Preface

Sean M. Lynn-Jones

In the preface to the first edition of *America's Strategic Choices* I wrote that "the United States has not found a new set of guiding principles to replace containment. As the millennium approaches, the United States continues to debate its post-Cold War grand strategy and foreign policy." That debate has continued in the three years since the first edition of this book was published, but the United States seems no closer to a consensus on its role in the world. We hope that this revised edition can contribute to the ongoing debate by focusing analysis on the main strategic options that the United States faces.

When the Cold War ended and the Soviet Union disintegrated in 1991, the United States found itself in a new strategic situation. The demise of the Soviet threat left the United States unchallenged as the world's only superpower. Containment, the grand strategy that Washington had followed since the late 1940s, could no longer serve as a guide for American policy. The United States therefore began to consider its new strategic options in a radically different strategic environment.

The central strategic questions confronting the United States remain the same: What are the principal threats to American interests? How can those interests best be defended? What combination of economic, diplomatic, and military instruments should be used to protect and advance U.S. interests? These are the enduring questions of U.S. strategy, even if they are often obscured by political rhetoric and heated debate over particular military policies and weapons programs.

In the 1990s, America's strategy often seemed hesitant and uncertain. The Clinton administration struggled with the problem of how to manage U.S. relations with other major powers in the post-Cold War world. While attempting to build a new cooperative relationship with Russia, the United States worked to enlarge NATO, provoking Moscow's opposition. Washington oscillated between policies of engagement and containment toward Beijing, as U.S. policymakers debated the implications of China's growing power.[1] In addition, the criteria for when U.S. forces should intervene in internal and regional conflicts remained unclear. The United States sent troops to Somalia to end a famine and civil war, then withdrew them after suffering casualties. It eventually intervened in Bosnia to impose peace, but did not commit forces to prevent

1. For analyses of the implications of China's increasing power and changing international role, see Michael E. Brown, Owen R. Coté, Jr., Sean M. Lynn-Jones, and Steven E. Miller, eds., *The Rise of China* (Cambridge, Mass.: The MIT Press, 2000).

genocide and a refugee crisis in Rwanda. The United States and its NATO allies bombed Yugoslavia and committed ground forces to protect ethnic Albanians in Kosovo, but a few months later hesitated to provide peacekeeping forces to prevent violence in East Timor. These events have stimulated continuing debate over the purposes of U.S. power.

Since 1991, many commentators, experts, and policymakers have attempted to understand the changing security environment facing the United States. There has been no shortage of new visions and paradigms for understanding world politics. Some observers have argued that the world will soon see war become obsolete, while others claim that there will be an explosion of internal violence in many countries. Some have called for devoting more attention to problems of environmental degradation, while others say that the traditional issues of military strategy and statecraft deserve priority. Predictions of the future of international politics include visions of the end of history, a return to unstable multipolar politics, and clashes between competing civilizations.

Forecasts of the changing security environment do not agree on which specific threats to the United States and American interests are the most dangerous. Some have argued that the greatest threat to U.S. interests is chaos and instability throughout the world. The turmoil in the former Yugoslavia, internal conflicts in Africa and the former Soviet Union, and the disturbing return of genocide all exemplify this apparent pattern of upheaval. Others have argued that the next threat to U.S. interests will come from a more traditional source: the rise of a hostile great power. In the early 1990s, Japan appeared to be the most likely candidate to become America's leading rival. Several writers predicted war between the United States and Japan, whereas others emphasized the threat from Japan's dynamic economy.[2] When Japan's economy slowed in the mid–1990s, China loomed larger as the most likely future adversary for the United States.[3] The debate over U.S. grand strategy is unlikely to be resolved until there is more agreement on the threats facing the United States.

The essays collected in this volume consider America's strategic choices. This revised edition has been reorganized so that the essays focus on four prominent recommendations for U.S. grand strategy and military policy: restraint, selective engagement, cooperative security, and primacy. In addition to offering arguments for each of these four strategies, the contributors present analyses

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2. See George Friedman and Meredith LeBard, *The Coming War with Japan* (New York: St. Martin's, 1990).
3. See Richard Bernstein and Ross H. Munro, *The Coming Conflict with China* (New York: Knopf, 1997).

of the contemporary security environment and the potential threats to U.S. interests. The revised edition also has been updated to include more recent essays that make the case for some of the proposed strategies.

In "Competing Visions for U.S. Grand Strategy," Barry Posen and Andrew Ross offer an overview and critical analysis of the strategic options that the United States faces. Posen and Ross explicate the four alternative grand strategies considered in this volume: (1) neo-isolationism (which we label "restraint"—see p. xv); (2) selective engagement; (3) cooperative security; and (4) primacy. They analyze the strengths and weaknesses of each.

Neo-isolationism argues that no country can threaten the sovereignty and territorial integrity of the United States. Proponents of this strategy contend that the United States is extraordinarily secure, because it is powerful, surrounded by oceans, and in possession of a nuclear force that could devastate any potential attacker. Potential competitors are much weaker than the United States and are likely to balance one another's power. Because it is so secure, the United States should stay out of foreign conflicts. It should not use its political and military power to impose world order, to spread democracy, or to advance U.S. economic interests. Neo-isolationism calls for an end to U.S. participation in NATO and other alliances and recommends a dramatic reduction in U.S. conventional military capabilities.

Posen and Ross argue that a neo-isolationist grand strategy would not serve U.S. interests. Disengagement from the world is likely to make the United States less secure, because without U.S. military protection other states would compete more aggressively for security. Potential regional hegemons would be emboldened. Former U.S. allies would acquire larger military arsenals, triggering arms competitions and possibly nuclear proliferation. The probability of war would increase, as would the likelihood that the United States would be forced to intervene militarily to respond to threats to its security. Although the United States would be able to cut its defense budget, these savings would come at the price of losing much of its international influence.

Selective engagement calls for using U.S. military power to prevent wars among the world's great powers, including Russia, China, Japan, and Germany. It also attempts to stop the spread of nuclear weapons to states that might threaten the United States: Iran, Iraq, and North Korea, in particular. Selective engagement would focus U.S. attention on Europe, East Asia, and the Middle East/Southwest Asia, because these are the regions where great powers may come into conflict and where the natural and industrial resources that might fuel a bid for hegemony are found. The United States should not rule out

interventions in other regions for humanitarian or other purposes, but such operations should be undertaken only when they impose low U.S. costs and casualties.

Posen and Ross point out that selective engagement has several flaws. Lacking an idealistic vision, it may not win public support in the United States. It also would require the United States to ignore conflicts and humanitarian disasters that did not threaten its core interest in maintaining great—power peace. The strategy also is ambiguous on which conflicts require U.S. action and which do not; thus it might not be very selective in practice. Finally, it has difficulty answering the neo-isolationist claim that the best way for the United States to avoid wars is to stay out of international conflicts.

Cooperative security rests on classic liberal internationalist premises. It assumes that peace is indivisible, because wars are likely to spread, and that the United States as an overriding interest in preserving global peace. The strategy would be implemented though international institutions with the assistance of other democracies. Institutions would coordinate military actions against "rogue" aggressor states, create and maintain arms control and confidence—building regimes, and prevent nuclear proliferation.

Posen and Ross note that cooperative security has several shortcomings. It assumes that the world's major powers will stop acting in their narrow self-interest and instead uphold global, collective interests. Multilateral institutions might have to fight many wars to establish their credibility. Democracies, in particular, will have trouble convincing their citizens to risk their lives in distant battles. Finally, cooperative security places more faith in arms control than is warranted by the historical record.

Primacy argues that the United States should maintain a preponderance of world power. The strategy aims to prevent the rise of any great powers that could compete with the United States. Its proponents argue that the rest of the world will accept American leadership because most other countries know that U.S. hegemony will be benign. Under the strategy of primacy, the United States would maintain a large overseas military presence to prevent the rise of regional or global hegemons. In particular, U.S. political and military power would be ready to contain Russia, China, or both.

Primacy, according to Posen and Ross, is problematic, because it is unsustainable and ultimately self-defeating. Other countries will acquire the power to challenge American preponderance. U.S. attempts to achieve primacy will spur others to balance against it. If the United States relies on its own power and shuns multilateral policies, it may find itself isolated when it confronts challenges from rising powers.

Posen and Ross compare the apparent grand strategy of the Clinton administration to the four basic options and find that it contains elements of several. The Clinton administration appears to have hoped to follow a strategy of cooperative security, but the difficulties in pursuing such a strategy have led it to embrace elements of selective engagement and primacy. The administration's most complete exposition of its grand strategy, A National Security Strategy of Engagement and Enlargement,[4] proclaims the need for U.S. participation in multilateral peace operations, but also places limits on U.S. involvement. The document also calls for U.S. leadership and the strengthening of U.S. military capabilities. Posen and Ross thus characterize the Clinton administration's grand strategy as "Selective (but Cooperative) Primacy."

Looking forward, Posen and Ross argue that the United States may not be able to sustain a policy that now contains many elements of a strategy of primacy. Domestic budgetary pressures and insular public opinion may combine with an erosion of America's relative power to render such a strategy impossible. U.S. involvement in a bloody and unpopular war also might provoke the American public to embrace neo-isolationism.

Posen and Ross conclude that the United States ultimately will be forced to make an explicit choice between strategies, because each generates a different U.S. force structure and policy implications. Military forces configured for multilateral peacekeeping/cooperative security missions, for example, may not be effective instruments for maintaining U.S. primacy. It may take a crisis to force America's leaders to make such a choice.

The essay by Posen and Ross sets the stage for a more detailed analysis of each of America's four strategic choices. The remaining essays in this volume present arguments for these four choices: restraint, selective engagement, cooperative security, and primacy.

The next two essays in this volume offer alternative strategies of restraint. Because "isolationism" has become a politically charged word that many regard as an epithet, we prefer to use the term "restraint" to describe these proposed strategies. In "Come Home America: The Strategy of Restraint in the Face of Temptation," Eugene Gholz, Daryl Press, and Harvey Sapolsky make the case for strategic entrenchment. They argue for military withdrawal from most of America's overseas commitments, while calling for continued U.S. economic engagement with the rest of the world and rejecting the protection-

4. The Clinton administration has issued several versions of this document. The most recent available as this volume goes to press, *A National Security Strategy for a New Century,* is included in this book.

ism of earlier forms of isolationism. In their view, the end of the Cold War has made it possible for the United States to exercise restraint internationally and to focus its energies on domestic problems.

Gholz, Press, and Sapolsky argue that the United States faces no threats to its physical security. It is surrounded by oceans and friendly countries. Its military forces are the largest and most powerful in the world. No potential adversary has the power to conquer Eurasia and then use its industrial and natural resources against the United States. With the exception of a hostile military takeover of the Persian Gulf's oil reserves, other countries cannot threaten America's peace and prosperity.

In these circumstances, the principal threat to U.S. national interests is the danger that the United States will overspend on defense and intervene needlessly in international conflicts. The authors recommend that the United States devote no more than $120 billion to defense spending—approximately half the 1997 level. U.S. restraint would encourage America's allies to accept responsibility for providing their own security and managing their own problems. It would also force them to pay for their own defense, thereby releasing U.S. resources for domestic investments.

Gholz, Press, and Sapolsky recommend that the United States withdraw its forces from Europe and dismantle NATO, leaving the European powers to defend themselves against any threat from a resurgent Russia. The United States also should bring home and demobilize the 100,000 U.S. military personnel in East Asia, and end its military commitments in that region. Like the European members of NATO, U.S. allies in East Asia have the economic capabilities to defend themselves. South Korea, for example, has twice the population and twenty times the economic output of North Korea. In the Middle East, however, the United States should maintain some forces to protect the region's oil reserves, but not to defend Israel, which can look after itself.

Gholz, Press, and Sapolsky recognize that their proposals will provoke many objections, including claims that U.S. disengagement will increase the risk of war, deny America the advantages of primacy, accelerate nuclear proliferation, stop the spread of American values, end economic openness, and fail to prevent the inevitable U.S. involvement in major wars. They offer rebuttals of each of these counterarguments, emphasizing that no country threatens U.S. security, great power wars are unlikely, the costs of a large overseas military presence are high, and a more activist U.S. security posture would provoke other countries to resent and resist the United States.

Gholz, Press, and Sapolsky believe that a U.S. policy of restraint would have to be abandoned only if three conditions are met: the rise of a major regional

power with offensive capabilities, the possibility that an aggressor state could consolidate much of the world's industrial might under its control, and the emergence of an aggressor that could somehow neutralize the nuclear capabilities of the existing major powers. The conditions are unlikely to emerge, so restraint is likely to be the best course for the United States for many years.

Christopher Layne's "From Preponderance to Offshore Balancing: America's Future" argues that the United States has yet to make the strategic changes required by the end of the Cold War. U.S. grand strategy continues to seek American preponderance, but this aspiration will not be tenable as new great powers rise. The strategy of preponderance will soon become too risky and too costly. Layne thus calls for a shift to a strategy of offshore balancing that would minimize the risks of U.S. involvement in war. This strategy would entail U.S. disengagement from alliance commitments in Europe and East Asia. It would avoid the risks of the strategy of preponderance, while preserving U.S power.

Layne regards offshore balancing as a balance of power strategy, not a form of what Posen and Ross call neo-isolationism. In their contribution to this volume (p. 8, notes 7 and 9), Posen and Ross concur that Layne's proposed strategy differs from neo-isolationism. The essence of the strategy of offshore balancing is, nevertheless, restraint and retrenchment.

Layne contends that the United States has pursued a strategy of preponderance since the late 1940s. This strategy has attempted to create and maintain a U.S.-led world order based on preeminent U.S. power and international economic interdependence, which U.S. leaders regarded as a condition for peace. Extended deterrence has been the principal instrument for responding to threats to instability. The United States sought preponderance even before the Soviet Union emerged as the leading threat. Since the end of the Cold War, the United States has continued to pursue preponderance by maintaining military protectorates in Europe and East Asia—security guarantees that prevent Germany and Japan from renationalizing their foreign and military policies and ensure that they will not challenge U.S. leadership. These policies are still justified by supporters of preponderance on the grounds that they preserve stability and economic interdependence.

Preponderance is supported by theoretical arguments made by offensive and defensive realists. Offensive realists argue that U.S. hegemony is the best way to preserve peace in a competitive and unstable international system. Defensive realists argue that U.S. hegemony does not threaten other states, and therefore will be welcomed by the rest of the world. Proponents of preponderance argue that only American hegemony can prevent the instability that might emerge in a bipolar or multipolar international system.

Layne argues that the strategy of preponderance is dangerous and wasteful. The strategy will lead to strategic overextension, because U.S. efforts to preserve stability through a policy of extended deterrence will require the United States to take on additional security commitments to preserve the credibility of its commitments to defend its allies and their interests. The initial U.S. involvement in Indochina between 1948 and 1954 and its 1990s intervention in Bosnia are just two examples of this creeping overextension.

The pursuit of preponderance also will cause the United States to exaggerate threats. Attempts to maintain global stability lead the United States to intervene in places without strategic value. These interventions then must be justified by inflating the threat to the United States.

Preponderance also relies too heavily on extended deterrence. Because proponents of the strategy believe that the spread of nuclear weapons threatens the United States, preponderance requires that the United States prevent nuclear proliferation by extending its deterrent umbrella over potential nuclear nations. But extended deterrence is likely to fail in a complex and conflict-ridden world that is no longer neatly demarcated the way the bipolar world of the Cold War was.

Layne argues that the strategy of preponderance has contributed to the relative decline of U.S. power and will continue to do so. The United States has paid a high price for its strategic policies: budget deficits, stagnant real incomes, and social decay. Domestic factors are partly responsible for some of these problems, but it would be easier to address all of them if the United States devoted more of its resources to domestic problems and spent less on its international commitments.

Layne calls for the United States to abandon preponderance and to adopt a strategy of offshore balancing instead. This strategy would define U.S. interests more narrowly: the United States would defend its territorial integrity and prevent the rise of a Eurasian hegemon. It would withdraw its forces from Europe, Japan, and South Korea. The United States also would cease exporting democracy and participating in peacekeeping operations and humanitarian interventions. This strategy would require defense budgets of 2–2.5 percent of U.S. GNP.

Offshore balancing is supported by elements of realist theories of international relations. The strategy assumes that states tend to balance against powerful states and that it is impossible for any one state to maintain a hegemonic position for long. It is therefore a realist, counterhegemonic strategy that aims to avoid anti-U.S. geopolitical backlash likely to result from America's pursuit of primacy. Offshore balancing also recognizes that economic interdependence

is limited and that the United States can afford to pursue an insular grand strategy. The strategy is particularly appealing to the United States, because geography protects the country from attack; the United States can capitalize on its geographic advantages to maximize its relative power in the emerging multipolar post–Cold War international system. Even the rise of a Eurasian hegemon might not threaten the United States, but a strategy of offshore balancing would attempt to prevent this outcome because technological changes might make such a power shift threatening.

Layne responds to two potential criticisms of the strategy of offshore balancing. First, he argues that it is not true that the United States must remain in Europe because it inevitably will be drawn into European wars. The United States has fought in some European wars, but it has avoided many others. Second, Layne denies that the benefits of preponderance outweigh the costs. Although the United States and its allies ultimately won the Cold War, the economic and social costs were high. The United States will have to pay even higher costs in the future. It is far from self-evident that preponderance is profitable.

In "Geopolitics Updated: The Strategy of Selective Engagement," Robert Art presents a detailed case for selective engagement. The distinguishing features of selective engagement, according to Art, are that it steers a middle course between isolationism and global interventionism, pursues liberal goals such as democracy as well as realist ones such as security, accepts that military force is a useful instrument of statecraft, relies on preventive action, retains core U.S. alliances and troop deployments in Europe, the Middle East, and East Asia, and assumes that U.S. leadership is essential.

Art argues that the United States has six national interests: (1) preventing an attack—particularly one involving nuclear, biological, or chemical (NBC) weapons—on the U.S. homeland; (2) preventing wars and destructive security competitions among the major Eurasian powers; (3) maintaining secure oil supplies at stable prices; (4) preserving an open international economy; (5) promoting democracy and human rights; and (6) protecting the global environment from ozone depletion and global warming. The first three are vital interests that are central to U.S. physical security and prosperity. The second three are desirable interests; realizing them makes the international environment more congenial to the United States.

The strategy of selective engagement employs U.S. military power to help the United States to realize its three vital interests, in the following ways. First, U.S. military power can reduce the likelihood of NBC attacks on the United States by preventing or slowing the spread of such weapons. Any NBC attack

on the United States is unlikely, but terrorists or rogue states are more likely to launch such an attack than are "normal" states. The key to reducing the danger of NBC attacks is to forestall the spread of NBC weapons and to maintain the global norm against proliferation. The U.S. nuclear umbrella over Japan and Germany and the presence of U.S. forces in each make it highly unlikely that those states—and their neighbors—will seek nuclear weapons. U.S. military forces should be prepared to take preventive or preemptive action against rogue states or terrorists who are attempting to acquire or develop NBC weapons. Finally, the United States should make a clear commitment to retaliate against any state that uses NBC weapons aggressively or against U.S. troops.

Second, U.S. military power can help to prevent wars and intense security competitions among the major powers of Eurasia. Such wars and competitions would threaten to involve the United States, reduce international trade, and might even make the spread or use of NBC weapons more likely. The American military presence in Europe and East Asia maintains the peace in each region by reassuring the countries in each region that they will not be threatened by Germany, Japan, or China.

Third, U.S. military power enables the United States to retain access to Persian Gulf oil by preventing any one state from dominating the region. The Persian Gulf has half or more of the world's oil reserves and the United States imports over half of its oil. Even though the United States imports relatively little oil from the Gulf, control over Gulf oil matters because oil is fungible and the world oil market is tightly integrated. If one or two states controlled the Gulf's oil reserves, oil prices would almost certainly go up. By ensuring that states like Kuwait and Saudi Arabia remain independent and that neither Iraq nor Iran becomes a regional hegemon, U.S. military power contributes to maintaining U.S. access to oil at stable prices.

Art also argues that the strategy of selective engagement assists the United States in realizing its desirable interests: promoting free trade, spreading democracy, and protecting the environment. Military power plays an indirect role in promoting these interests, except in the rare instances where military intervention can make the difference in restoring or creating democracy, or in cases where force can be used to stop genocide. The best way to achieve these desirable interests, according to Art, is for the United States to use its military power to protect its vital interests. If the United States can prevent or limit the spread of NBC weapons, maintain access to Gulf oil, and prevent great-power conflicts in Eurasia, the chances for keeping trade free, spreading democracy, and protecting the environment will go up.

Art considers the alternatives to selective engagement. Offering a slightly different list of choices than the four considered in this volume, he contends that the United States has six options: dominion, global collective security, regional collective security, cooperative security, containment, and isolationism. The first four are not feasible. Dominion—the "world policeman" role—is infeasible because the United States lacks the resources. Collective security, whether global or regional, and cooperative security also are infeasible, because states rarely agree to yield control over their armed forces and to make a commitment to punish all aggressors. Containment is feasible, but the only hostile powers that the United States might seek to contain are regional powers that the strategy of selective engagement would attempt to contain.

Art argues that isolationism is thus the only serious competitor to selective engagement. Isolationism would retain U.S. political and economic engagement in the world, but would eliminate U.S. commitments to use military power and would limit the use of force by the United States. Art contends that isolationism has four major shortcomings: (1) it would not serve all six U.S. interests; (2) it would react conflicts instead of preventing them; (3) it would deny the United States the advantage of basing some of its military forces overseas where they can train with allies and move rapidly to where they might be used; and (4) it fails to hedge against uncertainties because it assumes that the international environment will remain benign to U.S. interests.

Art recognizes that selective engagement has two pitfalls. First, U.S. commitments may grow, depriving the strategy of its selectivity and making it too costly. Second, the United States may provoke the rise of countervailing coalitions if it exercises its military power too frequently. But these problems can be avoided if the United States is disciplined in making and not inflating commitments and deft in avoiding provoking opposing coalitions.

The strategy of cooperative security was proposed in the early 1990s by several writers, some of whom subsequently held important positions in the Clinton administration. This volume includes two essays that explicate and analyze cooperative security and the related concept of collective security.

In "Cooperative Security in the United States," Janne Nolan considers whether the United States is prepared to pursue a strategy based on the principles of cooperative security, which include "preventive diplomacy, nonmilitary instruments for conflict prevention, mediation in place of war, and collective intervention only when other instruments fail." She argues that the essential premise of cooperative security is "selective engagement based on cooperative planning."

Nolan notes that there is no consensus in the United States on a new international strategy. Some American analysts have endorsed the idea of a "Pax Americana" based on the unilateral exercise of U.S. power, while isolationists call for global disengagement. These approaches emphasize unilateral U.S. action, but a growing number of U.S. analysts and officials accept the need for multilateral action when the United States uses military force. This growing appreciation of multilateralism may provide a foundation for policies based on cooperative security.

Nolan then examines how the principles of cooperative security could be applied to U.S. policy in five areas: (1) the use of force; (2) the conduct of regional relations; (3) the perceived role of nuclear weapons; (4) efforts to control the proliferation of weapons internationally; and (5) the overall characteristics of U.S. defense investment.

Since the end of the Cold War, the U.S. defense policy has been designed to use force to counter regional threats, such as a war in Korea, new and old nuclear threats, and domestic instability and humanitarian cases. U.S. military forces and defense spending have shrunk from their Cold War peak, but they remain large. Proponents of a Pax Americana have generally argued that the United States needs greater defense capabilities and should focus on unilateral, not multinational action. Advocates of global disengagement have said that the United States is spending too much on defense and should avoid most international military interventions.

Advocates of cooperative security would place more emphasis on conflict prevention, reduce reliance on nuclear weapons, configure U.S. forces for defensive missions instead of preemptive attacks, prepare to act in concert with other countries, and pursue cooperative approaches to limiting the spread of weapons of mass destruction. Nolan contends that the United States has yet to embrace these principles and to incorporate them into its defense policy.

When it comes to regional relations, a strategy based on cooperative security would build a "new European cooperative security structure" that would complement NATO. In Asia, the United States should maintain a military presence and rely less on threats to take punitive measures against China and Japan if they do not comply with U.S. preferences on human rights and trade. In the Middle East, a strategy of cooperative security would mean continued U.S. efforts to mediate the Arab-Israeli conflict, expanded multilateral efforts to control arms sales, and a reduction in U.S. forces and punitive military strikes.

Cooperative security calls for reducing U.S. reliance on nuclear weapons, cutting existing nuclear arsenals, taking some nuclear warheads off alert status,

ending nuclear testing, and not threatening to use nuclear weapons against other states. These policies would reduce the danger of nuclear war and limit incentives for nuclear proliferation. Current U.S. nuclear policy, however, has not fully endorsed these principles.

A strategy of cooperative security would include multilateral controls on the diffusion of weapons and weapons-related technologies, but the United States has not moved far enough toward such a policy. U.S. policy promotes technology proliferation and arms sales when they are expedient. Washington's bureaucratic apparatus fails to control arms transfers, and international attempts to limit arms sales have fared little better. The increasing U.S. interest in "coercive arms control"—preemptive military strikes against military installations—violates the principles of cooperative security and may simply drive other states to pursue clandestine weapons programs.

When applied to U.S. defense investment, the principles of cooperative security call for limiting defense firms' dependence on exports. As the defense industry has contracted in the 1990s, firms have turned to arms exports to increase their profits. In some cases, firms may need to subsidize defense-related technological innovations by increasing their arms exports. Maintaining U.S. superiority in military technologies while preserving its defense industrial base without relying too heavily on military exports may require a decision to slow the pace of acquiring new military capabilities.

Nolan concludes that the United States is still reluctant to commit itself to multilateral policies. Washington has the opportunity to lead a global transition to cooperative security. Like other states, the United States faces the challenge of embracing an international security regime that requires it to sacrifice traditional military-based sovereignty.

Collective security resembles cooperative security in that it calls for states to act collectively to prevent or respond to aggression. In "Concerts, Collective Security, and the Future of Europe," Charles Kupchan and Clifford Kupchan propose that a collective security system be created to preserve peace in Europe. They argue that the level of agreement among Europe's major powers has created the conditions for a concert-based collective security system, which would avoid the pitfalls of earlier attempts at collective security such as the League of Nations. The Kupchans explain how collective security could overcome the uncertainties that plague attempts to balance power in an anarchic international system. The essence of collective security is universal agreement to oppose any aggressor. Different types of collective security systems exist, but the Kupchans argue that a concert-based system is most likely to be effective. By institutionalizing cooperative behavior to oppose aggressors and

entrusting the responsibilities of leadership to a small group of powerful states, a concert-based collective security system can deter or counter aggression. A concert-based system in post-Cold War Europe would build upon the existing structures of the Conference on Security and Cooperation in Europe (CSCE). Like the nineteenth-century Concert of Europe, they argue, it would rely on coordination among the major powers to prevent wars.

In a retrospective written for this volume, the Kupchans consider how well their arguments have stood up since their original article was published in 1991. They argue that the case for collective security remains strong. In their opinion, NATO has remained an important European security institution precisely because it has embraced elements of collective security. During the Cold War, NATO was a traditional alliance designed to defend Western Europe against the Soviet Union. NATO continues to serve as a hedge against potential Russian expansionism, but it now focuses on preventing and ending wars in Europe—particularly in the Balkans. The alliance has embraced this mission in fits and starts, but its military actions in Bosnia and Kosovo were consistent with the spirit of collective security. NATO is becoming an organization devoted to preserving stability in Europe by taking collective action.

The Kupchans also contend that NATO's admission of Poland, Hungary, and the Czech Republic as new members, and its expanded cooperation with Russia and other former Soviet republics exemplify the practice of collective security. These initiatives are intended to turn former adversaries into partners in an enlarged zone of cooperation. Because NATO is in a hybrid state between collective defense and collective security, NATO enlargement and cooperation with Russia remain in tension. In the future, however, the conditions for concert-based collective security to operate are likely to be consolidated. If Russian reform continues, all of Europe's major states will be capitalist, democratic, status quo powers.

In hindsight, the Kupchans recognize that they need to amend their analysis in two ways. First, NATO, not the CSCE, has become Europe's central security institution. NATO's continued importance reflects the desire of the United States to preserve and strengthen an institution in which it plays the leading role. The Kupchans argue that NATO can and should continue to expand to include Russia and become a pan-European security institution.

Second, the Kupchans recognize that the European Union (EU) has come to play a larger security role than they had expected. In addition to consolidating a single European market and introducing the Euro, it has begun to develop military capabilities and a common defense policy. The EU will thus be a member of any eventual concert-based security structure for Europe.

The next two essays in this volume consider the implications of a unipolar world and the prospects for strategies based on U.S. primacy. In "The Stability of a Unipolar World," William Wohlforth argues that the United States enjoys an unprecedented margin of superiority over its potential great-power rivals and that the resulting unipolar world is peaceful and stable. He suggests that the United States has the capabilities to pursue a strategy of primacy.

Wohlforth contends that the current international system is "unambiguously unipolar." Although many commentators have argued that the United States lacks the power to shape world politics decisively, Wohlforth presents evidence that shows that the United States has extraordinary advantages over all other major states. No great power in the past two centuries has enjoyed such a wide advantage in every component of power—economic, military, technological, and geopolitical. The U.S. lead appears even wider when measured in terms of information-age indicators such as high-technology manufacturing and research and development. The "unipolar moment" that emerged at the end of the Cold War may well become a unipolar era.

Several scholars have argued that unipolarity is inherently unstable, conflict-ridden, and transitory, because other great powers will challenge the preponderant power.[5] Wohlforth, however, argues that unipolarity is peaceful and stable, for two reasons. First, because the United States has such a large advantage in raw power, no other state can hope to challenge it. Hegemonic rivalry will not emerge in the current international system; no major power can afford to incur U.S. enmity. In addition, the other major powers are unlikely to go to war or engage in intense security competitions because the United States has the capabilities to ease and prevent local security conflicts.

Second, unipolarity is peaceful because in a unipolar world states never miscalculate or misperceive the resolve of alliances or the distribution of power. In multipolar systems, the complexity and uncertainty of alliance systems and the importance of shifts in relative power often cause leaders to blunder into war. When one state is dominant, however, other states cannot form alliances against it, so there is no need to assess the resolve, power, and solidarity of rival alliances. In conflicts, the side that the dominant state takes is likely to prevail.

Wohlforth argues that unipolarity is likely to last. In addition to having an overwhelming advantage in raw power, the United States is in the favorable position of being the only actual or potential pole that is not in or around

5. See, for example, Christopher Layne, "The Unipolar Illusion: Why New Great Powers Will Rise," *International Security,* Vol. 17, No. 4 (Spring 1993), pp. 5–51.

Eurasia. This geographical fact means that other potential poles that seek to increase their power will provoke the countries near them to balance against them. If, for example, Germany, Japan, or Russia were to attempt to challenge U.S. preeminence, their geographical neighbors would resist this attempt—much as they have resisted earlier German, Japanese, and Russian bids for hegemony.

Some observers believe that other states are already balancing against what they see as the arrogance of U.S. power, but Wohlforth points out that most of this balancing remains rhetorical. States may complain about American preponderance, but most of them are reducing their military spending while they align themselves implicitly or explicitly with the United States.

U.S. preeminence will not last forever, but U.S. policymakers should focus on strategies for a unipolar world instead of making premature plans for a transition to a new international system. Wohlforth recommends that the United States should attempt to prolong unipolarity by playing a major role in providing regional security, thereby forestalling the emergence of great power struggles for power and security. Although some critics of U.S. foreign policy complain that the United States intervenes in too many overseas conflicts, Wohlforth argues that the United States should continue to use its capabilities to provide order and security. This strategy need not be too costly, because it does require limitless commitments. The United States should focus on "managing the central security regimes in Europe and Asia, and maintaining the expectation on the part of other states that any geopolitical challenge to the United States is futile."

In "Preserving the Unipolar Moment: Realist Theories and U.S. Grand Strategy After the Cold War," Michael Mastanduno examines whether realist theories can explain U.S. grand strategy after the Cold War. Unlike the other essays in this volume, Mastanduno's does not offer prescriptions for U.S. policy but instead seeks to account for it. He recognizes that there are several different, competing realist theories and chooses to focus on two: balance-of-power theory as elaborated by Kenneth Waltz, and the balance-of-threat theory developed by Stephen Walt.

Waltz's balance-of-power theory is the most prominent contemporary realist theory. It argues that states will tend to balance against powerful states in the anarchic international system. Changes in the distribution of power produce different patterns of alliances and military buildups. Although Waltz has denied that his theory can explain the foreign policies of particular states, Mastanduno notes that Waltz himself has used balance-of-power theory to explain

foreign policy. Mastanduno therefore argues that the theory can be applied to U.S. foreign policy. He suggests that the end of the Cold War and the demise of the Soviet Union transformed the bipolar world into a unipolar one characterized by U.S. primacy. This change in the structure of the international system, according to balance-of-power theory, should have three implications for U.S. security strategy: (1) the United States will be able to act with much greater freedom, (2) other states will balance against the United States, and (3) the United States will be compelled to accept the inevitability of mulitpolarity and to disengage from its Cold War commitments.

Mastanduno argues that there is some evidence to support the first prediction of balance-of-power theory. The United States has had the latitude to intervene or not intervene in many regional crises. But there is less evidence for the other two predictions. U.S. allies in Europe and Asia want to maintain their ties to the United States instead of forming anti-U.S. alliances. And the United States has yet to disengage from its Cold War commitments.

In the realm of economic strategy, balance-of-power theory predicts that under unipolarity the United States will seek to maximize its relative power position in its economic competition with other major powers. This prediction flows from the theory's emphasis on the need to maintain economic power to provide a foundation for military capabilities. During the Cold War, the United States embraced cooperative economic policies to maintain its anti-Soviet alliances. Now that the United States is attempting to maintain its primacy and no longer needs to contain the Soviet Union, balance-of-power theory predicts that the United States will attempt to reduce the costs of its foreign policy commitments, increase its assistance to U.S. firms, and limit support for international economic policies that help U.S. economic competitors.

Mastanduno finds considerable evidence to support the economic predictions of balance-of-power theory. The United States has asked its allies to share defense burdens more fully, particularly in the 1990–1991 Gulf War. It has aggressively promoted U.S. exports. In trade policy, U.S. negotiators have demanded that other countries open their markets to American exports and abandoned the principle of free trade when it did not offer the United States unilateral advantages.

Walt's balance-of-threat theory argues that states balance against threats instead of against power. The most powerful state may not be the most threatening if it is distant, lacks offensive power, or has benign intentions. Balance-of-threat theory implies that the United States should want to preserve its primacy and will do so by signalling its restraint and reassuring potential

adversaries. The United States can send such signals by emphasizing multilateral diplomacy and by following conciliatory policies toward status-quo states. These policies will prevent other states from balancing against the United States in a unipolar world.

Mastanduno finds that post–Cold War U.S. security strategy has conformed to the predictions of balance-of-threat theory. The United States has sought to maintain its dominant global position, but generally has pursued policies of conciliation and engagement, with an emphasis on multilateral institutions.

Balance-of-threat theory predicts that a cooperative post–Cold War U.S. economic strategy will complement conciliatory security policies. The United States should avoid aggressive financial and commercial policies because such policies would be perceived as threatening by other states, which might then balance against the United States. The evidence, however, suggests that the United States has aggressively sought to maximize its relative economic advantages, even in cases where this course has undermined U.S. security policy. Washington has adopted a hard line in its economic dealings with Japan, China, and Europe, although it has attempted to aid Russia's transition to a market economy.

Mastanduno finds that each realist theory explains part of U.S. post–Cold War strategy. Balance-of-threat theory accounts for U.S. policies that attempt to maintain U.S. primacy by engaging and reassuring other major powers. Balance-of-power theory explains why U.S. foreign economic policy has emphasized competition with other leading economic powers. These different policies amount to "security softball" and "economic hardball."

In Mastanduno's view, the divergent tendencies in post–Cold War U.S. security and economic strategies add up to a coherent overall strategy of primacy. Both sets of policies are intended to preserve America's preeminent global position. The Bush and Clinton administrations' grand strategies both have aimed to preserve U.S. primacy, despite the differences in their rhetoric.

Mastanduno concludes that it is not surprising that the United States is attempting to prolong the "unipolar moment." Primacy offers many benefits. In the near future, however, the United States will have to face the conflicting demands of its economic and security strategies. "Economic hardball" may induce other states to resent the United States and to balance against it. More generally, U.S. attempts to maintain primacy may have to end if the American public refuses to pay the costs of global engagement.

This volume also includes *A National Security Strategy for a New Century*, a White House document that presents the grand strategy of the Clinton admin-

istration.[6] This document emphasizes that American leadership and international engagement are essential to maintain U.S. and global security and to promote prosperity. It argues that U.S. strategy has three central goals: (1) to enhance its security; (2) to bolster America's economic prosperity; and (3) to promote democracy abroad.

Much of *A National Security Strategy for a New Century* is devoted to discussing threats to U.S. interests and how the United States can respond to them. The main threats include states such as Iraq, Iran, and North Korea that threaten their neighbors and international access to resources; transnational threats, including terrorism, international crime, drug trafficking, uncontrolled refugee flows, and environmental damage; the spread of weapons of mass destruction; foreign intelligence operations intended to obtain U.S. secrets; and failed states that generate internal conflict, humanitarian crises, and regional instability. The document enumerates the integrated diplomatic and military approaches that the United States has adopted to respond to these threats. Some of the new initiatives discussed are international and domestic efforts to prevent terrorism and to respond to terrorism involving weapons of mass destruction, as well as attempts to protect critical information infrastructures.

A National Security Strategy for a New Century also recognizes that U.S. power depends on the strength of the U.S. economy and enumerates the many steps the United States has taken to promote prosperity. These include strengthening macroeconomic coordination—particularly in response to the 1997 Asian financial crisis, enhancing American competitiveness, opening markets to free trade, and maintaining energy security. The document also briefly reviews U.S. policies intended to promote democracy. Finally, it provides an overview of policies toward each of the world's important regions.

Several recurring themes are evident in the debate over post–Cold War U.S. grand strategy. First, most observers agree that the United States enjoys an unusual—perhaps unprecedented—level of security against international threats. Although the contributors to this volume disagree over precisely how secure the United States is, they generally agree that the demise of the Soviet threat has made the United States more secure. The United States thus faces the challenge of devising a strategy in the absence of a clear threat or obvious enemy.

Second, the traditional divide between isolationism and internationalism is apparent in the contending perspectives on American strategy. Before the Cold

6. As this volume went to press, the Clinton Administration issued a new version of *A National Security Strategy for a New Century.* The new version is broadly similar to the one reprinted here.

War, the isolationist-internationalist debate pervaded discussions of U.S. foreign policy. During the Cold War, the consensus on Containment removed isolationist ideas from the mainstream of U.S. foreign-policy debates. Now that Containment has dissolved with the demise of the Soviet Union, isolationist proposals have re-emerged. The United States already has reduced the number of forces it deploys overseas. Many observers think the United States will (or should) further cut its military presence in Europe and the Asia-Pacific region.

Third, current discussions of U.S. grand strategy reflect the long-standing tension between realism and idealism (or liberalism-moralism) in American foreign policy.[7] Proposals for cooperative security and U.S. efforts to spread democracy reflect elements of the idealist strain in thinking about American strategy. Realist principles, which emphasize U.S. interests, are apparent in proposals for U.S primacy as well as in calls for U.S. disengagement.

Finally, the debate over America's strategic choices is implicitly (and sometimes explicitly) influenced by debates over theories of international relations. The logic of realist theories, which hold that countries tend to pursue power and/or security in international politics, is apparent in several competing proposals for U.S. grand strategy. The debate between different realist theories is mirrored in the debate between proponents of alternative grand strategies.[8] Those who argue for limited U.S. engagement in the world tend to be "defensive realists" who believe that states generally balance against powerful or threatening states. This theoretical perspective implies that the United States can rely on other major powers to form alliances against potential hegemonic states and that U.S. attempts to increase its power will provoke others to balance against the United States. On the other hand, proponents of a more assertive U.S. quest for global primacy tend to draw on "offensive realism" and hegemonic stability theory, which hold that states aspire to maximize their control over the international system and that international stability is achieved when one great power imposes order.

The essays collected in this volume do not cover every aspect of the current debate over U.S. grand strategy. Other authors have argued, for example, that the United States should adopt a "Bismarckian" strategy or that it should

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7. See George F. Kennan, *American Diplomacy, 1900–1950* (Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 1951), and Robert Endicott Osgood, *Ideals and Self-Interest in America's Foreign Relations* (Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 1953).
8. For an overview of contending contemporary realist theories, see Michael E. Brown, Sean M. Lynn-Jones, and Steven E. Miller, eds., *The Perils of Anarchy: Contemporary Realism and International Security* (Cambridge, Mass.: The MIT Press, 1995).

encourage the emergence of regional hegemons in Europe, East Asia, and other regions.[9] The analyses presented here do, however, offer a comprehensive explication of many of the strategic choices that the United States faces at the turn of the millennium. Several authors make a strong case for the strategy that they prefer. We hope that this combination of explication and advocacy clarifies the trade-offs that the United States must make and stimulates further debate.

9. See Josef Joffe, "'Bismarck' or 'Britain'? Toward an American Grand Strategy after Bipolarity," *International Security*, Vol. 19, No. 4 (Spring 1995), pp. 94–117; and Charles A. Kupchan, "After Pax Americana: Benign Power, Regional Integration, and the Sources of a Stable Multipolarity," *International Security*, Vol. 23, No. 2 (Fall 1998), pp. 40–79.