridge such fundamental differences and produce a single, integrated strategy to which everyone will subscribe. Instead, it may be more useful to focus on identifying at least a small set of strategy components that most Americans can agree to and that will lend greater cohesion and a better sense of direction to U.S. foreign and national security policy.* Three broad commonalities shared by the alternative strategies provide a starting point:

- A universal sense that the world is a chaotic place whose effects are increasingly felt in the U.S. and that there is a *need for continued U.S. global engagement*.

- General agreement on a *core set of security concerns* that any U.S. strategy will have to address. These include ensuring the contin-
ued physical security of the U.S. and its citizens; preventing the emergence of hostile great powers, especially those whose values conflict with U.S. values and that might become global or major regional rivals; impeding the spread of weapons of mass destruction, especially nuclear weapons, to potentially hostile powers, as well as the spread of delivery systems that could threaten the U.S.; and addressing the problem of America's energy dependence.

- Broad agreement on the increased salience of economics in general and U.S. domestic economic difficulties in particular.

*Drawing on these commonalities, it may be possible to identify some potential strategy components with which most—although surely not all—Americans might agree and upon which greater public consensus for a national security policy may be generated. These include*

- *A redefined U.S. role in global affairs.* Such a role would recognize that *pax Americana* is dead, as is America's willingness to unilaterally bear the full burden of global security. But it would also recognize the need for continued U.S. global engagement and active U.S. leadership. Exploiting several powerful international trends, it would explicitly seek to position the U.S. as the nucleus of a new coalition of powers willing to share responsibilities in pursuit of common interests.

- *A reformulation of U.S. military requirements.* This reformulation would allow the U.S. to maintain a military capability sufficient to credibly support its intention to remain actively engaged on both a collaborative and a comparative-advantage basis. A continued forward deployment of U.S. troops would be required, albeit at somewhat reduced levels, as well as a demonstrated ability to rapidly deploy forces from the U.S. At the same time, U.S. military requirements would focus on meeting core U.S. security interests:
  - Protect the physical security of the U.S. and its citizens abroad.
  - Prevent the use or threatened use of nuclear weapons against the U.S. or its allies.
Exploit emerging technologies to maintain U.S. military superiority and to reduce costs.

Ensure U.S. access to oil for as long as the U.S. remains dependent on imports for its energy requirements.

Create the nucleus for potential multinational coalitions.

Ensure that the U.S. has the ability to act unilaterally if necessary to protect critical U.S. interests.

- A greater link between U.S. foreign policy goals and domestic, especially economic, objectives. On the one hand, this link would involve hardheaded plans to safeguard America's assets and make clear to U.S. friends and allies the close connection between America's domestic performance and continued U.S. international engagement. On the other hand, it would more explicitly factor into U.S. strategy the equally close connection between foreign trade, investment, and both global growth and domestic U.S. prosperity, as well as the connection between global growth and the spread of democratic values and practices.

These potential strategy components do not by themselves amount to a strategy. They do not address a range of important issues critical to future U.S. strategy, such as how to deal with nuclear proliferation, decrease American dependence on imported energy, and exploit existing U.S. political advantages in the new global environment. Neither do they begin to suggest how priorities should be established among competing objectives and how resources should be allocated. But they do identify potential starting points for framing public discussion. They might also foster a greater sense of cohesion in U.S. security policies and help create a foundation for eliciting broader public support for a future U.S. strategy.

Whatever the utility of such potential strategy components in fostering greater domestic consensus, it is certain that the task of building a new U.S. national security strategy will continue for some time to come. In moving forward with this task, the Clinton administration will face at least three overarching challenges:

- Communicate a greater sense of purpose to American power. With the collapse of the Soviet Union and the Cold War’s end, Americans are looking for a new vision of the U.S. role in the
world and a compass by which to chart the relationship between America’s fundamental goals and its international actions. They are also seeking guidelines for structuring and evaluating America’s overseas performance. Giving greater emphasis to the domestic U.S. economy and the creation of American jobs is both strategically and politically necessary, but it alone is not likely to be sufficient for generating either policy consensus or a sense of direction.

- Foster a greater basis for collective action, without confusing collegiality and consultations with U.S. leadership. U.S. leadership will remain essential, if for no other reason than that the U.S. is the only country with truly global interests and the ability to act politically, economically, and militarily on a global basis. The realities of world power relationships and the exigencies of U.S. domestic priorities, however, make the kind of dominance the U.S. exercised in the past both unsustainable and undesirable in the 1990s. The U.S. is blessed with strong and dynamic friends that largely share American interests and have the potential to become critical extenders of U.S. policy. But they also have the potential to become important long-term U.S. rivals. The task will be to expand U.S. cooperation and collaboration with these countries in ways that maximize their respective contributions while maintaining U.S. global engagement and leadership. The forging of links that give free rein to the powerful forces of international trade and investment will underpin this effort, as will the substitution of integration for containment as the object of U.S. strategy.

- Move away from the current, understandable focus on conflict resolution to a greater emphasis on conflict prevention. The role of deterrence played in the past is clearly changing. The U.S. needs to find other ways to defuse centrifugal forces and address nationalist and other aspirations before they develop into full-fledged conflicts. The relationship between open markets—from which everyone prospers—and stability needs greater attention. So, too, does the link between the spread of democratic values, institutions, and practices and both global peace and prosperity. Little progress is likely to be made on either front until there is a better understanding of why conflicts begin and how they are terminated. The task of factoring such an understanding into
national strategy involves a range of conceptual and operational challenges—as well as opportunities—for the U.S. analytical and policy communities.
Many individuals contributed to producing this report. As mentioned in the Preface, Nanette Gantz came up with the original idea behind this report and provided strong support at all stages of the report's development. Kenneth Watman, Ian Lesser, Graham Fuller, and Benjamin Schwarz served as the leaders of the "teams" assembled to flesh out the alternative strategies and were the principal authors of Chapters Two, Three, Four, and Five, respectively. David Ochmanek helped draft Chapters One and Three; Steven Popper contributed to Chapter Three. Marcy Agmon, James Steinberg, Ronald Asmus, and Bruce Hoffman critiqued chapter drafts for their respective strategy teams and offered many valuable revisions. Ronald Asmus, Mary Morris, David Ochmanek, and Eugene Rumer served with me as a kind of core group for exchanging ideas and monitoring progress. A much larger group of RAND colleagues participated in several or all of the workshop discussions and added substantially to the intellectual content of those discussions. Paul Bracken provided an expeditious review of the initial draft report, which was published in July 1993. However, I alone bear responsibility for any faults with the conceptual framework and the direction of this research effort, as well as any errors of analysis, interpretation, or presentation in the Summary and in Chapters One and Six.

I think I can safely say on behalf of all those who participated in this strategy exercise that we found the workshops and exchanges extraordinarily stimulating and even enlightening. Each of us came away with a much greater appreciation of the diversity and richness of opinion here at RAND and the personal value of these kinds of intellectual exchanges. We are grateful for the Arroyo Center's support in this endeavor.
The U.S. needs a new national security strategy. This simple assertion meets with broad (though not universal) agreement, but there is little consensus on the nature of the new strategy that should be adopted, the level of resources needed to support it, and indeed, the principal challenges it should address. Moreover, the post-Cold War debate over strategy in the U.S. has thus far tended to address specific manifestations of strategy more than the nature and adequacy of alternative strategies themselves. Typically raised are such important but second-order questions as: Are projected military forces likely to be sufficient for U.S. needs? To what extent should the U.S. commit resources to underwrite the reform process in the former Soviet Union? Is NATO still relevant, and should U.S. military forces remain in Europe? These questions cannot be properly addressed without first constructing a suitable framework.

AN OBJECTIVE-BASED APPROACH TO STRATEGY

Questions such as those above are a reflection of the profound international and domestic changes of the past several years. These changes have spawned growing confusion in the U.S. about national security objectives—i.e., what the U.S. wants to achieve in order to attain its fundamental goals as a nation—and uncertainty about appropriate U.S. roles for their furtherance. This report proceeds from the assumption that the second-order questions can be usefully addressed only within the framework of an overall strategy designed to secure fundamental U.S. goals and national security objectives. The report’s purpose is to help clarify those goals and objectives and
explore their implications for national strategy. Specifically, the attempt here is to

- Offer a statement of fundamental national goals that should be served by any U.S. national security strategy, and identify four distinct strategies for securing these goals and related national security objectives.
- Describe and develop each of the four security strategies from the perspective of its proponents, and evaluate in a general way both the degree to which each strategy might succeed in securing U.S. goals and the costs and risks associated with its adoption.
- Highlight the major differences between the alternative strategies and the key shared elements, and assess the implications of both for future U.S. strategy.

The hope is that this report will contribute to the debate on U.S. strategy. It is also hoped that it will ultimately contribute to the development of a wider consensus within the U.S. on what components are essential to a strategy for securing U.S. national goals in the new international environment.

STRATEGY AND ITS FUNCTIONS

A nation's strategy describes and prescribes the way in which the nation's resources—political, military, and economic—will be harnessed in the pursuit of its goals. National security strategy is concerned with securing these goals in the presence of external conditions—i.e., those arising from beyond the nation's borders. (Domestic strategy ultimately pursues the same goals, but in the presence of internal conditions.) Strategy should at least implicitly set priorities for competing objectives. And while much of a nation's strategy is conceived in reaction to existing challenges and constraints, a sound strategy also allocates some resources for exploiting available opportunities and shaping the environment in ways that over time will allow the nation to achieve its objectives at less cost.

The need for a new U.S. strategy is based on far more than a desire for tidiness: without an accepted set of guidelines governing U.S. foreign political and economic policy and U.S. military strategy, co-
herent and effective responses to future challenges will be all but im-
possible to devise and implement. Washington’s reactions to inter-
national events will be ad hoc and characterized by delay and confu-
sion, and the tendency to treat individual issues in isolation will be
exacerbated. Without wide agreement on the principles, objectives,
and means associated with U.S. national security strategy, the ad-
ministration will have to test for consensus on myriad individual is-
ues before it can articulate an authoritative position. And each case
will be seen as a potential tool for parochial or partisan maneuvering.

Perhaps most serious of all, however, is that the long term will almost
always be sacrificed to the short term if there is no broadly accepted
and understood strategy. Strategy is to a policymaker what a map
and compass are to a navigator: it helps ensure that decisions taken
in reaction to exigencies of the moment (bends in the trail, if you
will) cumulatively lead to the long-term objective. A well-articulated
strategy helps to clarify the true costs of various policy options by
bringing to bear considerations of each option’s potential effects on
the strategy’s longer-term objects. For example, when there was a
solidly based consensus in the U.S. and in allied capitals on the long-
term need to contain Soviet military power through collective de-
defense, decisions on such questions as trade policy, defense spending,
and controversial weapon deployments were made with an eye to-
ward their potential effect on “alliance solidarity.” In the absence of
a shared and well-articulated strategy, such decisions are more likely
to be based on short-term considerations of political expediency or
narrowly defined national self-interest.

Strategy’s function in this sense is particularly important in times like
these. The profound and ongoing changes being experienced make
the world a challenging, much more complex place than it was be-
fore, a place where some of the long-held distinctions between eco-
nomic and security and between foreign and domestic no longer
much apply, and where foreign policy choices are increasingly con-
strained by the exigencies of domestic situations. But such times
also present rare opportunities to shape the environment for decades
to come, both for good and ill. The rapidly changing geopolitical
environment has forced the U.S. to throw out its Cold War strategy of
containment and is presenting Americans with challenges and op-
opportunities that demand a new approach. Ironically, at the very time
the U.S. is most in need of a sound strategy, it is most difficult to create one.

FUNDAMENTAL U.S. GOALS

Fundamental goals provide the starting point for any consideration of strategy, both because strategy is concerned with the pursuit of goals and because a nation's fundamental goals can be defined largely without reference to the vicissitudes of the international environment. Indeed, the most fundamental American goals have changed little since the founding of the republic.

The Declaration of Independence states that the very purpose of government is to secure for its people the inalienable rights of "life, liberty, and the pursuit of happiness." These, then, are the most fundamental U.S. goals, the securing of which is the ultimate purpose of both national security strategy and domestic strategy.

These national goals, so succinctly stated by Jefferson, can be translated into operational terms as follows:

- Protect the lives and personal safety of Americans, both at home and abroad.
- Maintain political freedom within the U.S.; keep U.S. values, institutions, and territory intact; and prevent the emergence of a situation in which a foreign power could coerce the U.S. into acting against its own best interests or principles.
- Provide for the material well-being and prosperity of all Americans.

These goals are truly fundamental. Other goals sought by states, such as military power or national influence, are not ends in themselves but instruments for pursuing these fundamental goals. Further, a degree of precedence is implicit in Jefferson's formulation: life must be assured at some level of confidence before liberty becomes meaningful, and both life and liberty must be assured in some measure before prosperity, or "the pursuit of happiness," arises as a priority. Much of the artistry in defining and implementing strategy lies in setting levels of adequacy for the first two goals such that the third can be pursued with the greatest possible vigor. The former
Soviet Union provides an object lesson in, among other things, the consequences of excessive investment in assets dedicated to the assurance of national survival.

Many people argue that a fourth fundamental goal should be added to these three: secure the basic human rights and well-being of those in other nations (see Chapters Three and Four). Support for this argument comes from several considerations. One is a function of awareness: people today are apt to have far more information about the identity and conditions of people in other countries than was the case even a generation ago. A second is a function of pragmatism: people’s lives today are more likely than ever before to be affected by changes in conditions elsewhere. A third is a function of learning: history suggests that there are connections between the repression of human rights and both explosive revolution (with its attendant regional instabilities) and external aggression. As a result, a combination of humanitarian impulses and self-interest (in varying proportions) leads people to care about the living conditions of people in foreign countries.

Many other people, however, argue that such concerns, while legitimate, are derivative and should not be elevated to the level of a fundamental U.S. national goal (see Chapters Two and Five). Their view is that as a resident of this planet, the U.S. lives in a rough neighborhood. Oppression and injustice are the norm rather than the exception, and the U.S. lacks the ability, even if it had the will, to significantly alter conditions elsewhere. Not every example of government oppression, moreover, poses direct consequences for U.S. interests, nor are most such examples clear black-and-white situations. Even people in countries where human rights violations are common recoil from the prospect of the U.S. arrogating to itself the roles of judge, jury, and prosecuting attorney, or setting itself up as the sole arbiter of “acceptable” intrastate behavior. Intervening in the sovereign affairs of other nations is a contentious issue domestically and a messy matter internationally. Adding global human security to U.S. national security strategy would, moreover, be no small step.

This difference in views is not easily remedied and represents a major potential branching point for strategy. What proponents of the two views share, however, is an awareness that the well-being of
Americans is going to continue to be increasingly tied up with that of "foreigners." Modern technologies of communication and transportation, as well as the deepening of global interdependencies, ensure this result. Even if securing the human rights and well-being of people elsewhere is not itself a fundamental U.S. goal, it certainly can affect fundamental goals such as "the pursuit of happiness." Thus, the scope of U.S. national objectives (often referred to as interests) seems to be growing inexorably.

At the same time, the U.S. should be aware of another goal that often intrudes into national strategy: the desire for recognition, status, and national self-realization. In much of the third world, and increasingly in component parts of some more-developed nation-states as well, the principal motivating force is a desire for self-determination. In other countries, such as China, Japan, and France, a desire to be recognized and treated as an equal of the world's major powers has propelled national strategies for over a century. In the U.S., the desire to be seen as a "moral" actor, a nation that "does good" in the world, has long been a motive for American actions. This desire can be somewhat satisfied by advancing freedom (the second fundamental goal) and human rights (the "fourth" fundamental goal). But it also needs to be addressed by U.S. strategy more broadly. Maintaining U.S. international economic competitiveness, for example, is important for preserving America's self-image as the world's "number one" nation, just as it is for ensuring American security and prosperity. By the same token, U.S. strategy must take into account the comparable aspirations of other nations.

ALTERNATIVE STRATEGIES

All four strategies described in this report are designed to secure at least the first three fundamental goals posited above. The strategies have been formulated in reaction to trends in the international environment and assessments of how those trends—particularly those that constitute threats, but also those that constitute opportunities—might impinge upon these goals and upon national objectives.

The four strategies are intended to span the full range of strategies (or, more often, fragmentary recommendations) that have been put forward most frequently in vehicles of public debate—speeches, editorials, and articles by policymakers and academics. They are also
meant to capture critical distinctions between the debate participants and to provide an analytical tool for exploring more or less complete articulations of identifiably discrete alternatives. The differences between the four thus may be exaggerated in some cases.

The four strategies are as follows:

1. **Realism.** Concerned with the need to maintain stability in regions important to U.S. security, proponents of this strategy seek to capitalize on (and perpetuate) America's current advantageous situation as the world's only true superpower. They want to focus U.S. overseas involvement on situations and events that directly affect this global position, while relying primarily on U.S. capabilities and ad hoc U.S.-led coalitions to further American interests. The dominant concern for this school's adherents is power.

2. **Multilateral security.** This strategy's advocates believe that the flourishing of Western values and the spread of complex interdependence in the industrial democracies have fundamentally changed the nature of relations between those democracies. They seek to establish more effective institutions for the collective security of these “Western” democracies, building around the core of the Group of 7 (G-7) nations. They also want to give priority to enhancing consultative mechanisms and arrangements for collective, rather than unilateral, U.S. action. The dominant concern for advocates of this strategy is interdependence.

3. **Democratic internationalism.** Proponents of this strategy believe that the most effective way to ensure regional stability and promote U.S. objectives is to consolidate the spread of liberal democracy and the global move toward market-oriented economies of the past several years. They give top priority to promoting and protecting economic reforms and democratic practices and institutions around the world. They also emphasize “universal” values over short-term national interests and seek to minimize foreign policy costs not directly related to protecting the “great transition.” This group's dominant concern is core values.

4. **Strategic independence.** Convinced that much of the cost of U.S. foreign engagement is an unnecessary drain on U.S. resources
and talents, proponents of this strategy counsel a deliberate withdrawal from many overseas security commitments and a redirection of resources toward domestic renewal. They give priority to maintaining U.S. strategic flexibility and developing a narrow, nonideological definition of U.S. national interests. The dominant concern for this group is independence.

These four strategies are described and developed, respectively, in the next four chapters. The broad world view underlying each strategy is discussed, as are the strategy's principal political, economic, and military components. Also explained is how each strategy would protect and further both fundamental U.S. goals and the national security objectives that must be achieved if these fundamental goals are to be advanced.

Each of the next four chapters was written from the perspective of proponents of the subject strategy, the primary focus being on the demands of the international environment the proponents identify and the most significant challenges they believe U.S. strategy must address. The core elements of each strategy and the way each would direct resources to both shape the environment in favorable ways and hedge against potentially unfavorable developments are also described. Each chapter then ends with an evaluation of the strengths, weaknesses, risks, and costs associated with the particular strategy.

The last chapter, six, describes the key issues dividing and driving the alternative strategies, as well as the elements they share in common. These commonalities are used to identify a set of strategy components that might help bridge the differences. The chapter then concludes by identifying several broad policy challenges the Clinton administration will face as it seeks to develop greater public consensus for a new American security strategy.

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This chapter attempts to use the perspective of realism to craft a national security strategy for the U.S. in the post-Cold War era. As used here, realism connotes less a normative guide for foreign policy than an explanation—at least a partial one—of how the world works.

Realism has come in too many varieties and been too loosely formulated to qualify as a coherent philosophy of world politics that can be applied uncritically to the current era. In the U.S., for example, realism began as an attempt by European scholars residing in the U.S. to prevent American policymakers from repeating with the Soviet Union the mistakes made with Nazi Germany and Japan in the interwar period. The writings of these scholars are often hyperbolic and overly stark in describing international relations as an unqualifiedly Hobbesian state of nature. Moreover, the world they describe is a good deal simpler than today's. Even with their limitations, however, the different versions of realism all rest on a few simple but powerful ideas that still have force.

GENERAL WORLD VIEW

The general principles that underlie the perspective of realism have to do with the following:

- The nation-state
- National sovereignty
• National power

• The character of international relations

• Methods for controlling conflict

*The nation-state.* At the core of realism is the concept of the nation-state as the fundamental and most important international actor. The status accorded the nation-state arises out of the philosophical and theoretical view that there is a limit to the diversity of interests that a social organization can tolerate in its members and still be effective—i.e., able to identify and secure the welfare and interests, whatever they are, of its members. So far, the nation-state (defined as people bound by ties of ethnicity, language, history, or ideas) seems to define that limit. When a social organization incorporates diversity in its members that exceeds the limit, it ceases to be effective, and the membership (citizenry) splits and forms new, smaller organizations (states) that can be effective. The location of the threshold is a hugely complex matter, but every social organization has one. In the world of international actors, the critical threshold seems to be the point at which the actor wishes to cross from a national basis for social organization to some broader, more inclusive and diverse basis.

Certainly, there are qualifications to this argument that the nation-state represents a practical limit to sovereignty. Supranational organizations have proven possible in specific areas—e.g., the panoply of international institutions for providing various kinds of services and regulation. The most notable and significant of these are economic institutions, one of which, the European Community (EC), may be nearing a level of longevity and span that could truly be called "state-like."

In this sense, the EC may eventually become proof that the nation-state is outmoded in important ways and is at a disadvantage compared to larger, more advanced social organizations. However, that point has not yet been reached, and many EC members are very resistant to such a prospect. Moreover, even if the powers of the EC do continue to grow, that may not signal a larger trend. The European continent is the best possible place for an experiment with supranational organizations because its states share history and ideas (if not language) and because the concept of being European
has long historical roots. Few, if any, other regions contain states bound by these types of ties.

The nation-state, then, remains the dominant international actor for now. Although some supranational organizations exist, none so far has state-like characteristics. The EC may eventually prove to be an exception, but it would be an exception unlikely to be replicated elsewhere.

National sovereignty. The nation-state controls almost all the sources and tools of international power. Sovereignty is the inevitable consequence of this virtual monopoly on power, although sovereignty is less complete now than it once was: international business, the media, and international economic institutions (among others) exert influences that states cannot fully control. An individual state or coalition can choose to eliminate most of these exceptions to its monopoly on power, but only if it elects to pay the price. That states do not do so is not a function of a lack of sovereignty; rather, it is the product of a costs-and-benefits analysis of a sort. States suffer these “nongovernmental actors” mostly because it is to their advantage to do so, and their decision to do so is revocable at will.¹

In sum, even though the traditional view on the complete sovereignty of the nation-state needs to be qualified, the nation-state is still sovereign in the great majority of its spheres of action—most importantly, war and peace. This situation may be changing, but the trends are not at all clear. Two factors are striking: the durability of predictions that the sovereign nation-state is in its final days as the fundamental unit of international relations, and the stubborn refusal of the nation-state and its citizenry to recognize this fact.

National power. The purpose of the sovereign nation-state is to pursue objectives consistent with the interests of its citizenry. Obviously, however, there are very great differences between states and across historical eras as to how these objectives should be defined. At least two types of national objectives exist: fundamental

¹Indeed, while power and sovereignty are, strictly speaking, related concepts, they are not identical. States routinely surrender power to other entities (e.g., treaty organizations) without surrendering sovereignty.
and instrumental. Fundamental national objectives reflect a nation’s idealized reasons for existing. Since they are idealized, they can never be secured entirely and unambiguously; rather, they are asymptotes that can be approached but never reached. For some nations, the fundamental national objectives may focus on aggrandizement of the state as manifestation of the nation. For others, international dissemination of an idea may be the fundamental national objective. For the U.S. and similar nations, fundamental objectives concern various aspects of the citizenry’s welfare.

Instrumental national objectives are those designed to further the achievement of fundamental objectives. As such, they are intermediate and subordinate to fundamental objectives.

In some cases, a state may be able to secure its objectives without reducing the ability of another state to secure its objectives. More often, however, states must compete in pursuing their objectives. They acquire various types of national power (military, economic, social, political, ideological, and the like) in order to give themselves advantages in this competition. Strategy is the application of those tools of national power for the pursuit of national objectives. The greater the state’s power, the more likely it is to secure its objectives in the face of rivals seeking the same objectives. Therefore, states attempt to acquire as much national power as possible, and they compete with each other for the sources of power.

The simplistic notions of power that have played such a prominent part in realist thinking have to be sharpened and reinterpreted for the current period. Traditionally, power was defined and measured mostly in military terms. The defense community became very sophisticated in devising ways to measure power in these terms, but the definition remained. Military manpower and its ingredients still matter for the physical security of the state, and threats to that security have not disappeared. However, for the U.S. in this era, they are much reduced and less immediate.

Power must be redefined to better incorporate the economic dimension of national capabilities. U.S. economic power refers to the ability to compete in international markets so as to secure the material underpinnings that permit the political, social, and intellectual culture the U.S. seeks. Power, in this sense, does not refer to domina-
tion. Nor does it necessarily refer to meeting another state’s economic force with economic counterforce, though it can. Thus, economic power is not appropriately described with the same terms used to describe military power. U.S. economic power is measured by the ability to sell goods of the type and to the extent needed to achieve U.S. national goals.

The character of international relations. By definition, if nation-states are sovereign and competing for national objectives, international relations always have the potential to degenerate into anarchy and violence. This ever-present possibility of war is the essence of international relations. Since the character of the international system is the consequence of the sovereignty of nation-states, and since that sovereignty seems likely to remain intact for the foreseeable future, the possibility of fundamentally changing the nature of international relations is low. But to say this is not to say that the world is governed by rapaciousness and amorality. Precisely because of the costs and risks of war, states seek ways to regulate and manage the entropic tendencies. Put another way, states seek substitutes for violence as the sole arbiter of international disputes. These substitutes work only so long as war remains relatively unattractive. The more powerful states (or the states that believe themselves to be more powerful) will disregard nonviolent solutions if they produce results inferior to those expected from using force.

Methods for controlling conflict. There are two major ways the competition between states can be directed and confined to constructive or at least nondestructive channels. Both involve the acquisition and application of national power of various sorts to make important states use certain ways of pursuing their self-interests as more desirable than others.

The first way to direct and constructively confine competition is by exerting hegemony, as the U.S. has done since the end of World War II. Normally, such a move triggers the creation of balancing coalitions or competing hegemonic powers, but that reaction has been somewhat blunted in the U.S. case because, as hegemonic powers go, America has been unusually benign. The U.S. can still choose to act hegemonically in some respects, but there are many important ways in which it cannot or should not so act. For example, the U.S. can deploy military power that, with some exceptions, no single state
or plausible coalition can match. Even in this domain, however, the costs of hegemony are often unacceptably high, if not prohibitive. In other domains, such as economics, the U.S. cannot act hegemonically at all.

The second way of regulating interstate competition is to create power balances that make it clearly unprofitable for states to pursue their interests outside desirable channels. Given the large and growing costs associated with acting hegemonically, the theme of U.S. grand strategy should be to create stable power balances along those dimensions of national power and between those states critical to achieving U.S. national objectives.

The crucial point to reemphasize is that the basis for an international order that regularly accepts substitutes for war in resolving conflicts is either a benign hegemonic power disposed to impose such an order, or a balance of power that makes alternatives to such an order unattractive. In the absence of one of these elements, the incentives for resorting to force are too great for a non-power-based international order to handle. Put another way, an international order not founded on stable power relations is unlikely to be durable, because appeals based on principles alone generally have not proven effective for regulating competition between states.

Attempts to create an international order based only on shared concepts of universal law and justice should be viewed with great skepticism, as the events of the interwar period in this century show. Principles such as the illegality of war and a League of Nations proved worse than worthless in the absence of a willingness to attend to the power balance in Europe. They were a temptation for states interested in upsetting the status quo by force and a source of vulnerability for states deluding themselves that principles alone could substitute for power. Therefore, an approach predicated on realism should be sharply distinguished from one that makes promotion of principles unsupported by power a paramount U.S. national interest. This conclusion is reached not because a just world is not a great and desirable goal, but because making such a goal a priority is likely to cause the U.S. to fail in achieving its more important goals of creating durable, creative balances of power—while failing in the justice goal as well.
By the same token, realism suggests an equally skeptical view of isolationism or radical disengagement from the world. This skepticism stems from the fact that such noninvolvement makes it virtually certain that other states, in the pursuit of their interests, will compromise U.S. objectives and reduce U.S. welfare. Obviously, some such instances are unavoidable, even in the best of circumstances. But the U.S. is fortunate to have the power to counter or moderate most of these challenges to its interests at an acceptable cost, and it is unreasonable for the U.S. to refrain from doing so.

Ultimately, it should be the purpose of U.S. national strategy to channel international competition in ways that permit the U.S. to achieve its national objectives to a sufficient degree without undue risk of dangerous tensions and conflict. The basis for this approach is the maintenance of U.S. military, economic, and political hegemony when appropriate and not overly expensive. In most cases, hegemony is no longer feasible. Where it is not, the U.S. should seek to establish balances of power of all kinds to limit threats to U.S. objectives.

This purpose is in no way inconsistent with collective action or international organizations. But these collectives must be based on a true community of material self-interest rather than on abstract ideals alone. Economic self-interest in an orderly international market structure is an example of a sufficiently material self-interest on which to base collective action and organization, as is a common fear of a military threat. By contrast, an interest in democracy or fundamental rights is unlikely to be an adequate basis for durable collective action, although the states in an economic or defense collective may have such humane concerns in common. The current difficulties being encountered as NATO seeks a "mission" illustrate this point.

FUNDAMENTAL NATIONAL OBJECTIVES

The U.S. has grown accustomed to associating national security strategy with great overarching, unifying themes, such as containment. Indeed, many seem to believe that the U.S. will lack a security strategy until it can find a new theme to take containment's place. However, the strategic coherence of the Cold War was a product of having one dominant threat that dwarfed all others. There is no such
threat today and probably will not be in the near future, though this latter point is by no means a foregone conclusion. What the U.S. currently confronts is a number of problems and threats arising from different sources.

By definition, then, it is very unlikely that any single unifying concept can capture this range of possibilities. This discussion thus takes a case-by-case approach without being particularly concerned that the strategy for dealing with one problem form a seamless web with the strategies for dealing with all the other problems.

There is little to object to in the traditional formulation of U.S. fundamental objectives: "life, liberty, and the pursuit of happiness." However, these general terms have little practical meaning for national choice and action. The difficulty connected with the question of fundamental interests arises in attempting to make the abstractions into concrete, operational, and specific guides for decision-making.

It is not hard to quickly generate a list of U.S. national objectives, though there would be argument about which were fundamental and which were instrumental. This list would consist of the desirable states of the world from the U.S. point of view. Unfortunately, discussions of U.S. strategy too often stop there.

To be useful, strategy must be about making choices between national objectives. (Where choices are unnecessary—as when a state can achieve all of its objectives—strategy is also unnecessary.) Therefore, at the heart of strategy is the problem of setting priorities for objectives and the opportunity costs of pursuing them. This chapter rests on the judgment that the U.S. has the resources to secure with the requisite certainty only its most important national objectives—i.e., only those that are truly fundamental. It is thus critically important to exert the intellectual discipline necessary to distinguish greater and lesser objectives, which means that worthy national objectives may receive little attention and resources if other, more worthy objectives would otherwise be risked.

The American system of government was and is intended to provide each citizen with an environment sufficiently safe and rich in opportunity to permit him to realize his talents and ambitions. Thus, America's fundamental national objectives focus inward, on the de-
velopment of the individual, rather than on the collective per se (though a great and humane society may be the welcome outgrowth of this individual development). Similarly, though the U.S. was produced through revolution, it has never been a revolutionary state in the sense of devoting substantial resources to the spread of U.S. ideals elsewhere. In a sense, then, U.S. national security policy is an instrument of domestic policy in that its fundamental objectives are internal.

By tradition and logic, the elements of the "life, liberty, and the pursuit of happiness" formulation are usually taken to be in descending order of priority: physical security is prior to all else, then political security, and then material security. Both national security policy and domestic policy should be devoted to the achievement of all three of these objectives. However, national security policy is best suited to furthering the first and third of these and should focus on them.

The political security of the American citizenry, as manifested by the vitality of important national institutions and civil liberties, is primarily in the domain of domestic policy. In principle, national security policy may play a role in this domain by fostering an international climate in which the U.S. political system can flourish. However, if U.S. political security is connected to the international climate or the health of foreign democracies, it is only loosely so connected, and then most strongly to the political health of the other developed states. This is not to say that the U.S. ought not to support foreign democracies and greatly prefer that they prosper. Rather, it is to say that with the important exceptions of the developed states, the spread of democracy and civil liberties to other states and the survival of those institutions are only distantly connected to U.S. political health. Therefore, being a relatively ineffective instrument for furthering U.S. political security, national security policy should focus on securing U.S. physical and material security.

During the Cold War, the opportunity costs of neglecting external threats to U.S. physical security were deemed higher than those of neglecting threats to U.S. material security, such as various imperfections in the international trading system and the behavior of some trade partners. Now, with the disintegration of the Soviet Union, the physical security of U.S. citizens from external threats is enormously
improved. Since it may not remain so, one thrust of U.S. grand strategy should be to extend this “window” of security for as long as possible. Simultaneously, however, U.S. external policy can and must devote much more weight than before to improving the material security of Americans. Thus, next to physical security, a priority of U.S. grand strategy should be the achievement of international economic objectives in the service of domestic economic objectives.

Why? One need not be an economic determinist to believe that certain material conditions are an essential precondition for the growth and maintenance of democratic institutions in the U.S. as well as elsewhere. Unless the great majority of any society believes itself able to secure life’s basic necessities, plus a modicum of future material security, the orderly, relatively disciplined culture that democracy requires is very difficult to achieve. In the absence of this level of prosperity and confidence in its continuation, social conflicts make the requisite democratic compromises increasingly problematic. The U.S., with its democratic traditions already in place, can withstand a good deal of this type of social conflict and still function. Therefore, the single most important objective for the U.S. grand strategy is the pursuit of international arrangements intended to foster prosperity for the greatest number, specifically and especially to include the U.S. population.

There may be many instances in which this economic objective is in tension with the pursuit of greater democratization in the world or with another state’s more stringent observation of basic human rights. The classic example is a state with which the U.S. could form a mutually advantageous trade relationship, but which is guilty of poor human rights practices or antidemocratic practices. Binary thinking is seldom consistent with reality, so U.S. policy cannot afford to fasten upon one objective to the absolute exclusion of all others. However, because the development of durable democracy is eased immeasurably if preceded by economic success, a general emphasis on the economic before the democratic is needed. Obviously, this approach is not always possible, since the pace of political reform is driven primarily by internal forces. However, democratic practices and human rights are far easier to implement and more likely to succeed after economic restructuring is complete, rather than before. Put another way, once a successful free market system
is established, society will tend to become more liberal of its own accord.

In terms of realism, then, the operationalized fundamental national objectives of the U.S. are, in order of priority:

a. Protect U.S. citizens from physical threats.

b. Create economic prosperity and provide reasonable assurance that these conditions will continue given a realistic amount of individual enterprise.

c. Foster international conditions that promote prosperity and democratic governance in Germany, Japan, the states of the former Soviet Union, and Eastern Europe.

d. Protect reasonable access to Persian Gulf oil for the U.S. and its major trading partners.

The preceding discussion opens the general question of the place of human rights and democracy in U.S. strategic policy. The American school of philosophy called "pragmatism" contains a theory of truth: the only important questions are those whose answers make an important difference in terms of shaping human behavior, either at the individual or group level. Pragmatists thus dismiss many metaphysical questions on the grounds that their answers, even if knowable, fail that test. Many of the questions about the place of human rights and democracy also may fail that test. For example, consider the question. Should the basic human rights and well-being of those in other nations be considered a fourth fundamental objective or an instrumental objective of the U.S.? However this question is argued, few would contest the view that the civil rights practices of other states are of some interest to the U.S. and that the U.S. should on some occasions occupy itself with these matters. Operationally, either position, fundamental or instrumental, is likely to be functionally equivalent to the other under most circumstances. The importance of deciding whether international human rights ought to be a fundamental versus an instrumental goal of the U.S. thus seems small.

It might be argued that there is an issue of priority that distinguishes the two positions. That is, those who take the side of the fundamental objective will place a higher priority on intervening over interna-
tional civil rights practices than will those taking the other side. However, the position taken on this question is not necessarily correlated to the priority assigned to the pursuit of human rights in other states. If the status of human rights in other nations can be of great importance to the furtherance of U.S. national interests, then it is of little additional importance whether the status of human rights in other nations also is an independent goal to be achieved. Similarly, if the status of human rights is a fundamental U.S. goal, but should be placed fourth behind the first three nationally focused, fundamental U.S. goals, then, as a matter of practice, its priority in U.S. strategic decisionmaking also is likely to be quite low—lower, in fact, than it would be if this goal were believed to be both instrumental and very important.

It also might be argued that if international human rights are a fundamental U.S. goal, then they should be pursued whether U.S. national welfare is thereby bettered or not. The problems with this line of argument are practical. It is possible to argue that U.S. national goals are always bettered by an improvement in human rights everywhere in the world, if only at the level of the global psychological climate. Since most of the world’s population is impoverished with respect to human rights, and U.S. resources are limited, the U.S. has to be able to decide where it will and will not intervene. Generally, the rule applied in deciding these cases involves finding a nexus between material U.S. national interests (beyond the psychological climate) and international human rights. Cases for which such a nexus can be found ought to receive higher priority than cases for which it cannot. Therefore, as a practical matter, U.S. national goals and international human rights are seldom truly unrelated. So, again, the consequences of calling international human rights a fundamental versus an instrumental objective seem small.

THREATS AND OPPORTUNITIES

It is a fortuitous coincidence that threats to America’s physical security have sharply lessened at the very moment that threats to America’s economic security have grown. The U.S. has a great opportunity to use the resources freed up by the reduction of one set of threats to ameliorate the increase of the other. This shift can be carried out with far less risk than what might have been necessary had
the Soviet Union survived as an adversarial superpower. The great challenge for the U.S. is to avail itself of this opportunity, for it will require the acceptance of some risks and unpleasant choices, as well as the rejection of existing habits of mind. This opportunity is particularly compelling because it is likely to be fleeting. Indeed, it could be quite brief, if the former Soviet Union or China takes some sort of radical turn. The more likely scenario, however, is that the U.S. has a decade or two to devote to its economic difficulties before serious physical threats to U.S. security begin to reappear.

Though not mortal, threats to U.S. fundamental interests do exist. They fall into three related categories: economic, military, and ideological.

Economic weakness is the most critical threat the U.S. faces, critical being defined here as a complex function of the value of the interests at stake, the immediacy of the problem, and the difficulties the U.S. will encounter in attempting to remedy the problem. To a considerable degree, the locus of the problem is domestic, as will be the solutions. However, foreign trade practices contribute substantially as well.

The nature of this threat is both specific and general. At the specific level, the quality of life sought in the U.S., in both material and emotional terms, will be made inaccessible if the U.S. does not produce items with sufficient "value added" to support middle class incomes for a very large number of Americans. Further, the U.S. cannot achieve its fundamental objectives if it fosters a bimodal society comprising one smaller, very affluent group and one larger group living at a subsistence level. At the general level, the threat is elusive but tangible: an unhealthy sense of national inferiority and resentment toward economic competitors that, via their superior ability to produce the most desirable and profitable types of goods and services, drive the U.S. into the role of raw material supplier and mass production assembler. The U.S. currently is not anywhere near this situation.

The most critical of the second type of threat to U.S. fundamental interests, the military threat, is hegemonic domination of Eurasia and the Middle East, two geographic areas of great importance to the U.S. America must seek to prevent any state or any collective functioning
as a state from being able to control the economic and military resources of Europe or Japan or the natural resources of the Persian Gulf. The most obvious modality for this domination is military, though an ideological nonmilitary form of hegemonic leadership cannot be excluded. A lesser, though still urgent, military threat is the proliferation of weapons of mass destruction, particularly nuclear weapons.

These military threats to the U.S. will primarily arise from changes in the international order. Any definition of “international order” as a concept is difficult, but it must include assumptions regarding both the places of states in the international “pecking order” and the definitions of power that produce that order. The risks of international conflict (not necessarily war) rise as states either come to believe that their places in the pecking order are no longer consistent with their power or come to have their places so perceived by other states. This dissonance produces policies and efforts designed to either change the pecking order or change the rules that determine states’ places in it. Conflict is usually the result, since the elevation of one state usually means the lowering of another, and that conflict may or may not lead to war. A primary task of international institutions is to contain and manage that conflict in peaceful, orderly ways.

The disintegration of the Soviet Union makes it possible to redefine international power so as to give greater weight to economic capabilities. This new definition will, however, mean that states’ positions in the current international order must be redrawn. Such a reordering may be accomplished more or less smoothly, but the conflict triggered by some nations seeking international status proportionate to their economic rather than military power and by other nations resisting pressures to move downward in that order will be difficult to manage with the international institutions extant today, particularly malfunctioning international economic institutions. This reasoning leads to a line of U.S. strategy intended to help put in place international arrangements that can absorb these potentially dangerous processes. Concern about these processes also leads to the desirability of maintaining sufficient U.S. military force, some of it forward deployed, to reduce the temptations of upwardly mobile states to use force to change their position in the international order, to calm the neighbors of such states, and to provide incentives to restrict international competition to nonmilitary channels.
The greatest future threats to U.S. vital interests are posed by the states of the former Soviet Union, Germany, Japan, and the Persian Gulf. Currently, the most likely of these, in terms of both time and magnitude, are the states of the former Soviet Union and the Persian Gulf. The next most likely is Japan, for three reasons: its democratic institutions are not deeply rooted, serious economic conflicts of interest between Japan and the U.S. may not be resolvable via international arrangements, and Japan combines national passions with scientific and technical competence to a greater degree than any other state. Many other states have the passions, few have the competence, and virtually only Japan has both. Germany, as a threat, is a more distant though still distinct fourth.

It is important to note that threat is not being used here to necessarily denote a state seeking war with the U.S. It instead refers to a state having vital interests in sharp conflict with those of the U.S., important unsatisfied grievances probably linked to the ability of a particular regime to mobilize popular support and hold power, and the capability and intent to acquire modern military forces, including nuclear weapons. This combination does not necessarily or even probably mean war; nuclear weapons will continue to provide a very great deterrent. But a world with these types of threats will be very uncomfortable for the U.S., and their control will dominate U.S. strategic policy.

The third type of threat to U.S. fundamental interests is the ideological threat. This threat does not refer to the prospect of an alternative ideology proving seductive to Americans or to the growth of an international ideological climate antagonistic to democratic values. The former seems unlikely, and, in any case, no external policy could ameliorate the domestic weaknesses that would permit such a possibility. It also is not likely or even plausible that some sort of global spiritual environment can diminish American democracy in any significant way—again, unless this international environment were to coincide with a period of great internal weakness in the U.S. Even in that case, the most worrisome threat to U.S. fundamental objectives would be the internal crisis, not the external oppressiveness.

What the ideological threat does refer to is the prospect that concentrations of military or economic power may become politically and emotionally "seized" by ideologies hostile to U.S. objectives. The
states making up the former Soviet Union and the Middle East are the two areas most obviously vulnerable to such ideologies. Germany and Japan seem much less so, but the current political cultures of both seem to have shallow roots and to be contingent on economic prosperity.

STRATEGIES FOR OVERCOMING THREATS AND EXPLOITING OPPORTUNITIES

Compete Successfully in the International Economy

Core Strategy. The U.S. must have a continuing capacity to sell in the international market the goods and services that will enable it to provide the great majority of its citizens with incomes sufficient to support a “middle class” quality of life, middle class here referring to an income level that ensures basic shelter, food, and education, plus some excess for leisure and savings. Democracy and political stability in the U.S. are not possible unless the great majority of people possess these items and are not excessively fearful of losing them—or, at minimum, reasonably believe that it is in their power to obtain them with a realistic degree of effort.

Successful competition refers to the ability of the U.S. to avoid conditions of disadvantageously asymmetric dependence on good trade relations with other states. All economic relations produce dependence, but that dependence is healthy only when it is symmetric—i.e., when an attempt by one party to injure the other by withholding trade injures the first party proportionately. Asymmetric dependence, which is unhealthy and dangerous, is the logical result of an international economy that consists of a small number of economic hegemonic powers producing high-value-added goods and services for which there are no substitutes and a large number of states producing low-value-added goods and services for which there are easy substitutes. Obviously, the U.S. must avoid finding itself in the latter group.

Environment-Shaping Strategy. The international component of this strategy flows from the assumption that classic economic theory is substantially correct: an international free market provides the highest level of prosperity for the greatest number over the long term. However, no international free market can exist for very long
without regulation of its incentives for unfair competition, dangerous economic concentrations, and unreasonably predatory behavior. Traditionally, in the absence of regulation, these temptations have proven to be irresistible, and they lead to a dangerous cycle of international tension, retreat from a free market, lowered quality of life, and reinforced international tension. The post-World War II economic arrangements have fallen into considerable disarray. The most important priority for U.S. strategy is to create a new set of economic arrangements and institutions designed to come as close as possible to establishing an international free market that can endure.

Obviously, the current trend of forming economic blocs represents at best a distinctly suboptimal approximation of this vision. It is preferable to have a large, rather than small, market if all the states can participate on the same terms. However, the U.S. must accept regional economic integration as an established trend, and thus must try to secure economic arrangements between blocs and between blocs and other states that approximate free market conditions.

**Strategic Hedge.** The U.S. needs to be prepared for the failure of its attempts to establish a new international economic framework based on free market principles. Such a failure equates to the collapse of international negotiations toward this end and the raising of substantial trade barriers of various direct and indirect kinds. The result would be a sharp reduction in U.S. exports to important foreign markets.

The hedging strategy against this eventuality has two components: declaratory and substantive. The declaratory component is an announced intention to retaliate against the imposition of inappropriate trade barriers with responses in kind. The aim here is to deter. The actual type of retaliation and its extent have to be decided on a case-by-case basis rather than by some iron rule.

The substantive component is formation of trade blocs such as the North American Free Trade Agreement (NAFTA). These offer the prospect of continued, unimpeded access to markets, even if an open, world international economic system proves unattainable.
Prevent Domination of Eurasia or Persian Gulf by any Single State or Collective Acting as a Single State

There are three basic tasks for implementing this strategy. First, foster the conditions that encourage the perpetuation of democratic institutions in these areas, particularly Russia. Second, avoid situations in which states in these areas come to view the pursuit of their interests as inimical to America's pursuit of its interests. Third, prevent any Persian Gulf state from securing a position that would allow it to deny free access by any other state to Persian Gulf oil.

The specific strategy for the European part of Eurasia is as follows.

Core Strategy. In the case of Germany, it must continue to be ensnared in an institutional framework of other democratic states that is designed to assure a requisite level of material prosperity, security from external threats, and continuous and intimate communication and contact between the leaders and people of the member states.

There are three likely institutional frameworks for Germany: NATO, the EC, and the West European Union (WEU). Obviously, it is vastly preferable that Germany belong to any of these rather than none, but of the three, the U.S. has a considerable interest in NATO continuing as a (or the) primary vehicle for European collective activity. From the parochial U.S. view, NATO provides the mechanism for maintaining the custom and practice of U.S. participation, if not leadership, in European affairs. In addition, for the Europeans, the active involvement and presence of the U.S. are more than desirable. For a variety of reasons, Europe is incapable of undertaking certain types of concerted action and of settling certain types of Continental problems itself. In particular, the presence and involvement of the U.S. are likely to make the German transition to a demi-superpower a much safer prospect for both the Germans themselves and their European neighbors.

The last reason for NATO's importance to the U.S. is that its continued existence assures that the West Europeans, East Europeans, and Russians are not left alone together at a time when so many states are moving from the known to the unknown.

Environment-Shaping Strategy. At issue here are the U.S. interest and role in influencing the paths taken by the states of the former
Soviet Union and Eastern Europe. Based on the U.S. vital interest in its own national security, as well as in discouraging the development of a European hegemonic power, it is of great importance that these states prove to be economically successful. If they are not, successful political development will be unlikely. There are deep, technical questions of how the advanced economies can best influence this process. However, it seems highly desirable that the West European states and the U.S. approach the problem jointly. One might term this strategy the logical extension of NATO’s old role: to deter and defeat a Soviet invasion. Now, under the aegis of a new NATO, Western Europe and the U.S. can pursue policies designed to intercept the development of regimes in the former states of the Soviet Union and Eastern Europe that could lead to a return to tensions.

For the Asian part of Eurasia, the strategy is as follows.

**Core Strategy.** The U.S. strategy for Asia has similarities to that for Europe. The U.S. needs to engage Japan in ways that foster its democratic culture while helping to insulate the region from the effect of profound changes in China and North Korea. These changes may not be violent and rapid, but the U.S. must prepare as if they will be. Unfortunately, the U.S. resources in this region are inferior to those in Europe in four important ways. First, there is no NATO-like concert of powers in Asia in which to enmesh Japan; there is only a bilateral security agreement between Japan and the U.S. Second, Japan’s democratic political culture may be less firmly rooted than Germany’s. Third, the U.S. trade relationship with Japan has much more potential for antagonism than does its counterpart with Germany. Fourth, the U.S. has less influence on the domestic evolution of China and North Korea than it does on the states of the former Soviet Union.

Unlike the situation in Europe, where a U.S. presence is desirable but not necessary, the implication of these constraints is that military, political, and cultural disengagement from or hostility toward the major states of East Asia is dangerous. Obviously, the U.S. must be politically realistic about the forward stationing of its forces, but it is much more important that the U.S. find a way to keep a substantial U.S. military presence in this area than in Europe. More important still, the U.S. must continue to urgently seek the institutionalization
of economic relations with Japan, South Korea, and China on terms that are politically sustainable by all. Indeed, such productive economic relations may be especially useful if exclusionary tendencies in the EC progress. With respect to U.S.-Japanese economic relations, the U.S. is currently witnessing a race involving progress in reducing Japanese trade barriers and in making U.S. goods more competitive versus growing resentment in both states toward the remaining recalcitrance. The outcome of this race is a function of time: the more time the U.S. has to settle these issues, both with the Japanese and domestically, the better the chance of a good outcome for both states. In turn, the amount of time available depends on at least two major factors: the existence of a threat to Japan serious enough to cause it to draw closer to the U.S. (as it did in reaction to the Soviet Union), and the extent to which the U.S. and Japanese economies can grow at a satisfactory rate in spite of the continuing Japanese trade barriers and the competitive inferiority of some sectors of the U.S. economy.

Environment-Shaping Strategy. It is in the U.S. interest to have China evolve peacefully in the direction of an increasingly free market economy, both internally and in its relations with trading partners. While this evolution does not ensure the eventual institution of civil rights and democratic political practices, it does favor the growth of a more liberal society. For this reason, U.S. policy should be designed to favor this evolution. The question is whether and to what degree the U.S. should make China's domestic political practices a major sticking point in the trade relations that would foster Chinese economic development. The U.S. should be explicit about its human rights preferences, but in most cases it should not make its trade relations with China contingent upon improved human rights practices. The likelihood of a more liberal Chinese political system is greater with an economy that is open internally and externally than with external pressure and a less open economy. Furthermore, the U.S. needs China's cooperation on restraints in arms transfers and in the United Nations. Obviously, there are limits, both ethical and political. For example, the U.S. probably ought not to conduct uninhibited relations in the wake of major domestic repression. Exceptions such as this one aside, however, the best course for U.S. policy toward China is vigorous trade and investment on terms profitable to the U.S., inclusion of China in international efforts to stifle nuclear
and conventional proliferation, and clear expression of the differences between mutually advantageous relations with China and approval of its domestic policies. There is little else the U.S. can do to affect the trajectory of Chinese political change.

For the last area, the Persian Gulf, the strategy involves the following.

Core Strategy. U.S. core strategy in this region is straightforward. The U.S. must be able to intervene to defeat a threat to its oil access, and it must see hegemonic control as an inherent threat to that access. Maybe no hegemonic power can "drink" the oil, but, by definition, hegemonic control by a potentially hostile state or coalition always carries with it an implicit threat.

Environment-Shaping Strategy. The U.S. position in the Persian Gulf and the rest of the Middle East is both perilous and favorable in its possibilities, seemingly in equal parts. It is perilous in that the status quo in the Persian Gulf, and perhaps Egypt and Jordan, seems untenable even in the short term, and the outcome of the inevitable change is entirely unclear. The result may be a situation inimicable to U.S. interests; also possible is a final result more stable than the situation today and at least acceptable to the U.S.

Suffice it to say that the political and social structures in Egypt and the Gulf kingdoms (with the possible exception of Oman) are probably incapable of containing the cross-cutting pressures for change that are part of the impact of modernity and, in the case of Egypt, of providing for the social welfare of their people. Comparably speaking, the Egyptian regime will have a somewhat better chance of dealing with these stressful situations, whereas the regimes of the Gulf kingdoms will very likely undergo substantial change in the next decade or two. What is unknowable at this point is how that change will happen—fast or slow, violent or orderly.

U.S. interests are best served by slower, orderly change, and the U.S. may be able to make a considerable difference in this regard. However, the U.S. faces a dilemma. The major way it can favorably affect the process of change in the region is by staying engaged, applying pressure, and offering advice and security to the friendly regimes. The danger is that, in the eyes of the opponents to the friendly regimes, the more the U.S. stays deeply engaged, the more it
becomes associated with the existing regimes and the more likely it is to be viewed as an enemy of change. Also, unless the U.S. is very skillful and firm, a policy of "constructive engagement" with friendly regimes can blend imperceptibly into a policy of opposition to change and defense of existing regimes.

The U.S. can avoid these risks by a policy of "constructive disengagement" in which it distances itself politically from the existing regimes while maintaining commercial relationships with them. The emphasis in this approach is on not having the U.S. seen as an enemy of change (which is inevitable) and thus as an opponent of any new regime that replaces an existing one. The problem with this approach is that it rules out any positive role the U.S. might play in the process of change and sends a strong signal to forces hostile to U.S. interests that they will have a more or less free hand in the region. The result is that friendly regimes would face an upsurge of opposition, some constructive, some the opposite.

There is no obvious or simple way out of this dilemma; both views seem about equally desirable and undesirable. What does this mean? Ideally, it means that the U.S. must strive for a very careful, subtle policy of support to existing regimes combined with pressure on them for moderation and movement in the direction of greater popular involvement.

Whether that involvement means democracy is impossible to know and is not particularly important. Similarly, it is impossible to know what the appropriate political theory is for the states in the Middle East. It is difficult to identify any particular cultural or historical propensity for a democracy defined in the Western sense. There are pressures for greater popular pluralism and sovereignty, but pressures for theocratic centralism are growing as well. Helping the existing friendly regimes to devise a constructive path of evolution in the face of these forces is important and possible, even though such help is likely to be limited in effectiveness. Nevertheless, the U.S. should try. At the same time, the U.S. must avoid forming with these friendly regimes the degree of association it formed with the Shah of Iran. In other words, the U.S. should strive to have its cake and eat it too—i.e., to maintain ties to existing regimes, but not so close as to greatly impair the ability to form constructive commercial relations with new regimes. The U.S. needs to frame its role as being friendly
to change, but only change of a peaceful, orderly sort. This qualification makes it important for the U.S. to establish communication with the antiregime forces in the region, even over the inevitable objections of U.S. friends.

This preferred course may be far too precious for a government such as that of the U.S. or a region such as the Middle East. Therefore, if the U.S. has to choose between erring too far toward engagement and too far toward disengagement, the latter is to be preferred. Change is inevitable in this region, and the U.S. risks more in standing against it than apart from it.

Finally, the U.S. needs an effective international regime for controlling the transfer of conventional weapons to the region. For the first time since World War II, the major weapon suppliers are not separated by sharp differences in strategic and ideological interests, although conflicting economic interests certainly do remain as an obstacle to international agreement. Despite the strong incentives to sell weapons, however, effective and useful control of certain conventional weapons is feasible. It would be supremely stupid to put the U.S. in a position of having to fight Iraq or Iran because supplier states could not restrain themselves.

Prevent, Delay, and Counter as Much as Possible the Proliferation of Weapons of Mass Destruction, Especially Nuclear Weapons

Core Strategy. This issue was discussed in part in the sections dealing with Japan, Germany, and the Middle East, but it deserves separate treatment because its importance goes beyond particular geographical areas. Given their nexus with vital U.S. interests, the regions already mentioned are the most worrisome for proliferation and thus should receive highest priority where proliferation is concerned. But given the existing, very useful (though partial) inhibitions on nuclear acquisition and the increased risk of proliferation contagion with each new nuclear state, the U.S. must be very aggressive in all of its nonproliferation and counter-proliferation policies. As to specific tactics, these would be decided on a case-by-case basis. No measures should be prohibited unconditionally, although a U.S.
military action to halt or delay a nuclear program is not often likely to be very attractive or effective.

**Environment-Shaping Strategy.** It is difficult to avoid pessimism about the ability of the U.S. and other existing nuclear powers to contain nuclear proliferation (and certainly the proliferation of chemical and biological weapons as well). The fundamental reason for this view flows from a sense of why states seek nuclear weapons in the first place. In virtually every case, nuclear weapons have been acquired by states that felt they had no other choice, that they faced security threats too great to be countered in any other way. What this means is that for the most part (Iraq may be an exception), states do not covet nuclear weapons for the more frivolous reasons sometimes advanced, such as international prestige or sheer aggression.

States that believe they have no choice will make very great efforts and sacrifices to remedy their problem. It is unlikely that a nonproliferation regime can prosper in the face of these kinds of pressures. The international community can turn to ameliorating the security problems of potential proliferators, but that remedy is not likely to be successful either. The U.S. and other states will be reluctant to offer serious security guarantees, and states in need of them will be reluctant to rely on them to the point of forsaking nuclear weapons. In planning, the U.S. thus must assume that there will be several more nuclear or near-nuclear states in the world within a decade or two. The U.S. must also assume that sooner or later these weapons will be used in some part of the world.

Under these conditions, attention to delivery systems that could threaten the U.S. seems at least equally as important as trying to stem nuclear proliferation. It is probably easier to detect national efforts to develop and deploy such delivery systems than it is to detect efforts to secure nuclear weapons. International regimes whose purpose is to slow the spread of the relevant technologies and systems seem feasible; elements of such regimes already in place have been reasonably effective. As a purely military matter, preemptively or preventively destroying an intercontinental ballistic missile (ICBM) launch site is easier than destroying the nuclear weapons that might be placed on the ICBM. In addition, a vigorous U.S. strategic and tactical defense program against air and missile threats is, unfortunately, very important. Unlike the situation with the for-
mer Soviet Union, defense leads offense with new nuclear states. In principle, of course, a nuclear weapon can be delivered against the U.S. in many less formal ways, which strategic missile and air defense cannot address. However, these are all far less reliable and controllable and therefore less attractive to potential attackers. If the U.S. can provide its homeland and its deployed forces with a very high level of defense against attack by small nuclear nations, a great deal will have been accomplished.

Intervene as Little as Possible in Third World

With two largely related exceptions, the priority of the third world and the problems of whether, when, and how the U.S. should intervene in it, militarily and otherwise, do not loom very large compared to the objectives of U.S. economic security and stability in Eurasia. In other words, there are likely to be few instances in which U.S. vital interests will require military intervention in the third world beyond that needed to protect U.S. nationals from various sorts of dangerous situations.

The first exception to this generality is the Middle East, mostly the Persian Gulf, because of the importance of its oil resources. The second exception is certain upwardly mobile third world states linked to nationalistic regimes that could pose a threat to U.S. interests. These are states that are growing rapidly and perceive themselves as crossing the threshold between developed and less developed. Along with this perception comes a growing sense of legitimacy about the assertion of national interests and prerogatives. The difficulty arises when the developed world does not defer, acting in ways at variance with a state's change in international status. Japan in the first 40 years of the twentieth century fit this description, and a number of third world states are candidates today: Iraq, Iran, South Korea, India, some states in Latin America, and probably China. Much depends upon the degree to which the regimes of these states are willing to confine these status-related conflicts to economics or to seek peaceful redress for grievances. And this willingness is related to the domestic politics of these states and to how much their governments' political survival depends on mobilizing popular sentiment against external enemies. The two main issues for the U.S. with respect to these states are their acquisition of nuclear weapons
and delivery systems (possibly with a range sufficient for striking the U.S.), and the ability of some of them to endanger free access to oil.

But beyond these exceptions, U.S. security in all its senses is only loosely coupled to the third world. Certainly, the U.S. prefers that as many states as possible enjoy prosperity and political institutions arising out of popular consent (which may or may not be democratic). However, these preferences are not synonymous with necessities, at least not in comparison to other U.S. priorities. The U.S. can become a critically diminished state for its citizens if it does not achieve its economic goals, and it can become a very threatened state if one or more industrialized states become hostile. But it will become only a disappointed, guilty, anxious, or inconvenienced state if parts of the third world become more savage, politically retrograde, or environmentally damaged. Obviously, nightmarish worlds in which U.S. security is truly imperiled by third world developments—especially those in the environmental area—are possible; and to some extent, dangerous third world trends can be contagious, making them more easily countered early than late. Moreover, third world regions can acquire importance because of possible collisions between developed states that have interests there. For all these reasons, the U.S. should not completely neglect the broad third world issues of democratization, human rights, economic development, environmental depredation, and the like. However, the priority the U.S. gives these issues should take third place behind economic and military arrangements with the developed states.²

STRENGTHS AND WEAKNESSES

The primary strengths of the realist approach for the U.S. are also its weaknesses. As a conservative, interest-based strategy, realism recognizes that the U.S. lacks the resources to effectively pursue any but the most important national goals. It thus takes a triage-like view in separating important from less important priorities, which means that, also like triage, it is a rather chilly business requiring a rigorous,

²There is one further reason to intervene in the third world: a situation there in which events become too awful to tolerate. Realism suggests, however, that in the absence of a material interest, the U.S. should succumb to the temptation to intervene in these cases only when the associated risks and costs are very low.
continuing sense of the consequences of not insisting on adherence to just a few, critical goals. This approach also proceeds from a rather pessimistic view of the fragility of human enterprises, especially those based on peace and justice, and the conviction that both peace and justice are impossible without the restraint produced by various balances of power. In pursuit of these balances, this approach eschews oscillation between the twin excesses that have be-deviled U.S. strategy: excessive activism, with its inevitable diffusion of resources, and isolation, with its inevitable loss of opportunities.

In the context of American society, which has almost no tradition of supporting strategies based explicitly on material national interests, these strengths are also the approach’s weaknesses. The principle of U.S. self-interest has been an insufficient justification to the American people for U.S. action. For this reason, a strategy such as the one proposed here may not be sustainable long enough to reach U.S. objectives.

Some might argue a second weakness: the priorities assigned in this strategy will result in many parts of the world being “neglected” by the U.S. This neglect could lead to various kinds of unstable conditions dangerous to U.S. interests. The response to this argument must be general agreement about the risks, accompanied by acceptance of the fact that there is no avoiding them. If the U.S. does not risk neglecting some parts of the world, it will surely neglect more important parts of the world—especially the U.S. itself.

Further Readings


MULTILATERAL SECURITY: INTERDEPENDENCE AND U.S. STRATEGY

Ian Lesser

It is commonplace to speak of the transformation of international affairs in the wake of the Cold War and the new opportunities resulting from the spread of democracy and the preference for free market economies. No less fashionable is the view that after 40 years of active international engagement, the U.S. is now free to reconsider the extent and character of its foreign and security policy commitments. Pressing domestic problems rightly command increased attention from the public and the American political leadership.

But this dichotomy is increasingly false, because distinctions between foreign and domestic policy are becoming more difficult to define. The transformation of global economic, political, and cultural relations is such that the well-being of Americans will be affected by actions and decisions beyond U.S. borders, as well as by developments on the domestic scene.

This chapter describes an approach to national security strategy that is based on a recognition of this fundamental reality of modern life. It is an approach informed by the belief that withdrawal from international affairs is not a viable option for the U.S. as it moves toward the twenty-first century. It views as equally unrealistic the notion that the U.S. can secure most of its goals by acting unilaterally based on some narrow definition of its own national interests.

As part of the international system, the U.S. simply does not have the luxury of framing policy without reference to the perceptions and
policies of other states and nonstate actors. Moreover, as the leading actor in the international system, the U.S. has the opportunity, especially in the wake of the Cold War, to help shape elements of the system in directions that favor the achievement of greater political and economic development and stability. It has long been clear that the emergence of a highly interdependent international system mandates the creation of institutions to facilitate the myriad interactions and tradeoffs that must be made every day in the normal course of international relations. This strategy seeks to accelerate these developments in the expectation that they can, over time, help the U.S. to secure its national objectives at less cost and with a more equitable sharing of costs than is the case today.

GENERAL WORLD VIEW

The character of the international system as a whole is in many respects less interesting than the opportunities offered through the subset of the international system that has been described as "international society." At the formal level, international society is composed of vehicles for institutional cooperation—the G-7, the Organization for Economic Cooperation and Development (OECD), the United Nations, the World Bank and International Monetary Fund (IMF), and the various security mechanisms, such as NATO and the Conference on Security and Cooperation in Europe (CSCE). At the informal level, international society embraces state and nonstate actors that adhere to widely accepted norms of internal and external behavior (respect for borders, peaceful resolution of disputes, minimum standards of human rights, and others). These are the actors with which U.S. strategy should seek to work most closely. The expansion of international society and the propagation of behavioral norms at the international level play key roles in the multilateral approach to order in the post-Cold War world.

The advocates of multilateral security accept the proposition that the well-being of others is and should be treated as a fundamental national goal, alongside "life, liberty and the pursuit of happiness" for

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Americans. This belief seems appropriate for two broad and interrelated reasons, the first of which is a function of consciousness: through modern media, people today are simply apt to have far more information about the identity and conditions of people in other countries than was the case even a generation ago. Ideologies, both secular and religious, have combined with global communication to expand the scope of what and whom many people care about, from village to region, to nation, and to the entire globe.

The second factor is a function of pragmatism: people’s lives today are more likely than ever before to be affected by changes in conditions elsewhere. Examples of the “spillover effects” of humanitarian disasters can be found in recent refugee flows spurred by deteriorating conditions in such countries as Afghanistan, Vietnam, El Salvador, Haiti, Croatia, and Bosnia. At one point in the mid-1980s, for example, it was estimated that more than one-half of the population of El Salvador was living in the U.S.

In short, the well-being of Americans is increasingly tied to that of “foreigners.” And humanitarian impulses as well as self-interest are leading people today to care more than before about the conditions in which people in foreign countries live, prompting administrations to respond to the needs of others. In effect, the scope of U.S. national objectives (often referred to as Interests) seems to be growing inexorably, despite the end of the global competition between communist East and democratic West. How the U.S. chooses to deal with this set of challenges in the future will be a key factor in shaping U.S. strategy.

THREATS AND OPPORTUNITIES

The new international environment, while safer in some respects than the Cold War world, presents a variety of security and security-related challenges for the U.S. Perhaps first among these is the risk of

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2James Rosenau has written perceptively about this phenomenon, observing that the awareness of horrendous conditions in other countries, combined with the potential consequences of such conditions, is likely to prompt an expansion in the interventionary rights of international organizations. See James N. Rosenau, Turbulence in World Politics: A Theory of Change and Continuity, Princeton: Princeton University Press, 1990.
things going very wrong in the former Soviet Union and Eastern Europe. A failure of the political and economic reform movement in Russia, followed by a renationalization and remilitarization of Russian policy toward the West, could produce a new Cold War with none of the comfortable political certainties of the old (such as a solid Atlantic alliance). At the very least, a turn to the right in Moscow would raise the specter of Russian involvement in regions on Russia's periphery and perhaps beyond that would collide with U.S. and Western interests.

A second set of challenges arises from regional powers hostile to Western interests that may seek hegemony in their regions. Without the ability to play one superpower off against the other, and with such established outlets for international activism as the nonaligned movement in sharp decline, some regional actors will be tempted to embark on a new search for geopolitical weight in the post–Cold War world. This search could take positive forms, including successful political and economic development and movement toward regional integration, but it is at least as likely to express itself as a quest for domination through subversion, intimidation, or outright aggression. The search for international "weight" will also fuel the quest for sophisticated conventional and unconventional weapons in the Middle East and Asia.

Of course, there is the growing potential for weapons of mass destruction to be harnessed to the ambitions of hegemonic leaderships. The proliferation of nuclear, chemical, and biological weapons and the means for their delivery at longer ranges will challenge U.S. regional security strategy in fundamental ways by making intervention in defense of Western interests much more difficult and risky.

The growing world imbalance in population and development between the "rich" north and the "poor" south is another source of risk. Although different in character from the challenges above, this challenge is no less significant and, if inadequately addressed, could well exacerbate the problem of regional instability. This imbalance is likely to fuel problems of migration, political instability, and ultimately regional instability and proliferation. The widespread perception in the developing world that the East-West competition of the Cold War is being replaced by a political, economic, and strategic
confrontation along north-south lines is bound to corrode international stability.

To the extent that this trend coincides with the rise of radical Islam, the U.S. could face the threat of a new ideological confrontation close on the heels of the struggle against communism. (There could be an important and related effect on the evolution of the republics of the former Soviet Union. Will the emerging states of Central Asia, for example, consider themselves part of the north or the south, the Islamic world or the West?) These are risks of an international or systemic character that cannot be ignored and to which there are no simple national responses.

Conflict has also arisen in the wake of the collapse of Soviet power. In the absence of political repression and military domination from Moscow, long-suppressed ethnic and religious rivalries are coming to the fore and causing bloody struggles for territory. Such struggles not only jeopardize the lives and property of those in the region, they also threaten fragile but potentially important standards of state behavior that the Western states have a growing stake in upholding. As the breakup of Yugoslavia has shown, intercommunal violence can spread from one area to another, and it can exacerbate long-simmering animosities, complicating the task of peaceful mediation.

The deterioration of the earth’s environment is an increasingly urgent and sometimes emotive dimension of the new security agenda. It provides an additional example of a threat drawn along global lines, and the prospects for cooperation and conflict have an important north-south dimension. It is becoming increasingly clear that the U.S. cannot insulate its own environment from the damaging effects of actions elsewhere: when Brazilians burn down the rain forest, just as when a nuclear reactor at Chernobyl catches fire, the effects are global.

Finally, and by no means least, there is the more general threat of a renationalization of foreign, economic, and security policies and the collapse of established regimes for international cooperation. The deterioration of the global trading system and the rise of protectionist blocs would threaten political and ultimately strategic relations between the U.S., Europe, and Japan.
The absence of a single, tangible threat to common security in the form of Soviet expansionism creates the risk that formerly secondary issues, such as disputes over trade policy, will come to dominate “West-West” relations. The willingness of Western publics and governments to compromise short-term national interests in favor of fostering long-term cooperation on a broad common agenda may be reduced. Because international cooperation will be essential, both to sustain the shared Western prosperity and to address the problems outlined above, such developments would be potentially disastrous. In light of these considerations, the possible breakdown of cooperation and emergence of bitter rivalries between the industrial democracies can be seen as the predominant threat facing American policymakers in the 1990s.

This catalog of new threats and risks is formidable, but it is accompanied by clear opportunities and the prospect of accelerated progress toward systemic change favoring U.S. and Western preferences.

A “Western” coalition. The U.S. and its allies have emerged from the Cold War with shared goals, institutions, and values. These, in combination with the patterns and habits of cooperation built up during the Cold War period, constitute a sort of strategic capital inherited from that struggle. Today, the U.S. has an opportunity to build on that capital to establish means for more effective cooperation in pursuit of common goals.

Spreading Western values. The collapse of the Soviet Union and its external empire has freed more than a dozen states whose people have expressed the desire to join the West. By underwriting the twin processes of economic reform and democratization in these areas, the U.S. can expand the scope and influence of the Western coalition and help to bring long-term peace and stability to important parts of Eurasia.

Likewise, the demise of communism as a serious ideological threat allows the U.S. to envision the spread of democracy and free market economies to Africa and Latin America as well. Over time, the propagation of shared values will contribute to the competence of international society and the stability of the international system—devel-
opments in which the U.S. will continue to have a critical long-term stake.

Economic revitalization. The end of Soviet expansionism and the crippling of the Russian military have created opportunities for the U.S. to reduce its defense spending and redirect some of its public resources to other objectives. Investments in long-term productivity gains, including education and training, "civilian" technologies, and infrastructure renovation, appear particularly attractive. U.S. policymakers must be cognizant, however, of the risks associated with steep defense cuts. Military instruments will play new and demanding roles in supporting U.S. national security in the future. If cuts are taken without a clear understanding of the needs of the future strategy, U.S. policymakers could find themselves without the military assets needed to secure U.S. goals.

Collective action. The current state of flux in perceptions and institutions and the strong desire of many previously isolated states to be integrated into the leading institutions of international society provide the U.S. with the opportunity to build new coalitions and develop new modes of action on security problems (e.g., peacemaking and peacekeeping, humanitarian action, the monitoring of human rights). Many of these initiatives will find a logical home in the United Nations. At the same time, however, there may have to be tradeoffs between inclusiveness and decisiveness: the United Nations, precisely because of its universality, can be a somewhat unwieldy and unreliable instrument for collective security. Hence, it would also appear wise to build a more cohesive and explicitly defined Western "caucus" for pursuing effective collective action.

Finally, the new strategic environment will heighten the need for a more global approach to issues ranging from political and economic development to migration, proliferation, and the environment. The end of the Cold War offers substantial new opportunities for multilateral initiatives aimed at spreading the burden of developmental assistance and fostering consensus on the character and extent of "conditionality."
NATIONAL SECURITY OBJECTIVES

National security objectives are what a nation must attain if it is to achieve its fundamental goals in the presence of diverse risks. These objectives change as the international environment undergoes significant adjustments. Offered here are U.S. national security objectives from the multilateral security perspective. Those with global applicability are given first, followed by those applying to specific international actors.

Some U.S. national security objectives that have global applicability are as follows:

- Deter attack (from whatever quarter, from nuclear strikes to terrorism) on the U.S., its forces abroad, and its citizens.

- Prevent the domination of regions important to U.S. prosperity (especially Europe, the Persian Gulf, and East Asia) by powers hostile to the U.S.

- Impede the proliferation of weapons of mass destruction and the means for their delivery. Discourage the export of sensitive weapons and technologies. Where such proliferation does occur, discourage the use of such weapons, especially against U.S. forces and allies. Should antiproliferation efforts fail, prevent the use of such weapons.

- Encourage the establishment of international norms of behavior that reduce the prospects for internal and transnational conflict.

- Reduce the flow of illegal drugs into the U.S.

- Promote environmentally sound economic development. Help ensure that the basic human needs of all people are met.

- Protect the physical environment. Promote global adherence to policies designed to improve the global environment.

Key national security objectives with respect to major U.S. trading partners can be identified as follows:

- Overall, ensure that the U.S. economy continues to grow and that a wide range of U.S. goods and services remain internationally competitive.
• Preserve U.S. influence over the decisions of governments, private companies, and transnational organizations that may impinge upon U.S. prosperity and well-being.

• Maintain a stable climate for investment and trade among the Western industrialized democracies.

• Maintain and extend norms, rules, and adjudication procedures providing for free and fair trade.

Important U.S. national security objectives vis-à-vis the former Soviet Union and other states once dominated by communist parties can also be identified:

• Promote democratic institutions, Western values, and prosperous, free market economies in formerly communist-dominated states, particularly those in Central and Eastern Europe.

• Discourage the reemergence of authoritarian and anti-Western elements in the former Soviet Union.

• Avoid bloodshed and conflict attendant to the breakup of states and republics formerly dominated by the communist regimes. Satisfy legitimate desires for self-determination to the extent that they are consistent with the protection of the rights of minorities.

Finally, because of the critical role played by petroleum in modern economies, important U.S. national security objectives apply in this area as well:

• Maintain the flow of crude oil, at stable and reasonable prices, to the U.S., its allies, and the international economy.

• Promote long-term stability in the Persian Gulf region, reducing the likelihood of aggression, subversion, violent revolution, or other forms of conflict.

• Over the long term, reduce the dependence of the U.S. and its allies on interruptable energy sources.

Virtually all of these national security objectives have been present on the agendas of U.S. policymakers for many years. But there are now two major changes. The first is the absence of what for 40 years was the central objective: deter and prevent the expansion of Soviet
power and influence. The second is the relative priority of the other objectives. Not all can be pursued with equal vigor; some threats, such as nuclear proliferation, loom larger today than they have in the past. Likewise, there appear to be new opportunities to advance objectives long on the U.S. policy agenda but considered infeasible. Taking account of these changes and assigning resources to the "new" set of objectives is the main task of strategy.

CORE STRATEGY

At the heart of the multilateral approach to strategy is the belief that isolationism simply is not an option for the U.S. and, with the brief exception of the 1920s, cannot be supported by America's foreign policy tradition. U.S. leadership cannot secure America's fundamental goals alone. The U.S. must be able to influence at many levels the decisions and actions of a host of actors beyond U.S. borders. Hence, a strategy of engagement is imperative. It seems equally evident that U.S. engagement should in most cases be structured around multilateral approaches to problem solving:

• The interdependent nature of contemporary society dictates the need for mutual accommodation and coordinated solutions to most problems.

• Because the U.S. broadly shares common interests with the other Western democracies, it can expect multilateral approaches to be fruitful in many areas of policy as, indeed, they are today. Moreover, giving new impetus to the creation of multilateral policymaking structures should help to avoid renationalization of foreign, economic, and security policies.

• It is not, in any case, in the U.S. interest to singly bear the burden of promoting and defending Western interests around the world. Strengthened mechanisms for collective security can help to spread the burden more evenly.

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3This is not to imply that a return to authoritarianism and anti-Western policies by Moscow is precluded. But this eventuality should be handled primarily by the hedging and environment-shaping components of U.S. strategy (see below).
How might this basic orientation—global engagement via multilateral means—be translated into a concrete strategy for the protection and advancement of U.S. goals? The following represents an outline of such a strategy.

**Political Dimension**

Implementing this strategy would require first that the administration articulate a vision and a statement of how it would like to see the world's democracies organized over the longer term, as well as a general idea of how the U.S. might proceed. The statement, which would follow consultations with U.S. allies, would explain how a revised Western alliance can help to create and secure a more orderly world. Policy priorities flowing from the new U.S. strategy might include the following.

*An expanded and reorganized NATO.* It has become increasingly clear that effective European security demands an organization that combines the universality of the CSCE with the effective enforcement capabilities of NATO. The U.S. has thus far avoided calling for such an organization, in part out of concern that it might undermine the alliance; but this conservative approach to NATO's future may be the surest route to NATO's demise. If the alliance remains aloof from such problems as the breakup of Yugoslavia or Ukraine's perceived need for reassurance, it will be seen on both sides of the Atlantic as increasingly irrelevant to the continent's security problems.

*A formal association of non-European democracies with this new collective security organization.* Democracies will, of course, be faced with security challenges outside Europe as well. Explicitly associating the U.S. with collective security arrangements that cover such contingencies as another Persian Gulf crisis, the management of affairs on the Korean peninsula, and other potential problems can help to assure such states as Japan, South Korea, and Australia that they are not being left out of the Western security system. Of course, the United Nations Security Council may, in the event of a crisis, be able to provide a legal basis for collective action. Or it may not. In either case, the U.S. should make it clear to its allies that it is prepared to provide leadership and military forces in the defense of important democratic interests.
A more explicit connection between U.S. military power and cooperation in other issue areas. The U.S. remains unique in its ability to project a large-scale conventional military capability around the world. No other nation could have conducted Operation Desert Storm, a fact that will remain true for years to come. Importantly, no other nation is so widely seen as a trusted guarantor of security and regional stability. Both the U.S. and its chief allies have powerful incentives to continue this division of labor while instruments of truly collective security are created. Neither the Japanese nor their neighbors, for example, relish the prospect of a Japanese military establishment capable of protecting Japanese global interests. But for this bargain to remain viable, U.S. allies must offer greater political and material contributions in return for U.S. services.

Finding ways to translate America's unique military assets into greater influence on a wide range of other issues will be a central task of this strategy. A good place to start is by suggesting to U.S. allies a more explicitly stated set of norms and obligations for all Western governments.

Underwriting democracy and reform in the former Soviet empire. The collapse of Soviet power provides a unique opportunity to extend democracy and free market principles to a large and important region of the world. Failure to establish stable democracies in Russia and other states of the former Soviet empire risks a return to a hostile and confrontational relationship between the West and the largest state in Eurasia, a development that could be far more costly than any large-scale aid program the U.S. might mount to avoid such an outcome.

The West should proceed along two parallel tracks, substantially stepping up aid flows while helping to create effective political and economic institutions that can use the aid efficiently. For a time, this process may involve the creation of parallel structures that are independent of those still controlled by elements of the former communist elite.

Strengthening the United Nations. The U.S. must think seriously about reforming the United Nations as a precondition to its assuming a greater role in international affairs. Specifically, the administration should initiate studies and consultations on structural
changes to the United Nations apparatus. One of the most important tasks along this line is to address the question of Security Council membership so as to grant Japan, Germany, and perhaps other powerful states a voice commensurate with their geopolitical weight.

Expanding mechanisms for policy coordination in specific issue areas. The administration should review the extent to which U.S. policies on issues such as nuclear proliferation, international terrorism, and the global environment are being coordinated with the policies of other Western governments. In reviewing these areas, the U.S. should look for opportunities to enhance and formalize policy coordination.

All of these priorities, which form only a portion of what would need to be done, in themselves constitute a very ambitious agenda. One key to success will be the ability of the U.S. president and his top officials to clearly and consistently articulate a vision of the end-state to which these initiatives are meant to contribute. Also important will be the degree to which U.S. policies are seen as being consistent with this vision. If the U.S. preaches free trade and disciplined technology transfer policies, for example, while restricting imports and selling sensitive technologies to repressive or aggressive regimes, the prospects for success will be remote indeed.

The G-7 would seem to be well suited as a forum for conducting formal consultations relating to the new strategy and as a vehicle for promoting consensus on its major elements. America’s most important allies are represented in the G-7, which has the added advantage of being traditionally associated with a broad-based agenda.

The strategy’s trickiest part will perhaps be the attempt to leverage U.S. military assets into other areas. If the U.S. overplays its hand, it risks alienating its allies and losing the structures it wishes to preserve. However, if the U.S. fails to convince its allies to be more forthcoming, domestic pressures will likely render it unable to sustain its military commitments.

Some allies, such as Germany and Japan, have at times found it difficult to admit to the existence of serious military threats to their interests. This ostrich approach to international relations was evident in the Gulf crisis. Other allies recognize the existence of threats but, like Denmark in NATO, play the free rider game. Knowing that a respon-
sible American leadership will remain engaged in their regions and will retain the capabilities needed to deal with regional threats in any case, these nations convince themselves that they need not repay the U.S. for its trouble.

To some extent, the U.S. can counter such responses by emphasizing that Congress and much of the U.S. public may have little enthusiasm for superpowerdom and even less appreciation for the subtleties of regional stability and its prerequisites. If U.S. allies demonstrate a marked unwillingness to cooperate on important matters, even the most internationally minded of administrations would be unable to sustain American support for continued U.S. investments in regional security.

Military Dimension

Much has been made of the coming “demilitarization” of international relations. Observers point to Japan’s success in relying on the economic dimensions of power to the virtual exclusion of the military; they then jump to the conclusion that this domain is the one in which the game will be played in the future.

There is something to this view. The U.S. has not done nearly enough to strengthen its economic portfolio vis-à-vis other important actors. America’s unwillingness to close the gap between public expenditures and collected taxes has hurt investment and undermined long-term U.S. competitiveness. And America’s addiction to cheap hydrocarbons has left the U.S. vulnerable to supply disruptions and international price fluctuations. Addressing these and other shortcomings would strengthen the U.S. hand in dealing with friends and foes alike on issues that directly affect U.S. prosperity.

But the U.S. will still require first-rate military capabilities. For one thing, a number of governments around the world are likely to see aggression, terrorism, and subversion as ways to gain hegemony in their regions. When these leaderships run afoul of important U.S. interests, they will have to be dealt with on their own terms. Precipitous cuts in U.S. military capabilities would encourage would-be aggressors to challenge Western interests. For the U.S. to withdraw from its role as regional stabilizer would be a risky and potentially costly experiment.
Moreover, as noted earlier, military power is one of America’s strong suits. As such, it provides a basis for a mutually beneficial division of labor between the U.S. and its allies. Since America’s worldwide interests demand that U.S. power projection capabilities remain second to none, it seems wise to try to gain the additional benefits that could accrue from continuing to be prepared to defend common interests.

Military forces will be called on to support the following operational strategies, all of which are components of the overall national military strategy:

- Deterrence of attacks on the U.S.
- Deterrence and defeat of large-scale aggression by regional powers. (Plans for U.S. operations in future major regional conflicts should take into account the enemy’s possible possession of nuclear weapons and ballistic missiles.)
- Limited interventions, to include *peacemaking* operations. The chief goal of these operations may be to protect populations victimized by armed attacks, whether they are officially sponsored by the central government or not; to support diplomatic efforts aimed at brokering a settlement between two warring factions; or to remove from power a hostile regime.
- Foreign internal defense. Generally, this strategy encompasses operations to assist a more or less competent friendly government in controlling insurgency or other forms of lawlessness within its own borders. *Peacekeeping* operations—monitoring compliance with a settlement that has been agreed to by all parties to a dispute—might also be placed under this rubric.
- Counter-terrorism.
- Humanitarian relief efforts.

**Economic Dimension**

The view of the world that informs the multilateral approach to strategy is characterized by an emphasis on economic relations between states and the importance of bringing about general conditions of prosperity. In its economic dimensions, a multilateral strategy seeks
to ensure national standards of well-being by gearing both internal policies and external institutions to maximize the benefits from trade and economic expansion. It does so not necessarily out of a higher moral purpose, but more because of a realization that the boomerang effects from pursuing protectionist and neo-mercantilist strategies make such approaches counterproductive. Economics are also held to be important in areas not usually considered their province, particularly in providing for national security. Economic development and the visible pace of economic progress are viewed as principal means for reducing international tension (based on the theory that people busy becoming wealthy are less inclined to be diverted to foreign adventures) and creating a greater commonality of interests between states. Because of their growing importance and power, the international institutions necessary to create and preserve a free and effectively functioning international economic order (e.g., the World Bank, the IMF) are also dampers of otherwise disruptive international behavior: developing nations cannot afford to be too far out of sympathy with such actors.

The American pattern of the multilateral strategy (which may differ in certain respects from its European counterparts) affirms the role of competition, both foreign and domestic, as a spur to economic development. There is a legitimate role for government in providing and encouraging a facilitating economic environment, though not necessarily in engaging in policies of sectoral management and microeconomic choice. Few sectors of the economy are so sensitive in terms of U.S. security that they are not insurable in some respect, which means that few require protection from foreign competition or acquisition. Policies of a protectionist character are to be avoided in large part because of the prime importance of having a national base of human capital that is dynamic and responsive to economic forces. This brief characterization of a multilateralist economic strategy suggests the following policies:

- Adhere to and extend the General Agreement on Tariffs and Trade (GATT) framework. The corpus of rules governing the conduct of international trade and the associated instruments for dispute resolution have served the international community and U.S. interests very well. The U.S. should strengthen the GATT system and seek to extend its purview to capital and equity markets as
part of a general effort to bring more open competition to these areas.

- **Encourage economic development.** The U.S. should be prepared to devote appropriate resources to encouraging economic development in regions that have not been adequately integrated into the international economy, such as the former Soviet Union and Eastern Europe. In many cases, these resources will be an essential accompaniment to political aims and initiatives. The U.S. should recognize the critical role of economic development along free market lines in promoting regional stability and averting disastrous refugee flows. To the extent possible, the U.S. should move away from a system of national preferences in tariff policy.

- **Explore new areas for international coordination.** A maximalist reading of the multilateralist strategy would encourage movement toward the international coordination of macroeconomic policy, recognizing that such coordination is likely to prove useful in minimizing the number of international shocks that would damage a system so dependent on international interaction. For the near future, this type of policy coordination may be limited because of major differences in economic institutions and constituencies worldwide. Premature efforts might even prove counterproductive by giving rise to the perception that policies are being externally imposed, in the pattern of the Maastricht experience.

- **Take an active stance on energy and environmental issues.** Cross-border issues on the environment and access to energy and nonfuel resources should be given a higher profile than they currently have, with an emphasis on multilateral diplomacy. The enduring link between perceptions of resource vulnerability and security policy suggests that the U.S. (as the current guarantor of last resort with regard to Middle East oil) will have a strong stake in this aspect of economic reassurance.

**ENVIRONMENT-SHAPING STRATEGY**

Chapter Four describes a strategy whose main goal is to foster the spread of democracy throughout the world. That salutary goal is in-
corporated into the multilateral strategy not as its core component, but as the main element of its environment-shaping component. That is, top priority is given to consolidating the existing group of Western democracies into a more cohesive unit, and efforts to "export" democracy focus on those states that have already chosen that path—i.e., the nations of Central and Eastern Europe.

Moreover, added to the environment-shaping component of this strategy are some dimensions beyond pressing for the spread of democracy: strengthening norms of state behavior and spreading Western values. Consistent with their acceptance of a broad definition of U.S. national goals, advocates of multilateral security believe that U.S. strategy should harness some resources to efforts aimed at strengthening these norms and values, such as those contained in the United Nations Charter, the Universal Declaration of Human Rights, and the Helsinki Treaties:

- Peaceful settlement of disputes
- Freedom of thought, conscience, and religion
- Freedom of expression
- Protection of one's fundamental rights without regard to race, ethnicity, or territorial affiliation

To the extent that state governments fail to uphold such standards, multilateral security proponents would generally prescribe active U.S. and Western opposition, proportionate to the violation. When the rights of minority groups within states are systematically violated, the U.S. should be less reticent than it previously has been to call for international efforts to protect these rights, traditional concerns about interference in internal affairs notwithstanding.

**HEDGING STRATEGY**

Of course, there are many ways in which the ambitious strategy outlined above could be thwarted or frustrated, either temporarily or for the longer term. To hedge against this possibility, the U.S. must retain the capabilities needed to unilaterally protect its most important interests. This hedging component of the strategy would manifest itself in several ways.
Most obviously, the U.S. military establishment would be affected. For some time to come, the U.S. would have to sustain active and ready reserve forces capable of prevailing in two concurrent major regional conflicts. These will be needed until other powers firmly commit to participating in future military operations and to developing the capabilities needed to contribute meaningfully to those operations. Should such commitments and capabilities not become available, the U.S. defense burden would grow over the longer term.

However, if the Western powers begin to go their own ways, there would be less call for U.S. forces to participate in "local" conflicts in Eurasia. Thus, the U.S. might be able to realize some savings by reducing the size and capabilities of specialized forces earmarked for participation in peacemaking and peacekeeping operations.

Above all, there will be a need for ambitious thinking about the composition of military forces and the operational strategies and doctrines guiding their use. A leading challenge in this respect will be to understand the implications of a new strategic environment in which old parameters of deterrence and stability may no longer apply.

STRENGTHS AND WEAKNESSES

Collective internationalism draws strength from its reflection of contemporary strategic reality. Its multilateralism reflects the growing economic and political interdependence of states and the increasing importance of multilateral forums for legitimation and action. The approach is unashamedly activist (some would say interventionist). It rests on the proposition that isolationism is self-defeating and that unilateralism fails to harness the most favorable changes on the international scene. Enormous environment-shaping opportunities exist now, in the wake of the Cold War, but they cannot be captured if national interest is narrowly defined. Further, a new national security strategy must reflect the American tradition in foreign and security policy with its considerable emphasis on values and international norms.

The approach is not without flaws and risks. The emphasis on international society could easily be understood as promoting membership in an elitist, Western "club" (although there are surely worse clubs). And the high degree of activism called for in this approach
will not be cheap. But a stable environment that the U.S. has been able to shape according to its interests and the interests of international society will be less expensive over the long term than a system drifting out of control.

As noted above, the difficult task for American leaders will be to translate U.S. activism and responsibility for regional security into influence over decisions in other issue areas. And they will also have to deal with the endemic problem of free riders—states that enjoy the advantages of a stable international environment without paying their share of the costs.

Perhaps the loudest criticism of the strategy would be the claim that international involvement could distract America from pressing problems at home. The strategy's view that growing international interdependence is creating an ever closer relationship between foreign and domestic policy renders this criticism somewhat moot, but this view is not widely enough understood. Thus, the administration must point out that, on many fronts, a successful national security strategy will be a necessary condition for domestic prosperity and well-being.

Further Readings


Hoffmann, Stanley, “A New World and Its Troubles,” Foreign Affairs, Fall 1990.

Chapter Four

DEMOCRATIC INTERNATIONALISM: TOWARD A NEW FOREIGN POLICY

Graham Fuller

Democratic internationalism is a foreign policy strategy grounded in the core political values of democracy. Democratic internationalists believe that ideas and ideals are the ultimate drivers in international relations. They would point to the fact that in the final analysis, it was democratic ideology—not weaponry—that won the Cold War. Only through the gradual creation of a world of like-minded communities can the most cherished goals of a peaceful, prosperous, and free international order be ultimately attained. Based on its conviction that these values are universal, the strategy is operationally dedicated to their promotion worldwide.

GENERAL WORLD VIEW

Many forms of Government have been tried, and will be tried in this world of sin and woe. No one pretends that democracy is perfect or all-wise. Indeed, it has been said that democracy is the worst form of Government except all those other forms that have been tried from time to time.

—Winston Churchill

All the ills of democracy can be cured by more democracy.

—Al Smith
Democratic internationalism is not a strategy of naive idealism, but rather a sober, realistic, and demanding view of the indispensable role of values in foreign policy. Its essential proposition is that the values of human rights, pluralism, freedom of speech, and democratic governance are universal and that their promotion will over the long run secure—more effectively than any other policy—a safer, more prosperous, and more secure world.

The strategy of democratic internationalism is based on the fundamental belief that the characteristics and benefits of democracy will positively affect the nature of the world. There is a fundamental link between a nation’s internal political order and its external orientation. A world order based on recognized norms of democracy would be a safer, saner, and more prosperous place. Democracies do not go to war with one another. Moreover, compared to other forms of government, they are more reliable trading partners and, because they are more responsive to their citizens, are more transparent and predictable political systems and strategic actors. As such, they are more likely to honor international obligations.

This chapter uses the term democracy broadly, but recognizes that it can have different meanings. The pursuit of democracy is here taken to mean the process of working to establish pluralistic systems of government in which all the governed have a direct say in determining the leadership that will govern them, as well as some considerable influence in formulating the government policies that order their lives. This type of governance assumes some kind of regular electoral process by which leadership is selected and perpetuated.\footnote{The crucial point is that governments can be elected and deposed by democratic means. There may be cases in which antidemocratic forces will succeed in gaining power through the ballot box, but democratic internationalists believe that those forces will be unable to remain in power in a truly democratic society unless they respond to the aspirations of that society.} It also assumes freedom of speech sufficient to enable members of the society to be informed about events that affect their lives and their judgments about the efficacy of their own leadership. Integ rally linked to this freedom is the right to discuss these issues through freedom of assembly; also included is freedom of religion and worship. And finally, this type of governance assumes the existence of an independent judiciary to guarantee due process and the
rule of law over the rule of power. The minority must be afforded a means of protection from the tyranny of the majority.

These, then, are the principles of a democracy. While they do not vary, the mechanisms for implementing them do: different cultures and historical experiences may offer alternative forms and styles of implementation. There is no one mechanistic formula by which effective democratic institutions can be instantly put into effect.

Free market principles are the economic corollary of liberalization and democratization in the political arena. While total commitment to free markets may waver from state to state and from time to time, there seems to be a general relationship between the market and democratization. A free market inevitably creates strong internal pressures for distribution of economic and political power, thereby generating dynamics that inevitably produce a freer political system to accompany that market. Free markets can indeed operate within a repressive society, but the contradiction generated by capitalism creates pressures for internal change. In this sense, liberal democratic states should generally favor free markets in principle.

Democratic internationalism embraces a universal set of values. It is not, however, a crusade to impose Western or American values upon other countries. Its goal is to pursue a strategy that creates the best possible framework for the spread of those values. Implementation of such a policy involves much hardheaded policy formulation, difficult choices, and robust action in pursuit of goals. It may often call for firm, broad action—including sometimes even military action—to establish or restore a modicum of representative government in authoritarian states that egregiously violate international norms of conduct.

NATIONAL INTERESTS AND SECURITY OBJECTIVES

In the Declaration of Independence, Jefferson set forth the classic formulation of American interests: "life, liberty, and the pursuit of happiness." Several centuries later, in a world shrunk by modern communications, media, transportation, and international awareness, it is self-evident that the attainment of these interests is intimately linked as never before to the state of the external world.
Foreign policy is designed to shape and form that international environment along lines consistent with these American interests.

Jefferson’s goals already offer a sequence of priorities for domestic policy. Their corollary in foreign policy is that American interests are served by extending these values abroad via the spread of democracy and human rights. This is not to say that the tactical implementation of American foreign policy will invariably place sole or even first emphasis on the promotion of democracy. In pursuing any high goals (including those in one’s personal life), constant decisions must be made regarding which tactics to use—pressure, persuasion, cooperation, indirect methods, or other means—so as to facilitate the ultimate attainment of the goals. And, as in all human undertakings, timing is another essential consideration. Blind and indiscriminate pursuit of anything, including the establishment of democracy, is patently unrealistic and even counterproductive.

Democratic internationalism sees U.S. national interests through the prism of three suppositions:

1. The values of democracy are absolutely desirable as ends in themselves for all peoples—i.e., they are universal values.\(^2\)
2. The security, moral well-being, and even happiness of the U.S. is ultimately diminished to the extent that these universal values are denied to persons elsewhere in the world.
3. Promotion of democratic governance in an effort to establish a like-minded international community of nations must therefore be the primary strategic U.S. goal—even when not tactically accorded absolute priority in every situation—in formulating foreign policy.

\(^2\)Many Americans rightly worry about the assumption that values are universal and deplore efforts to impose values on others. Concern arises from the knowledge that many ideologues and religious sects in power have forcibly imposed state controls and ideologies on subjected populations based precisely on the claim that they are “right” or are “moving with the forces of history.” Democratic values, however, can distinguish themselves from those of other ideologies by their primary insistence on the individual’s right to maximum freedom in ordering his or her own life, and on the protection of the individual from arbitrary or imposed acts of the state.
The primary external threat to the security and welfare of the U.S. derives almost exclusively from nations that do not share a core commitment to the values of democracy and human rights. Not all such nations will be directly hostile to the U.S.; many are unable or unwilling. But certain enemies of the U.S. will emerge from nations that not only do not share these values, but also are intent upon expanding their own values and interests in opposition to those of the democratic community of nations. The history of the world in the next century will be all about the complex process of relations between three groups of states: those that have basically attained democratic governance, those that are struggling to do so, and those that are hostile to the process and its proponents.

Above all, democratic internationalism rejects the classic realpolitik dictum that nations have no permanent friends, only permanent interests. It finds this view wanting to the extent that it

- Speaks of national interests as paramount without offering any basis for their identification.
- Assumes that the tactical implementation of those interests is always shifting and hence cannot be fundamentally posited.
- Denies the critical role of values in the ready identification of friends, and denies the characterization of such friendships as permanent so long as political values are maintained.

The determination of national interests is hardly an objective process; it is instead an intensely subjective one, conditioned by the formulation of values. A value-oriented foreign policy admits this fact up front, accepting values as a very permanent anchor.

Also in contrast to realism, democratic internationalism is not concerned with the emergence of hegemonic or regional powers per se, but rather with their content and the character of their governments. An alternative power center is only a threat if its character is by definition hostile to the democratic order.

Democratic internationalism can accept realpolitik tactics, but not realpolitik strategy. For in the end, it is difficult for realpolitik to transcend the transient and personal interpretations of national interests put forth by the foreign policy leadership of the moment.
Indeed, as democracy spreads, more countries become committed to the same democratic values, lessening the need for the old realpolitik balance of power.

The subject of nuclear weapons illustrates democratic internationalism’s implicit acceptance of the idea that other countries’ values matter. For over 40 years, U.S. policy was absorbed in generating responses to the nuclear threat posed by the Soviet Union. Yet Britain and France have both long been capable of destroying the U.S. with their nuclear arsenals. The point here is that because the U.S., Britain, and France share democratic values, the U.S. can make assumptions about how Britain and France will behave and thus does not have to worry about their nuclear capabilities. Canada similarly loses no sleep over U.S. nuclear intentions. Today, in dealing with the neo-nationalism and resurgence of ethnicity that have gripped the post-Cold War world, as well as with the attendant problems of instability, the benefits of democratic governance are equally as vital.

THREATS AND OPPORTUNITIES

In the next decades, the instability of nations, especially in the third world, will likely be the primary hallmark in international relations. What new approaches to foreign policy thinking might be required?

The Cold War era embodied an ideological and nuclear confrontation of a global character, and it posed basic existential questions for all nations. The magnitude of the confrontation simplified the process of policy formulation in the West: Western survival and deterrence of Soviet expansionism were given the highest priority. Today’s post–Cold War environment differs radically. Its outstanding characteristic is the absence of the old framework of stark existential alternatives, opening the way for far greater policy options. The reformulation of old policy assumptions is especially urgent in reassessing the meaning of instability.

During the Cold War, the working policy assumption was that the Soviet Union profited from instability in the world, so preservation of stability ranked high among Western policy values. Today, the very meaning of stability calls for reconsideration in the context of democratic internationalism. First, the Soviet Union itself embodied the principle of internal stability for nearly 70 years, perhaps more
than any other country. The staggering political, economic, and social costs of indefinitely repressing change in the name of stability are now known: stability through repression simply submerges profound problems and issues that only worsen during years of inattention to their root causes. For example, the multitude of nationalistic feelings in the former Soviet Union, repressed for 70 years, have now burst forth with renewed virulence. This issue and other issues of social evolution, similarly neglected, delayed the society’s confrontation with normal and inevitable social frictions that should have taken place gradually over the 70 years.

Stability, in short, is bogus, indeed dangerous, when it is sustained by force, violence, and repression. The new world order implies a new era in which forces of ethnic and sectarian aspirations have been released from previous states of suppression and discontent—for better and for worse. These forces will seek to fulfill their cultural and political aspirations through the formation of new kinds of nationhoods. The quest includes release from nondemocratic, repressive, or authoritarian orders of old that hinder nationalist expression. This process is going to be destabilizing, at the least involving political and social revolution, and perhaps even involving the breakup of many existing nations, the regrouping of other ethnic and sectarian groups, and the merger of yet other groups into new, larger entities. The process is not stoppable; it is at best marginally manageable.

Of the policies for dealing with this new kind of world, democratic internationalism is best equipped because it seeks to create the framework within which change can most peacefully take place. Democracy, among other things, embodies a process that permits constant change, a means for the controlled release of ever new social impulses and the adjudication of conflicting aspirations (much as many small earthquakes deal with the earth’s accumulated friction in a safer way than does one massive temblor). Democracy inherently recognizes and incorporates the process of change more than any other political system. As such, it provides the optimum

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3Yugoslavia poses another such striking example. Many more states in the world are to face new reckoning with the collapse of the old totalitarian or imperial order, with China almost certainly near the top of the list. Other large multinational states are also at risk. Even India will face new strains, although its basically democratic order may save it from breakup.
political system for a new international order that will have to cope with massive change and aspirations for ethnic self-fulfillment and freedom. A failure to introduce some semblance of the democratic process into the politics of most nations can only guarantee that these inevitable processes of change will take place with maximum violence and will spawn high regional instability as authoritarian states and arbitrary rulers employ violence and repression to halt them.

It is fear of these natural and often inevitable forces that sometimes leads to the adoption of authoritarian means to deal with ethnic, sectarian, and economic grievances. Radical ideologies often emerge to express unfulfilled aspirations; terrorism is often practiced by those groups with no other political outlet. Foreign policy adventurism, external distractions, and war often emerge from the policies of authoritarian states, especially those faced with serious internal fissures: leaders will do anything to prevent the emergence of “unacceptable” demands of particularist groups and populations. Yet in the new international order, “unacceptable” aspirations are being thrust upon ruling groups all over the globe by dissatisfied ethnic and other groups. The Soviet Union and Yugoslavia have already bowed to them.

If the world wishes to avoid “balkanization” beyond the Balkans or “lebanonization” beyond Lebanon, new means are required. If stability means no breakup of existing states, the world had better be prepared for a new absolutist order in which vast phalanxes of dictators prepare to vouchsafe for the U.S. the “stability” of the status quo.

It would be naïve to assume that democratization provides instant answers to deeply rooted problems. The process of democratization is itself destabilizing, as old orders give way to new. It can initially even give more power to some undemocratic forces—such as, for example, the radical Islamists in the Muslim world who often make great early gains at the ballot box when admitted into the political system. A democratic international order will likely wish to increase the cost to those who use democratic means to attain power only to then subvert the system by establishing their own autocratic order.
KEY STRATEGY ELEMENTS

Political Dimensions

American democracy can only prosper in a world where democratic values are shared and collectively secured and defended. Democratic internationalism therefore seeks to build coalitions of like-minded countries that are prepared to act as a group or through international organizations both to create an international framework for the successful promotion of democracy and to defend the democratic values should they be threatened.

The end of the Cold War offers a unique opportunity for the U.S. to forge a new coalition of democratic powers committed to democratic internationalism. Building upon the positive experience of the Cold War, democratic internationalism seeks to create a new caucus of democratic powers working together as the engines of democratic and capitalist revolution. The key actors are the U.S., Western Europe, and Japan, all of whose resources and energies need to be harnessed more effectively. However, as democracy is consolidated in Eastern Europe, Russia, and elsewhere, these actors should be integrated into an expanding coalition of democratic countries working to create a new democratic order.

The core institutions for such efforts are those in which such democratic countries are already organized—e.g., the G-7, the EC, and NATO. Institutions such as the EC and NATO should be opened to new democracies to achieve the expansion critical to helping ensure that the strategic gains of the Cold War are consolidated and built upon. Russia, should it succeed in its own democratic experiment, could and should be incorporated into this expanding zone of democracies. At the same time, these organizations should increasingly orient themselves toward supporting democracy beyond Europe. It is crucial to find a new framework in which the three centers of democratic and capitalist values—the U.S., Europe, and Japan—can work together more effectively. Extending democracy more broadly should be a central objective.

Democratic internationalists have a two-sided approach to the issue of internationalization. On the one hand, they implicitly assume that democratic nations will increasingly relinquish greater degrees of national sovereignty as the world continues its move toward inter-
nationalization. This development will be especially true within the circle of like-minded democratic powers that form the core of this integration process. The history of the world, after all, chronicles smaller social subgroups successively relinquishing their autarky and sovereignty to larger institutions that then assume governing functions, including security, at the expense of individual or local power, even when the larger institutions are not omniscient. The history of international relations suggests that the quest to attain a more rational international order and a growing community of diverse nations that subscribe to democratic values is a long and rocky one.

On the other hand, democratic internationalists are only prepared to have states work within and cede sovereignty to international institutions to the degree that those institutions are legitimately democratic and committed to fostering democratic values. Democratic internationalists believe that international organizations should be the primary vehicle for gradual extension of democratic governance and expansion of the democratically oriented international community. But they are also prepared for states to act unilaterally or in ad hoc coalitions, and are not willing to give institutions carte blanche or veto power.

Nowhere is this double-sided approach clearer than in the case of the current United Nations. While strongly committed to the rule of law both at home and abroad, democratic internationalists see the present United Nations as an institution having great potential but needing reform. There is concern about the ability of nondemocratic powers to block actions in the United Nations, especially in the Security Council. Reforming the United Nations to ensure that it effectively contributes to democracy would be a top priority. Until then, the right to act individually or collectively with a group of democratic powers will not be abandoned.

Proponents of democratic internationalism may differ tactically and procedurally on which institutions can most effectively fulfill an international democratic agenda. The essential debate is whether the community of democratic nations is itself the best international vehicle of action, or whether an attempt should be made to turn existing international organizations to best use.
The United Nations may be a promising institution for the forces of 
democratic internationalism over the longer run. It had a dismal 
reputation for inaction and hypocrisy during the Cold War, but the 
Cold War deeply compromised and hamstrung its ability to function. 
Today, the United Nations has taken on new life with the end of the 
East-West confrontation and is beginning to explore new roles and to 
dramatically expand its responsibilities. In principle, the United 
Nations need not bear the entire onus for international action if 
other existing organizations (NATO, the CSCE, etc.) can carry part of 
it. There may also be good reason to develop other regional associa-
tions for the regulation of local economic, political, and security 
problems as a way to avoid centralizing and overtaxing the capabili-
ties of a global organization. There should, however, be coordination 
between any regional organizations and the United Nations.

The United Nations Security Council will remain a critical institu-
tion. Its central dilemma is that it purports to be globally repre-
sentative rather than ideologically representative of democratic values. 
It will be less capable of functioning if it is not filled by nations 
committed to the values of democratic internationalism. If it is to 
function effectively in the name of expansion of democratic govern-
nance, nations that do not subscribe to and practice democratic val-
ues should lose their places on it—their presence can only serve to 
hamper the council's focus and operations. China, for example, 
should be placed on notice. The Security Council will also ultimately 
need to be enhanced with other major nations of the world, includ-
ing Japan and Germany; and other states, such as India, Brazil, 
Indonesia, Nigeria, and Egypt, might come to be included eventual-
ly, so long as they conform to democratic values.

If the United Nations and its Security Council are too bound up in 
the statutory requirements of global representation, instead of the 
ideals of democratic internationalism, some other vehicle may need 
to be established to pursue the fostering of democracy. What is very 
important is that the policies of democratic internationalism not be perceived in the third world as simply a fancy new form of Western 
condominium. Such a perception, deeply rooted in the annals of the 
"white man's burden" during the colonial and imperial ages, can be 
alleviated by clear commitment on the part of the democratic na-
tions to balanced and fair policies impartially imposed.
The relinquishment of degrees of national sovereignty clearly comes more painfully to large and powerful states such as the U.S. than to smaller ones, because the powerful possess in greater measure the means to unilaterally secure their own security and thus have more to lose. Internationally based security is more welcome to the weak than to the strong. This uneasy process of relinquishing elements of national sovereignty thus places different kinds of stress on strong and weak states. It also places different obligations on them. The weak must support international arrangements and instruments that are not millenarian, utopian, or unduly prejudicial to the interests of the powerful, for the powerful will not join them otherwise. And as for the strong, they must develop greater sensitivity to the anxieties and sensibilities of the weak that stem from the weak’s historic victimization by the strong. The strong must recognize that bitterness and frustration, especially among many third world countries, often assume dangerous and radical forms of expression; these can be deeply problematic and destabilizing, even to powerful Western states. To paraphrase Ali Mazrui, power corrupts, but absolute powerlessness can also corrupt absolutely.4

But democratic internationalism is also realistic. It does not seek immediate and utopian revolution in the world order that will impose sudden new and sweeping limitations upon national sovereignty. World government is not just around the corner. Nor do modern concepts of decentralization suggest that a single centralized world government is in fact the best way to order the planet. Under any circumstances, relinquishment of degrees of sovereignty is far less likely to take place in a world order in which absolutism is more common than democratic governance. It is only in the sane and democratic ordering of international institutions that broad international subscription to their regulations will take place.

**Military Dimensions**

The explosion of ethnic problems, civil wars, and destabilizing aggressive and repressive policies will confront the entire world for some time to come with urgent international problems. The U.S.

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neither can nor should assume responsibility for the assuaging of most of these international sores. However, the pervasive character of modern transportation, communications, and mass media (above all, television) means that no country can remain innocent and isolated from international events, even if its own immediate welfare is not directly affected. Somalia is a premier example. Now largely bereft of strategic value, it has nonetheless elicited American and other international aid to save its population from starvation created solely by internal strife. The U.S. will find it increasingly difficult to avoid some kind of involvement in situations like this one and the one in Bosnia, where mass bloodshed, human suffering, aggression, and gross violations of human rights occur.

The U.S. has so far taken the lead in international action because few other countries have the will, the sense of international leadership, the tradition, and the experience and skills needed to lead an international task force for international emergencies. Clearly, the U.S. cannot always bear this responsibility, for domestic and international political reasons, as well as for economic reasons. Over time, the United Nations must adopt an ever greater role in handling international intervention. The U.S. would still train, assist, and contribute, and would even take the political initiative in helping to organize international opinion and policy. But the bulk of these duties should gradually fall under the responsibility of multilateral forums, above all the United Nations. For now, however, there is no alternative to active U.S. leadership.

Since international action on a huge range of issues is almost certain to characterize the next decades, the U.S. needs to decide how and where its military/security money can best be spent. America will never relinquish its unilateral capabilities for self-defense and for critically necessary international intervention that may not conform with international opinion and goals. But democratic internationalism holds that, over time, most international operations are likely to be supported by a consensus represented in the Security Council. It is here that the U.S. may eventually relinquish some significant part of its military budget to the United Nations to handle the kinds of international operations sure to become necessary in ever greater numbers. This relinquishment could be a bargain, sparing the U.S. the responsibility and cost of unilateral action. The United Nations is already involved in peacekeeping operations of some kind in over
two dozen areas. Support to the United Nations will facilitate operations that the U.S. might like to support but simply cannot afford to engage itself in.

Nuclear proliferation, spawned by traditional competition in the international order, represents a uniquely dangerous threat to that order. Dictatorship facilitates the acquisition of nuclear weapons because it provides what the acquisition process usually needs: suppression of information and a drive for international domination. By existing, nuclear weapons help create the regional insecurity, tensions, and suspicions that often evoke chauvinistic or ultranationalist policy responses.

The international order must make a major effort to deal with the problem of nuclear proliferation, and the international atmosphere has never been more propitious for doing so. The security needs of smaller states must be recognized and treated; international mechanisms must be created to protect nonnuclear states from nuclear states. Mechanisms for inspection and intervention in cases of suspected proliferation must be evolved that enjoy broad international support, at the cost of every state’s national sovereignty.

But international mechanisms for preventing nuclear proliferation are far from predictably reliable. An increased reliance on them for the security of smaller nations should not rule out options for supplementary bilateral security arrangements between states. Transition to a new order of democratic internationalism will not come overnight; it would be foolish to assume that all traditional mechanisms of assuring security, especially to small states, can be dispensed with in the context of new international guarantees. Regional security organizations, perhaps resembling the CSCE in their comprehensive character, will be able to play larger roles. Their effectiveness will grow in direct proportion to the weakening of brutal, ambitious authoritarian regimes on the international scene.

**Economic Dimensions**

Democratic internationalism is grounded in a broad acceptance of the free market as an important corollary of democratic governance.
But the ultimate benefits of democratization are perhaps more apparent than are the “universal” blessings of the free market. Democratization is almost never a zero-sum game, whereas the free market is all about selecting winners and losers, which involves critical problems of income distribution that are politically volatile. In this sense, it would seem that political commitment to totally free markets may require leavening with other political considerations, both domestic and international, that are too complex for discussion here. In the final analysis, a policy of democratic internationalism urges support of open and free markets as a general principle. But it is a known feature of free markets that the concept is always relative, never absolute, and that free markets require constant bilateral and multilateral negotiation and adjustment. Just as U.S. foreign policy must acknowledge other factors that impinge on a general policy preference to export democracy to other states—thereby calling for a variety of differing tactical approaches—so, too, will there be additional factors in the economic area that likewise temper full and indiscriminate support for free markets.

A world that is increasingly subdivided into smaller ethnic entities guarantees that very few, if any, states in the world can remotely aspire to economic autarky. Indeed, the proliferation of new and smaller states guarantees that most of them will only be able to survive by satisfying a large portion of their economic needs from abroad and by finding a niche for themselves in an international free market. The absence of free markets will be particularly devastating to a new order of small states; this fact alone should place them firmly on the side of free markets. The economic viability of a state may thus come to be measured and determined more by the international political and economic environment as a whole than by more traditional measures of the state’s size, range of resources, etc. Either way, U.S. strategy should seek the growth of market-oriented systems, for they are a critical means of spreading democracy.

SUMMARY OF STRATEGY OBJECTIVES

The key strategy objectives of democratic internationalism are as follows:
• Promote democratic governance abroad.

• Establish an effective and cooperative body of democratic nations, membership in which will bring major political and economic advantages.

• Develop policies of rewards and sanctions for use as instruments in fostering democratic governance. Military action to stop serious violations of human rights and democracy will be part of the available international tools. Multilateral measures will be the preferred approach, but the U.S. will retain both the right to pursue and the capabilities needed to carry out unilateral action in particularly egregious situations.

• Recognize that instability is an inevitable product of change, especially when change follows a period in which deep-seated feelings have long been pent up. A whole range of policies must be developed for treating separatism and aspirations for self-determination. It is preferable not to break up existing states if other ways to settle outstanding grievances can be identified (federalism, confederalism, guaranteed minority rights, new constitutional arrangements, international supervision of elections, etc.), but breakup is not excluded if other means fail.

• Recognize and deal with inequities of the market system, especially when they affect the fate of smaller nations. Widespread free market systems will not be credible or feasible if they are perceived as creating a Darwinian jungle in which only the powerful survive. Trading blocs that exacerbate the gap between haves and have-nots will be increasingly intolerable and will become a major source of international instability, violence, and warfare.

• Use international means as the avenue of first resort for solving international crises. Nations should avoid creating ad hoc regional alliances against putative enemies unless other means fail. An important goal is to avoid using balance-of-power mechanisms as the primary way to achieve international security.

• Take firm, broad action, including military, to impose or restore some kind of representative government in states that egregiously violate international norms of conduct (Iraq and Yugoslavia currently rank high in this regard). Trade, invest-
ment, foreign assistance, and other economic instruments should be used as tools to promote democratic practices. Nations moving toward dangerously high patterns of arms acqui-
sition should face heavy sanctions and isolation (Iran, North Korea, and China are immediate examples). Standards must be uniformly applied, however, or the new international order will be perceived by many as a travesty of double standards imposed by the rich and powerful. Moves by nations to gain nuclear weapons deserve particular attention. Nations practicing state-sponsored international terrorism must also be subject to universal standards of condemnation and isolation. These sanctions will generally be much more effective if applied internationally in a world more accepting of a new democratic order.

- Create an effective working alliance of democratic states that share fundamental political values and agree on the need for their propagation. This alliance may come via the United Nations, informal networks among already existing states, or some other path. Ideally, such an alliance should have organized form so that it can bring concerted pressure to bear and can provide privileges and advantages to its members. These factors are especially important for third world nations that need incentives to move in the direction of liberalization and that can achieve positive economic benefits as a result of inclusion. If standards are broadly applied, exclusion from such a body could have a powerful effect on states that engage in proliferation, terrorism, internal oppression, external aggression, or other violations of international norms.

- Devote particular attention to the possible formation of an antidemocratic bloc under the leadership of one or more powerful nations. Ostensibly, these nations would brand the international democratic community as an extension of Western imperialism and its handmaidens. The bloc would claim that it seeks to preserve the sovereignty and dignity of nations preferring their “own path” to development, a path in line with “their own traditions.” It would reject the “weakening” and “divisive” character of Western democracy and its harshly competitive, “loaded” economic order run in the interests of the rich. It would perhaps take refuge in corporatist authoritarian political structures. Such a grouping, consisting largely of have-nots, could be led by a
state such as China, or a resurgent ultranationalist Russia, or
India, or some other large world state, as a new form of struggle
between haves and have-nots. Over the longer run, the advan-
tages of membership in a have-not bloc would be limited, but
such a bloc could pose severe problems for international co-
operation over the shorter term.

STRATEGY WEAKNESSES

The key difficulty with a strategy based on democratic international-
ism is its relatively radical proposal that international relations be re-
structured away from the tried (but not always so true) principles of
balance of power and realpolitik. Nations, especially strong ones, are
invariably reluctant to cede elements of sovereignty to larger, inter-
national bodies.

Another weakness stems from the fact that the world cannot be
readily transformed into a bastion of democratic governance
overnight. A great debate rages over putative "preconditions" for
democracy and the necessary conditions for its long-term sus-
tenance. No one in fact can definitively state when a nation or people
are "ready" for democracy; as with the maturing of individuals,
complex characteristics are involved that render some nations more
susceptible to early and successful democracy than others. No peo-
ple should be prejudged. Pronouncements that a people or nation is
not ready for democracy are usually made by enemies, rather than
supporters, of democracy. The important point is to begin at least
some aspects of the process now, such as a focus on human rights.

In most cases, democracy invol- as a long learning process, one that
will get off the track at times and need to be restored: mistakes are
part of the process. And the international environment in which
democracy grows is critical to democracy's development. Yet how-
ever difficult the process, certain basic criteria must be met. Human
rights are the essential rock bottom of democracy, without which one
has nothing. Freedom of speech, press, and assembly are also cru-
cial. The international community should be structured so that it
can use powerful carrots and sticks when dealing with nations that
do not conform with these ideals. China, for example, would receive
no privileged status with the U.S.—on the contrary, it would suffer sanctions.

International bodies must also develop expertise on the important “technical” features of democracy and their critical impact on success or failure. Issues to be researched include size of parliaments, two houses versus one house, presidential versus parliamentary rule, optimum number of political parties, criteria for establishing political parties (should ethnic and religious parties be permitted?), threshold number of votes required for a party to enter parliament, strength of the executive over the legislative, etc. The findings can then be adapted to differing conditions in different states. But the right of people to decide whether they like who is ruling them at any given moment will be a fundamental principle, the application of which will have an immediate effect on the political longevity of a whole series of “maximum leaders” around the world.

The strategy’s third weakness concerns the relative weight to assign to the promotion of democracy versus other U.S. international interests. This strategy posits that the weight will be great, but there are obviously differing political conditions and factors involved in promoting democracy in, say, Iraq, Kuwait, and Saudi Arabia. Some states are friends, others are not. How much will the U.S. lean on friends as opposed to others? What is the degree of urgency for change? Clearly, gross violation of international norms by an authoritarian regime makes the case more urgent. Democratic internationalism would also assume that the degree to which a society is functional versus dysfunctional would have a bearing on the degree to which pressure to change is applied. And what kinds of pressure? Nations seen as delinquent could be called upon to develop plans for a transition to democracy that would be submitted for consideration to international bodies on democratization. Further, technical advice and counsel can be offered. The process is obviously a deliberate and gradual one.

A fourth weakness, noted earlier, is the danger of democratic internationalism being seen as a new Western diktat. The U.S. has already seen anxieties and suspicions about this possibility in connection with Operation Desert Storm, Western operations (or their absence) in Bosnia, and even operations in Somalia. It is important that the concept of democratic internationalism be widely perceived
as a global, not Western, movement that enjoys broad international support. In this way, most people of the world are likely to regard international pressures and intervention as being in their own interests (as opposed to those of their rulers).

These issues all involve important tactical and situational judgment calls that cannot be predetermined or simplistically arrived at. But the bottom line is that the process of democratization, however gradual, will take high priority in U.S. policy formulation.

Democratic internationalism argues that the determination of national interests based first and foremost on values and their promotion in the world provides a surer and steadier compass than some ad hoc, allegedly objective realpolitik consideration of situationally identified American "interests." The U.S. can indeed be permanent "friends" with states that share its democratic values. It must suspect, however, the friendship and motivations of any states and leaders that do not subscribe to such values.

Finally, given that even democracy is an imperfect instrument, democratic decisions made on a world basis will also be imperfect. And yet the creation of a congenial international environment has to be the key task of the next century, a century that will almost inevitably involve the turbulent reemergence of nationalism and an ever deeper extension of the struggle for democracy into areas of the third world. If the U.S. does not work on making the jungle more habitable, the next century will be anarchic indeed. There is no other basic operating principle but democratic internationalism.

Further Readings


Proponents of strategic independence take partial exception to the notion that the U.S. needs a new national security strategy. They believe that many of the difficulties—and not a few of the tragedies—that America has encountered in its relations with the world spring from an enthusiasm to embrace overarching concepts and doctrines that purport to explain and define America’s so-called role in the world. Viewing the world through any one prism is bound to get the U.S. into trouble; there is great danger in defining any one thing in the international system—be it communism or instability or fundamentalism—as ipso facto a threat to, or even a concern of, the U.S. The essence of statecraft is discrimination on the basis of power, interest, and circumstance. It would be foolhardy to forsake statecraft in the rush to find a new “strategy.”

GENERAL WORLD VIEW

The concept of strategic independence arises in part from this distaste for broad visions in foreign policy, which in turn arises from a view of the world as anarchic and chaotic: a world in which the U.S. has no permanent friends, only permanent interests. Strategic independence is informed by the view that conflict and competition are inherent features of world politics and that, for as long as it remains a sovereign state, the U.S. will perform engage in the push and pull of international politics. Rather than embark upon vainglorious efforts to create a benign international environment, strategic indepen-
dence seeks to prepare America for a world that cannot be led, managed, or stabilized. Contrary to fashion, proponents of this strategy do not see the world changing into something it has never been; nor do they see an end to history or power politics. Rather than furthering millenialist goals, they see foreign policy as largely a way to make the best of bad choices—in Michael Oakeshott’s metaphor, to keep afloat in “a boundless and bottomless sea where there is neither harbor for shelter nor anchorage for food, neither starting place nor appointed destination.” Strategic independence is a foreign policy for the long haul. Far from viewing foreign policy as a way to affect the fundamental nature of international society, strategic independence accepts the world for what it is and does not attempt to transform it into what some would like it to be. In place of a grand vision in foreign affairs, strategic independence advocates pragmatism, flexibility, and opportunism.

The U.S. enjoys enviable advantages in what will soon be a multipolar world. Unlike other major powers, it does not have large, potentially hostile neighbors. Its security concerns are therefore less pressing than those of Japan, China, Russia, and the states of Western Europe. America, then, has neither the same stakes in the status quo as other countries, nor their fear of the consequences of instability. The U.S. need not, especially now that the Cold War has ended, make other states’ security concerns its own. To continue to do so will be increasingly dangerous, futile, and costly.

While a policy of strategic independence has many components that some may characterize as neo-isolationist, its guiding principle is a clear-eyed and unsentimental realism. Rather than pursue grandiose visions pleasing to its self-image, the U.S. needs to concentrate on its foreign policy task, which is far more modest but still arduous: secure a finite number of assets within a turbulent global environment. That task, while requiring a willingness and an ability to use decisive force to protect U.S. interests, does not require the burdensome military establishment that has been the norm for the past 40 years.

It is time to abandon the notion that the welfare of the U.S. depends critically on a benign international environment and that it is a U.S.

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security imperative to order that environment. America has thrived even though it has been surrounded by tyranny and chaos for most of its life. Today, in a world shrunk by technology, the nature of the international environment arguably affects America more. This environment, however, is just as arguably becoming less controllable. Turning a sow's ear into a silk purse is not a proper object of national security policy. Instead, America's post-Cold War strategy should follow Walter Lippmann's injunction:

A mature great power will make measured and limited use of its power. . . . It will eschew the theory of a global and universal duty which not only commits it to unending wars of intervention but intoxicates its thinking with the illusion that it is a crusader for righteousness, that each war is a war to end all war. . . . I am in favor of learning to behave like a great power, of getting rid of the globalism which would not only entangle us everywhere but is based on the totally vain notion that if we do not set the world in order, no matter what the price, we cannot live in the world safely. . . . In the real world we shall have to learn to live as a great power which defends itself and makes its way among other great powers.  

**NATIONAL INTERESTS AND SECURITY OBJECTIVES**

This strategy's conception of what constitutes America's vital interests is limited—protect the U.S., its sovereignty, and its prosperity—and, being beyond controversy, anodyne. Because this strategy is so different from what the U.S. has pursued since 1948, it can probably best be described by analyzing what it is not, rather than what it is. Perhaps, though, the starting point can be reduced to two features: emphases on solvency and on America's *domestic* purpose.

Any well-conceived foreign policy must take into account probable domestic and international constraints and dangers. Unless foreign policy goals are directly connected to the state's vital security interests, it is not enough that they be objectively worthwhile. The crucial issue, as Walter Lippmann discussed, is whether a country's goals are attainable at an acceptable level of risk and cost. America's current

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national security commitments are unacceptable on both counts, and the new attempts to redefine and enlarge the conception of America's national interests are dangerous and extravagant. Moreover, foreign policy is a means to security, not a means to greatness. America's moral purpose, as elucidated by all its defining state papers, will be fulfilled not by the extent to which the U.S. attempts to perfect the world, but by the extent to which the U.S. strives to perfect itself.

This strategy's focus, then, is squarely on domestic priorities, not on the supposed need of the international community for leadership, moral or otherwise. The prominence of national security in American life and the perceived need to exercise global leadership have seriously warped American politics, society, and culture. Moreover, after 40 years of funding history's most sweeping foreign policy agenda, America is economically exhausted. To be sure, defense spending is not the main culprit for big deficits. Nevertheless, nearly one out of every five federal dollars will be consumed in the name of national defense for the indefinite future; this despite unprecedented peacetime deficits and a virtual consensus that America must spend a great deal more on half a dozen crises ranging from infrastructure and education to health care and the cities.

With the end of the East-West rivalry, the Cold War era arrangement that made America's enormous spending on national security palatable is now vulnerable. To fully appreciate why, it is necessary to understand that this arrangement was based on a coincidence: the apparent dictates of national defense against a superpower foe happened to correspond to the global pacification strategy that the U.S. foreign policy establishment believed was essential regardless of the Soviet threat. This connection was understood by astute observers who were present when America's internationalist foreign and security policies were created in the late 1940s and early 1950s. During congressional consideration of the Marshall Plan, conservative

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3 The American public, for instance, supported the maintenance of U.S. forces in Europe and the Far East based on its understanding that those forces were needed to counter the Soviet threat. National security experts, however, have long known that the U.S. presence in those regions has been based on far more complex and esoteric rationales involving so-called environmental shaping, reassurance, and the necessity for continuing engagement.
Republican Senator Robert Taft remarked that he was "more than a bit tired of having the Russian menace invoked as a reason for anything that might or might not be desirable or necessary on its own merits." It proved difficult to convince the public of the need to fund a world-order policy in the name of national security; and in the end, the Truman administration found it necessary to follow Senator Arthur Vandenburg's advice "to scare hell out of the American people" to win their approval of a globalist agenda and its concomitant, the national security state. For much of the next 40 years, the public was, in General Douglas McArthur's words, "kept in a perpetual state of fear—in a continuous stampede of patriotic fervor—with the cry of grave national emergency. Yet these disasters seem never to have quite happened, seem never to have been quite real."6

Throughout the Cold War, the public thus tolerated massive appropriations for defense based on a fairly narrow conception of the national interest (the apparent need to contain and deter a superpower threat to the U.S.) and in the name of a prolonged national emergency. The public never fully understood, however, that containment of the Soviet Union was in fact only one item on the foreign policy community's complex agenda. Uninitiated in that community's esoteric reasoning, the public is now left wondering why, without a superpower for an enemy, defense spending must remain so high and overseas commitments must remain so extensive.

If current levels of defense spending are no longer needed to protect the national interest as defined by the public (for instance, to help defend Europe from Soviet conquest), it is incumbent upon those in the national security community to make this fact clear and to explain that the defense appropriations they regard as essential are based on their own broad and arcane conception of the national interest. They will then have to try to forge a new consensus regarding how much the public is willing to spend year in and year out in pur-

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suit of international goals. The recondite conceptions of the national interest that justify current defense spending levels are far removed from the public's ideas of what is needed for national security. Such a tension between an elite's view and the public's perception of what is necessary is dangerous in a democracy and is inimical to creation of the basis for shared sacrifice that is essential if the U.S. budget crisis is to be solved. In a democracy, the people must understand and control, albeit indirectly, the broad course of policy undertaken on their behalf.

THREATS AND OPPORTUNITIES

The most prominent new "threat" with which many people believe America must deal is the nebulous "instability." Strategic independence proponents agree with those who argue that the world is likely to be a dangerous and disorderly place in the coming years. With the end of the restraining influence of the Cold War and with borders in many areas of the world failing to coincide with racial, religious, and ethnic dividing lines, turmoil is likely to be all too common and to be regarded by some of the participants as entirely justified. A particularly chaotic period of history is just beginning, a period that America will not be able to control, manage, or otherwise affect. Throughout history, instability and conflict have shaped and reshaped the world. Thus, to indiscriminately define regional instability, aggression, and misrule as threats to America is perforce to adopt a posture simultaneously approximating paranoia and omnipotence.

As with so many situations likely to confront the U.S. in the post-Cold War world, a degree of fatalism is necessary. In most of the worst situations likely to arise, America can do very little—other than proffer its good offices—to prevent or even subdue instability at an acceptable level of risk and cost. Furthermore, in instability there is often opportunity. If it were to adopt a pragmatic view of world affairs, the U.S. would indeed welcome chaos in many situations if that chaos weakened an unfriendly state or caused an economic rival to divert a greater proportion of its wealth to either defense or dealing with the adverse effects of instability on its own borders. In a world full of dangerous neighborhoods, America is blessed by its geopolitical security. Those forces in the world responsible for instability are unlikely to make the U.S. the object of their enmity unless the U.S.
involves itself in their disputes. Thus, one of the more dangerous endeavors for the U.S. in the post–Cold War world would be, say, to transform NATO from an anti-Soviet alliance into an arrangement with the amorphous objective of pursuing European stability. That approach would create for America a multitude of unwarranted risks.

Ensuring regional stability is the responsibility of each particular region’s powers; strategic independence assumes that states can cope with threats in their own backyards. A policy of strategic independence would turn on a simple truth: other states have at least as much—and often more—interest in secure sea-lanes, access to raw materials, and regional stability as does the U.S. The less America does, and the less others expect it to do, the more other states will do to help themselves. This assumption may sometimes prove faulty, which is why this strategy advocates that the U.S. retain a military establishment permitting it to be a “balancer of last resort”; but if the U.S. takes upon itself the security burdens of other states, those states will happily pass the buck, to the ruin and risk of the U.S. In most cases, regional powers will balance themselves rather than provoke others to align against them. Allowing, and in some cases encouraging, this natural balancing in areas important to the U.S. will be to America’s benefit in that it will spur the appropriate parties to commit and expand their own resources to solve their own problems.8

CORE STRATEGY

At the heart of a policy of strategic independence is a fundamental change in America’s important alliance relations. NATO was created to bolster nervous Europeans whose states still suffered from the devastation of World War II. In its original inception, U.S. involvement was to lessen and wither as Western Europe strengthened and became capable of standing on its own two feet. Western Europe

7While shunning permanent alliances, a policy of strategic independence recognizes that the U.S. may very well wish to form ad hoc alliances (and to cooperate militarily with other powers in other ways) to meet common threats.

8Not all regional balances, or imbalances, are important to America; it should be concerned only with the emergence of great power threats. The relative position of one sub-Saharan state vis-à-vis another, or of Hungary vis-à-vis Romania, or of Serbia vis-à-vis Bosnia thus does not meet the criterion.
achieved full economic recovery long ago and is now a prosperous and politically stable region fully capable of forging military forces adequate to meet any likely danger. With the dissolution of the Soviet Union, there is simply no longer a credible superpower threat to the security of Western Europe. Under such vastly changed circumstances, the time has come to devolve full responsibility for the security of Europe to the Europeans. It should be remembered that the long-term goal of such realists as George Marshall, George Kennan, Dwight Eisenhower, Robert Taft, Walter Lippmann, and Hans Morgenthau was to restore a functioning multipolar balance of power so that the U.S. could free itself from its crushing global responsibilities by devolving them to other great and regional powers.

If the mission of protecting Western Europe from the Soviet Union has been fulfilled, then the alliance—in contrast to American political, economic, and cultural engagement in Europe—is no longer needed. The U.S. should be wary of a common danger in foreign policy, what Lord Salisbury called “clinging to the carcass of dead policies.” Washington should welcome, not resist, such signs of European initiative and independence as the Franco-German military brigades and efforts to strengthen the WEU. Devolution to the Europeans of responsibility for the security of their own region was the original objective of the U.S. officials who helped create NATO, and that objective is consistent with American interests.

The U.S. should also execute a gradual military withdrawal from Japan and accept a Japanese military buildup. America needs to recognize that Japan is a great power that will sooner or later become the preeminent actor in East Asia and the Western Pacific. U.S. leaders can adjust to reality and maximize the chances of maintaining good relations with Japan, or they can insist upon perpetuating a policy of smothering paternalism until the Japanese openly rebel against it. Other powers in the region can act as balancers to Japan, and it is incumbent on the U.S. not to alienate those powers needlessly.

Two arguments that are unrelated to the security of U.S. allies but that call for maintaining America’s alliance commitments are often

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employed by the foreign policy community: (1) a military presence gives America a "place at the table" in economic and political relations with its present allies, and (2) an American military presence "reassures" Germany's and Japan's neighbors.

In response to the first argument, it should not be forgotten that America's industrialized allies have just as many, if not more, reasons to cooperate with the U.S. as the U.S. has to cooperate with them. Those who stress the importance of economic interdependence as a justification for maintaining military alliances seem to assume that Americans cannot have productive commercial relations with countries in other regions unless Washington occupies those regions with its armed forces. Throughout the nineteenth and early twentieth centuries, however, the U.S. enjoyed vigorous overseas trade without being the planetary gendarme. Economic relations occur because both parties to a transaction expect to benefit. Those expectations on the part of the U.S. and its principal trading partners are not going to suddenly collapse because Washington decides it will no longer subsidize the defense of wealthy allies. A military presence cannot serve as a device to circuitously bind other countries to the U.S. economically or politically. Economic and political cooperation can only be born of common interests. When those interests are present, military ties are superfluous; when those interests are absent, military ties are useless.10

10Other endeavors are much more important to healthy economic relations with America's industrialized allies. It is far more essential that the U.S. show foreign markets its resolve and sense of international responsibility by taking serious action to reduce its budget deficit, which presents a clear and present danger to the international economy and America's place in it. On this point, consider George Kennan's remarks (from "Morality and Foreign Policy," Foreign Affairs, Winter 1985/1986, pp. 215-216) at a time when the deficit did not loom nearly so large as it does now:

A country that has a budgetary deficit and an adverse trade balance both so fantastically high that it is rapidly changing from a major creditor to a major debtor on the world's exchanges, a country whose own internal indebtedness has been permitted to double in less than six years, a country that has permitted its military expenditures to grow so badly out of relationship to other needs of its economy and so extensively out of reach of political control that the annual spending of hundreds of millions of dollars on "defense" has developed into a national addiction—a country that, in short, has allowed its financial and material affairs to drift into such disorder, is so obviously living beyond its means, and confesses itself unable to live otherwise—is simply not in a position to make the most effective use of its
In response to the second argument, proponents of strategic independence would, of course, agree that small countries always have reason to fear large countries, especially if the large countries have made war on them. But consider, for example, the fact that Canada and Mexico on occasion and for some purposes fear American power. Had the world evolved differently, would that fear have been a sufficient argument for some other great power (Japan?) to station armies permanently in the U.S.? More important, if the U.S. accepts the “cork in the bottle” theory for maintaining its alliances—i.e., if the U.S. accepts the notion that only an American-dominated security structure can ensure stability in regions where stability is deemed vital to the U.S.—then it is accepting a truly permanent and ultimately crushing burden. Such a strategy amounts to taking the wolf by the ears: when could the U.S. safely let go? Arguing last year for maintenance of America’s “reassurance” strategy, a high-ranking Pentagon official asked, “If we pull out, who knows what nervousness will result?” 11 The problem is, of course, that it is impossible to know what will happen, and therefore, according to the assumptions underpinning the current U.S. security policy, the U.S. will always stay—and pay. As an alternative to smothering Germany and Japan, a phased U.S. withdrawal from its alliances would encourage regional balances by allowing those states’ neighbors to assess the degree of threat and balance accordingly.

The question of Russia’s future is too uncertain for the U.S. to play any active role there. Those who advocate such a role assert that unless massive Western aid and technical assistance are immediately forthcoming, Russia will plunge into an economic and social shambles, the result of which will be the emergence of dangerous nationalist forces that will lead Russia on aggressive, expansionist actions. The truth is, however, that such forces could only come to power in a Russia gravely weakened by the same economic and social chaos that would conceivably propel those forces into office. Could such an impotent Russia truly pose a serious military threat to the U.S.?

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Furthermore, if such dangerous nationalist forces are lingering just below the surface, why is it in America’s interest to strengthen Russia? Is it really in America’s interest to build up what is described as a potential enemy? Given the assumptions under which advocates of massive aid to Russia operate, it would seem dangerous to assume that mere aid and technical assistance will exercise the demons apparently ready to possess Russia. Advocates of aid to Russia are, it seems, advocating a policy not so much of financial and technical assistance as of social and political engineering. This policy toward a sovereign power is likely to breed nationalist resentment and to thereby engender the very forces it attempts to forestall. Finally, why would a democratic Russia be any less inclined to pursue expansionist and “imperialist” politics than was a democratic America in 1847 and 1898?

These issues relate to the larger one of what role the spread of democracy should play in American foreign policy. A policy of strategic independence is very skeptical of democracy’s ability to protect U.S. interests and transform the world and, in any case, does not see democracy’s promotion as a practical goal of foreign policy. Nor does strategic independence embrace the idea that democracies are ineluctably peaceful, settle all their international disputes amicably, and therefore never go to war with one another. The German Social Democratic party’s monumental decision to vote for war credits in August 1914, France’s military operations against the Weimar Republic in the Ruhr in 1923, and Hitler’s strictly constitutional election in 1933 are all profound refutations of this popularly embraced notion. Adhering to the strong realist tradition in American foreign policy, the proponents of strategic independence concur with Alexander Hamilton’s assessment:12

There are still to be found visionary, or designing, men who stand ready to advocate the paradox of perpetual peace between states. The genius of republics, they say, is pacific; the spirit of commerce has a tendency to soften the manners of men and to extinguish those inflammable humors which have so often kindled wars. Republics will never be disposed to waste themselves in ruinous

contentions with each other. They will be governed by mutual interest, and will cultivate a spirit of mutual amity and concord.

We may ask these projectors in politics, whether it is not the true interest of all nations to cultivate the same benevolent and philosophic spirit? If this be their true interest, have they in fact pursued it? Has it not, on the contrary, invariably been found that momentary passions and immediate interests have a more active and imperious control over human conduct than general or remote considerations of policy, utility, or justice? Have republics in fact been less addicted to war than monarchies? Are not the former administered by men as much as the latter? Are there not aversions, predilections, rivalships, and desires of unjust acquisition that affect nations as well as kings? Are not popular assemblies frequently subject to the impulses of rage, resentment, jealousy, avarice, and other irregular and violent propensities?

Moreover, anyone familiar with America’s own agonizing experience in achieving democracy and putting civil differences to rest will acknowledge that democracy—and stability—is, by its nature, a do-it-yourself enterprise, not an export commodity. And contrary to current assertions, the democracy exporting business has not been a traditional American “value.” Whether as the Puritans’ “city upon the hill” or Henry Clay’s “light to all nations,” America has seen its role as that of an exemplar to be followed or not, as other societies so choose. While the founders hoped for and believed in an ordered, peaceful world community, no American leader before Woodrow Wilson contemplated using American power to achieve such a community.  

13Much discussion has been devoted of late to the proposition that America will only be true to its founding ideals if it adheres to a foreign policy based upon democracy and morality. Leaving aside the question of whether it is important that U.S. external policy be true to the ideals of America’s founders, advocates of strategic independence would ask those who advocate this proposition to consider the tough foreign policy realism of Washington’s farewell address; the writings of Hamilton, John Adams, James Madison, and John Jay; and the July 4, 1821, speech of John Quincy Adams, in which he said, “Whenever the standard of freedom and independence has been or shall be unfurled, there America’s heart, her benediction and her prayers be. But she goes not abroad in search of monsters to destroy. She is the well-wisher of the freedom and independence of all. She is the champion and vindicator only of her own.” (Samuel Flagg Bemis, *John Quincy Adams and the Foundations of American Policy*, New York: Alfred A. Knopf, 1956, p. 421.)
It is instructive to note that history shows only two examples of democracy's successful importation: Germany and Japan—after their military conquest and occupation. But as discussed above, the most prominent current justification for keeping U.S. troops in these states is that many analysts, and most of the neighboring countries, are not convinced of Germany and Japan's permanent pacification. A great many of America's world order policies—from making the U.S. responsible for the "West's" secure access to Persian Gulf oil, to the reassurance strategies of NATO and the U.S.-Japan alliance—are in fact rooted in the belief that America's most powerful democratic "allies" must be constrained from embarking upon independent and, to Washington's thinking, potentially dangerous and aggressive policies. The most ambitious and expansive pro-democracy projects the U.S. has attempted, then, have proved unable to ensure against the threat of aggression. Promotion of democracy is assumed to be in America's interest because democracies do not fight democracies. This line of thinking has not convinced Japan's or Germany's democratic neighbors, and has done little to assuage the mutual suspicion of Turkey and Greece, two more of America's democratic allies.¹⁴

A policy of strategic independence proposes that in the matter of democracy, as in other matters, the U.S. treat Russia and other states as adults, not as wayward children to be cajoled and converted. Thus, for example, rather than viewing Russian nationalism or Chinese authoritarianism as conditions that can be converted by American efforts to engender democracy and order, the Russians and Chinese should be seen as exactly what they have been for a very long time and are likely to continue to be. Strategic independence holds that fatalism should replace idealism in U.S. expectations of and conduct toward the world and, moreover, that pragmatic policy choices born of self-interest are to be embraced as such and not clothed in altruism or idealism. Engendering changes in other nations' fundamental ambitions and values so that they resemble America's is an impossible and unreasonable goal of foreign policy; a pragmatic foreign policy would accept other nations for what they are or for what history has made them. To force the world into the

¹⁴It is not logical to simultaneously assert, as many do, that the U.S. must involve itself in Balkan instability so as to avert war between Turkey and Greece, and must promote democracy worldwide because democracies do not fight each other.
procrustean bed of America’s prodemocracy and world order policies will expose the U.S. to more dangers, both material and moral, than these policies could repel.

The Russians must work out their own salvation; they, like other nations, as John Stuart Mill argued, will get the government they deserve. Whatever form that government takes, America should behave in an adult manner: recognize Russian interests while pursuing its own. This approach means not reviving NATO (as some defense planners would) as a way to protect Baltic and East Central European states that lie within Russia’s sphere of influence and whose independence is of no vital interest to the U.S. But it also means that if Russian power and menace increase considerably, the U.S. will not necessarily look askance at the possibility of a nuclear-armed Ukraine as a counterweight to Russia.

ENVIRONMENT-SHAPING AND HEDGING STRATEGIES

Generally, strategic independence calls for a tough, pragmatic approach to America’s relations with the world. The U.S. should unambiguously assert its national interest, acknowledging few international constraints when it intervenes militarily to protect those interests; for, while eschewing intervention for the most part, strategic independence demands it in certain situations. In its pragmatic approach to weapons of mass destruction, for instance, strategic independence (as opposed to the current policy) would not hold to a single doctrine on proliferation. It would instead approach the problem flexibly, assessing who is doing the proliferating. The Non-Proliferation Treaty has done a wonderful job of dissuading responsible states from pursuing nuclear programs, but it is becoming progressively ineffective at dissuading the Irans, Libyas, and North Koreas from doing so. For the time being, the U.S. should discourage its current allies from acquiring nuclear weapons. If circumstances change, however, and nuclear threats increase, it may have to acknowledge the mutual benefits of regional nuclear balances. “Bad actors” should be clearly identified by the U.S. and, if they pursue nuclear programs, should be subject to preventive force applied by the U.S. unilaterally or in collaboration with other interested parties. While such a policy is highly interventionist, it is far less meddlesome and roundabout than manipulating mercurial religious, political,
economic, and cultural trends in, say, the Middle East, in an attempt to forestall proliferation.

In the Middle East, the U.S. could foster a regional balance by lifting the sanctions against Iraq so that it can remain a viable state and hence serve as a counterweight to Iran. The U.S. would then intervene in Iraq only to prevent proliferation or aggression against the Gulf states—not to protect Kurds or Shiites. If Iraq and Iran are allowed to balance each other, American defense costs in the region will be minimized.

This measure, however, is no long-term solution to the problem of U.S. dependence on a commodity from so inhospitable and unstable a region. Long-term U.S. goals in the Middle East should be to end American dependence on that region and to prevent the proliferation of weapons of mass destruction in states hostile to America. Energy independence must be made a national security priority. A gasoline tax of 50 cents per gallon should be imposed on economic and security grounds. Alternative energy (including nuclear power) and energy conservation programs and incentives must be given greater priority than they now have.

A policy of strategic independence will enable the U.S. to protect its own security with a much smaller and less expensive military force structure than it now possesses. If the U.S. had no obligation to protect the West European states, Japan, South Korea, and other allies, it could cut its forces and military budget to a far greater extent than has been advocated by the Clinton administration. Moreover, the U.S. should place a high priority on maintaining its strength in emerging technologies (especially information technology) that will allow it to use force effectively without having to maintain the Cold War era’s extravagant military establishment. The U.S. should stress naval and airlift capabilities instead of forward deployment. America would rarely be intervening to affect political (as opposed to military) outcomes in remote regions, so active-duty ground forces would have extremely limited utility. A new ground force structure, one that is flexible, mobile, and combines relative units of the Army and Marines, need not total more than six active-duty divisions. A significant tactical air power capability must be maintained, but the tactical air force could be reduced to about one-third its current size. It would consist of 18 squadrons armed with the newest aircraft
types—F-117s and F-15 and F-16 fighters. The number of aircraft battle groups should be reduced to six, the total number of navy surface ships should be reduced to approximately 205, and there should be ten Trident submarines and 40 tactical submarines.

It is essential, under any national security strategy, that the U.S. keep a nuclear arsenal large enough to deter attacks and blackmail attempts. Beyond a certain point, smaller is not necessarily better. An excessively small arsenal might tempt an aggressive state to assume it could destroy the U.S. retaliatory force with a coordinated attack. Current proposals to reduce the nuclear arsenal to 1,000 weapons would undermine deterrence stability and spur proliferators. Reductions in the strategic deterrent should be primarily from the fleet of vulnerable and provocative ICBMs; the backbone of the new deterrent should be submarine-launched ballistic missiles (SLBMs). A scaled-down strategic dyad of eight or nine Trident missile submarines and a bomber fleet of about 50 B-1Bs and B-2s will be sufficient. Given the long-term threat of ICBM proliferation and the danger of accidental launchings, it is essential that the U.S. begin now to augment its deterrent with effective air and missile defenses. A "thin-layer" anti-ballistic missile (ABM) system could offer crucial protection against an accidental launch or a deliberate attack by a new nuclear power that possesses a limited arsenal.

SUMMARY

In sum, strategic independence sees the following as threats to and objectives of the U.S.:

- A state that possesses the desire and the means to imperil the physical security of the U.S. is a threat. An Iran or Libya that can deliver weapons of mass destruction to U.S. shores is such a state; a nuclear-armed Israel or Germany is not. A state with the will and means to sponsor terrorist attacks against America could also be a threat, although the so-called terrorist threat at present is more a nuisance than a threat.

- Given America's dependence on foreign energy sources and the concentration of those sources in one particular region, the U.S. must in the short term prevent the imposition of a hegemony in that region. The U.S. thus must encourage regional balances and
be prepared to redress a dangerous imbalance. In the long term, however, the most pressing national security objective should be to end U.S. dependence on this region. Public investment, economic incentives to the private sector, and a stiff gasoline tax should be part of a national effort to end U.S. dependence on foreign oil and give America greater control of its economic health and foreign policy.

- The U.S. should eschew entering into any dependent economic relationships that would compel it to be responsible for the protection or stabilization of other states or regions. While economic interdependence can be beneficial, it is, for the U.S., optional rather than necessary. Since the Athenian empire, the self-imposed task of ensuring the stability and security of the world’s markets has led to expanded frontiers of insecurity and the bankrupting of predominant powers.

- An ABM system and a robust nuclear deterrent are national security imperatives.

The opportunities available to the U.S. for furthering its security objectives are as follows:

- Reductions in defense expenditures, along with such even more important measures as significant deficit reduction and radical tax and health care reform, are needed to set America’s economic house in order. The end of the Cold War allows public investment and private enterprise and abilities to be diverted away from defense and toward America’s economic renewal. Investment in education, infrastructure, and nondefense research and development will in the long term add immeasurably to American prosperity and security. A healthy domestic economy will help to eliminate the perception that the U.S. must adhere to what historian Melvyn Leffler has called a “strategy of preponderance” in order to secure and stabilize foreign markets through “reassurance,” “environment shaping,” etc.\textsuperscript{15} The control of access to a thriving American economy and the pro-

duction of first-rate goods will give the U.S. far more economic "leverage" than can military forces based overseas.

- Letting other states be responsible for their own security will allow large reductions in the U.S. defense burden and reduce the risks inherent in being involved in others' defense. It will also force America's economic competitors to divert more of their resources to defense. The world remains a dangerous place, but it is more dangerous for some than for others. America enjoys security advantages not shared by its economic rivals and fellow great powers. It should exploit this situation to its advantage.

STRENGTHS AND WEAKNESSES

There are costs, or weaknesses, related to a policy of strategic independence, the most obvious of which is that American influence in the world would in some ways be reduced. Leaving others to work out their own fate, the U.S. would forsake its role as world leader. Just as France, for instance, does not view the U.S. Haitian refugee problem as a proper French concern, so, too, would the U.S., under a policy of strategic independence, not worry about that new bogeyman, massive refugee flows into Western Europe (a bogeyman that is as fungible as was the international communist conspiracy for justifying U.S. strategic interest in practically every peripheral area). The U.S. would recognize that France and its neighbors have an even greater interest in preserving their stability than the U.S. has, and that for the U.S. to attempt to "cure" the problem would prove to be more expensive and dangerous than the disease itself.

In some of the worst-case scenarios, a policy of strategic independence could mean that certain areas deemed important to America would be destabilized, a result that could hurt the U.S. economically. But taking on the responsibility for ensuring a secure, stable, and predictable world environment conducive to profitable and expanding U.S. trade and financial relations necessarily entails huge economic costs ("world order" security policies require Cold War era
defense spending levels) and considerable risk. It also smacks of imperialism, albeit an informal imperialism.\textsuperscript{16}

Strategic independence is not reflexive isolationism. It could, however, engender a mood of invulnerability and a laxity concerning American security that would prove disastrous. U.S. leaders must make clear—to both the U.S. public and the world—that while wishing no country harm, America will monitor and assess potential threats and, when it sees a real threat, will act decisively to forestall it. America must also act flexibly. A devotion to avoiding entangling alliances should not prevent the U.S. from cooperating closely with other states when faced with a common danger—including not only potential great power threats, but environmental threats as well.

If it employs a policy of strategic independence, America will lose some of the awe with which it is viewed by the world. Such an occurrence is not altogether bad, however. When Britain enjoyed its “unipolar moment” nearly two centuries ago, Edmund Burke, in warning his countrymen, said, “I dread our being too dreaded.”\textsuperscript{17} There are those, he said, who would argue that Britain’s obvious altruism would prevent it from being regarded with suspicion by the world. If so, he declared, Britain would be the first such power in history. There is no reason to assume that America’s strategy of preponderance will not buy it the same fate as Britain’s: the world’s resentment and hostility. British “influence” ultimately bought Britain isolation and enemies. The argument for strategic independence is that less influence, paradoxically, will give the U.S. more security. It will also bring America a more respectful, mature, and natural relationship with those countries to which it is most closely tied, as we, as Americans, abjure leadership and instead, in Lippmann’s phrase, “make our way among the other great powers.”\textsuperscript{18}


\textsuperscript{18}See Steel, \textit{Walter Lippman and the American Century}, p. 566.
Further Readings


CONCLUSION: STRATEGY ISSUES AND CHOICES FOR U.S. POLICY

As stated earlier, the objective of this report is to help clarify America's goals and national security objectives and to explore the implications of alternative definitions of U.S. national security for the post–Cold War era. Chapter One identified a number of fundamental national goals that any U.S. security strategy should attempt to achieve and outlined four distinct possible strategies. Each of Chapters Two though Five elaborated on one of the four strategies, providing the general world view upon which it is built, the specific national security objectives it would aim to achieve, and the principal strategy components it offers for achieving U.S. fundamental goals and security objectives. This concluding chapter assesses the choices posed for U.S. policy by looking at the differences between the four alternative strategies and their implications for an overall U.S. national security strategy.

This chapter first offers general observations about the effort made to develop coherent strategies, after which it describes some of the key issues dividing and driving the alternative strategies. Together, these issues pose a formidable array of choices for U.S. policymakers. A number of elements common to all or most of the strategies, despite their sharp differences, are then identified; and a set of strategy components based on these commonalities is defined in an effort to help bridge the differences. Although the fault lines separating the four alternatives are too deep to permit construction of a single, integrated strategy to which the different strategies' advocates would all subscribe, the commonalities and potential strategy components
may be useful for framing the public debate in ways that help to generate greater consensus for a future U.S. national security strategy.

**GENERAL OBSERVATIONS**

Given the sharp differences separating the alternative schools of thought, there is admittedly a danger in making "general" statements of any kind. Yet a number of broad generalizations do seem possible about the alternative, and competing, strategy perspectives. These can be expressed colloquially as follows:

*What you see depends on where you sit.* As a general statement, what inclines individuals to one or another of the alternative strategies is not so much their differing views on important world developments or on the *fundamental* U.S. national goals and interests. Indeed, there seems to be widespread agreement on the major international trends, as well as on the most fundamental goals Americans share as a nation. The driving force behind the alternative strategic orientations appears to be differences in *general world views* and *philosophical predispositions.* What do we think really matters in international affairs: ideas, institutions, or power? What drives the international system? How do we conceive of the U.S. role in ordering this system, and on what should the U.S. predicate its international efforts? Whether particular actions are seen as being in U.S. interests seems largely to be a function of the answers one's world view provides to these types of unspoken but basic questions.

*The goal is the thing where you catch the conscience of the king.* The different ways in which the underlying general world views are operationalized into broad strategic goals and concrete security objectives constitute a critical source of difference between the alternative strategies. Consider, for example, the following differences. A person from the realist camp (Chapter Two), who regards power as the determining factor in international relations and the primary basis for U.S. international actions, will see the maintenance of U.S. dominance (to the extent feasible) and stable power balances (to the extent dominance is not feasible) as a primary, or grand, strategic objective. A proponent of multilateral security (Chapter Three), however, will accord top strategic priority to averting the potential breakdown of cooperation between the Western industrial democracies and to fostering multilateral approaches to international security. A
democratic internationalist (Chapter Four) will identify the promotion of democracy as the principal grand strategic objective; and an individual who advocates strategic independence, although sharing the realist’s view of power as the determining factor in international relations, will emphasize American independence and avoidance of foreign entanglements while identifying the achievement of U.S. domestic purposes and the minimization of external costs as principal strategic objectives. Each of these broad strategic goals in turn leads to a set of specific national security objectives—ranging from preventing potentially hostile powers from dominating critical regions to terminating U.S. alliance commitments—that vary according to the strategic orientation. These objectives then become important drivers of strategy. They also become important filters through which information about the world is subsequently collected and processed.

At the same time, however, the effect of these differences should not be overstated. In some cases, the differences are more a matter of degree than kind. In others, individuals with different world views may share a given objective (such as the spread of democracy) but accord it varying degrees of emphasis, or apply it differently to different situations. All groups, as noted above, agree on the most fundamental goals of the U.S. as a nation. It is precisely those areas in which there is broad agreement on fundamental U.S. goals and basic security objectives that may provide a basis for developing greater public consensus behind a future U.S. national security strategy. Focusing on goals and objectives is thus critical to strategy development.

The more you’re like yourself the less you’re like others. This observation makes a simple and perhaps somewhat obvious point: the closer one is to a “pure type,” the less common ground one will find with others. A “true believer” in multilateral security, for example, might refuse to sanction any U.S. military action overseas—no matter what stakes were involved—unless the action was part of a multilateral effort. This stance would prevent agreement with a member of the realist perspective, who might prefer multilateral action but see a need to act unilaterally in the case at hand, or with a person who subscribes to democratic internationalism, who might see the promotion of democracy as being at stake unless unilateral action was taken. Similarly, a true believer in democratic internationalism
could stand in the way of agreement on a U.S. strategy with respect to such important countries as China by insisting that the promotion of democracy be placed above all other U.S. security objectives. The more rigid or doctrinaire the philosophical positions are, the more difficult it is to reach consensus.

_You can't always get what you want._ With few exceptions, advocates of the alternative strategies rarely see their philosophical predispositions adopted without modification. For advocates of democratic internationalism, the objective of extending democracy and human rights sometimes takes a back seat to the exigencies of more narrowly defined "security" considerations. For those of the realist school, it is sometimes necessary to acknowledge the transcendence of human rights concerns and to allow U.S. involvement in areas where U.S. interests—as measured in terms of narrow power politics—are judged to be small. And for those who believe in multilateral security, unilateral U.S. action is at times deemed necessary. Most of the proponents of the four views articulated in this report seemed to recognize this reality intuitively and, while clinging to their general world views and predispositions, modified their strategies away from what might be considered pure types.

By the same token, while it would be nice for the purposes of strategy development to have a simple way to bridge the philosophical and other differences between the four strategic orientations, no such device is possible. The differences are too profound. In the absence of some new, overarching threat to U.S. security of the sort once represented by the former Soviet Union, there is no way to resolve or paper over these differences. Nor is there a way to articulate a single integrated strategy with which everyone will agree. Rather, the task is to see if at least a small number of concrete strategy components can be identified with which _most_ Americans would probably concur and around which greater domestic consensus can be reached so as to provide greater coherence and a sense of direction to U.S. security policy.

_It's a small world after all._ If there is a basis for greater consensus on what some of the components of a future U.S. strategy should be, it may be the shared awareness that a U.S. withdrawal from international affairs and return to isolationism is neither desirable nor possible. In a world shrunk by technology, modern means of communi-
cation, and increasingly porous borders, the U.S. does not have the luxury of withdrawing from world affairs. One way or another, it must engage in the push and pull of international politics. Even the proponents of strategic independence, who strongly stress U.S. avoidance of entangling alliances and a jettisoning of the American role as global policeman, acknowledge the importance of economic interdependence, as well as such global problems as terrorism, proliferation, environmental degradation, and renegade states. They allow for U.S. participation in cooperative and ad hoc regional security arrangements to deal with such global issues, including the use of force to ensure U.S. access to the Persian Gulf. This general awareness of the increasingly close link between U.S. security interests and what happens abroad may provide a basis for getting—if not always what the U.S. wants—at least some of what the U.S. needs.

BROAD DIFFERENCES

Having suggested that there may be a basis for at least some commonality, it is important to stress that the fault lines in the debate over U.S. strategy are both numerous and serious. At the broadest level, it is possible to think of these fault lines in terms of three kinds of differences, as summarized in Figure 1.

The first difference, as noted above, has to do with what really matters in international relations, with some individuals stressing the military, economic, or psychological attributes of power while others emphasize universal values or cooperation among like-minded states. A second broad difference has to do with the appropriate role for the U.S. in ordering the international environment. Here, there are important distinctions about the extent to which the U.S. should try to shape the international order, as well as about both the basis and the means for any such effort (e.g., narrow U.S. interests versus shared values, unilateral versus multilateral actions). Third, there is a difference in how multiple and at times competing objectives are prioritized, a key point of disagreement being the priority given to the well-being of other countries and of people outside the U.S.
POLICY ISSUES

Given these basic fault lines, it is not surprising that there is a plethora of crucial differences over specific policy issues. These issues can be grouped analytically into five broad categories.

Category 1: maintaining the international system. The first category has to do with the importance of maintaining the existing international system. This category involves a range of critical issues: How should the U.S. handle NATO and other bilateral alliances now that the Cold War is over? Should the U.S. continue to play the role of global balancer and thus maintain a large military presence overseas? What should the U.S. posture toward the United Nations be, and how much weight should it accord the United Nations in U.S. strategy? How important is it to maintain the current international economic system, including the system of free trade and the role of the G-7 countries?

Figure 2 shows how proponents of the alternative strategies view these issues. As can be seen, of the four alternatives, realism and multilateral security place the most importance on maintaining and
<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th>Realism</th>
<th>Multilateral Security</th>
<th>Democratic Internationalism</th>
<th>Strategic Independence</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td><strong>NATO</strong></td>
<td>Strengthen, expand; very important</td>
<td>Strengthen, expand; very important</td>
<td>Strengthen; somewhat important</td>
<td>Jettison</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Bilateral alliances</strong></td>
<td>Keep; important</td>
<td>Keep; important</td>
<td>Keep; somewhat important</td>
<td>Jettison</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Global balancer</strong></td>
<td>Keep forward presence; very important</td>
<td>Keep forward presence; very important</td>
<td>Keep forward presence but refocus; important</td>
<td>End forward presence; not important</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>United Nations</strong></td>
<td>Keep; somewhat important</td>
<td>Expand; very important</td>
<td>Keep but democratize; not very important</td>
<td>Keep for some issues; not very important</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>International economic system</strong></td>
<td>Strengthen, expand; very important</td>
<td>Strengthen, expand; very important</td>
<td>Expand but use as tool; very important</td>
<td>Keep but do not support militarily; America first</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Figure 2—Strategy Positions on Maintaining the International System

strengthening the existing international security system. Proponents of these two strategies believe that the Soviet Union's disintegration has vastly improved America's physical security and regard the extension of this window of security as a central aim of U.S. grand strategy. Their national security objectives place particularly high importance on strengthening NATO and maintaining the global U.S. role as balancer of last resort, both of which require a continued and robust (if perhaps reduced in the case of Western Europe) U.S. forward presence. But they also seek to maintain the other U.S. bilateral alliances, especially the one with Japan, and to avoid military withdrawals that could prove destabilizing to the Asia-Pacific region.

The proponents of realism and multilateral security also highly value the existing international economic system. Indeed, they believe that preserving this system is critical to the achievement of U.S. domestic economic objectives, which they see as having gained priority
now that there has been a decline in how much attention must be paid to ensuring America’s physical security. For this reason, they want to further strengthen international arrangements for fostering global prosperity by avoiding moves toward protectionism, expanding the coordination of the industrial powers’ economic policies, and creating new economic arrangements that will both prevent asymmetric trade relationships and come as close as possible to establishing an endurable international free market. The multilateral security proponents particularly stress the importance of adhering to and strengthening such international economic institutions as the GATT and expanding the G-7’s role to include more than just economic issues. The advocates of realism are more prepared to accept the current trend toward regional economic blocs as a “suboptimal approximation” of an international free market, as well as assertive measures to avoid the development of asymmetric trade relationships, but their objective is to secure economic arrangements between countries and potential blocs that approximate free trade. One additional difference between these two groups concerns the priority to place on the United Nations. The multilateral security proponents make the United Nations central to their strategy, whereas the realists tend to give relatively greater emphasis to unilateral U.S. activities.

Those who subscribe to democratic internationalism are less oriented toward maintaining the existing international system. They strongly support maintaining the Western alliance structure as a community that shares broadly based international values, and they want to strengthen international economic arrangements that reinforce such shared values. But compared to the realists and the multilateral security proponents, they place greater emphasis on changing the existing international system as needed to facilitate the spread of democracy and protection of human rights. For this reason, they want to see a greater effort to support the newly democratizing countries and to foster change in third world states still living under dictatorial governments. They share with the realists and the multilateral security advocates the objectives of maintaining interdependence and fostering the growth of market-oriented economic systems, but they would use trade and investment more explicitly as tools to punish human rights violators and promote democratic systems. While they support a United Nations strengthened so as to be a more
effective projector of democratic values, they would not make the United Nations a core of U.S. strategy, both because its current "undemocratic" nature makes it unworthy of great U.S. emphasis, and because its emphasis on collective action unnecessarily restricts U.S. latitude and freedom of action in promoting democratic practices.

The group least interested in maintaining the current international system is the strategic independence proponents. They view the requirements for maintaining this system as an unnecessary and insupportable drain on U.S. resources, a diversion from the internal needs of the American people, and an unacceptable constraint on U.S. freedom of action. For these reasons, they would jettison America's postwar alliances and any U.S. role that falls under the heading of global policeman, instead transferring responsibility for regional security to other major powers and encouraging the formation of local power balances. They would also downgrade U.S. participation in any global police activities of the United Nations, although they would keep and even expand the United Nations' role in such areas as world health and environmental issues. Proponents of this strategy believe that the current international economic system benefits all states and are delighted to reap the benefits of such an open system. They are not, however, willing to use military force to support it. Moreover, they believe that some states benefit more from the system than do others, and they want to rectify imbalances harmful to the U.S. through more explicitly America-first (mercantilist, managed trade) economic policies.

**Category 2: maintaining U.S. autonomy and control.** The second category of broad policy issues has to do with maintaining U.S. autonomy and control. This category includes such issues as maintaining America's current status as the world's only superpower, ensuring national control over key assets and technologies, and guaranteeing U.S. autonomy from or dominant influence over international organizations. As Figure 3 shows, on this set of issues, the realism and democratic internationalism strategies are toward opposite ends of the spectrum, with the other two strategies somewhere in between.
<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Sole superpower status</th>
<th>Realism</th>
<th>Multilateral Security</th>
<th>Democratic Internationalism</th>
<th>Strategic Independence</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Expand; very important</td>
<td>Keep; somewhat important</td>
<td>Give up; not very important</td>
<td>Give up; unimportant</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>National control over assets, technologies</td>
<td>Keep; important</td>
<td>Give up; not very important</td>
<td>Give up; not very important</td>
<td>Keep; important</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Autonomy from/ control over international organizations</td>
<td>Keep; important</td>
<td>Give up; not very important</td>
<td>Give up; not very important</td>
<td>Keep; important</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Figure 3—Strategy Positions on U.S. Autonomy

To the realists, maintaining America’s sole superpower status is a critically important security objective. Their emphasis on maintaining a robust military capability, ensuring a vigorous indigenous defense industrial base, and preventing the rise of global challengers (such as Germany and Japan) and potential regional hegemonic powers (such as China, Iran, and Iraq) reflects this high priority. They also want to ensure that the U.S. will have as much control over its national assets as possible, although the practical limitations of full national control somewhat diminish the importance they ascribe to this objective. Similarly, they seek to ensure maximum U.S. control over or autonomy from United Nations types of international organizations, although they are willing to give up some freedom of action to maintain the cohesiveness of NATO and foster greater allied burden sharing.

Democratic internationalists, in contrast, do not consider it important for the U.S. to remain the world’s only superpower. Nor are they concerned about maintaining U.S. autonomy and control as ends in and of themselves. They are willing to relinquish America’s sole superpower status and its control over assets and international organizations to groups and institutions that share common values and
agendas for world order. Although they would give up these powers only gradually and only in step with the development of an international community of this type, they do not view U.S. autonomy as an important national security objective. Indeed, they consider America’s relinquishment of its dominant position an essential requirement for creation of such an international community.

The advocates of multilateral security and strategic independence present a more mixed picture. Like the realists, multilateral security proponents want to keep America’s status as the world’s only superpower, although this goal is less important to them than to the realists because their focus is more on strengthening interdependence than on maximizing U.S. power per se. Unlike the realists, however, they are willing to give up U.S. control both in United Nations types of institutions and over U.S. assets and technologies in order to build truly multilateral processes and organizations. They see a need for some selectivity on such issues as proliferation, but their overall thrust is decidedly internationalist.

The proponents of strategic independence are at the opposite end of the spectrum from the realists on the issue of maintaining America’s status as sole superpower. They see that status as both unimportant and undesirable: unimportant because there is no threat to U.S. supremacy, and undesirable because such efforts divert attention and resources away from domestic problems (which they see as more pressing) and hinder efforts to strengthen America’s international economic competitiveness. Their emphasis on ending America’s postwar role as global policeman, terminating U.S. postwar alliance arrangements, and encouraging local power balances follows from their desire to remove the maintenance of sole superpower status from the list of American national security objectives. They do, however, agree with the realists on the importance of maintaining as much national control over U.S. assets as possible, and they place equal, if not more, importance on ensuring U.S. autonomy from international organizations. As their name implies, their central thrust is toward maximizing U.S. independence.

Category 3: using military force. The third category of issues concerns the use of military force overseas. As Figure 4 indicates, there are sharp differences over when, where, and how the U.S. should intervene militarily. In general, the major fault line appears to put the
<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>When</th>
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<th>Democratic Internationalism</th>
<th>Strategic Independence</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>If security of U.S., oil flow, or critical regions is threatened</td>
<td>If major threats exist to international norms, values</td>
<td>If major threats exist to international norms, values</td>
<td>If security of U.S. or oil flow is threatened</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Where</td>
<td>U.S., U.S. citizens abroad, critical regions</td>
<td>Anywhere major threats exist to international norms, values</td>
<td>Anywhere major threats exist to international norms, values</td>
<td>U.S., U.S. citizens abroad, Persian Gulf</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>How</td>
<td>Unilaterally if necessary but prefer multilaterally; limited use okay</td>
<td>Only multilaterally; limited use okay</td>
<td>Unilaterally if necessary but prefer multilaterally; limited use okay</td>
<td>Unilaterally if necessary but prefer multilaterally; limited use okay</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Figure 4—Strategy Positions on the Use of Force

realists and advocates of strategic independence on one side (although there are important differences between these two groups as well), and the proponents of multilateral security and democratic internationalism on the other.

Not surprisingly, strategic independence advocates have the most restrictive orientation. They sanction the use of military forces abroad only if the physical security of the U.S. is threatened (which as a practical matter means only in the Persian Gulf, given the current U.S. dependence on imported oil) and in defense of U.S. citizens. Realists are more expansive: in addition to these circumstances, they allow the use of force in such critical regions as Western Europe, Japan, or the Middle East if instability threatens important U.S. interests. But both groups share a generally restrictive orientation in that they are reluctant to use force unless important U.S. interests are clearly threatened. They also share a willingness to use force unilaterally if necessary to protect these interests, although both would prefer that any required use of force be multilateral.
Advocates of the other two strategies are less restrictive. They sanction the use of force whenever and wherever major threats to international norms or violations of human rights exist. Both groups recognize, of course, that any military intervention must be consonant with U.S. priorities, as well as that intervention cannot be based solely on a desire to foster multilateral institutions or international values. But they see a close connection between these priorities and values and are willing to use force to see their perpetuation. The principal difference between the two groups has to do with the question of means: whereas advocates of multilateral security insist that any use of U.S. forces abroad should be as part of a multilateral effort, democratic internationalists allow the unilateral use of force in particularly egregious situations.

Interestingly, none of the four strategies holds that any use of U.S. force must be decisive in nature. All sanction the limited use of force to achieve limited objectives.

Category 4: renewing the U.S. economy. The fourth category of issues on which there are major differences concerns the relationship between U.S. economic and political-military interests. All four strategies agree that the U.S. cannot accomplish its external goals without a strong domestic economy, and all four assign a high priority to improving American economic performance. They differ, however, over how such a priority should affect U.S. external economic policies and what the relationship should be between domestic economic management and broader international stability.

As Figure 5 indicates, strategic independence is somewhat of an outlier in this area. Proponents of the other three strategies see a close relationship between U.S. external economic policy and U.S. strategic interests. Believing that the U.S. cannot foster international stability and maintain close alliance relationships while using adversarial trade practices, they advocate maintaining a U.S. trade policy that is as close to free as is politically possible. They also want to extend free market economic systems overseas, believing there to be a close relationship between market-oriented systems, economic prosperity, and political stability. At the same time, these proponents all see a
close relationship between domestic economic management and broader international stability, and they support extensive coordination of the major powers' economic policies. The similar link perceived between international stability and *domestic* U.S. prosperity reinforces the importance of a generally free trade orientation.

The principal area of divergence for these three strategies is the relationship between economic policies and the extension of democracy. Although all three regard the promotion of market economies abroad as conducive to the spread of democratic values and institutions, the democratic internationalists are the most disposed to link economic benefits explicitly with progress toward democracy. The lesson they draw from the experience with detente in the 1970s and 1980s is that the U.S. propped up corrupt systems for too long. Their economic policy would thus be two sided: free trade within the Western, democratic group, and the use of trade as a tool or weapon to foster democratic practices in the rest of the (nondemocratic) world. The realists agree that trade should be used as a weapon in certain cases, but they assign this approach a much lower priority, particularly in the case of countries deemed important to U.S. strategic interests, such as China.
The multilateral security advocates are between the democratic internationalists and the realists, but are generally closer to the former. The connection between expanding democratic values and expanding the "club" of nations into a viable multilateral security system makes them more willing than the realists to use trade as a tool for fostering democratic practices.

The outlying group, the advocates of strategic independence, want the U.S. to adopt a managed trade and in some cases an explicitly neo-mercantilist orientation. Believing that the Cold War and the international system of free trade have disadvantaged the U.S. vis-à-vis its principal economic competitors, they urge an economic strategy predicated more explicitly on American economic interests. They also believe that the effects of the international situation on the U.S. economy do not necessitate U.S. actions in support of the international system. They deny any connection between the management of the domestic U.S. economy and international prosperity, urging instead an essentially go-it-alone, quasi-autarkic approach for managing U.S. economic affairs.

*Category 5: extending democracy.* All four strategies regard the spread of democratic practices and universal values abroad as beneficial to U.S. interests. They disagree strongly, however, on the priority that should be assigned to this objective, the principal geographic areas at which it should be aimed, and the primary means for its achievement.

Figure 6 summarizes the strategy positions on this issue. As is evident, the advocates of democratic internationalism and strategic independence bound the debate. The first group, believing that the U.S. can achieve its fundamental goals only by creating a world of like-minded communities, would make the promotion of democratic systems, values, and practices its central strategic objective and first priority. This group seeks to achieve its objective on a global basis, moreover, and with whatever means are needed, including military force. The second group, in contrast, is very skeptical of democracy's ability to protect U.S. interests and rejects the promotion of democracy as a goal of foreign policy. Believing that an effort to foster democracy abroad will only expose the U.S. to more dangers than the effort could repel, this group stresses fatalism over idealism.
and thinks that the U.S. should accept other nations for what they are rather than try to change them.

The proponents of multilateral security are close to the democratic internationalists. They accept the proposition that the well-being of others is and should be treated as a fundamental U.S. goal, both because of the reality of global interdependence and as a practical prerequisite for establishing the international norms of behavior that underpin international institutional cooperation. With their focus on developing multilateral approaches to problem solving, they give priority to underwriting democracy and reform in the former Soviet empire and to expanding the European club of nations to Japan, South Korea, and other non-Western democracies. They diverge from the democratic internationalists primarily in the degree to which they emphasize the global extension of democracy and the means by which they want to foster international human rights.

As for the realists, they are closer to the advocates of strategic independence. They agree that the U.S. should support foreign democ-
racies and hope that they prosper. But other than in the developed states that are crucial to the global balance of power, they regard the spread of democracy as only distantly connected to America’s security and health. For this reason, they focus on America’s physical and material security—the “life” and “pursuit of happiness” components in Thomas Jefferson’s formulation—and relegate the spread of democracy and human rights (the “liberty” component) to a decidedly secondary position in their strategy.

COUNTRY-SPECIFIC ISSUES

Given the complex mix of views and objectives associated with the five broad categories of issues described above, it should come as no surprise that the advocates of the alternative strategies take different positions on a range of important country-specific issues. Figure 7 highlights these positions, summarizing how each strategy would deal with four currently pressing international concerns: Russia, potential global powers such as Germany and Japan, rising regional powers such as China, and the situation in the former Yugoslavia. The figure also indicates the relative priority proponents of each strategy would assign to the various countries.¹

On policies toward Russia, Germany, and Japan, there is broad consensus among all of the strategy groups except the one advocating strategic independence. Each of the three in agreement places a high U.S. priority (albeit for somewhat different reasons) on the effort to prevent the process of reform in the former Soviet Union from failing, and seeks to foster multilateral efforts to prevent developments that might abort this process. Each also places a high priority on enmeshing Germany and Japan in an institutional framework of other democratic states and expanding their role in multilateral political, economic, and security organizations. The challenge for each strategy is to achieve these objectives in a U.S. environment in which internal and external resources are constrained and an increased priority must be placed on improving U.S. economic and material well-being.

¹These positions were drawn in part from Chapters Two through Five and in part from a questionnaire circulated to the strategy teams as part of the exercise.
The advocates of strategic independence, in contrast, consider any attempt to affect the course of events in the former Soviet Union as being beyond America’s ability and a needless waste of U.S. resources. They would leave the Russians to work out their own fate, while hedging against the re-creation of Russian power and menace. The differences between this strategy and the others are even more acute in the case of Germany and Japan. Far from further enmeshing these states in a broader security framework, advocates of strategic independence would terminate the postwar alliance arrangements and actively devolve national and regional security responsibilities to the two powers themselves. As noted earlier, they would also pursue a more explicitly America-first set of economic policies vis-à-vis these two competitors, without regard for other, so-called security interests.
On the question of China, the fault line appears to lie between pragmatism and idealism. The realism and strategic independence advocates would downgrade human rights considerations, stressing instead the need to maintain normal relations and to approach China in terms of its potential role in the global balance of power. The multilateral security and democratic internationalism proponents, however, would limit ties with the Beijing regime and actively seek to foster democratization. The democratic internationalists give policies aimed at China a particularly high priority, partly because of China's potential role as the leader of an antidemocratic bloc of nations and partly because of the challenge that a repressive, undemocratic, but economically dynamic China poses to their core philosophy.

A similar divide exists for the situation in the former Yugoslavia. The proponents of multilateral security and democratic internationalism ascribe high priority to the evolution of events (reflected in their willingness to use military force to affect the outcome), whereas the proponents of the other two strategies seek to avoid U.S. involvement, the realists varying only in that they approve of involvement when specific important U.S. objectives can be accomplished at minimal cost in U.S. lives and resources.

COMMONALITIES

The kinds of differences and policy divisions described above will almost surely dominate the public debate in the U.S. for some time to come, and will have to be ameliorated before any U.S. national strategy can be formulated. In the meantime, holding pattern strategies may be the order of the day. In focusing on the differences, however, some important commonalities should not be overlooked. There appear to be at least three broad points of agreement that may provide a point of departure.

First, the advocates of all four strategies agree that Americans are living in a chaotic and perhaps even anarchic world whose effects are increasingly felt in the U.S., and they accept the need for continued U.S. engagement in world affairs. Even the proponents of strategic independence see a need for some U.S. involvement, albeit in a nonentangling, ad hoc, and circumscribed manner. The proponents of the other three strategies all see an increasingly close link between
what happens overseas and America's well-being, and they believe an active U.S. role in world affairs is essential to achieving America's fundamental goals and national security objectives. A truly isolationist strategy of the pre-World War II variety is simply no longer possible, nor would it serve as a basis for an American national consensus.

Second, there is general agreement on what might be called a core set of security concerns: ensuring the continued physical security of the U.S. and its citizens; preventing the emergence of hostile great powers, particularly the ones whose values are at variance with those of the U.S. and that might become global or major regional rivals; impeding the spread of weapons of mass destruction, especially nuclear weapons, to potentially hostile powers, as well as the spread of delivery systems that could threaten the U.S.; and addressing the problem of America's energy dependence. Proponents of the alternative strategies identify different ways to address these core concerns, but they all agree that any national security strategy must address them.

Third, and finally, there is broad agreement on the increased salience of economics in general and U.S. domestic economic difficulties in particular. The proponents of all four strategies regard American economic strength as the foundation for any national security strategy. They see both a need and an opportunity to devote greater resources to U.S. economic renewal by placing greater emphasis on internal measures: reducing the national debt, improving decaying infrastructure, strengthening inadequate schools and training facilities, and promoting private sector activities to improve American international economic competitiveness. The question is no longer whether the U.S. should place greater priority on such problems of economic renewal, but how it can best ameliorate these problems while simultaneously pursuing other important U.S. strategic objectives.

TOWARD A GREATER CONSENSUS?

Given these broad commonalities, it may be possible to identify a number of strategy components with which most Americans—although surely not all—can agree and upon which greater public consensus may be generated. These components revolve around the
three commonalities identified above: continued U.S. engagement, a core set of security concerns, and U.S. economic revitalization.

**Continued U.S. engagement: a redefined U.S. role.** One strategy component, a redefined U.S. role in world affairs, emanates from today's chaotic international conditions, the growing effect of global developments on U.S. interests, and the reality of increased competition in the U.S. for scarce resources. Such a role would recognize that *pax Americana* is dead, as is America's willingness to *unilaterally* bear the full burden of global security. But it would also be predicated on the need for continued American engagement and active U.S. leadership—based on shared interest and comparative advantage—in shaping the future security environment. This component would seek to exploit three powerful international factors: the demise of America's global rival and the resulting opportunity to devote greater attention to domestic difficulties, the rise of new powers able to both positively and negatively affect important U.S. interests, and the driving force of international trade and investment. In addition, it would explicitly seek to position the U.S. as the nucleus of a new coalition of powers willing to share responsibilities in pursuit of common interests.

As with all strategy components, the devil is in the details. The more such a redefined role is spelled out, the greater the divisions will be among American voters. But a U.S. strategy *not* predicated explicitly on the principles of U.S. global engagement, active leadership, and greater *collective* security efforts will meet neither the demands of the times nor the requirements for establishing greater domestic policy consensus.

**Core security concerns: a reformulation of U.S. requirements.** The second strategy component is a reformulation of U.S. military requirements. This reformulation should allow the U.S. to maintain a military capability sufficient to credibly support America's intention to remain actively engaged on a collaborative and comparative-advantage basis. A continued forward deployment of U.S. troops, albeit at somewhat reduced levels, would be required, as would a demonstrated ability to rapidly deploy forces from the U.S. At the same time, U.S. military requirements would be focused on meeting core U.S. security interests. As reflected in the commonalities shared by
the alternative strategies, these core interests might be stated as follows:

- Protect the physical security of the U.S. and of U.S. citizens abroad.
- Prevent the use or threatened use of nuclear weapons against the U.S. or its allies.
- Exploit emerging technologies to maintain U.S. military superiority and to reduce costs.
- Ensure U.S. access to oil so long as the U.S. remains dependent on imports for its energy requirements.
- Create the nucleus for potential multinational coalitions.
- Ensure that the U.S. has the ability to act unilaterally if necessary to protect critical U.S. interests.

Translating these needs and concerns into specific defense budget figures and military force structures is one of the central challenges for the administration. But it is a challenge that must be faced if domestic support is to be generated for a future U.S. security strategy.

**U.S. economic renewal: a greater link between U.S. objectives.** The third strategy component is greater linkage between U.S. foreign policy goals and domestic, especially economic, objectives. In the current environment, rebuilding America’s physical infrastructure and improving America’s economic competitiveness have become priority requirements. Any U.S. security strategy must give these requirements greater emphasis, both as appropriate ends in their own right—if for no other reason than that military strength cannot be maintained on a weak economic foundation—and as a way to support continued U.S. global engagement. U.S. friends and allies must come to understand the close link between America’s domestic performance and continued U.S. international engagement. By the same token, the equally close link between foreign trade, investment, and both global growth and domestic U.S. prosperity needs to be factored more explicitly into U.S. strategy. So, too, does the connection between global growth and the spread of democratic values and practices. The task of establishing such links through hardheaded plans that both safeguard American assets and allow the U.S. to
progress toward meeting other important U.S. security objectives will be critical for future U.S. strategy.

Figure 8 illustrates these three potential strategy components and their interactions. It is important to stress that these components do not in themselves amount to a strategy. They do not address a range of important issues crucial to future U.S. strategy, such as how to handle nuclear proliferation, decrease American dependence on imported resources, and exploit existing U.S. political advantages in the new global environment. Neither do they begin to suggest how priorities should be established among competing objectives and how resources should be allocated. But they do identify potential starting points for framing public discussion. They might also foster a greater sense of cohesion in U.S. security policies and help to create a foundation for eliciting broader public support for a future U.S. national security strategy.

![Diagram](image)

Figure 8—Strategy Components: Potential Starting Points for a New Strategy

**CODA: SOME POLICY CHALLENGES**

Whatever the utility of these commonalities and strategy components in fostering greater domestic consensus, it is certain that the task of building a new U.S. national security strategy will be with us
for some time to come. In moving forward with this task, the administration will face at least three overarching challenges.

The first challenge will be to communicate a greater sense of purpose to American power. Based on the views expressed in this exploration of alternative strategies, it would seem that most Americans (although not all, as suggested in Chapter Five) are pleased that the fundamental judgments and policies of their leaders for over four decades turned out to be sound, and that their national struggle against communist expansion was largely successful. They are proud of their country’s military prowess, as demonstrated in the war in the Persian Gulf, and are pleased with America’s status as the world’s only true superpower. But few seek power for power’s sake alone. They regard power not as an end in itself, but as a means for achieving their truly fundamental goals—“life, liberty, and the pursuit of happiness,” in Thomas Jefferson’s formulation—as a nation. With the Soviet Union’s collapse and the end of the Cold War, they will be looking for a new vision of America’s role in the world and a compass by which to chart the relationship between America’s fundamental goals and its international actions. They will also be seeking guidelines for structuring and evaluating America’s overseas performance. Giving greater emphasis to the domestic U.S. economy and the creation of American jobs is both strategically and politically necessary. But it is not likely to be sufficient in and of itself for generating either policy consensus or a sense of direction.

The second challenge will be to foster a greater basis for collective action, without confusing collegiality and consultations for U.S. leadership. The world has clearly entered a new era, and U.S. leadership will have to change in this new era, as all four of the strategies at least implicitly recognize. The realities of world power relationships and the exigencies of U.S. domestic priorities make the kind of dominance the U.S. exercised in the past both unsustainable and undesirable in the 1990s. At the same time, however, active U.S. leadership will remain essential, if for no other reason than that the U.S. is the only country with both truly global interests and the ability to act politically, economically, and militarily on a global basis. The U.S. is blessed with strong and dynamic friends that largely share American interests and have the potential to become critical extenders of U.S. policy. They also have the potential to become important long-term U.S. rivals. The task will be to expand U.S. coopera-
tion and collaboration with these countries in ways that maximize their respective contributions while maintaining U.S. global engagement and leadership. The forging of links that give free rein to the powerful forces of international trade and investment will underpin this effort, as will substituting integration for containment as the object of U.S. strategy. The successful functioning of the international system and the achievement of U.S. national interests in a fluid and uncertain period are likely to hinge critically on how well these tasks are managed.

The third overarching challenge will be to move away from the current, understandable focus on conflict resolution to a greater emphasis on conflict prevention. The way in which the Soviet Union’s collapse and the end of the Cold War have stimulated ethnic and other conflict has been widely noted. Somewhat less noted has been the way in which these events have altered the role and diminished the utility of deterrence. The U.S. needs to be able to defuse centrifugal forces and to address nationalist and other aspirations before they develop into full-fledged conflict. As suggested by most of the strategy advocates, the relationship between open markets—from which everyone prospers—and stability deserves greater attention. So, too, does the link between the spread of democratic values, institutions, and practices and both global peace and prosperity. Little progress is likely to be made on either front until there is a better understanding of why conflicts begin and how they are terminated. And the task of factoring such an understanding into national strategy brings with it a range of conceptual and operational challenges, as well as opportunities, for the U.S. analytical and policy communities.

All of these challenges are easier to state than meet. But the achievement of America’s fundamental goals and security objectives may ultimately hinge on how successfully they are handled.