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Chapter 1
The International Setting

Every day, newspapers, television news channels, and Internet sites cover a wide variety of political, economic, and military developments around the world. Given this vast volume and variety of information, it can be difficult to determine which events and trends are most likely to affect the national security of the United States. Although the derivation of a constant set of generic criteria may be impossible, theories and concepts from the discipline of political science can help concerned observers analyze and assess a complex international system.

Unfortunately, there is no "silver bullet" or simple answer that holds the key to understanding international politics and their setting. However, reliable conclusions are more likely when an analyst explicitly acknowledges assumptions, is unambiguous about the meaning of key concepts, and can clearly state the logic of his or her cause-and-effect arguments. This approach best prepares the analyst to analyze the evidence and test assessments in light of competing views and explanations. Of course, all analyses of important issues are likely to be accompanied by uncertainty. A sensible approach for both analysts and policy makers would include an estimate of the degree of uncertainty associated with a particular assessment, an exploration of potential implications, and a provision for hedging against key uncertainties wherever possible. Although a sound understanding of the international environment is not sufficient to ensure good national security decisions, it is an essential starting point.

National Security

The term *national security* refers to the safeguarding of a people, territory, and way of life. It includes protection from physical assault and in that sense is similar to the term *defense.* However, national security also implies protection, through a variety of means, of a broad array of interests and values. In one definition the phrase is commonly asserted to mean "physical security, defined as the protection against attack on the territory and the people of the United States in order to ensure survival with fundamental values and institutions intact; promotion of values; and economic prosperity."[1] Preserving the national security of the United States requires safeguarding individual freedoms and other U.S. values, as well as the laws and institutions established to protect them. The specific definitions used by different analysts may vary, and the prioritization of national interests may be difficult and controversial. Nevertheless, in essence, national security encompasses the protection of the fundamental values and core interests necessary to the continued existence and vitality of the state.[2]

This traditional conception of national security, which focuses on preserving the state from threats, is being challenged from several directions. One set of questions has been raised by those who believe that traditional notions of national security have focused too much on threats from other states and have paid inadequate heed to a variety of transnational phenomena. Some of these transnational forces, such as migration, narcotics, transnational crime, and terrorism, have human beings as the main actors. However, other phenomena, such as environmental degradation, critical resource shortages, and infectious diseases, might not be the specific product of human intention, yet they still pose critical challenges to states. Advocates for a focus on this broader security agenda—an agenda that has received greater emphasis since the end of the Cold War—believe that these issues deserve a place next to traditional military and economic issues as national security priorities.[3]

A second challenge, related but even more fundamental, is raised by scholars and policy advocates working in a field known as *human security.* They question the adequacy of the concept of national security itself by challenging the presumption that the state rather than the individual is the key unit of value. Particularly in predatory, failing, or failed states, security from external threats may not be the most meaningful concern. As one recent study states, "during the last 100 years far more people have been killed by their own governments than by foreign armies." The study goes on to note that violent conflicts within states "now make up more than 95% of armed conflicts."[4] Scholars vary in the definition of human security that they use, with some focusing on the full range of threats to personal well-being and dignity and others focusing more narrowly on political violence. However, they agree on putting the welfare of individuals at the center of their analyses. Though this volume focuses primarily on traditional national security issues, the new security agenda and human security are discussed in greater depth in Chapter 25.

A third challenge to traditional concepts of national security is one of emphasis rather than content. One could argue that protection of the home territory has always been a priority, even if in certain periods of U.S. history it could be taken somewhat for granted. However, after the September 11, 2001, terrorist attacks that killed almost three thousand people on U.S. territory, homeland security has received new emphasis. The terrorist attacks highlighted limitations in the understanding of important threats; inadequacies in the United States' ability to prevent attacks; the need for organizational reforms in federal bureaucracies; and the imperative to enhance cooperation across federal, state, and local levels of government. When President George W. Bush signed legislation creating the Department of Homeland Security (DHS) in November 2002, he created an organization intended to "prevent terrorist attacks within the United States; reduce America's vulnerability to terrorism; and minimize the damage and recover from attacks that do occur." To accomplish this, the new DHS "would mobilize and focus the resources of the federal government, state and local governments, the private sector, and the American people."[5]

Though properly considered to be a component of national security, a new focus on homeland security has highlighted problems not previously emphasized due to the historical tendency of national security analysts to focus on external threats. The increased salience of homeland security concerns will be particularly evident in Part II of this volume, on national security actors and processes, and is the specific focus of Chapter 6.

The term *national security* is an elastic one; its meaning and implications have expanded, contracted, and shifted over time. Reminiscent of Dr. Samuel Johnson's definition of patriotism as "the last refuge of scoundrels," protection of national security has sometimes even been invoked to justify or conceal illegal acts. Because national security issues can involve high stakes, it is especially important to critically analyze arguments invoking national security as a justification for a position or action. It is also useful to remember that national security policy in the U.S. context serves both material interests and nonmaterial values and to return occasionally to first principles. Does a particular policy further U.S. security or economic interests while preserving the U.S. Constitution and the framework it establishes for the American way of life? If the answer to that question is uncertain, then so may be the grounds on which a particular policy rests.

Perspectives on International Politics

Among scholars of international relations, three of the most important intellectual perspectives are realism, liberalism, and constructivism.[6] These worldviews affect such basic assumptions as which phenomena are truly important and how the world is expected to operate. These perspectives have practical relevance because, just as scholars may accept core assumptions of a particular worldview, so may policy makers. It is useful for both scholars and

policy makers to be self-conscious about their perspectives so they understand the likely strengths and weaknesses of their approaches. Clarity about core assumptions may also help policy makers anticipate circumstances under which their various initiatives may be mutually reinforcing or internally contradictory.

Realism

The oldest and perhaps most dominant tradition with regard to the nature of international politics is *realism.* With intellectual roots dating back to Thucydides and Machiavelli, realists see international politics as a dangerous, conflict-prone realm in which security is far from guaranteed. States are the primary actors and can be analyzed as if they were unitary and rational actors whose core national interest can be defined as power. Given the presence of anarchy— defined as the lack of a single authority with sovereign power over states in the international system—realists assert that states must pursue self-help strategies in order to survive. Though some states may seek only to maintain their own survival, others may seek universal domination. To preserve independence and prevent destruction, states seek to balance the power of other states either through alliances or through internal means of increasing their relative power, such as arms build-ups or economic mobilization. Although alliances may be useful forms of cooperation, they should be expected to last only as long as the common threat that initially brought the allies together.

An important contribution of the realist school of thought is its emphasis on the central concept of power. Though it can be tempting to define power as influence or as the ability to get one's way, this approach can easily become misleading. For example, Canada's victory in a trade dispute with the United States does not make it reasonable to conclude that Canada is more powerful. Political theorist Kenneth Waltz sought to give the term a more scientific and measurable formulation, arguing that power was a combination of seven components: size of population, territory, resource endowment, economic capability, military strength, political stability, and competence.[7] All these elements must be considered in any assessment, though the weighting of the different elements varies in different contexts. Waltz's central prediction is that states can be expected to react to the power of other states by engaging in balancing behavior. He argues that if "there is any distinctively political theory of international politics, balance of power theory is it."[8]

In an effort to refine Waltz's approach, Stephen Walt argues that power is important but not fully adequate to explain what motivates state behavior. States respond not just to power, but to *threat,* with threat defined as encompassing power as well as geographic proximity, offensive power, and aggressive intentions.[9] Though Waltz and Walt differ slightly on the key motivator for balancing behavior, they have in common the majority of assumptions that characterize the realist school of thought: The world is a dangerous place in which each state must ensure its own survival by obtaining and competently applying power.

Although realism has proven itself an enduring and valued paradigm, it has weaknesses as well as strengths. Realists have traditionally emphasized the primacy of the state and the relative importance of relations among the great powers.[10] In an era marked by the decreasing relevance of state boundaries and by weak and failed states as the source of critical transnational threats, the primacy that realists give to great power competition is challenged. A second issue is the priority that realists give to power and security—especially military security. Realists may be right about the centrality of these state concerns, but this may simultaneously make realism a less valuable approach to explaining state policies in other issue areas. For example, although a realist perspective may help to explain international trade issues in some cases, convincing scholarship has argued for the frequent significance of other variables, such as domestic interests, domestic and international institutions, the structure of the international economy, and the interactions of state and nonstate actors.[11]

Finally, realism does not contain within itself an adequate explanation of change. To a great extent, realists have taken pains to point out continuity in international politics. For example, realists might argue that the same fear that Sparta had of an increasingly powerful Athens—which Thucydides argues contributed to war between those powers more than two thousand years ago—could just as easily serve as a powerful explanation for war today.[12] This emphasis on the balance of power between states and states as key actors makes realists less likely to explore such potential system-transforming phenomena as the rising importance of transnational actors and the impact of the processes of globalization on the international system.

Liberalism

A second major international relations tradition has its roots in the political writings of Immanuel Kant and other Enlightenment thinkers. Whereas the core value for realists is state security, the core values for liberals are individual liberty and moral autonomy. Though states may still be seen as the key actors in international politics, their status rests on whether or not they can reasonably be seen as the legitimate guarantors of the rights and aspirations of their populations. This perspective underpins the right to rebel that exists within the political theory of important liberal thinkers, such as John Locke.[13] Where a realist may be content to assume that a state is unitary and not carefully analyze domestic institutions or politics, a liberal sees societal actors as having central importance.[14] According to the liberal tradition, democratic institutions, as well as liberal democratic values within a population, will have an important impact on foreign policy behavior.

With regard to U.S. national security, perhaps the single most important international relations insight stemming from the liberal tradition is *democratic peace theory.* This theory seeks to explain the empirical reality that liberal democracies have rarely gone to war with one another. Though the exact mechanisms through which this result has been achieved are the focus of ongoing research, explanations generally focus on the nature of democratic institutions and norms. Democratic institutions require consensus and therefore create time for debate, as well as preclude wars for unpopular purposes (presumably war with another liberal democracy would be unpopular). Democratic norms emphasize peaceful conflict resolution and compromise—especially with another democratic government, which is seen as the legitimate custodian of the interests of its people.[15]

In addition to focusing greater attention on the domestic characteristics of states, liberalism also differs from realism in the mechanisms it suggests for the maintenance of international peace and stability. Though realists would likely dismiss any suggestions that a permanent peace between states is possible, they would hold that periods of relative peace and stability can be achieved if states prudently look to their interests (defined as power) and pay adequate attention to ensuring a balance of power in the international system.[16] Liberals, on the other hand, would be more likely to look to the mechanisms identified by Kant in his political essays "Perpetual Peace: A Philosophical Sketch" and "Idea for a Universal History with a Cosmopolitan Purpose."[17]

In the first of these essays, Kant hypothesizes that a permanent peace would have three characteristics: All states would have representative, elected governments; these governments would form a federation among themselves to resolve differences and to ensure an overwhelming response to any state's aggression; and individuals would enjoy the basic right of not automatically being treated as an enemy when arriving in a foreign land. This last provision, a minimal human right that opens the door to commerce, identifies a mechanism for the development of peaceful relations, which is further developed in the second of Kant's essays. According to this essay, trade will increase the interconnectedness between societies, which will

in turn increase the benefits of peaceful relations and heighten the costs of increasingly destructive wars.

Although scholars working within the liberal tradition have refined these basic arguments and developed more specific propositions since Kant's time, his central ideas still underpin much of the liberal approach. Democratic peace theorists explore the possible benefits of democracy in terms of peace and security. Kant's notion of a federation of states is an early articulation of the focus of modern liberal theorists on the roles that international institutions and international law can play in furthering common interests among states. Finally, the idea that increased trade can promote peace continues to inform liberal thinking. For example, Robert Keohane and Joseph Nye developed an approach called *complex interdependence* that sees the mutual dependence between states created by economic interconnectedness as making conflict less likely.[18]

For most liberals, these ideas are underpinned by some concept of universal rights and the view that the freedom and moral autonomy of the individual are central values. A classic statement of this viewpoint can be found in the U.S. Declaration of Independence: "We hold these truths to be self-evident, that all men are created equal, that they are endowed by their Creator with certain unalienable rights, that among these are Life, Liberty and the pursuit of Happiness. That to secure these rights, Governments are instituted among Men, deriving their just powers from the consent of the governed."[19] The liberal desire to protect the individual is embodied in international law, such as the "Universal Declaration of Human Rights" adopted by the United Nations (UN) in 1948, as well as in the Law of War.[20]

Like realism, liberalism has both strengths and weaknesses. It is a historical fact that liberal democracies have rarely if ever fought one another, though the process of democratization can itself be quite dangerous to international peace and security.[21] International law can be useful in defining standards, in establishing a mechanism to punish individuals when domestic systems cannot, and in providing legitimacy, but its most significant shortcoming is the lack of guaranteed enforcement. Similarly, international institutions have been significant mechanisms hi helping states to achieve mutually beneficial outcomes—think of the contribution of the General Agreement on Tariffs and Trade (later the World Trade Organization) in facilitating free trade—but are also limited by uncertain enforcement. Finally, increased international commerce has improved individual welfare around the world—if unevenly—and the mechanism of mutual dependence has been used to make war less likely between states. As an example, Germany and France established the European Coal and Steel Community (which has now evolved into the European Union [EU]) in the early post-World War II years with the intent of making war between them less likely. But, even in the area of trade there have been disappointments. In 1910, Sir Norman Angell published *The Great Illusion,* arguing that economic interconnectedness made war obsolete and conquest counterproductive. Of course, World War I broke out only four years later. Overall, the world wars in the middle of the twentieth century were great setbacks to the liberal vision. Enlightenment did not necessarily mean progress, and economic interdependence, democracy, and international institutions were not adequate to preserve the peace.

Neoconservativism

Although it is not an enduring tradition of international relations, such as those discussed above, an American school of thought that achieved prominence and influence in U.S. foreign and security policy in the late twentieth and early twenty-first centuries is *neoconservativism*—a perspective that actually blends propositions from the realist and liberal traditions. Neoconservatives have much in common with the realist view, seeing the international environment as dangerous and as more characterized by conflict than by cooperation. Like the realists, they put power at the center of their analyses and see it as the responsibility of the

great powers—or, more precisely, the United States, as the world's only remaining superpower—to manage world affairs and to provide what peace and stability can be attained.[22] They are skeptical of the notion of an international community and of the idea that consensus among states that uphold different values confers meaningful legitimacy. They also question the value of international law and international institutions, especially the UN, which has proven itself, in their view, to be the "guarantor of nothing."[23]

Despite these commonalities with a realist perspective, neoconservativism also incorporates strands of liberal thought, viewing realism as ultimately inadequate for its lack of moral vision. The use of U.S. power should always be guided by moral values and should be used to promote "democracy, free markets, [and] respect for liberty."[24] As have many liberal-tradition thinkers, neoconservatives have argued that doing the morally right thing—such as supporting the development of liberal, democratic governments abroad—would also be the best way to promote U.S. interests. Neoconservatives share with at least some liberals the notion that the condition of international affairs is improvable, though by using U.S. power rather than by strengthening mechanisms of global governance. International institutions and international law, in the neoconservative worldview, often merely mask efforts of weak or undesirable actors to restrict U.S. freedom of action.

The reader can evaluate the degree to which the neoconservative outlook reflects traditional American approaches to national security by consulting Chapter 2. Here, it is sufficient to note that both realists and liberals challenge the neoconservative outlook for different reasons. Neoconservatives have argued that "America must be guided by its independent judgment, both about its own interest and the global interest."[25] Realists would deride the notion of a "global interest," as well as the claims of any state to possess and to be acting in accordance with universal moral values. Liberals would question the legitimacy of U.S. claims to this decision-making authority and question the ability of the United States to exercise it well. A second issue stems from the neoconservative claim that the United States is a uniquely benign global hegemon, which validates and enables its world leadership.[26] Realists might question the importance of a benign status but be even more skeptical of the notion that the United States is capable of remaking the world in its own image. Liberals question whether the unilateral use of U.S. power, particularly the U.S. military, can succeed at democracy promotion and whether such an approach would preserve global perceptions that the United States is benign. Whatever its future, neoconservatism has been charged with being excessively realist for its focus on material power and U.S. national interests, as well as excessively idealist in its agenda of democracy promotion abroad.[27] It has also been widely criticized as the rationale for increased unilateralism and the decision to invade Iraq in 2003.

Constructivism

In addition to realism and liberalism, a third worldview is offered by scholars working within a paradigm known as *constructivism* who examine the potential importance of nonmaterial as well as material factors in shaping situations and affecting outcomes. For example, Alexander Wendt rejects the centrality that a realist might give to the distribution of material capabilities, arguing instead that relative material capabilities only affect behavior in the context of amity or enmity between the actors involved. As an example, the imbalance of power between the United States and Canada does not foster the same sense of insecurity that is created by the imbalance between India and Pakistan (see Chapter 19): Shared knowledge and the practices of the actors involved are also important in understanding how states will behave in any given situation.[28]

Besides illuminating the potential importance of nonmaterial factors in shaping the relations among states, an additional constructivist contribution is to provide an explanation for change. The constructivist asserts that identity not only shapes but is also shaped by social interaction

over time. Because change may occur at a level of values and fundamental interests rather than just at the level of behavior, the fundamental character of international politics could change over time as the interactions among states affect the identity of the actors involved.

The constructivist view of international relations aids in the examination of a number of issues of potential significance to national security. For example, constructivism provides an approach that facilitates an understanding of aspects of identity, such as strategic or organizational culture, that may help to explain a state's behavior.[29] As a second example, constructivists have looked at the role of international norms, such as those that govern state intervention into other states, to evaluate how they may shape behavior as well as how they have evolved over time.[30] As a final example, constructivists examine socialization processes—such as the interaction of states in international institutions—for their potential explanatory power.[31] Constructivists offer an alternative worldview that adds to the manner in which scholars and policy makers can seek to understand the behavior of key actors in international politics.

Key Concepts

This section introduces four concepts that are essential tools to critical and analytical thinking about international politics: anarchy, sovereignty, levels of analysis, and power.

Anarchy. As used in international relations, the term *anarchy* refers not to mere disorder, but instead to a lack of formal and authoritative government. It is the existence of anarchy that distinguishes international politics from the domestic realm. Although there may be such mechanisms as international institutions intended to provide some degree of governance within particular issue areas, in the world as it exists today, there is no single authority to which one can turn that can arbitrate disagreements and enforce the decisions that result from such arbitration. The traditions of international relations discussed above agree on the existence of anarchy; they merely disagree on its implications. For such realists as Hobbes, where there is no overarching authority, there is no law and no peace because individuals must constantly compete with one another merely to survive.[32] Among states in a condition of anarchy, one should expect constant suspicion and the ever-present possibility of war. For such liberals as Locke, on the other hand, society is possible in the absence of a common authority. Instead of constant war, the state of nature is one of inconvenience because enforcement is uncertain. An implication of this view is that states could form some type of rudimentary society in which, even in the absence of world government, they could cooperate to achieve mutual gains. For constructivists, either the realist or the liberal outcome could be possible, depending on the identities of the states involved and the social context of their interactions.

Sovereignty. The modern conception of sovereignty dates to the Peace of Westphalia in 1648, which many mark as the origin of the modern state system. Intended to bring a bloody period of religious conflict to a close, the Peace of Westphalia also reflected a desire to limit future wars by establishing the principle of sovereignty. In essence, sovereignty means that each state has total authority over its own population within its own territory. Modern recognition of sovereignty can be found in the UN Charter. This document recognizes the "sovereign equality" of all of the member states of the UN and affirms that "nothing contained in the present Charter shall authorize the United Nations to intervene in matters which are essentially within the domestic jurisdiction of any state."[33]

Many important national security issues involve the concept of sovereignty. A first instance is the concept of the formal legal equality of all states. Though this is recognized in the UN General Assembly, where each state gets one vote, the limits to this idea are also recognized in the UN Security Council, where five permanent, great-power members get a veto. States may be legally equal, but relative power also shapes how they interact. A second issue is the

contrast between the ideal of sovereignty and the fact that many of the world's more than 190 states lack sufficient capacity to exercise full control over their populations and territories. This shortcoming in governance helps to create, and makes it more difficult to resolve, a variety of transnational security concerns. A third issue relates to limits to sovereignty. In 1951, for example, the Convention on the Prevention and Punishment of the Crime of Genocide went into force, which commits the contracting states to "undertake to prevent and to punish" acts of genocide.[34] This international agreement makes clear that genocide, perhaps the most egregious form of human rights violation, justifies the intervention of states into each other's affairs. As states decide when to intervene in response to either human rights or security concerns, the value of preserving the ideal of sovereignty as a limiting force in international conflict is a value that must be carefully weighed.

Levels of Analysis. As an organizing framework, levels of analysis can be of great utility in aiding clear and critical thinking about international affairs. Introduced by Waltz in *The Man, the State, and War* in 1959 as the three "images" of international relations, the concept of levels of analysis has become a common organizing framework for thinking about the causes of outcomes in international politics.[35] As a useful simplification, the causes of international developments can be thought of as stemming from the nature of individuals, domestic factors, or the international system as a whole. Though one or another may have greater explanatory power in a given instance, all may well bear on a given case.

Individual Level of Analysis. One place to look for causes of events is at the individual level of analysis. As an example, some argue that war will always be a part of the human experience, because the tendency toward competition and violence is intrinsic to human nature. This view that war is embedded in human nature has been held by a number of leading realist thinkers, including Thucydides and Hans Morgenthau. Though perhaps plausible, this perspective cannot provide a complete account, because an unchanging human nature cannot explain variations in war and peace over time. There are other explanations that also reside at the individual level of analysis that are more helpful in accounting for variation. These explanations may draw upon the role of psychological factors or even specific personalities. As a case in point, analysts argue that Saddam Hussein's personal characteristics played a role in the defeat of his regime at the hands of U.S.-led coalition forces in 2003.[36] Caution is called for here as well. Although the characteristics of individuals may often be important, a focus upon them must be accompanied by an explanation as to the process through which individual motivations and dispositions are able to affect state action.

Domestic Level of Analysis. A second approach suggests that actions in international affairs are best understood as the product of the internal character of states. Vladimir Lenin's view of the imperialistic activities of capitalist states is an example.[37] He believed that the capitalistic states' struggle for markets, resources, and profits would inevitably lead them to dominate and exploit the underdeveloped areas of the world. As the potential colonial territory of the world diminished, Lenin foresaw increased competition that would ultimately result in violent conflict among the imperial states and the end of the capitalist system.

Other possible characteristics of states that have been hypothesized to affect international behavior include their political institutions, culture, ideology, and bureaucratic and organizational politics. Democratic peace theory provides an example of the first two. In explaining why liberal democratic states do not war with one another, some analysts emphasize the characteristics of democratic institutions, while others highlight shared cultural beliefs and values that conduce to the peaceful resolution of differences. The third characteristic mentioned above, ideology, is of course not always peaceful. Defined as a set "of beliefs that give meaning to life" and "an explicit or implicit program of action," the program-of-action component can constitute a threat to

states of differing ideologies.[38] As exemplified in the German Third Reich, Nazism was a threat to every other ideology. Finally, numerous scholars have examined the manner in which bureaucratic politics within a government and the characteristics of large government organizations can influence state behavior.[39]

International Level of Analysis. A final place to focus when seeking to understand actions or outcomes in international politics is the international system as a whole. Accepting anarchy as a starting point, those who look to the international system generally focus on one of two categories—process or structure.

Those who look to *process* examine the interactions of states or even the transnational forces that are not clearly motivated by or confined within particular states. An example of the focus on states is provided by theorists who focus on the weight of international institutions in shaping state behavior. Given the existence of self-interested states in an anarchic system, it may nevertheless be possible to structure their interactions through institutions so that cooperation is more likely.[40] An example of the focus on transnational forces is provided by scholars and policy makers who argue for the importance of globalization. Although there is not one single agreed-upon definition, *globalization* is generally seen as an ongoing process that is decreasing the significance of state borders.[41] Enabled by reductions in transport and communication costs, new technologies, and the policy choices of many of the world's political leaders, international trade is increasing, international flows of capital are on the rise, the nature of international business activity is changing, and there is a tremendous diffusion of cultural forms. Although it may be difficult to point to globalization as the specific cause of any one event or outcome, its processes are arguably changing the character of international politics by altering the relative economic power of states, raising the salience of certain transnational concerns, increasing the challenges of global governance, and empowering new actors (see Chapter 25).

In addition to process, the *structure* of the international system can also be useful for understanding international politics. Perhaps the clearest formulation of this is in Waltz's *Theory of International Politics.* He argues that as long as anarchy exists and two or more actors seek to survive, it is possible to understand a lot about the nature of international politics merely by knowing the number of great powers in the international system.[42] For instance, a world with one great power which outstrips all others, or *unipole* (as is arguably the case with the United States today), will see other powers seeking to balance against that dominant state. At the same time, the unipole will be tempted into an overactive role in the world, because its power is unchecked.[43] Waltz's argument helpfully illuminates general tendencies, but it is unlikely to yield the specific, context-sensitive prescriptions needed by policy makers.

National Power. Despite the central importance of the concept of power, there is no universally accepted definition. This lack of agreement partially stems from four aspects of power that make it difficult to settle on a single formulation. The first of these is that power is *dynamic.* New instruments of power have appeared continuously over the centuries, and new applications for old forms are always being found. Even a seemingly backward society can achieve surprising results under strong political leadership that is willing and able to engender sacrifice and a sense of purpose among its people. The defeat of the French in Vietnam and the subsequent failure of the U.S. intervention to support South Vietnam are classic cases. The collapse of the Soviet Union in the early 19905 provides an example of the manner in which a particular state's power can change dramatically over time.

In addition to being dynamic, power is also *relative, situational,* and at least partially *subjective.* Power is relative because its utility depends in part on comparing it with whatever opposes it, and it is situational because what may generate power in a particular set of

circumstances may not in another. Finally, it is subjective in that a reputation for being powerful may be sufficient to achieve results without power actually having to be applied.

Despite these difficulties, it is nevertheless possible to say something useful about power by focusing on its relatively objective characteristics—measurements of capabilities. One of the classic definitions is Morgenthau's from *Politics Among Nations.* He defines power as consisting of: geography, natural resources, industrial capacity, military preparedness, technology and innovations, leadership, quantity and quality of armed forces, population, national character, national morale, quality of diplomacy, and quality of government.[44] Morgenthau argues that these aspects must be evaluated for the both the present and the future, and that an assessment requires analyzing each factor, associated trends, and how these trends are likely to interact over time.[45] Waltz, in his later definition already introduced above, emphasizes only seven elements. Though simpler, Waltz's formulation is similar to Morgenthau's in that they both cannot fully resolve difficulties in assessment stemming from imperfect information, weighting, and aggregation. Because of these difficulties, even careful efforts to assess and measure relative power will always be accompanied with a degree of uncertainty.

In the parlance of some observers of international relations, the definition of power as capabilities is also known as hard power. This is to distinguish it from a competing concept, soft power. Originally coined by Nye, soft power refers to "the ability to achieve desired outcomes in international affairs through attraction rather than coercion." He explains:

> It works by convincing others to follow, or getting them to agree to, norms and institutions that produce the desired behavior. ... If a state can make its power legitimate in the perception of others and establish international institutions that encourage them to channel or limit their activities, it may not need to expend many of its costly traditional economic or military resources.[46]

If power is not thought of as an end in itself, but rather as a means to further U.S. interests and values, Nye argues that the power of attraction and legitimacy can help the United States to secure these interests and values at lesser cost. Skeptics, on the other hand, argue that soft power will tend to have little or no force in shaping the behavior of other states when they have important interests at stake.

Assessing national power is an art, not a science; any specific assessment will be open to a variety of challenges. National security analysts in and out of public office are inescapably faced with the task of identifying a moving and ill-defined target and of counting that which has often yet to be adequately measured. Still, policy makers in Washington and the rest of the world must act, however scant and unreliable their information may be. National power, in one sense or another, is generally a central feature of the analyses behind their actions.

Practical Assessments of Power. When decision makers actually assess power, they invariably do so in specific contexts; that is, they engage not in some general, theoretical exercise but in a specific, situational analysis: Who is involved, over what issue, where, and when! Taking each of these questions in turn, the who element is crucial. Not only are all states not equal in quantity of resources, but the quality also differs. Health, education, motivation, and other factors confound attempts to establish reliable equivalency ratios. As an example, Israel manages to more than hold its own against adversaries many times its size. Though no government can make something from nothing, clearly some can and do have the organizational, managerial, technical, scientific, and leadership skills that enable them to make much more with equal or lesser amounts of similar resources.

This leads to the second element of situational analysis—namely, the issue. Its significance lies largely in the support or lack thereof given to national leaders over a particular matter. All governments depend on at least the passive support of their citizens in order to function, and

none can expect to endure once it has lost that minimum loyalty embodied in the term legitimacy. As long as a government satisfies the minimum expectations of the politically active or potentially active members of its society, there is little chance of internal upheaval.[47] Mobilizing resources to apply to national security tasks requires more than passive support, however; it invariably necessitates some degree of sacrifice and active involvement. For some issues, such support may be difficult to muster; others have an almost electrifying effect upon a nation's consciousness, eliciting enormous willingness to sacrifice. The attack on Pearl Harbor in 1941 had such an effect on the American people; the terrorist attacks on 9/11 arguably had the same potential— at least initially. The morass of Vietnam had little such support even at the outset and, like the war in Iraq begun in 2003, gradually generated quite the opposite. Between extremes of support and dissent lie most national security issues. In these cases, leaders must build support for those tasks they believe important or resign themselves to impotence.

The third situational feature of power is geographic—*where* events take place. All states are capable of making some sort of splash somewhere in the pool of world politics, normally in their own immediate areas. No matter how large a splash may be, its effects tend to dissipate with distance from the source. The ability to apply resources at a distance sufficient to overcome resistance generated by those closer to the conflict has always characterized great powers; it continues to provide a useful test by which to appraise claimants to that status.

This introduces the final situational feature of power, *time.* The interplay of leaders' ambitions and creativity, changes in resources, technological developments, and the public response to challenges all work to effect a continual redistribution of global power. Empires acquired to the great satisfaction of their builders have overtaxed the abilities of their successors to maintain them, resulting not only in the loss of domain but in the collapse of the founding unit as well. The Soviet Union's demise makes this point dramatically. Similarly, the piecemeal application of resources may ultimately produce a long-term drain that adversely affects areas of national life not originally thought vulnerable. This insight in part motivates those concerned about U.S. activism abroad during the 1990s and into the early twenty-first century.

Application of Power. Power for its own sake can be likened to money in the hands of a miser; it may delight its owner, but it is of little consequence to the world because it is applied to no useful purpose. The American experience between the two world wars in many ways resembles such a situation. In profound isolation, the United States forfeited its initiative in world affairs to other states, principally to the traditional European powers and Japan. The reputation of the United States as a significant military power, established in the Spanish-American War and World War I, plus its geographic advantage of being separated from other great powers by oceans served to protect the nation and its interests during this period. But reputation is a fleeting thing, especially for great powers that are identified in their own time with the existing world order. Steamship and bomber technology partially overcame the barrier of the oceans, while a foreign policy of isolationism eroded the American military reputation. Pearl Harbor and four very expensive years of war were the result of ignoring the relevance and uses of power.

The purpose of power is to overcome resistance in order to bring about or secure a preferred order of things. When the resistance is generated by other human beings, the purpose of power is to persuade those others to accept the designs or preferences in question or to destroy their ability to offer continued resistance.

Depending upon the importance attached to the goal, the capabilities available to the respective protagonists, the skills they possess in applying those capabilities, the vulnerabilities each has in other areas upon which the opposition may capitalize, and the history of conflict between them, the techniques of persuasion can take either of two principal forms: rewards or punishments.

Rewards themselves are of two types: the presentation of some benefit in exchange for the desired reaction or the willingness to forgo negative behavior in exchange for compliance.

Threats in this context are considered part of the reward approach to persuasion, because unless and until the threatening actor delivers on its threat, no actual harm has occurred. Either type of reward will work as long as all parties concerned feel they are getting something worthy of the exchange or are minimizing their losses in a situation where all the alternatives appear worse. Since the early 19905, U.S. negotiations with North Korea over the status of its nuclear weapons program provide examples of each. The United States has proven willing to offer North Korea aid and other incentives for verifiable disarmament. At the same time, the United States has threatened economic embargo and even harsher measures in the absence of compliance. (For more on the North Korean nuclear situation, see Chapter 18.)

When nations in a dispute decide to carry out a threat or initiate negative action without prior threat, they are seeking to persuade through *punishment* or coercion. Clearly, such persuasion works only if the actor being punished can avert its predicament by compliance. Therefore the threatened punishment, its timing, and its application must be chosen carefully in order to achieve the desired effect. To punish indiscriminately not only squanders resources, driving up costs, but also may be counterproductive in that it antagonizes and sharpens resistance by forcing a change in the perception of stakes.

International Relations Theory and National Security Policy

International relations theories can often be associated with such international relations traditions as realism, liberalism, and constructivism, but theories are more carefully specified. A *theory* consists of assumptions, key concepts, propositions about causal relationships, and an articulation of the conditions under which it can be expected to hold. These elements should be sufficiently clear so that the theory can be subjected to testing and possible falsification. Two examples from the realist perspective include *balance of power theory,* which looks at expectations of state behavior given different relative power situations, and the *theory of hegemonic stability,* which examines the manner in which a single, dominant power in the international system can foster an open system of international trade.[48] Two liberal tradition examples are *neoliberal institutionalism,* which examines the role of international institutions in fostering cooperation, and *democratic peace theory,* which seeks to explain peaceful relations among democracies. A theory is useful to the extent that it contributes to describing, explaining, and predicting international events and has implications for policy prescription.

When approaching a particular national security problem or situation, every policy maker has a theory. It may be held more or less self-consciously or be more or less carefully specified, but it nonetheless exists. As international relations scholar Walt states, "theory is an essential tool of statecraft. Many policy debates ultimately rest on competing theoretical visions, and relying on a false or flawed theory can lead to major foreign policy disasters."[49] As an example, Walt gives the "infamous 'risk theory'" of German Admiral Alfred von Tirpitz before World War I. His theory held that Germany's ability to threaten British naval supremacy would cause Great Britain to accept Germany's preeminence on the continent; the opposite proved to be true. As a more recent example, advocates of the U.S. war in Iraq in 2003 "believed war would lead to a rapid victory, encourage neighboring regimes to 'bandwagon' with the United States, hasten the spread of democracy in the region, and ultimately undermine support for Islamic terrorism. Their opponents argued that the war would have exactly the opposite effects."[50] As Walt goes on to explain, at stake here are propositions about the fundamental dynamics of international relations that theories can help to illuminate.

An example that shows the significant policy implications of theoretical differences is the rise of China. A realist, balance of power theorist would expect an increasingly powerful China to become increasingly assertive and a possible threat to its neighbors. As a counter, the United States should shore up regional alliance arrangements and potentially increase various facets of its own power. A neoliberal institutionalist, on the other hand, might focus on China's

increasingly extensive engagement in regional and international institutions and recommend policies to encourage and reward this engagement as a way of fostering common interests and the value that China places on peaceful relations. A constructivist might argue that China's future behavior will be decisively governed by the dominant Chinese "national ideas about how to achieve foreign policy goals" and the extent to which these ideas are achieving success.[51] If China's current policies meet setbacks, and alternative national ideas are present within important Chinese domestic constituencies (emphasizing, for example, separation from or the revision of the international system), China's policy approach could be expected to change in potentially dangerous or disruptive ways. (For more on China, see Chapters 18 and 26.) Though it might be frustrating for a policy maker to be given such contrasting visions of important policy problems, the preservation of multiple perspectives is valuable. These competing explanations and prescriptions suggest a continuing need to engage with available evidence and test reality when making critical policy choices.

Characteristics of the Current International System

One way of examining the nature of the international system today focuses on globalization and its effects. As introduced above, the economic, cultural, and political processes associated with globalization will lessen the significance of state borders over time, change the relative power among states, increase the importance of nonstate actors, and contribute to the challenges associated with global governance. Although a state can still decide to close itself as much as possible to the outside world—North Korea is the most dramatic example—the costs of doing so are only increasing over time (see Chapter 18).

The forces of globalization do not have purely positive or purely negative effects. In economic terms, although technological diffusion, increased trade, and increasingly international capital flows have improved the welfare of millions of people around the world, all countries and individuals are not able to benefit equally. Even within countries, the benefits from an increasingly open international trading system are not evenly spread. In addition to economic issues, the forces of globalization can be disruptive or even unwelcome to traditional societies in which rapid change may be difficult to assimilate and can empower violent nonstate actors.[52] (For more on globalization and human security, see Chapter 25.)

Despite the importance of globalization, states will remain the key actors in international politics for the foreseeable future. For one thing, both independently and through their actions in such international institutions as the World Trade Organization, the decisions made by states will affect the pace and nature of globalization. In addition, until or unless more effective institutions of global governance are constructed, states will remain the actors with the most capability to solve problems.[53] Even individuals or groups with a transnational agenda will need to work with or through states in order to realize their goals. Any who are tempted to take a determinist view of the impact of globalization would be wise to keep in mind the capabilities and political choices of states.

In addition to the ongoing processes of globalization, international relations scholar Robert Jervis argues that from the perspective of international security there are three remarkable aspects of the international system in the early twenty-first century. The first is the existence of a security community among the great powers: "war among the leading powers—the most developed states of the United States, Western Europe, and Japan—will not occur in the future, and is indeed no longer a source of concern for them."[54] Jervis goes on to argue that though war may be possible between Russia or China, or between one of these countries and one of the members of the security community, the diminished prospects of war between the leading powers (which are also the most economically developed and democratic) is a remarkable historical development. There is no guarantee as to duration, and possible tensions with Russia

or China retain significance, but the existence of the security community is an important aspect of the current international environment that can all too easily be taken for granted.

A second important characteristic of the current international system, noted by Jervis as well as many others, is the extraordinary concentration of political, economic, and military power in one state—the United States. The status of the United States as a single, dominant power is likely to have a significant impact on international relations for the foreseeable future, though interpretations of its implications vary widely. The realist expectation is that other states will seek to balance against the power of the United States; as this expectation has not been fully met in the early twenty-first century, analysts have looked for forms of "soft balancing" as evidence that states are still seeking ways to resist and restrain U.S. power.[55] Others argue that the U.S. position of dominance enables it to play the role of global hegemon, serving as a key provider of the collective goods that sustain the international economy. The extent to which this is sustainable depends on the will of the American population as well as the extent-to which other major powers in the system also see the United States as acting in their interest.[56] Finally, analysts from the liberal tradition might argue that U.S. unipolarity is an opportunity to reinforce the rule-governed international system, which it played such an important role in founding after World War II, through a multilateral approach to international affairs and an embrace of international institutions.[57] Though the above interpretations have limitations as well as strengths, they have in common the insight that U.S. national security policy decisions are likely to have uniquely significant force in a world in which it holds such disproportionate power.

The third characteristic of the international system identified by Jervis is the rise of terrorism and the U.S. response to the attacks on its own soil on 9/11. This characteristic is related to the second issue above, as "the American response is clearly conditioned by the nation's great capabilities and the lack of challenges from peers."[58] The unique position of the United States in the world means that actions that the United States takes in this area may have broad repercussions for international politics for years to come.

Despite important changes in the international strategic environment of the United States over time, there are also constants. One of the most important of these is that the United States will always face the need to balance the limited means it is willing to devote to national security policy with the ends it seeks to pursue. The traditional American approaches likely to shape this balance are the subject of Chapter 2; the manner in which the United States has managed or not managed to strike this balance over time is the subject of Chapter 3. Whether one assesses the current and future international environment to be extremely threatening or relatively benign, the challenges faced by U.S. policy makers in balancing U.S. national security needs with other interests and domestic priorities remain great.

Discussion Questions

1. Define the terms *national security and human security.* Are there any tensions between these two concepts?

2. What is the realist worldview? What are strengths and weakness of the realist perspective on international politics?

3. What does balance of power theory predict? Can you provide examples of balance of power theory in action?

4. What are the main mechanisms through which adherents of the liberal tradition believe that peace can be furthered in international politics? What are their strengths and weaknesses?

5. What is the constructivist critique of the idea that anarchy causes security competition among states?

6. What is *national power?* Can you quantify national power? How?

7. What is *soft power!* Is soft power important in explaining the U.S. role in the world? Why or why not?

8. How important are theories of international relations to policy makers? Should they be? Why or why not?

9. What are the most important characteristics of the international strategic environment of the United States today?

Recommended Reading

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Chapter 15
Conventional War

As the Cold War ended and the "unipolar moment" of U.S. preeminence began, it was reasonable to ask what kind of conventional, state-on-state conflicts Americans might find themselves fighting.[1] With the terrorist attacks of September 11, 2001, and U.S. dominance over any conventional army that it has faced, including the Iraqi Army in 1991 and 2003, some questioned whether the United States would ever fight a conventional opponent and argued that the military should instead shift significant resources toward confronting unconventional and asymmetric threats.[2]

As serious as the threat of terrorism is to the United States today, it is difficult to argue that terrorism is a threat comparable to that posed by the Soviet Union during the Cold War. Even if terrorists used weapons of mass destruction (WMDs) to present a catastrophic challenge to national security, it is unlikely that terrorists would have enough warheads to seriously threaten the continuation of the United States as a nation. States will continue to be the primary actors in the international arena, and any that ignore the potential of military conflict, including conventional war, do so at their own peril.[3]

A discussion of conventional war includes traditional challenges and disruptive challenges—the lower two boxes in the challenges to U.S. national security chart (Figure 13.1 in Chapter 13) considered by defense planners. *Traditional threats* are the force-on-force military operations that occur in a conventional war. To accomplish their political aims, adversaries seek to defeat one another's military forces. *Disruptive threats* include technological or operational advances that enable a potential adversary to challenge or threaten U.S. interests in the future. Both categories of threats have serious implications for U.S. national security policy.

Traditional Threats

Military planning and resource allocation around the world are still heavily focused on the development of armed forces to combat other military forces. How traditional military forces are employed is likely to differ based on the state's degree of commitment to the military operation and the scale of the political purposes at stake.

General War. *General conventional war* occurs when the resources of a state are mobilized on a massive scale in a war fought for total victory over a clear and defined enemy: either a single state or a coalition. The two world wars in the last century are commonly regarded as general conventional wars in which the resources of opposing coalitions of belligerent states were mobilized on a massive scale in a war fought for victory, requiring unconditional surrender by the vanquished enemy.[4] In both wars, progress toward victory was measured by the geographical movement of battle lines established by mass military formations and by the destruction or capture of enemy units. Victory was achieved by destroying the enemy's economic or military capacity to continue or simply defeating its political will to fight. Such victories are sealed by a formal exchange of signatures on a document of surrender or a treaty that ends the war.

For decades, many theorists have believed that the advent of the nuclear balance of terror has likely precluded another general conventional war along the lines of World War II.[5] Of course, general conventional war is still possible among non-nuclear states fighting for objectives not centrally involving important interests of the nuclear powers; the Iran-Iraq War of 1980-1988 is one example. Theoretically, limited wars could occur even among nuclear states, as long as the states restricted the conflict to the use of conventional forces, with the threat of nuclear retaliation deterring both states from escalating the conflict. The concept of *mutually assured destruction* implies that no rational head of state would invite nuclear self-destruction by

the first use of nuclear weapons, and therefore traditional conventional military strategy and tactics remain applicable and possible even among nuclear opponents. Though the logic of these propositions seems sound, they have never been tested in the nuclear era. Indeed, there has not been a general conventional conflict between nuclear powers.[6]

   Limited War. *Limited conventional war* is one in which at least one side fights with only limited resources, in a limited geographic area, or for limited objectives. Limited war "reflects an attempt to *affect* the opponent's will, not *crush* it, to make the conditions to be imposed seem more attractive than continued resistance, to strive for limited specific goals and not for complete annihilation."[7]

Limited war is hardly novel. Historically, few wars have resulted in the utter physical or political demise of a contending state. Rome's total destruction of Carthage occupies a special place in history in large part because it was so unusual an event; the term *Carthaginian Peace* is frequently used to describe the consequences of total war. In contrast, throughout much of Western history, the means, scope, objectives, and consequences of war were sharply curtailed by the limited military power of states and by their limited ability to project that power beyond their own borders. Together, such constraints tended to restrict the objectives for which states went to war and their expectations about what might be achieved thereby.

While familiar to historians and military theorists, the concept of limited war does not fit with traditional American perspectives" toward war. As discussed in Chapter 2, Americans historically have approached war in moralistic terms; the United States should only fight "just" wars and not wage war simply for narrow self-interest. Although the Korean conflict (1950-1953) was fought as a limited war, it was not the wellspring of limited war doctrines.[8] The most common reaction to it among Americans was "never again." In fact, Secretary of State John Dulles's formulation of "massive retaliation" with nuclear weapons was designed to deter future limited wars similar to Korea and was still widely viewed as a viable policy into the late 1950s.[9]

Contemporary limited war doctrine is primarily the product of western fears of nuclear war growing out of Cold War hostilities, Soviet development of a thermonuclear capability in the 19503, Russian sputniks, bomber and missile "gaps," and the balance of terror. Obviously, limited alternatives to massive retaliation had to be found when the impact of nuclear retaliation in response to non-nuclear threats raised the risk of nuclear devastation in one's own country. Moreover, massive retaliation seemed particularly inappropriate to containing the threat of communist subversion in the form of so-called wars of national liberation in the Third World, particularly in the 1950s and 1960s.

American military involvement in Vietnam was influenced in its early years largely by various doctrines of counterinsurgency warfare. After the U.S. troop buildup in 1965, these doctrines were supplemented by limited war and controlled escalation strategies that guided the application of conventional military force. Although they were difficult to achieve, important U.S. objectives—principally, the security of an independent, noncommunist government in South Vietnam—were rather clear and limited at the conflict's outset, in contrast to North Vietnam's unlimited war against South Vietnam. Few could have estimated the effect of the restraints limiting American strategy, tactics, and resources. As limits on U.S. means and actions grew— motivated by mounting casualties, escalating monetary costs, concern about direct Chinese involvement, and international and domestic public sentiment against the war—U.S. objectives became still more limited, settling for the acceptability of any kind of government in South Vietnam as long as it was freely elected and secure from North Vietnamese military aggression. By 1975, the United States was unwilling to dedicate resources even to this limited objective.[10]

The outcome of the American experience with limited war in Southeast Asia has been stated succinctly: "The war is over, the cost enormous, and the side which the United States backed lost."[11] Perhaps few conclusive lessons concerning the general utility of limited war can be drawn from Vietnam, but it was clear that for Americans the utility of the limited approach to

warfare was very low indeed throughout the 1970s and 1980s. Indeed, the strategy, tactics, and force superiority that the United States brought to the Gulf War battlefield in 1990 for a quick, decisive victory were in large part a consequence of lessons learned from limitations in Vietnam. Nevertheless, limited war remains an alternative in U.S. national security policy, albeit an approach fraught with various problems.[12]

The Nature of Competitors in Conventional War.   Whether the United States finds itself facing the threat of general conventional war or limited conventional war hinges on the type of potential enemy. Only a viable peer could cause the United States to mobilize its resources on a massive scale for a general conventional war. In the early twenty-first century, no state meets this threshold. However, a peer competitor could arise by attaining strength in one of two ways—internally or externally.[13] *Internal balancing*—a state using its own resources to increase its power—is unlikely to allow any state to achieve peer status vis-a-vis the United States for the foreseeable future in the absence of a technological breakthrough that would close the military capabilities gap with the United States. A major opponent's breakthrough capability to nullify American superiority in command, control, communications and intelligence (C^3I) would be a conceivable example. To the extent that the United States is perceived as a status quo power, it is also unlikely to prompt alliances or coalitions forming against it—that is, by states resorting to *external balancing* that would lead to conventional war.[14] In the absence of a peer competitor, any conventional war that the United States engages in will likely be a limited rather than a general one. However, over the longer term, the possible development of a disruptive threat from future potential peer competitors, such as China, Russia, or India, is something that defense planners must consider and is discussed below.

A more likely scenario, particularly in the near term, is the development of a hostile regional hegemonic power or the escalation of a regional conflict that leads to U.S. intervention. A hostile regional hegemon may decide to use force to advance its own interests because it perceives the United States as being either unwilling or unable to respond. Whether and how the United States would respond would depend on its current level of military commitments, its political will, and the national interest at stake. The U.S. National Security Strategy (NSS) of March 2006 provides some indication of the potential willingness of the U.S. to intervene in limited regional conflicts, even when American national interests do not seem to be directly challenged:

> Regional conflicts do not stay isolated for long and often spread or devolve into humanitarian tragedy or anarchy. Outside parties can exploit them to further other ends, much as al-Qa'ida exploited the civil war in Afghanistan. This means that even if the United States does not have a direct stake in a particular conflict, our interests are likely to be affected over time.[15]

Thus, there are potential regional interests that could warrant U.S. military intervention. Though the statement above is sufficiently ambiguous to invite differing interpretations, a would-be hostile regional hegemon would be ill advised to easily assume U.S. inaction.

Disruptive Threats: Rise of a Peer Competitor

Although the rise of a peer competitor is unlikely in the foreseeable future, its development would present a dangerous strategic situation for the United States, and thus it merits analysis. Although some worry about China, despite its phenomenal economic growth over the last twenty-five years, it is not likely to be able to rival the United States militarily in the near term. Although exact budgetary comparisons are difficult, most estimates of military spending reflect that the United States spends far more than does China on defense. And in *qualitative* terms, the differences are even more profound (see Chapters 18 and 26).

To become a peer competitor and thereby compete militarily, head to head, with the United States, a country would need to achieve a major advance in technology, operational art, or some combination of the two with which it could counter decades of U.S. investment in high-technology weapons. Although technology and the ability to effectively use military systems are important—and often the former is of little usefulness without the latter—the prospect of "leap ahead" technologies preoccupies many defense analysts. Because of the length of time required to procure a new weapons system and the high cost of doing so, after a nation commits to developing a particular system, it is difficult to halt that production cycle in favor of a newer, more potent one. While one country develops the most technologically advanced weapons system (at the time of its decision), another country could "leap ahead" with even more advanced technology. Thus, disruptive threats could emerge.

Research and Development. Modes of conventional war fighting and war prevention have become inextricably linked to the sophistication and scientific currency of weapons systems. As just noted, it is possible that a seemingly invulnerable superpower could find its interests threatened virtually overnight because of breakthrough technology. It is no longer sufficient to be a World War II-style "arsenal of democracy" and outproduce a potential opponent with average weapons. In the twenty-first century, arms competition has become as much qualitative as it is quantitative.

The establishment and maintenance of a strong technology base and leadership in scientific investigation is a principal determinant of the future technological capability of a state. Military research and development (R&D) capability is an important indicator of the future military power of the state. If the base for future advancement and continuing progress in technological fields is inadequate, the military component of national power will erode as technological advances enable competitors to pass it by. Alternatively, the state will become dependent on imported sophisticated defense systems, which could constrain its policy options. States today appropriately view the technological potential and capabilities of opponents as major factors in capability assessments.[16]

Rapid advances in technology can significantly affect national security in at least three distinct ways. First, a successful technological breakthrough can have a considerable impact on the quality and capability of conventional forces. To highlight one example that worked in favor of the United States, the global positioning system (GPS), which is now commonly used in daily life for such purposes as automobile navigation, was first used in combat in Operation Desert Storm in 1991. Prior to the relatively specific technological breakthrough of GPS, maneuvering several divisions of thousands of vehicles over a desert with few terrain features for orientation and battle space management would have been extraordinarily difficult. But the deployment of and training with GPS only months before the war provided a technology that "revolutionized combat operations on the ground and in the air during Operation Desert Storm and was—as one Allied commander noted—one of two particular pieces of equipment that were potential war winners."[17] If the Chinese military or another conceivable peer competitor could develop a technological breakthrough of similar significance, they would have the potential to disrupt American military predominance in at least one major dimension of combat operations.

A second significant aspect of technology's contribution stems from the uncertainty inherent in newness and change. A sizable R&D program, even if it is unsuccessful in gaining major breakthroughs, contributes the possibility of associated successes or surprise advances. This introduces a degree of uncertainty into a potential adversary's calculations, intensifying its sense of risk over particular policy alternatives. A further fear generated by the unknowable arising out of possible technological breakthroughs is that a breakthrough could make much of a nation's standing military force obsolete. Even if such a breakthrough did not result immediately in military defeat, the cost of rebuilding a security force from the ground up could be prohibitive. At a minimum, a breakthrough could affect the quality of a state's existing military and,

subsequently, its calculations of relative power. Quickly changing relative-power and balance-of-power calculations could lead to conventional conflict. Conceivably, the losing state in the R&D competition might, in the absence of other options, feel compelled to initiate conflict with the winner to avoid certain future defeat because of its newfound technological inferiority.[18]

The implications of a true breakthrough pose a dilemma. Given the often lengthy lead time from concept to application and the high rate of technological change in the world, planners of the first state to discover a concept will be reluctant to concede the initiative to the second discoverer, yet they could err by "locking themselves in" to the development, procurement, and deployment of the earliest operational prototype, a *first-generation* system. An opponent, in response, could concentrate instead on the development of more advanced *second-generation* applications and, by skillfully collapsing technological states into each other, could balance the capability with a more advanced system in almost the same time frame. Historically, this case is illustrated by the "missile gap" of 1958-1962. The Soviet Union, by launching Sputnik, demonstrated the technological capability to build an intercontinental ballistic missile (ICBM). Immediately thereafter, Soviet spokesmen began implying that the Soviets were deploying first-generation ICBMs; in fact, they were not.[19] The United States, uncertain about the truth of Soviet statements, rushed missile programs to completion and deployed first-generation ICBMs to counter the supposed threat. The problem of uncertainty and the fear of technological breakthrough contributed to the U.S. reactions. In retrospect, the outcome of this situation was counterproductive for both sides. The Soviet Union suddenly found itself on the inferior side of the strategic balance, faced with a larger U.S. missile force than anticipated. The United States, as a result of its rush to redress, found itself with a costly and obsolete first-generation missile force that had to be phased out and replaced.

Today, to balance the need to adopt advanced technology while attempting to avoid the deleterious impact of locking in a first-generation technology, many military acquisition programs use spiral development. *Spiral development* is a form of evolutionary acquisition in which the end-state technology is not specified when a program starts, but the military requirements are refined incrementally as the technology is developed, depending on feedback from users and technological breakthroughs.[20] As the rate of technological advances increases in the information age, it is critically important for the research, development, and acquisition systems to be able to adapt as well.[21]

The third way that rapid technological change can affect national security is, ironically, the possibility of disproportionate reliance on technological breakthroughs, which appear to provide a significantly advanced capability but, in fact, are less effective or otherwise easily countered when used against a thinking enemy in combat. For example, in conducting the air war against ground units in Kosovo, many military leaders believed that the technological advances and sophistication of the intelligence, aircraft, and precision munitions would and did have a significant effect on the Serbian military in Kosovo. After the war, however, detailed bomb damage assessments indicated that the bombings had at best a "modest effect" on targets, in spite of the advances in technology.[22] In the worst case, fascination with technology can distract national security decision makers from the nature and ultimate purpose of warfare. As Fred Kagan observes:

> The U.S. strategic community in the 1990s was in general so caught up with the minutia of technology that it lost sight of the larger purpose of war, and therefore missed the emergence of a challenge even more important than that of technology—the challenge of designing military operations to achieve particular political objectives.[23]

Although technological breakthroughs can have a significant, even decisive, effect on military competition, overestimating technology's ability to ameliorate the inherent fog and friction of warfare can also lead to failures in national security policy.

The Revolution in Military Affairs and Defense Transformation. Incorporation of the latest technological changes into the military has always been a significant concern for the Department of Defense, and indeed for all military establishments. Changes in equipment, organization, and tactics that the services developed after the Vietnam conflict were so transformative and decisive in the 1990-1991 Gulf War that they were labeled as a "Revolution in Military Affairs" (RMA).[24] With the advent of the George W. Bush administration in 2001, Secretary of Defense Donald Rumsfeld vigorously pursued the RMA, using the term *defense transformation,* created an Office of Force Transformation, and published a Transformation Planning Guidance document to better manage the changes.[25] Regardless of the name given to the adaptation of military capabilities, understanding the characteristics and implications of such changes is an essential component of national security policy.

Information technology and precision weapons played a critical role in shaping the approach to warfare taken by many senior military and civilian leaders in the Pentagon in the 1990s.[26] Many believed that increasingly lethal yet precise weapons, coupled with information dominance, would facilitate decisive military operations without the need for large, mobilized land forces. Thus, defense transformation focused on increasing reconnaissance and intelligence capabilities, standoff munitions, and computers to effectively integrate all components of an increasingly complex and fast-paced battlefield. The defeat of the Taliban in Afghanistan and the overthrow of Saddam Hussein's regime in Iraq seemed initially to validate this approach. As demonstrated by continued operations in Iraq and Afghanistan, however, such dominating conventional capabilities do not necessarily translate to victory when fighting an adversary who purposely avoids such strengths.

Whether described as an RMA or as defense transformation, most analysts agree that there are at least four elements of a potentially significant military adaptation: technological change, systems development, operational innovation, and organizational adaptation.[27] Technological innovation without a concomitant change in the concepts and organization for employing such technology, however, is of limited utility. One such example is the significant time it has taken the U.S. military to adapt organizationally to fully maximize the advantages gained through the use of battlefield-tracking technology.[28] Only with the wars in Iraq and Afghanistan did the Army shift away from its traditional division-centric organization and capitalize on the advances made in precision air power and precision navigation systems.

Changing organizational concepts can lead to the effective exploitation of existing technology. For example, special forces soldiers in Afghanistan integrated centuries-old transportation technology (horses) with sophisticated targeting technology (laser targeting, satellite communications, and precision munitions) to create a capability that Rumsfeld praised as being transformational. As he described it, this integration of sophisticated technology with cavalry skills "shows that a revolution in military affairs is about more than building new high-tech weapons—though that is certainly part of it. It is also about new ways of thinking and new ways of fighting."[29] Organizational and conceptual change may be as important as technological change in creating a new military capability that is effective on the battlefield.

The response by potential peer competitors to the current U.S. defense transformation is particularly interesting.[30] As mentioned above, technology can affect national security planning either because of the technological breakthrough itself or because of the uncertainty associated with newness and change. Traditionally, great powers or those aspiring to be great powers have attempted to keep up technologically by committing themselves to an R&D program within the constraints of the competition for national resources. At the beginning of the twenty-first century, however, states appear to be conceding defeat to U.S. technological superiority. Rather than attempting to match the technological advances of the United States in most or even many areas, such countries as China are focusing more on developing capabilities to exploit potential U.S. weaknesses. During the 1980s, when China focused on responses to possible conflict with the Soviet Union, it concluded that its best defense strategy would be have the capacity to

attack "soft targets," such as command posts; electronic weapons control systems; and command, control, communications, and intelligence (C^{3}I) systems.[31] China appears to have decided to take a similar approach to potential confrontations with the United States.

As the United States develops systems of increasing complexity, it will become more vulnerable to attacks against those sophisticated information-based systems. Rather than modifying their strategies to reflect technology, as often happens in the evolution of U.S. strategy, such countries as China may simply employ new technology to fit their existing strategies after the technology has been developed by other, more advanced industrial countries, such as the United States. For example, the idea of the "people's war" remains embedded in Chinese strategic culture. The technological advances of the past twenty years have not fundamentally altered this concept but rather have simply added new meanings.[32]

Other potential responses by those conceding U.S. technological superiority include the acquisition or development of WMDs or the exploitation of asymmetric warfare.[33] Some countries may calculate that their possession of WMDs can deter the United States from using conventional force against them. Based on the U.S. military's record in Iraq and Afghanistan, many countries will likely conclude that asymmetric warfare is the best means of countering U.S. strength in a limited war, because it allows technologically inferior forces to exploit the vulnerabilities of a technology-centric opponent. The most dangerous scenario would be a combination of asymmetric techniques and nuclear capability, as discussed in Chapter 14.[34]

Disruptive Threats and the Escalation of Regional Conflicts

Another possible response to U.S. conventional military superiority is for regional powers to develop a niche military capability that threatens U.S. interests.[35] China's development of the ability to shoot down satellites is an example of this response. Although the rise of a peer competitor to the United States is highly unlikely in the foreseeable future, it is quite possible that states hostile to U.S. strategic interests will develop into regional hegemonic powers and subsequently threaten American national security interests.

The 2006 Quadrennial Defense Review describes potentially disruptive threats as "countries at strategic crossroads" and declares that the United States will use all of its power to "shape these [nations'] choices in ways that foster cooperation and mutual security interests. At the same time, the United States, its allies and partners must also hedge against the possibility that a major or emerging power could choose a hostile path in the future."[36] In other words, the United States seeks the integration of states that represent potential disruptive threats into an international system characterized by peaceful political and economic competition. In the end, that outcome is far more productive for all involved than one of military competition. The United States is most likely to be successful in this aim if it effectively leverages all instruments of national power.

A short list of potential hostile regional hegemonic powers includes China in East Asia, Russia in Central Asia and Eastern Europe, India in South Asia, Iran in the Middle East, and perhaps Venezuela in South America. Whether these rising regional powers are or will become hostile to U.S. strategic interests depends largely on two factors: first, the historical relationship that the country has had with the United States; and second, the extent to which specific foreign policy goals of the two sides diverge or conflict. In the short term, the United States can do little regarding the former, but it has significant control over the latter. Through its positive interaction with potentially hostile regional powers, it is possible that the United States can overcome challenges emanating from a problematic history of relationships.

Although it was not explicitly articulated in this way at the time, the U.S. approach to Japan and Germany since World War II is an example of the productive integration of potentially disruptive powers. Both countries have sophisticated military forces and R&D capacities, and both could develop technologies that could be channeled in ways that would threaten U.S.

interests. This has not happened. Instead, American engagement with these states over more than sixty years has helped to make these countries U.S. allies. Though they may compete economically, and sometimes differ diplomatically, it is inconceivable that these countries and the United States would threaten one another militarily.

At first glance, a promising solution to discouraging regional powers from becoming hostile to U.S. interests, or perhaps even reducing existing hostility, appears straightforward. The United States could simply act multilaterally whenever possible and otherwise act in a matter to reduce suspicion about American intentions (see Chapter 26 for a more in-depth discussion of the role of *multilateralism).* Thus, the strategic challenge for the United States is to pursue its fundamental security interests, including its interest in combating terrorism worldwide, without inducing either great power competition or the rise of hostile regional hegemons.[37] But, aggressively combating terror could require the United States to act unilaterally, potentially employing the doctrine of preemption with the unintended effect of provoking hostility or even efforts by other states to strengthen themselves militarily or form alliances to be better postured to oppose—or defend themselves against—the United States.[38]

Whether an aggressive strategy, such as preemption, is likely to do more good than harm is a contentious debate. This topic is further discussed in Chapter 14. One problem with such strategies is that they have adverse, unintended consequences. As Stephen Biddle notes:

> If the chief determinant of balancing is perception of others' intent, then continued erosion of world perception of American intentions can be an important stimulus to great power competition, and energetic American use of force against terror has proven to be an important catalyst for negative perceptions of American intentions.[39]

Though most countries realize that they cannot compete with the United States militarily any time soon, balancing through the formation of hostile regional coalitions remains possible. However, the most probable response by a hostile regional power or coalition is to threaten U.S. national security by attacking U.S. economic or political interests rather than attempting military confrontation. The alignment of France, Germany, and Russia to oppose U.S. intervention in Iraq in 2003, for example, provides a vivid case of an ad hoc coalition undermining U.S. national interests diplomatically. Hugo Chavez and his anti-American efforts in South America demonstrate a hostile regional power attempting to undermine U.S. economic interests. Despite such examples of soft balancing, which can be frustrating diplomatically, the United States is not likely to find itself in a limited or general conventional war against these adversarial regional powers or coalitions over political or economic interests.

Escalation of Regional Conflicts. Since the terrorist attacks of 9/11, the prospect of regional conflicts has not diminished, and in some cases has perhaps increased. According to the 2006 NSS, "the U.S. strategy for addressing regional conflicts includes three levels of engagement: conflict prevention and resolution; conflict intervention; and post-conflict stabilization and reconstruction."[40] Subsequent chapters provide a more detailed analysis of regional issues confronting the United States and potential state-on-state conflicts and crises that might occur. However, a quick overview of some of the potential contingencies in the international security environment today makes it clear that there are several possibilities for new, limited conventional wars.

The Korean Peninsula will certainly be a major source of friction for the foreseeable future. A great gulf exists between North and South Korea, and, political rhetoric notwithstanding, no major actor in the region supports near-term unification of the peninsula. After its successful testing of a nuclear weapon in 2006, North Korea's nuclear weapons program status is no longer in doubt. Additionally, it maintains a military with more than I million service members, potentially armed with chemical, nuclear, and even biological weapons. These forces, most of

which are positioned in relatively close proximity to the demilitarized zone separating the two Koreas, pose a constant danger of surprise attack or even unintended military incidents. Those forces would eventually lose a conventional war against the U.S.-South Korean Combined Forces Command of approximately twenty thousand U.S. and six hundred fifty thousand South Korean uniformed personnel. Nevertheless, North Korea's possession of nuclear weapons has dramatically increased the risks. Even absent the use of nuclear weapons, North Korea has the capability to wreak destruction in the greater Seoul metropolitan area, where almost a third of South Koreans and most of the eighty thousand Americans living in South Korea reside.

China continues to undergo a transition from a centrally planned, state-led economy to a more open, market economy. It has experienced tremendous economic expansion over the last twenty-five years.[41] However, the growth has been very uneven—coastal areas have gained disproportionately, while its inland provinces remain comparatively impoverished. Increasing inequality could produce domestic instability within China. Should the leaders of China attempt to shore up domestic support by resorting to hypernationalism and by attempting, by force or dire threat, to regain control of Taiwan, as some feared was the case in 1996 when China tested missiles in the Taiwan Straits, reverberations would be severe. Japan and other Asian powers would be gravely concerned by such Chinese bellicosity, and regional economic relations would be seriously affected. The U.S. relationship with Taiwan, as well as regionally, could result in involvement in any armed conflict between China and Taiwan.

Further, the dispute over Kashmir between India and Pakistan will be a strategic concern for the United States for the foreseeable future. The tense situation in Kashmir has repeatedly led to conventional conflict, and the United States can ill afford to have the tensions result in a full-scale conventional conflict that might escalate into nuclear war. Because both countries are integral players in the U.S. effort to combat terrorism worldwide, it is conceivable—though unlikely—that the United States would directly intervene with conventional forces as part of an international effort to bring any conflict over Kashmir to an early resolution.[42]

The Middle East will likely be the most pressing source of regional instability to preoccupy American strategists for years to come, as described in more detail in Chapter 20. The question of Palestine continues to smolder, while Iraq and Afghanistan continue to struggle, against great odds, in their development of governmental capacity. Iran's regional ambitions could also touch off further conflicts. The United States, dependent on the oil of the region and committed to Israel's security, could become a participant in additional conventional conflicts in the Middle East.

Issues in Conventional War

Responding to these and other various regional instabilities and conflicts will pose challenges that are similar to the limited war concerns that prevailed during the Cold War. At issue will be U.S. interests, objectives, means, and constraints. Each of these four factors will affect the American approach to future conventional wars.

The extent to which future conflicts will be limited will largely be determined by the U.S. interests at stake. The more significant the interests, logically, the more general the war might be. World War II, in which two global powers threatened the United States directly, required a much more complete U.S. response than the localized challenge posed by North Korea. The nature of the U.S. interests involved will also affect limitations in the actual waging of any war. In the 1991 Gulf War, for example, U.S. interests in Saudi Arabian security and the preservation of international access to Gulf oil were deemed by the George H. W. Bush administration to be vital and worth a major, if still limited, effort.

Problems of defining and pursuing interests are more challenging since the end of the Cold War. International politics is not so, much a zero-sum game as it was during that era, where every gain for Moscow was perceived as a loss for Washington. In the twenty-first century, it is

sometimes difficult to determine what U.S. interests are at risk in the developing world and what level of military action is justified to protect them. The George W. Bush administration decided that the putative possession of WMDs by the Hussein regime posed an unacceptable risk to the United States and that military conflict was necessary to remove the risk. Clearly there was disagreement within the United States and in the international community over this decision.

In terms of objectives, architects of U.S. conventional war strategies face problematic confusion between the concepts of limited and total war. Generally, regional conflicts will threaten only limited U.S. interests and will likely demand only a limited U.S. military effort, but the damage done to a target country could approach that characteristic of a more general or total war. The focus on regional conflicts also lends itself to confusion, if not clashes, between political and military objectives, arising from the tension between a limited war's aims and the highly intense fighting likely to be required.

There is also the possibility that, when decision makers consider responses to a regional "contingency," national security policies—including the military strategy designed to address such events—might encourage them to rely too much on the short-term use of military power to solve what are at heart political, economic, or social problems. This possibility is enhanced by intense media coverage and domestic attitudes that pressure policy makers toward rapid, decisive action. Once a war has begun, however, the opposite presumption—of limited rather than total ends—might emerge in the minds of leaders and the public. In the case of the 1990-1991 war with Iraq, the George H. W. Bush administration from the outset denied that it sought the removal of Hussein from power; at the time, these statements seemed appropriate to a war of limited ends. As it turned out, however, U.S. and coalition interests might have been better served at that time by a more ambitious set of military and political goals *if* allied and public consensus had been possible. Ruling out total victory also complicated war termination. When the key postwar U.S. goal was "getting out quickly," other goals—such as encouraging a transition to a democratic Iraq under different rule or protecting the Kurds and Shiites from Hussein's vengeance—fell by the wayside.

The Iraq War in 2003 presented somewhat different issues in the connection between interests and objectives. In that war, unlike in the 1990-1991 Gulf War, the explicitly stated objective was to remove Hussein from power and to effect a regime change. Not unlike the first Gulf War, however, insufficient attention was given to the problem of transitioning from war to peace after the stated objective had been attained.

It is important to note that military objectives should serve political objectives that are established by political leaders who take into consideration the whole array of U.S. military, political, and economic interests. War is an extension of politics, and political leaders should never begin a war without having a vision for its political end in mind. The 1990-1991 Gulf War and the Iraq War in 2003 demonstrate the difficulty of "winning the peace" when war commences without a clear vision for its political end.

The means used to pursue conventional war also must adjust in an era that includes a persistent conflict with global terrorism. The notion that all international conflicts have important social, economic, and political foundations and cannot be treated merely as military phenomena has gained nearly unanimous acceptance. In the Gulf War, for example, waging a limited regional war involved far more than the purely military tasks of fighting air and ground battles; it entailed the diplomacy needed to assemble an international coalition with the backing of the United Nations, the embargo levied against Iraq, economic incentives offered to certain Arab states (such as Egypt), and response to the environmental hazards posed by Hussein's forces burning Kuwaiti oil fields.

Waging conventional war also required diplomatic negotiation to secure basing rights for ground forces and flyover rights for air forces, assistance from neighboring countries to control cross-border traffic, and the enlistment of nongovernmental organizations to help with countless postconflict reconstruction tasks. In both the Gulf War and the Iraq War, observations that U.S.

and coalition military actions were incomplete were frequently based on the fact that important national objectives—even though they may not have been fully articulated at the outset of the campaign—were not achieved.

In the realm of constraints on U.S. action, one of the most powerful will continue to be public opinion. One of the biggest challenges confronting President George H. W. Bush in August 1990, when Iraq attacked its neighbor, was an apparent lack of public support for military action—a lingering "Vietnam syndrome." Polls showed little public enthusiasm for a war to oust Hussein from Kuwait, and Congress balked at the idea of actually declaring war or in some other way authorizing the president to initiate major conflict. President George W. Bush faced a similar challenge as his administration began to make the case for war against Iraq in 2002.

In both cases, of course, public and congressional doubts were overcome, and authorization was given to both presidents. In the Gulf War, this was partly a result of a robust international consensus: Americans were apparently much more willing to accept the use of force in that conflict if it was clear that the world community also accepted it and agreed to stand side-by-side with U.S. forces in the war. Involving friends and allies in any conventional limited war undoubtedly contributes to, and even may be a precondition for, gaining domestic public support.

In the Iraq War, the still-lingering effects of the 9/11 attacks were enough to provide American support for the conflict, despite significant international opposition. The paucity of international support for military action in 2003, which was critical in Gulf War, did not appear to be a binding constraint as the president made the case that removing Hussein from power was a vital national interest that justified military intervention.

One of the clear lessons from both wars therefore relates to the means by which national leaders can create support for a U.S. military intervention. Such support will result from a shared sense of purpose and a perception of a common goal. A significant event, such as a major terrorist attack, would seem to generate a sufficient sense of common purpose and to preclude the need for the support of a significant part of the world community. However, the mostly lone struggle to stabilize Iraq after the removal of Hussein in 2003 will certainly make Americans far more leery of "going it alone" in the future.

The extent of support for conventional operations will depend, of course, on the conduct of the war and how quickly it ends. If it is defined by a specific, powerful moment—the Japanese attack on Pearl Harbor, Iraq's aggression against Kuwait, or the attacks of 9/11—the onset of a war will often serve to *galvanize* public opinion behind the U.S. military effort. This is consistent with the "rally around the flag" effect discussed in Chapter 2. Often, however, when the war is extended and the casualty lists grow, the citizenry is confronted with the brutal consequences of war and begins to rethink its support. That is certainly what happened in Vietnam. George H. W. Bush never faced this problem in the 1990-1991 Gulf War because of the war's short duration, relatively few casualties, and negligible costs.[43] Many thought that, collectively, Americans had moved beyond the "Vietnam syndrome." The costs in casualties, time, and spending, as well as the outcome in the current conflicts in Iraq and Afghanistan, will significantly affect the constraints on future presidents engaging in conventional wars.

The issues of public opinion and public diplomacy are complicated by the pervasiveness of information technology in today's world, as discussed in Chapter ii. Beginning with the Gulf War, and continuing in the Somalia, Bosnia, Haiti, Kosovo, and Iraq interventions, reporters often broadcast stories in the United States before they are reported through military channels. The requirements of information operations are more demanding than ever as defense leaders may face a media that is occasionally better informed about some aspects of the battlefield situation than they are. If public support is to be maintained, U.S. interventions must be swiftly decisive, and during such operations the government's ability to report accurately must be equal to that of the world's media.

The implementation of the "embedded reporters" plan during operations in Iraq in 2003 was useful as a means of meeting the need for information dissemination, even if some editors and news organizations believed that their reporters had "gone native" and had lost their ability to objectively report on the war. Whether it is through embedded reporters or another program, the media will certainly be a continuous, important element of all future conventional wars.

Looking Ahead

The United States will encounter formidable challenges in the concepts and the conduct of conventional conflicts in the coming decades. Despite the current strategic focus on terrorism and the increasing concern about China's military buildup, limited conventional war will continue to be a distinct possibility for the United States. Policy makers and citizens must understand how to best think about the interests, objectives, means, and constraints involved with conventional war. Perhaps the most useful, succinct guidance—although not necessarily applicable in every case—was furnished by General Colin Powell when he was Chairman of the Joint Chiefs of Staff. A further distillation of Secretary of Defense Caspar Weinberger's tests for employing military force, the so-called "Powell Doctrine" (discussed in Chapter 13) required that any commitment of U.S. military forces must: establish clear objectives, use overwhelming force, ensure public support, and plan an exit strategy for U.S. military forces before entering any direct military conflict.[44]

Discussion Questions

1. How does one define *limited conventional war* versus *general conventional war!*

2. To what extent is the concept of general war relevant to the United States as a policy option? Is it more relevant to other states? Why?

3. During any international crisis, what domestic considerations (if any) might constrain the United States in regard to limited, regional conflicts?

4. Were the Arab-Israeli wars of 1967 and 1973 or the Gulf War of 1990-1991 limited wars? Was the Iran-Iraq War limited or general? The 2003 Gulf War? By what standard? From whose perspective?

5. What effect can a nation's R&D programs have on a potential enemy's perception of its military capability?

6. If the United States had sufficient national interests in a specific region in the world, could a regional conflict escalate into a total conventional war? From whose perspective? Explain.

7. Is there a threat to the United States of a rise of a peer competitor? If so, who might it be, and how should the United States respond?

8. To what extent have technological changes since the end of the Cold War been revolutionary? How have these changes altered the nature of conventional war, if at all?

9. Do the current rapid advances in technology make the prospect of a peer competitor to present a disruptive threat to the United States more likely? How should the United States best respond to such a competitor?

10. How should U.S. interests drive the objectives and affect the means that the United States employs in a conventional war?

11. To what extent should U.S. objectives and means in a conventional war be constrained by U.S. public opinion? By international public opinion? By diplomatic pressure? By other factors?

12. What are the most likely conventional wars that the United States will face in the next ten years? Who will they most likely be with? Why?

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Internet Resources

The National Security Strategy of the United States of America, March 2006, www.whitehouse.gov/nsc/nss/2oo6 The Project on Defense Alternatives (full-text online sources on the Revolution in Military Affairs, information war, and asymmetric warfare), www.comw.org/rma

Chapter 17
Nuclear Policy

Throughout the Cold War, nuclear weapons formed the backbone of Western defense policy. Unable to fully match the conventional military strength of the former Soviet Union and the Warsaw Pact, the United States and its North Atlantic Treaty Organization (NATO) allies used the threat of nuclear retaliation to help avert what U.S. policy makers believed to be a serious risk of Soviet military adventurism as well as to deter the use of the Soviet nuclear arsenal. In support of this policy, the United States and its allies built tens of thousands of strategic and tactical nuclear weapons and deployed them in Europe, the Far East, and at sea. The policy was fraught with risks—indeed some believed that the nuclear arms race placed the very survival of the human race in jeopardy—but Western leaders thought the Soviet threat justified those risks.

In the years since the end of the Cold War, the Soviet nuclear threat has been replaced by a range of challenges posed by new or aspiring nuclear weapons states, such as North Korea and Iran, as well as by nonstate actors looking to acquire a nuclear weapon or a nuclear device to strike at Western targets. Particularly in the case of nonstate actors, U.S. strategic planners confront an enemy that most analysts believe cannot be deterred or contained by threats of nuclear reprisal (see Chapter 14). This chapter primarily focuses on what defense planners have termed *catastrophic challenges,* as shown in the upper right box in the diagram of threats identified in Figure 13.1 in Chapter 13 (though it also has implications for traditional and disruptive challenges). It examines the role of nuclear weapons in the post-Cold War security environment and measures to prevent the spread of nuclear weapons to states and nonstate actors that might use them against the United States or its allies.

U.S. Nuclear Strategy during the Cold War

As the leader of the Free World during the Cold War, the United States was the principal guardian of western Europe, the Middle East, northeast Asia, and other regions against communist incursions. Its nuclear arsenal was the keystone of containment, providing military strength and deterrence that buttressed U.S. and NATO conventional military strength and political unity. On many occasions, the United States enunciated or became party to doctrines explicitly relying on the threat of nuclear war to achieve U.S. strategic aims (see Chapter 3). The predictable result was the deployment of a vast U.S. nuclear arsenal that included more than twelve thousand strategic warheads, thousands of tactical nuclear weapons at locations throughout Europe and the Far East, extremely accurate counterforce nuclear weapons, the satellites and command systems to help guide them, intercontinental ballistic missiles (ICBMs), submarine launched missiles, and heavy bombers to penetrate enemy airspace. The United States spent trillions of dollars on the strategic triad—the combination of nuclear missiles, bombers, and submarines—that comprised the U.S. nuclear posture.

Nuclear Deterrence. At different times, U.S. policy during the Cold War reflected two basic theories regarding how to deter an opponent from starting a nuclear war. One theory, known as *assured destruction,* holds that as long as a nuclear power is capable of responding in kind to a nuclear attack, any aggressor state would know that an attack would be suicidal and would therefore be deterred from making such an attack. Assured destruction requires a secure, second-strike capability—a nuclear force capable of withstanding an enemy attack and responding. If both sides have this capability, a situation known as *mutually assured destruction* (MAD) exists. Neither side can rationally start a war, because both sides are vulnerable to planned and credible retaliation. This threatened retaliation is often aimed at civilian targets, such as cities and industries, in what is called a *countervalue* approach to targeting. Assured

destruction does not require a large or extremely accurate nuclear arsenal, but one that is certainly survivable and capable, after an enemy attack, of inflicting an unacceptably high level of punishment. The emphasis on credibility requires not merely the existence of nuclear weapons but the command, control, training, and exercising of nuclear weapon delivery systems so that an adversary will conclude that it could and would suffer devastating retaliation if it launched a nuclear attack.

A warfighting theory supported by a *counterforce* nuclear strategy, on the other hand, is much more ambitious than a countervalue, assured destruction approach. It holds that to deter an opponent, whose leaders might believe a nuclear war could be fought and won, military forces must have the ability to go beyond retaliation and be able to prevail over an opponent in a nuclear conflict. Such a strategy requires numerous accurate weapons capable of destroying enemy nuclear forces, well beyond the relatively few nuclear weapons required to hold enemy population centers or factories at risk. Counterforce strikes could be aimed at either nuclear or non-nuclear targets, such as command nodes or radar sites, but it is most commonly associated with counternuclear strikes. This approach seeks to deter by denying the attacker the ability to prevail in a nuclear attack.

One common analogy for the nuclear superpowers during the Cold War is of two people with guns pointed at one another's heads. In the context of this image, assured destruction would have each side merely watch and wait and promise to pull the trigger if the other side does. Counterforce advocates say such a mutual suicide pact may not be credible and argue that each side must be prepared to win a gun duel rather than merely fire back. The distinction is between deterrence by threatening punishment and deterrence by demonstrating the capability to win a nuclear conflict.

History of U.S. Nuclear Weapons Strategy. To properly understand nuclear strategy today, the evolution of U.S. nuclear weapons policy must be considered, because previous approaches provide the theory, context, weapons, and precedents that affect current decision making. The earliest U.S. nuclear war plans emphasized countervalue targeting of Soviet cities because of the small number of bombs available and because of their unprecedented destructiveness. President Harry Truman saw little value in nuclear weapons and placed emphasis on arms control with such initiatives as the 1946 Baruch Plan—a proposal for total nuclear disarmament. Civilian control of nuclear weapons was absolute; it was not until 1948 that the military was allowed to formulate plans for the use of nuclear weapons.[1]

Eventually, however, Truman redoubled U.S. production of nuclear weapons and began to permit some military control.[2] Once given the right to formulate nuclear options, the new Strategic Air Command began to immediately develop plans to destroy Soviet war-making potential. The Soviet Union's August 1949 test of an atomic bomb lent new urgency to efforts to target Soviet military assets. By 1956-1957, the Soviet Union was expected to possess up to two hundred fifty bombs, and Soviet nuclear stockpiles, production facilities, and bomber delivery vehicles became the chief targets of the U.S. nuclear force.[3]

This targeting policy was not publicly announced, however. Secretary of State John Foster Dulles formally endorsed massive retaliation in 1954, and official U.S. statements still stressed general retaliation against Soviet society. Yet counterforce targeting had already begun, and target priorities would remain largely unchanged for decades. By the late 1950s, the push to target the Soviet military was in full force, and Defense Secretary Thomas Gates spelled out the implications: "We are adjusting our power to a counterforce theory," he said. "We are not basing our requirements on just bombing Russia for retaliatory purposes."[4]

From the beginning, U.S. military planners sought two primary goals with counterforce strategies. One was damage limitation. By destroying Soviet nuclear assets, planners contended that those weapons could not be launched against the United States. A second rationale for counterforce targeting was tied to the American policy of threatening nuclear

escalation in Europe's defense. Early on, U.S. and NATO officials recognized that they would be unable to match Soviet conventional force levels in Europe, and they looked to American nuclear weapons as the absolute deterrent. Though committed to this policy, American policy makers also sought options that would not necessarily cause immediate Soviet retaliation on U.S. cities. The ability to selectively target with nuclear weapons military formations moving toward western Europe could deter a Soviet attack without necessarily escalating to a major strategic nuclear exchange.[5] A policy of extended deterrence—where U.S. nuclear weapons deterred not only a Soviet nuclear strike but also protected allies against a Soviet conventional attack—began as early as 1948, with the deployment of B-29 bombers to Germany, and emerged fully during the Eisenhower administration.

The Kennedy administration and Secretary of Defense Robert McNamara pursued this same strategy and did so in part by downplaying the threat of massive retaliation and emphasizing flexible strategies of counterforce targeting as well as conventional force development. Domestic and international opinion quickly forced the Kennedy administration to retreat from public statements on flexible nuclear options. Some observers in the United States viewed counterforce strategy as problematic, because it suggested the possibility of launching a first strike at the Soviet Union. As might be expected, Moscow condemned the doctrine as provocative and dangerous. American allies also expressed doubts about a strategy that contemplated fighting limited nuclear wars. While such a policy could make the threat of nuclear use more credible, it might also make nuclear war more conceivable, and the territory of allied countries could become nuclear battlegrounds.

Given the destructiveness of nuclear weapons, the potential damage of even limited nuclear wars—let alone the ever-present possibility of further escalation—made U.S. discussion of making nuclear weapons "usable" unpopular at best and, for many, an unacceptable policy option. Development of means other than nuclear weapons to deter or defeat limited threats became the hallmark of the "flexible response" strategy.

During the Nixon administration, a distinction again emerged between publicly stated strategies and actual ones. Public opposition to counterforce targeting strategies and the Soviet's major buildup of strategic nuclear weapons induced President Richard Nixon to adhere to a policy *of strategic sufficiency*—a more limited doctrine that aimed at some notion of adequacy rather than superiority—but, in fact, his administration accelerated the trend toward counterforce targeting. Secretary of State Henry Kissinger's National Security Study Memorandum 3, requested the day after Nixon's inauguration in 1969, was partly designed, as Kissinger put it, to "kill assured destruction" and establish the need for limited nuclear options and escalation control. A series of Nixon directives and decisions on the development of nuclear weapons as well as their employment reflected this goal.[6] Secretary of Defense James Schlesinger, the architect of this shift, sought a robust but limited and discriminatory nuclear counter-force.

For the remainder of the Cold War, counterforce targeting strategies continued to dominate U.S. nuclear policy. During the Carter administration, senior officials held the view that an ability *to fight* a nuclear war had become an integral component of deterrence.[7] By the late 1970s, influential Western experts on the Soviet Union were convinced that Soviet military officers believed that their combination of heavy intercontinental ballistic missiles and an evolving strategic defense allowed them to fight and win a nuclear war against the United States. American planners concluded that they must threaten Soviet leaders with death and defeat, not just post-attack destruction, to deter them adequately. Counterforce capabilities would promote those goals.

By 1983, when the Reagan administration instituted its nuclear war plan, counterforce targets dominated U.S. retaliatory plans. As documented in numerous books and articles during the early 1980s, U.S. planning to fight, survive, and ultimately win a nuclear war reached a peak during the early Reagan years.[8] Some of the proponents of Ronald Reagan's policy to begin

building defenses against missile attacks (the so-called Strategic Defense Initiative or SDI) made their case in a counterforce context, arguing that missile defenses were necessary to deny Soviet war aims. Even today, the United States continues to pursue some form of counterforce targeting as part of its comprehensive nuclear weapons posture, which is discussed later in this chapter.

U.S. Nuclear Policy after the Cold War

The end of the Cold War brought with it the demise of the past central focus of U.S. nuclear policy—the Soviet Union. Theoretically, Russia still possesses the capability to destroy the United States in a matter of hours with its huge nuclear arsenal, but despite recurring tensions in relations between the two countries, few observers believe that Russia intends to wage nuclear war against the United States or poses the military threat to NATO or other U.S. allies that it did during the Cold War (see Chapter 22). Nevertheless, since Russia still has the ability to devastate the U.S., a nuclear deterrence hedge continues to be essential.

This change in context requires a complete re-examination of the role of nuclear weapons in U.S. national security policy. There are two related, and yet distinct, issues to be considered. The first challenge facing U.S. strategic planners is the threats created by the proliferation of nuclear weapons and technology to additional states or nonstate actors. The second issue concerns the overall nuclear capabilities that will best enhance U.S. national security in the current and probable future strategic environment.

Current and Future Threats. While the end of the Cold War has diminished though not entirely eliminated the threat of an all-out nuclear war involving the United States, the threat of nuclear weapons, possessed by a handful of states and coveted by other states and nonstate actors hostile to the West, is highly dangerous. Considering each of these potential threats illustrates the complexity and interconnected nature of U.S. nuclear policy.

Russia. Despite Russia's continuing nuclear capabilities, improved relations between the United States and Russia since the end of the Cold War have dramatically reduced the risk of nuclear war. In the minds of some experts, concern over the potential for nuclear conflict has now been largely displaced by fear of the deteriorating condition of the Russian nuclear arsenal. Russia's nuclear forces did not entirely escape the general collapse that occurred in all the country's armed forces. Horror stories of broken equipment, lax security, Strategic Rocket Forces personnel not being paid for months at a time, and rumors of attempted black-market sales of nuclear warheads had become commonplace by the late 1990s. Many analysts believe that the greatest threat from Russia stems not from deliberate government action but rather from a lack of effective control, which could lead to an accidental, unintentional, or unauthorized use of nuclear weapons.[9]

China. As of 2008, China's nuclear arsenal remains modest. China has an estimated twenty nuclear-tipped missiles with truly intercontinental range, and another twenty-two long-range missiles. It also deploys another estimated one hundred intermediate range missiles and at least one nuclear-armed submarine. The balance of China's nuclear arsenal is composed of hundreds of gravity bombs or tactical nuclear weapons.[10]

This relatively small force has long been adequate to China's traditional nuclear strategy of minimum deterrence. During the Cold War, China never sought to match the nuclear arsenals of the United States or the Soviet Union. Instead, China built a force large enough to destroy a number of major cities of any state that attacked its homeland. The question remains whether Chinese military leaders will remain content with this approach or will seek to expand their nuclear arsenal to achieve parity with the reduced forces of the United States and Russia. As far

as can be determined, China's current nuclear plans, similar to those for the rest of the People's Liberation Army, point to more of the same—it has declared a preference for modernizing its relatively small force rather than substantially increasing its size. Of course, changes in U.S. nuclear policy could influence China's choice. Surprisingly, some American analysts argue that the United States should seek dramatic reductions in U.S. and Russian nuclear forces to emphasize to Chinese policy makers that a further nuclear buildup is not necessary.[11]

North Korea. On October 9, 2006, North Korea detonated a nuclear device. This detonation came after years of negotiations among six parties: the United States, North Korea, South Korea, China, Japan, and Russia. Throughout the long diplomatic process, North Korea, despite promises to the contrary, continued to secretly pursue nuclear weapons.

According to an authoritative 2006 Congressional Research Service report, North Korea is estimated to have enough plutonium for six to ten atomic bombs and enough highly enriched uranium (HEU) for between two and six additional weapons.[12] Likely targets of a North Korean nuclear weapon would be South Korea or Japan, as well as U.S. forces deployed in the region. It is unclear whether North Korea has been able to miniaturize a nuclear device to fit on the tip of a missile. Current North Korean ballistic missile technology is not capable of targeting cities in the United States.[13]

One worrisome side effect of a nuclear North Korea is the specter of a nuclear arms race in Asia. It is possible that South Korea and Japan would want to acquire nuclear weapons to deter a North Korean attack. In turn, the possibility of South Korea and Japan acquiring nuclear weapons could cause China to create more robust nuclear capabilities in response. Also, given the nuclear status of India and Pakistan, a destabilizing arms race could spread beyond the immediate region and engulf most of Asia.

India and Pakistan. In 1998, India and Pakistan conducted underground nuclear tests and became declared nuclear weapons states. This situation raises at least three significant concerns. First, relations between the two states are still marked by sharp tensions—particularly over the contested region of Kashmir—and they have already fought one minor war since becoming nuclear powers.[14] Second, the nuclear programs of these states could become a source of proliferation of nuclear technologies to additional state or nonstate actors, as has already occurred through the network that Pakistani nuclear scientist Abdul Qadeer Khan admitted to having established in 2004 (see Chapters 19 and 26). Third, domestic political instability in the region—particularly in Pakistan—could result in risky nuclear posturing or loss of control over the country's nuclear arsenal, constituting another possible source of nuclear anarchy. The bilateral relationship between India and Pakistan and their nuclear postures will remain serious concerns for U.S. national security policy makers.

Iran. The 2006 U.S. National Security Strategy identifies Iran as the single most dangerous state-centered threat to U.S. security.[15] Iran pursued nuclear weapons in secret for nearly twenty years until 2002, when the National Council of Resistance of Iran blew the whistle on nuclear activities at Natanz and Arak.[16] Despite these covert nuclear programs, Iran proclaims that its nuclear ambitions are peaceful, claiming that nuclear energy is required to meet rising domestic energy requirements. However, the November 2007 U.S. National Intelligence Estimate (NIE) on Iranian nuclear intentions and capabilities reports that Iranian military entities were "working under government direction to develop nuclear weapons" until the fall of 2003, when they stopped their nuclear weapons program "in response to international pressure."[17] The NIE further judges that if Iranian policy changed, it could restart the nuclear program, and Iran could produce a nuclear weapon some time between 2010 and 2015.[18] The difficulty of assessing the intentions and capabilities of a covert nuclear weapons program in Iran highlights

the difficulty and importance of using intelligence assessments as a guide for national security policy making.

The regional implications of a nuclear Iran are similar to those of Asia. Should Iran successfully acquire nuclear weapons, it would create numerous problems, including the possibility of touching off a nuclear arms race in the region. Israel in particular has reason for concern; Iranian President Mahmoud Ahmadinejad has stated many times that Israel should be wiped off the map. Should Iran nearly actually complete a nuclear device, Israel might decide to take action, much as it did in 1981 when the Israeli air force conducted a successful preemptive strike against the Osiraq nuclear reactor in Iraq. Whether such a raid would succeed against hardened buried facilities in Iran is unclear. Additionally, a Shiite Iran with nuclear weapons would likely make the Sunni Arab states feel dangerously threatened, perhaps leading them to seek their own nuclear weapons. Finally, Iranian sponsorship of terrorist groups, such as Hezbollah and Hamas, leads to the possibility of terrorists gaining access to nuclear weapons. This would raise the specter of some of the most dangerous people being armed with the world's most dangerous weapons. Each of these consequences highlights the importance of precluding Iranian nuclear weapons, if that is possible.

Nonstate Actors. The rise of terrorism in the post-Cold War era has been marked by an increase in violence toward nonmilitary targets, such as civilians. Many terrorism experts agree that nuclear weapons especially lend themselves to this purpose (see Chapter 14). Once terrorists acquire a weapon, deterring its use is highly problematic. Perhaps the most promising deterrence policy is to focus on preventing the acquisition of a device or the nuclear material for it in the first place.

The obstacles that a terrorist organization, such as al-Qa'ida, would have to overcome to attain nuclear capability include the acquisition of a weapon and the ability to employ it. A more likely related scenario would be for a nonstate actor to acquire sufficient radiological and explosive material to fashion a *radiological dispersion device,* or what is more commonly referred to as a *dirty bomb,* for use against targets in the United States or abroad.[19] This type of device would be easier for a non-state actor to acquire, transport, and use than a nuclear weapon, yet it would still inflict significant physical and even greater psychological damage. The danger of this scenario developing is far from negligible.

Managing the Nuclear Challenge in a New Era. As this brief survey reflects, the challenges to U.S. national security created by nuclear technology have grown far more diverse in the twenty-first century. U.S. policy makers can no longer focus on the threat posed by a single, rival superpower; instead, they must seek effective ways to deter the threat posed by new and aspiring nuclear weapons states as well as nonstate actors. Deterring this hosts of threats requires understanding of the values, motives, fears, risk tolerance, and priorities for each and tailoring policies for each without confusing the differing messages that must be sent.[20] These traditional nuclear deterrence strategies cannot be discarded but must be supplemented with other foreign policy tools, such as arms control, nonproliferation strategies, and counterproliferation measures.

Arms Control. In 1961, the United States established the Arms Control and Disarmament Agency (ACDA) to advise the president on arms control, to regulate nuclear activities, and to build expertise on negotiated measures for dealing with international conflict. For a United States focused on the problems of military strategy and international conflict in a nuclear age, *arms control* was defined as having three purposes: to reduce the likelihood of war by enhancing communication and crisis stability, to limit the damage if war were to occur, and to lessen the economic burdens of preparing for war.[21] While these purposes continue, in 1999

ACDA was dissolved as an independent agency, and its bureaus and functions were incorporated into the State Department.

During the Cold War, arms control agreements were an important component of U.S. nuclear policy. They can broadly be grouped into three categories: confidence-building measures, restrictions on the development and testing of weapons, and limitations on the weapons themselves. Examples of *confidence-building measures* include the "Hot Line Agreement" that established a direct communications link between the leadership of the United States and the Soviet Union (1963) and the on-site inspections by foreign teams that were instituted by the Stockholm Conference on Confidence and Security-Building Measures and Disarmament in Europe (1986). Examples of *testing restrictions* include the Limited Test Ban Treaty that banned nuclear tests in the atmosphere, outer space, and under water (1963); and the Threshold Test Ban Treaty that committed the superpowers to limit the size of underground nuclear weapons tests (1974). *Weapons limitations* include: the Nuclear Non-Proliferation Treaty (NPT; 1970), which is discussed below; the Strategic Arms Limitation Talks (SALT I), which constrained certain offensive strategic systems (1972); the Anti-Ballistic Missile (ABM) Treaty, which limited the superpowers' development of defensive capabilities (1972); SALT II, which sought arms reductions between the superpowers (1979; although the U.S. Senate never ratified it, the United States followed its restrictions); the Intermediate-Range Nuclear Forces Treaty, which eliminated U.S. and Soviet intermediate-range nuclear systems (1989); and the Strategic Arms Reduction Treaty (START), which reduced U.S.- and Soviet-deployed nuclear forces and established robust verification measures (1991).

In the early twenty-first century, it is not clear what role bilateral arms control agreements will play in U.S.-Russia relations. In May 2002, U.S. President George W. Bush and Russian President Vladimir Putin signed the Strategic Offensive Reductions Treaty (SORT), which committed each side to reduce its forces to not more than 2,200 operationally deployed warheads by the end of 2012. However, the treaty lacks verification measures and allows the storage rather than destruction of warheads that are not operationally deployed. The SORT treaty is scheduled to expire on the same day its limits must be reached, unless it is extended by both nations. The George W. Bush administration preferred flexible and informal arrangements, while the Russian leadership preferred another formal agreement cutting strategic nuclear forces.[22]

Another dynamic in the U.S.-Russia relationship has been created by the U.S. withdrawal from the ABM Treaty in 2002, followed by U.S. proposals in 2007 to put ground-based missile interceptors in Poland and a new radar system in the Czech Republic. From the U.S. perspective, these initiatives merely recognize the end of the Cold War and the existence of new threats—such as the possibility of Iranian missile launches—in a new strategic environment. However, Russian officials have expressed strong opposition to these developments. According to one Russian foreign ministry statement, "one cannot ignore the fact that U.S. offensive weapons, combined with the missile defense being created, can turn into a strategic complex capable of delivering an incapacitating blow."[23] Whether the United States and Russia continue to turn to arms control as a way to manage the nuclear arsenals each side developed during the Cold War remains to be seen.

Nuclear Non-Proliferation Treaty. The most significant multilateral agreement regarding nuclear weapons is the treaty commonly referred to as the NPT. This treaty was signed by the United States in 1968 and entered into force in 1970. As of 2008, 188 states were party to the treaty, including the five recognized nuclear weapons states (the United States, Russia, the United Kingdom, France, and China) and 183 non-nuclear weapons states. The only states that are not signatories to the treaty are India, Pakistan, Israel, and North Korea (North Korea withdrew from the NPT in January 2003, but this action has not been recognized by the United

Nations [UN]).[24] India, Pakistan, and North Korea possess nuclear weapons, and Israel is an undeclared nuclear weapons state.

The NPT commits the non-nuclear weapons states to not build or use nuclear weapons and commits the nuclear weapons states (the five states that had exploded a nuclear device by January i, 1967) to the eventual elimination of their own weapons. In addition, all parties to the NPT agree to accept International Atomic Energy Agency (IAEA) safeguards on all nuclear activities; to not export nuclear equipment or materials to non-nuclear weapons states except under IAEA safeguards; and to give ninety days' notice when withdrawing from the NPT. The NPT has undoubtedly played an important role in limiting the spread of nuclear weapons to only four states in the nearly forty years since its inception. (South Africa had a nuclear weapons program from 1977 to 1989 but later dismantled it, destroyed the six weapons it had reportedly produced, and signed the NPT in 1991.)[25] The relatively small growth in nuclear weapons states is particularly impressive in light of the fact that the NPT has no means, aside from referring the matter to the UN Security Council, of punishing those who violate its provisions.

Though the NPT is the centerpiece of the global nonproliferation regime, it has faced numerous trials over time and remains under stress. One tension results because the NPT enshrines the status of the five nuclear weapons states and therefore can be seen as preserving their long-term military dominance. This aspect of the treaty was partially mitigated by the fact that these nuclear weapons states committed to eventual nuclear disarmament by signing the NPT. However, they are regularly criticized "for not disarming fast enough and for abandoning nuclear arms control, increasing reliance on nuclear weapons, and especially for developing new types of weapons."[26] A second source of tension relates to compliance. A particularly unpleasant surprise occurred after the Persian Gulf War in 1991, when it was discovered that Iraq had managed to begin a nuclear weapons program despite the oversight of IAEA inspectors. Iran's case, discussed above, is another compliance problem. Other current tensions include safeguarding the nuclear fuel cycle to support the use of nuclear energy for peaceful purposes while stemming the diversion of material to weapons programs; and recent U.S. initiatives to support India's nuclear energy program despite the fact that India's facilities are not all subject to IAEA safeguards (see Chapter 19).[27]

Cooperative Threat Reduction. In November 1991, in response to deteriorating conditions in the former Soviet Union, the U.S. Senate passed the Nunn-Lugar Act, with the intent "to assist the states of the former Soviet Union in dismantling weapons of mass destruction and establishing verifiable safeguards against the proliferation of those weapons."[28] The objectives of cooperative threat reduction (CTR) are to:

• Destroy nuclear, chemical, and other weapons of mass destruction (WMDs).
• Transport, store, disable, and safeguard weapons in connection with their destruction.
• Establish verifiable safeguards against proliferation of such weapons.
• Prevent diversion of weapons-related expertise.
• Facilitate demilitarization of defense industries and conversion of military capabilities and technologies.
• Expand defense and military contacts between the United States and the former Soviet Union.[29]

Initial CTR support included assisting in the transport of nuclear warheads from Kazakhstan, Ukraine, and Belarus back to Russia; converting the Soviet-era method of tracking nuclear warheads from a time-consuming and often inaccurate manual system to a rapid, automated system; and providing upgraded security equipment at weapons storage sites.[30]

In addition to securing nuclear weapons, CTR efforts focused on securing the material necessary to construct a nuclear weapon. Russia possesses the world's largest stock of fissile

material (highly enriched uranium [HEU] and plutonium).[31] Keeping this material out of the hands of terrorists became even more pressing after the events of September 11, 2001. By April 2005, Senator Sam Nunn estimated that, since 1991, the United States and Russia had "completed between 25 and 50 percent of the job of securing nuclear weapons and materials, depending on definitions."[32] In recent years, CTR programs have continued and have expanded beyond the former Soviet Union into other states in eastern Europe.

The Nuclear Suppliers Group. The Nuclear Suppliers Group (NSG). is a forty-five-state association that has agreed to coordinate export controls to prevent the sale or transfer of nuclear-related equipment, materials, or technology to non-nuclear weapons states. Its aim is to preclude nuclear exports for such commercial, peaceful purposes as medicine and agriculture from being diverted to production of nuclear weapons. Its formation in 1975 was in response to the 1974 explosion by India, which had diverted commercial materials to build its nuclear device. To be eligible for nuclear imports, non-nuclear weapons states have to agree to IAEA safeguards on the imports. Among the nuclear weapons states that have not joined the NSG are India, Pakistan, Israel, and North Korea. In addition to the problem of lack of universal membership, the NSG faces the difficulty that, as a voluntary organization, it cannot compel compliance with its guidelines. Russia, for instance, despite opposition by other members, transferred nuclear fuel to India in 2001.

The Proliferation Security Initiative. Originally launched in 2003, the Proliferation Security Initiative (PSI) is designed to stop the international shipment of nuclear weapons, weapons materials, and related technology. The focus of PSI is interdicting nuclear materials during transit between the country of origin and the country or nonstate actor that is the intended recipient. States that are party to PSI voluntarily agree to provide intelligence, law enforcement, and diplomatic cooperation to combat the spread of nuclear weapons, utilizing force if necessary. Membership in the PSI, as well as levels of participation by the signatories, is not widely publicized because of the political sensitivity of these activities.

Reviews of the effectiveness of PSI are mixed. On the one hand, it has raised awareness of illicit trafficking in WMD-related materials, probably constrained traffickers, and "increased national capacities for coordinated detection and interdiction of suspect shipments" through its exercises.[33] On the other hand, the initiative is characterized by a lack of transparency that reflects the political sensitivity of interdiction activities and the ambivalent status of such interdiction under international law. These characteristics make claims of its success difficult to verify.[34]

Counterproliferation. In addition to the various measures to stem proliferation, such as the NPT, PSI, and NSG, in recent years the United States has begun to focus on actions that can minimize the impact of weapons that have been proliferated. Offsetting the dangers of state and nonstate actors that have already acquired or may acquire nuclear weapons is at least as difficult as stopping the proliferation in the first place; however, several steps can be taken. First, missile defense, discussed below, is a measure that, if successful, would address one dimension of the problem. Second, strengthening the IAEA, expanding arms control initiatives, and increasing international pressure on actors with nuclear weapons minimizes the prospect of their proliferation. Third, development of sensors that can locate nuclear weapons and their production facilities as well as conventional weapons that can destroy them are important to Counterproliferation. Finally, various defensive steps, which are analogous to the civil defense programs that were aimed at mitigating the damage of a nuclear attack during the Cold War, can be part of a comprehensive Counterproliferation strategy. These include homeland security measures, such as improvements in detection, vaccines, antidotes, communications, medical responses, and protective equipment. Known collectively as *consequence management,* such

measures comprise a system that organizes, trains, and exercises government agencies and ordinary citizens to respond to a nuclear weapons or other major disaster can minimize the impact of such an event. While no government action can fully negate the proliferation of nuclear weapons, several steps pursued as part of a comprehensive counterproliferation strategy may be effective at limiting the impact that such weapons can have on national security.

Missile Defense

Given the security challenges posed by nuclear weapons, as well as the difficulty each of the approaches mentioned above faces in meeting those challenges, a perennial issue is the development of an effective defense against nuclear weapons. This has been an issue since the development of nuclear weapons and has become increasingly important with the proliferation and the progress of missile defense technology.

In the context of the superpower rivalry of the Cold War, the United States accepted limits on the creation of ABM defenses, which are enshrined in the 1972 ABM Treaty. By becoming a party to this treaty, the United States acknowledged the situation of MAD and accepted vulnerability as a means of preserving stability in its nuclear competition with the Soviet Union. The first significant challenge to this situation came in January 1984, when Reagan issued Presidential National Security Decision Directive (PNSDD) 119. The purpose of PNSDD 119 was to establish the SDI (which became known as "Star Wars") to "investigate the feasibility of eventually shifting toward reliance upon a defensive concept. Future deterrence should, if possible, be underwritten by a capability to defeat a hostile attack."[35] Reagan's proposal has evolved since its inception because of budgetary constraints, the evolution of technology, and the changing nature of the threat.

A realistic test for missile defense technology came during the 1991 Gulf War with Iraq. U.S. Patriot missiles were used to shoot down incoming Iraqi Scud missiles aimed at Saudi Arabia and Israel. Although the Scud missiles carried only conventional warheads and were not very accurate, and the Patriot missiles had limited success in actually defeating them, these engagements demonstrated the possibility of defeating ballistic missiles while in flight. Each subsequent administration has continued to develop a missile defense program. These efforts have been a great deal more successful for theater weapons than for strategic ones.

On December 17, 2002, George W. Bush directed the Department of Defense (DoD) to develop a system "to protect our homeland, deployed forces, and our friends and allies from ballistic missile attack."[36] The resulting Ballistic Missile Defense System (BMDS) is a layered network of systems that is designed to eventually be able to destroy ballistic missiles in all three stages of flight: the boost phase, the midcourse phase, and the terminal phase.[37] In fiscal year 2008, the United States spent $8.7 billion on BMDS.[38]

The Case for Ballistic Missile Defense. The primary reason for the United States to acquire a defense against ballistic missiles is the threat of missile-delivered nuclear weapons on the United States, on deployed U.S. troops, or on U.S. allies and interests abroad. According to a 2001 State Department report entitled "The Emerging Ballistic Missile Threat," some twenty-seven states currently possess or are in the process of obtaining ballistic missiles.[39] A handful of these states also have nuclear weapons programs. The report cites missile technology in North Korea and Iran as the greatest threat to the "U.S., its forces deployed abroad, and allies and friends."[40] The report further states that the preeminence of the United States in the world's political affairs may cause its adversaries to seek ballistic missiles as a means to deliver chemical, biological, radiological, or nuclear weapons (CBRN). These adversaries would seek to use CBRN weapons to "deter the U.S. from intervening in, or leading coalitions against, their efforts at regional aggression, or these states may believe that such capabilities would give

them the ability to threaten allied countries in order to dissuade them from joining such coalitions."[41] A viable BMDS not only would confront the threat posed by states or nonstate actors possessing ballistic missiles but also would protect the United States and its allies against an accidental nuclear launch by any other state.

The Case against Ballistic Missile Defense. Opponents of the BMDS argue that such a system cannot protect the United States, provides a false sense of security, and requires great expenditures for a program of uncertain effectiveness. If BMDS works by destroying a hostile warhead with an interceptor, to achieve certainty the United States would need to launch multiple interceptors for every single hostile warhead. For example, if a country were to launch one thousand warheads, then the United States would need to launch many more than one thousand interceptors to defeat each warhead as well as to confront any decoy warheads or other countermeasures that would likely accompany any attack.

Because the BMDS is a layered network of systems that consists of elements that acquire targets, computer systems that analyze the data, and interceptor missiles that destroy the incoming missiles, it is difficult to test such a system. Even if a very expensive missile defense may be effective in theory or simulations, it would be difficult or impossible to ever know if it would work perfectly in practice. Moreover, some believe a successful strategic BMDS could even be destabilizing; other states may perceive U.S. strategic invulnerability to portend greater U.S. aggression vis-a-vis other states.

In addition to these concerns, two additional issues are opportunity cost and appropriateness to current threats. With regard to opportunity cost, investments in missile defense systems come at the expense of other defense or homeland security priorities. A second and related issue concerns the nature of the threat. Some analysts argue that other homeland security measures, such as cargo inspection at U.S. ports, might actually be more effective than missile defense in providing protection against the most probable delivery method of CBRN against the United States.

Whether to deploy strategic or theater ballistic missile defenses and, if so, which kind of defense to deploy will continue to be a central issue in U.S. nuclear policy. The allure of defensive weapons integrated into a system that reduces vulnerability will always be appealing, despite costs, technical challenges, and potential strategic ramifications.

Toward a New Nuclear Posture and Strategy

Despite repeated efforts at arms control, membership in the NPT, and less formal arrangements, such as CTR, PSI, and NSG, the United States continues to maintain the essentiality of nuclear weapons. Nuclear weapons are the ultimate deterrent. Many experts believe that Saddam Hussein did not use chemical or biological weapons during the 1991 Persian Gulf War because he feared threatened nuclear retaliation by the United States.

Maintaining a credible deterrent means that the United States must continue to invest in nuclear technology, inevitably at the expense of other weapons or other critical programs. Nuclear weapons, much like conventional weapons, become obsolete over time and require investment in basic sustainment and modernization. Current American nuclear weapons are decades old and in the absence of testing will be increasingly difficult to certify as reliable. Congress has been very reluctant to appropriate the funds necessary for sustainment, let alone modernization. As the strategic situation changes over time, new threats to national security may require new types of weapons. Debates over new weapons are likely to travel through familiar territory, requiring answers to such questions as their continuing deterrence role their political and strategic utility for purposes beyond deterrence and projections about the ability to control escalation in the event of nuclear weapons use.[42]

In January 2002, at the direction of Congress, the DoD released the classified Nuclear Posture Review (NPR). The intent of the NPR was to develop a road map for the future development of strategic weapons. The NPR recognizes that the U.S. Cold War nuclear arsenal is no longer appropriate in light of twenty-first century threats. The DoD therefore developed a new strategic triad to replace the old model. The new triad incorporates the previous triad (nuclear weapons launched from ballistic missiles, strategic bombers, and submarines) while also adding non-kinetic and non-nuclear weapons as part of the offensive strike capabilities on the first leg of the triad. These offensive capabilities allow the United States to use a spectrum of weapons when responding to a threat against its interests, reserving nuclear weapons as the highest level of response the United States could take. The first leg of the new triad is reminiscent of the flexible response policy of the Kennedy administration and clearly recognizes that nuclear weapons have a major role, although they need not be the initial weapon of choice, in future military planning.

The second leg of the new triad consists of passive and active defensive measures (such as the BMDS and the PSI). These methods seek to deter adversaries from the pursuit of nuclear weapons technology, dissuade those states (and potentially nonstate actors) that seek to possess nuclear weapons from acquiring them, and deny or reduce the effectiveness of nuclear attacks if they occur. The aim is to add deterrence by denial to deterrence by retaliation.

The third leg is an improved nuclear weapons infrastructure designed to improve the development and procurement of weapons systems as well as to improve communications and intelligence capabilities. This leg of the triad acknowledges the need to modernize the Cold War nuclear force using current technologies that make nuclear forces safer and more effective. Additionally, the new triad, according to the NPR, should allow the United States to reduce its nuclear arsenal to between 1,700 and 2,200 operationally deployed nuclear warheads by the year 2012.[43] This would make the U.S. nuclear posture consistent with that proposed as part of the SORT, discussed above.

To maintain a strong viable nuclear arsenal, despite obsolescence and shrinking numbers, the Secretaries of Energy, Defense, and State, in July 2007, urged the Congress to support initiation of the Reliable Replacement Warhead (RRW) Program. This program is designed to improve the safety of the U.S. arsenal by replacing older warheads with new similar yield warheads that contain state-of-the-art security systems. These systems are designed to augment prevention of unauthorized use or accidental launch of a nuclear weapon. Additionally, the RRW Program is designed to improve weapons reliability by offsetting the natural effects of age while also eliminating the need to test weapons to measure their output.[44] The Congress was not, however, persuaded and the program has not been funded as of late 2008.

For a variety of reasons, U.S. spending on the further development of its nuclear arsenal is seen with a critical eye in many quarters. One issue is scale. In 2006, two national security scholars, Kier Lieber and Daryl Press, argued that U.S. investment in more or improved nuclear weapons—especially given the status of the arsenals of major nuclear rivals Russia and China—could reasonably be seen as an effort by the United States to obtain a first-strike capability. In other words, a degree of U.S. nuclear superiority had the potential to enable the United States to inflict such a devastating nuclear first strike that an adversary would be unable to retaliate.[45] (This argument disregards the fact that both Russia and China are modernizing and enlarging their nuclear arsenals.) Some policy advocates, concerned about the effect of continued U.S. nuclear weapons development upon arms control and nonproliferation efforts, argue against modernization on the grounds that, even before modernization, the current U.S. nuclear arsenal is more than capable of meeting contemporary and future threats to national security. On the other hand, experts on the actual status of our weapons argue that, given obsolescence, without modernization the U.S. is on the path to unilateral nuclear disarmament. Some believe that the United States has an obligation not to pursue new nuclear technology, especially in light of its NPT obligations and its commitment to limit the spread of nuclear

weapons. A final argument relates to resources, with some analysts believing that money spent on researching and developing new nuclear weapons would make a more effective contribution to U.S. national security if it were spent on securing "loose" nuclear weapons in the former Soviet Union or funding other CTR programs. Collectively, these and similar anti arguments have produced a national nuclear allergy in the U.S that makes it difficult to maintain a viable nuclear deterrent.

Clearly, the end of the Cold War has reduced the profile of nuclear weapons in international politics, at least among the major powers. Yet despite currently planned arms reductions in the U.S. and Russian arsenals, many policy makers around the globe continue to push for new nuclear weapons to replace the old, outdated models. Whether the impetus for denuclearization will continue and build or nuclear arsenals will increase in the future is an open question. What is clear is that nuclear weapons cannot be uninvented and that any scheme to eliminate them once and for all would require climbing a verification mountain of unprecedented height.

Looking Ahead

After the end of the Cold War, the United States faced a new strategic environment in which the role of its nuclear arsenal became less central. If anything, this trend accelerated after the terrorist attacks of 9/11 and the U.S. wars began in Afghanistan and Iraq. Policy makers and analysts consumed with diverse new challenges have generally paid less attention to matters of nuclear policy. Indicative of that inattention is the fact that deep reductions in the U.S. nuclear arsenal since the end of the Cold War have gone almost unnoticed.

The serious issues that the United States should address in the nuclear area would benefit from broad-ranging, vigorous debate, which to this point has been lacking. A discussion of the size and characteristics of the future U.S. nuclear arsenal should include the likely impact of such weapons on nonproliferation efforts, arms control, crisis stability, deterrence, military budgets, and other political and economic factors.

The vision of a world in which nuclear weapons play a diminishing and ultimately nonexistent role has had broad, worldwide appeal for decades. But nuclear weapons are spreading. The extent to which their elimination is achievable and the extent to which the United States should pursue that goal are issues U.S. policy makers will have to confront in the years ahead.

Discussion Questions

1. What is the difference between a *countervalue* and a *counterforce* nuclear strategy? Which strategy requires more nuclear weapons? Which strategy would better suit U.S. national security needs? Why?

2. What is *counterproliferation?* What is *nonproliferation?* What are the similarities and differences between the two policies?

3. Will traditional methods of deterrence used during the Cold War work on modern adversaries, such as Iran, North Korea, and such nonstate actors as al-Qa'ida? Why or why not?

4. What did the U.S. strategic triad include during the Cold War? What does it include today? What are the reasons for the changes?

5. Which poses the greater threat to U.S. security: possession of nuclear weapons by rogue states (such as North Korea and Iran) or by nonstate actors (such as al-Qa'ida or Hezbollah)?Why?

6. Has the NPT been a success, or does the spread of weapons to at least four states since 1970 constitute a failure?

7. How does North Korea's acquisition of nuclear weapons affect security in Asia? Does the threat posed by Iran's nuclear program have similar consequences for the Middle East?

8. Should the United States focus its efforts on preventing the spread of nuclear weapons or on defending itself and its allies from a nuclear attack?

9. What is the role of nuclear weapons in U.S. defense policy today? Should the United States develop new nuclear weapons as new threats emerge? Why or why not?

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Internet Resources

Arms Control Association, www.armscontrol.org
Carnegie Endowment for International Peace, www.carnegieendowment.org
International Atomic Energy Agency, www.iaea.org
Missile Defense Agency, www.mda.mil
The Nuclear Files Web site, www.nuclearfiles.org
Nuclear Posture Review, www.globalsecurity.org/wmd/library/policy/dod/npr.htm
Nuclear Threat Initiative, www.nti.org
U.S. Air Force Counterproliferation Center, http://cpc.au.af.mil
Programme for Promoting Nuclear Non-Proliferation, www.ppnn.soton.acluk

Chapter 22
Russia

Relations between the United States and the Soviet Union, and then later between the United States and post-Soviet Russia, have played an essential, central role in American national security. Marked by confrontation after World War II, these relations shifted to expectations of partnership with the new Russian state after the Soviet collapse. However, the first decade of the twenty-first century brought renewed friction over Russia's behavior and its standing in the international political, economic, and strategic order. Across the different stages of its recent history, the changes in Russia's international power and influence have been dramatic.

The collapse of the Soviet Union eliminated what was arguably the single greatest external threat to the United States since its founding. The Soviet threat was not simply strategic in nature but encompassed a profoundly different set of values and institutions that formed an alternative political, economic, and cultural system. An appreciation for the history of this threat remains valuable for the perspective it provides on current U.S. national security challenges, including the problem of terrorism. As the primary heir of the Soviet Union, Russia is still shaped by this legacy. Moreover, it retains a nuclear arsenal that is still capable of destroying the United States.

Russia's failure to establish authentic democratic institutions and a market economy after the Soviet collapse means that cooperation between Washington and Moscow for the foreseeable future will rest less on common values than on perceptions of shared interests. Depending on how Moscow defines its interests, Russia can play the role of spoiler or supporter of U.S. foreign policy.

The Cold War

The central dynamics in the history of U.S. national security policy during the Cold War, reviewed in Chapter 3, were the tension and competition between the United States and the Soviet Union. Although hundreds of books have been written on the origins of the Cold War, two main causes are worthy of mention here.[1]

The first, frequently listed as the chief among all causes, was a set of beliefs arising from Marxist and Soviet ideology. This ideology assumed inherent conflict between capitalism and communism and drastically skewed relations between the Soviet Union and the West. The brutal nature of Soviet domestic politics strengthened the ideological tendency of the Kremlin to see the world in zero-sum terms—any loss for one side was a gain for the other and vice versa. For example, Soviet leader Joseph Stalin accused his political rivals in the Communist Party of being "enemies of the people" who served foreign powers and were intent on destroying the new Soviet state from within. Soviet moderates who favored a less confrontational approach to the Western democracies, such as Nikolai Bukharin (communist theorist and leader during the 1917 Russian Revolution) were swept away. Yet careful observers understood that Soviet behavior was shaped not only by communist ideology and an authoritarian past but also by the tumultuous history of Russia, which had suffered numerous and devastating invasions from the Mongols to Napoleon Bonaparte and Adolf Hitler.

A second key origin of the Cold War arose from deep conflicts of interest. The first major area of friction was the fate of postwar Germany and Eastern Europe. Stalin wanted to establish a socialist "sphere of influence" in Eastern Europe and ultimately place Germany under Soviet domination. This policy was designed not only to increase the number of nations in the socialist camp (and thereby validate ideological predictions) but also to provide a friendly "buffer zone" for the territory of the Soviet Union.

The United States was willing to see the establishment of governments friendly to the Soviet Union in Eastern Europe but objected to the forcible imposition of communist regimes. The survival of European noncommunist states, especially a free Germany, gradually became a key concern for American leaders, who believed that the addition of any significant portion of western Europe to the newly expanded Soviet bloc would eventually tip the global balance of power. The resolve of the United States and its allies was tested by the Soviet Union on numerous occasions: in 1946, over the prolonged Soviet occupation of Iran; in 1946-1947, over threats to Greece and Turkey; in 1948, by the Soviet sponsored coup that installed a communist government in Czechoslovakia; and in 1948-1949, by the blockade of West Berlin by Soviet forces.

In 1947, President Harry Truman announced the Truman Doctrine, proclaiming America's intention "to support free people who are resisting attempted subjugation by armed minorities or by outside pressures." Shortly thereafter, U.S. diplomat George Kennan published an influential article titled "The Sources of Soviet Conduct" in the journal *Foreign Affairs* (using the pseudonym of "Mr. X") which argued that the United States should aim to contain the Soviet Union. Over time, this article came to be seen as one of the key statements of the emerging U.S. strategic doctrine of containment. In response to the Czech coup and the Berlin blockade in 1948, in 1949 ten western European states, Canada, and the United States signed the North Atlantic Treaty, a collective self-defense pact. This became the basis for the North Atlantic Treaty Organization (NATO) military alliance (see Chapter 23). After the rearming of West Germany, the Soviet Union and its Eastern European satellites responded by signing a treaty "On Friendship, Cooperation, and Mutual Aid" in May 1955, creating the Warsaw Treaty Organization. The countries of the Warsaw Pact, as this agreement came to be known, included the Soviet Union, Albania, Bulgaria, Czechoslovakia, East Germany, Hungary, Poland, and Romania.

Even as the United States was adapting to its new activist role, the international environment produced dramatic changes. First, the Soviet Union exploded its first atomic bomb in 1949, undercutting the heavy U.S. reliance on nuclear weapons to check potential Soviet aggression. Also in 1949, the Chinese Communists ejected the Chinese Nationalists, with whom the United States was allied, from mainland China. Finally, perhaps influenced by a speech given by U.S. Secretary of State Dean Acheson in which South Korea was left outside the U.S. security perimeter in Asia, Stalin gave his support to the North Korean Communist invasion of South Korea in 1950. When United Nations (UN) forces—led by the United States— made a successful counterattack and drove deep into North Korea, Communist Chinese forces entered the war. This string of stimuli brought a series of strong U.S. responses. Work began on the next generation of nuclear weapons, containment was transformed into a global doctrine, and NATO conventional forces were strengthened.

The Movement Toward Detente. Stalin died just before the end of the Korean War in My 1953. The policies of his successors (Georgy Malenkov and then Nikita Khrushchev) showed change as well as a degree of continuity with Stalin's policies. The changes in Soviet strategy were significant. First, realizing the awesome effects of nuclear weapons, both subsequent leaders shelved the rhetoric and perhaps even the idea of the inevitability of war between capitalist and socialist states. "Peaceful coexistence" between the United States and the Soviet Union became a goal, though perhaps not the dominant one, of post-Stalinist foreign policy. Second, after 1957, Khrushchev insisted on developing a nuclear-oriented force structure at the expense (temporarily, it proved) of the ground forces and the surface navy. Third, in an effort to "embarrass and outflank Western diplomacy," Khrushchev began a major effort to increase Soviet influence with the nonaligned nations of the Third World, many of which were former Western colonies.[2] The doctrine that it was the sacred duty of the Soviet Union to promote and support "wars of national liberation" was enunciated by Khrushchev in 1961.

Key elements of continuity in Soviet policy were the Soviet preoccupation with the settlement of the German question and with Western acceptance of Soviet domination of Eastern Europe. Khrushchev twice tried unsuccessfully to push the West into greater acceptance of the Soviet position on these issues, using Berlin as the fulcrum for his efforts. Khruschev's desire to achieve strategic parity with the United States, as well as his desire to ensure the security of a Third World communist ally, led to his decision to deploy nuclear weapons in Cuba. The result was the 1962 Cuban Missile-Crisis, which was ultimately a dramatic Soviet psychological defeat.[3] Khrushchev's covert missile buildup was discovered while still underway; faced with U.S. nuclear as well as local conventional superiority, the Soviets backed down.

Although the Cuban Missile Crisis was a setback for the Soviet Union, three factors contributed to subsequent Soviet successes in the foreign policy realm. First, especially during the decade from 1965 to 1975, the Soviet economy prospered. Relative economic health enabled the regime of Leonid Brezhnev (successor to Khrushchev and leader of the Soviet Union until his death in 1982) to spend more on defense while simultaneously investing in an improved domestic standard of living.[4] Second, the United States became increasingly bogged down in Vietnam, with the result that U.S. spending on nuclear forces and conventional capabilities in Europe suffered. American policy makers and the general public turned increasingly against the notion of military power, and wider talk of "American imperialism" called into question the legitimacy of U.S. actions abroad. A third factor sprang from a re-evaluation of Soviet intentions on the part of many politicians and intellectuals in the West who came to view the Kremlin as less threatening and more worthy of accommodation.

The Soviets also wished to lessen tensions for strategic and economic reasons. Under President Richard Nixon, the United States made what to the Soviets were worrisome overtures to the People's Republic of China (which since the late 19505 had increasingly distanced itself from the Soviet Union). An accommodation between the United States and China had the potential to weaken the global influence and power position of the Soviet Union. With regard to economic incentives, the Soviets also saw an opportunity to gain from increased trade with the West. Increasingly, both sides saw value in seeking to limit strategic arms. Thus, the relatively short era of *detente* was born.

Return to Cold War. The high point of detente occurred in 1972, when the United States and the Soviet Union signed agreements on anti-ballistic missiles and strategic arms at the conclusion of the first round of Strategic Arms Limitation Talks (SALT I). By 1973, however, it became obvious that the Cold War had not ended. In October of that year, the Soviets threatened intervention in the Arab-Israeli War. Unlike during the days of Khrushchev, this Soviet threat was not empty—six airborne divisions stood ready, and the Soviet Mediterranean fleet numbered a near-record eighty-five vessels.[5] In response, the United States found it necessary to alert its armed forces throughout the world.

From the American perspective, the Arab-Israeli War damaged but did not sink the ship of detente; subsequent Soviet operations in the Third World did. After 1973, with varying degrees of Soviet help, procommunist parties oriented toward Moscow seized power or de facto control in Vietnam, Laos, Angola, Ethiopia, Afghanistan, South Yemen, Cambodia, and Nicaragua. Unlike previous Soviet forays into the Third World, these activities seemed particularly ominous for two reasons. First, the Soviets were no longer content to work through nationalist movements but instead began to rely on proclaimed communist or socialist elements. Second, Soviet military moves became bolder. Beginning in 1975, Cuban troops and Soviet arms, advisors, and technicians became major, direct tools in Africa.[6] In 1979, a Soviet army of about one hundred fifteen thousand troops moved into Afghanistan, dramatically increasing Western perceptions of aggressive Soviet intent.

The Crisis of Afghanistan. The December 1979 Soviet invasion of Afghanistan marked the first time since the end of World War II that Soviet ground forces had engaged in combat outside the Warsaw Pact countries of central and eastern Europe. No longer limiting intervention to arms, advisors, and proxies, the Soviet Union had now become directly involved in a Third World country.

Western governments were alarmed by the opportunities that the Soviet invasion seemed to create for Soviet policy. First, the Soviet Union had a better position than ever from which to exploit ethnic rivalries in the area. Turbulent Pakistan seemed an especially vulnerable target. Second, the possession of airfields around Afghanistan's Kandahar region put Soviet aircraft in closer proximity to the critical Strait of Hormuz in the Persian Gulf. Finally, a Soviet presence in Afghanistan could incentivize countries in the region to distance themselves from the United States and its allies by subjecting governments to the Soviet mixture of "fear and seduction."[7]

Soviet operations in Afghanistan also had more general and disconcerting implications. Earlier operations in Angola and Ethiopia had given Soviet leaders confidence in their logistical capabilities and generalship. Success in Afghanistan increased the confidence of the Politburo (the central governing body of the Soviet Union) in the Soviet military establishment, making it more prone to use force in the future.[8] In the context of their intervention in Afghanistan, the Soviets extended the "protective custody" of the Brezhnev Doctrine (which guaranteed the perpetual "socialist" character of Soviet satellites) to all of the proclaimed Marxist states in the Third World. The Soviet Union had, in effect, created a rationale for using force in areas of the Third World wherever the correlation of forces would permit them to do so.[9]

To counter Soviet military adventures and proxy wars in the Third World, the American government began to support anti-Soviet insurgencies in a policy that became known as the Reagan Doctrine. This policy forced the Soviet Union to focus considerable resources on sustaining its clients as they waged difficult campaigns against insurgents supported by the United States.[10] As a tool to impose local defeats or higher costs on Soviet policy, the Reagan Doctrine was a significant innovation after a decade of relatively ineffective responses by the United States to Soviet activism in the Third World.

From Stalin's era to Brezhnev's, the Soviet Union evolved from a regional power with global pretensions to a global power with the ambition to at least equal the United States in virtually every category of military strength. In expanding its role, the Soviet Union increasingly relied on its strongest asset—its formidable military establishment. However, this reliance came at a political as well as an economic cost. Throughout much of its existence, the Soviet model of socialism with its emphasis on economic and social equality was often viewed within portions of the developing world and in Western Europe as a viable and even attractive alternative to capitalist democracy. However, the increasing Soviet reliance on military force, as demonstrated by its invasions of Hungary in 1956, Czechoslovakia in 1968, and Afghanistan in 1979, seriously undermined the international legitimacy of the Soviet system. The advent of authentic reform in Soviet domestic politics and in Soviet foreign policy in the mid-19805 can be traced in part to the recognition by a segment of the Soviet political elite that the Kremlin's reliance on military force would ultimately be self-defeating.

The Gorbachev Era and the Collapse of the Soviet Union. Brezhnev's death on November 10,1982, ushered in a new era in Soviet politics. After a brief interregnum, in which first former Committee for State Security (KGB) chief Yuri An-dropov and then Party Secretary Konstantin Chernenko were elevated to the position of general secretary, only to fall ill and die, Mikhail Gorbachev was selected by the Politburo to become the Communist Party's leader on March 11, 1985. By the time that Gorbachev assumed power, the declining economic performance of the Soviet economy had become so serious that Soviet leaders could no longer ignore it. Gorbachev's answer was to embark on an ambitious but piecemeal program of structural reform *(perestroika)* of key sectors of the economy. Faced by significant resistance to

economic reforms from vested interests, especially the bureaucracy, Gorbachev launched the policy of *glasnost* (openness) and then *demokratizatsiia* (the infusion of competitive elements into the Soviet one-party system) as political tools to expose inefficiencies and failures.

As more controversial topics became the focus of attention in the official press, criticism of Soviet foreign and military policy—once taboo—became a more frequent feature of articles in the Soviet media. The war in Afghanistan, at first presented to Soviet citizens as a glorious effort to help a fraternal socialist revolution in an underdeveloped neighboring country, was for the first time presented in a new and disturbing light. Soviet television began to show footage of the fighting, and reports of casualties and deaths previously kept secret by censorship were more openly discussed. The rising chorus of criticism against the Afghan adventure rapidly spread to other areas, and the heavy share of the economy devoted to the military came under attack. The burden of supporting such faraway countries as Cuba, Angola, and Ethiopia at a time of mounting economic difficulties at home became the subject of public discussion, and the Soviet government was forced into a defensive stance. In light of serious military reversals, primarily at the hands of Afghans who were receiving covert assistance from the United States and Pakistan, Gorbachev declared victory and announced a withdrawal from Afghanistan in May 1988; the withdrawal was completed in February 1989.

Gorbachev's embrace of greater openness also led to the exposure of profound social problems at home, including rampant alcoholism and the decline in the growth of the Soviet work force, as well as irremediable structural problems in the centralized Stalinist economic model, such as widespread inefficiency and corruption. Gorbachev's economic reforms, poorly crafted and haphazardly implemented, seemed only to deepen these underlying problems. Most important, the disabilities of Soviet socioeconomic conditions assumed political relevance as a result of *glasnost* and the attendant policy of *demokratizatsiia* which freed Soviet society to organize against specific Soviet policies and, over time, against the Soviet system itself.

The mounting economic and political crises within the Soviet Union were compounded by acute political problems in the Soviet empire in Eastern Europe. Gorbachev encouraged the communist leadership there to embark upon a policy of liberalizing reforms similar to those he was pursuing at home. This triggered a series of changes that proved disastrous for the survival of communism in this key region of the empire. Gorbachev had hoped that a policy of reform would prove attractive and stabilizing in Eastern Europe. But the liberalization he encouraged only served to destabilize regimes that had been installed by Soviet force of arms and that continued to rest on the support of the secret police, communist penetration of all institutions of the societies, and, ultimately, the presence of Soviet troops. Deciding that the costs and uncertainties of intervention to preserve the status quo outweighed those of inaction, Gorbachev presided over the collapse of communism in the region, culminating in the fall of the Berlin Wall on November n, 1989, which set the stage for the reunification of Germany.

In 1991, Gorbachev himself succumbed to the same political forces that had toppled communist regimes in Eastern Europe. His piecemeal economic reforms had only served to destabilize the Soviet Union's badly ailing economy, and the decline in the country's gross national product accelerated. His political thaw led to a rising chorus of criticism that spared not even the most sacred tenets of Marxist-Leninist ideology. The multinational, multiethnic complexion of the country contributed to the political crisis, as nationalism and separatism engulfed one region after another. The communist party apparatus tried to fight back, and, beginning in the fall of 1990, Gorbachev was prevailed upon to switch course and slow the pace of change. But conservatives remained fearful that Gorbachev's leadership would lead to the complete collapse of central Soviet authority.

On August 19, 1991, one day before a new treaty among the Soviet republics was to be signed, senior officials in the military, the communist party, and the KGB attempted a coup d'etat against Gorbachev. Hastily planned and executed like a bad comic opera, the attempt failed within days. The only achievement was the very outcome the coup plotters had set out to

avoid: the complete destruction of communist rule and the disintegration of the Soviet state. By December, Gorbachev, who was discredited at home by his failed economic policies as well as by his association with the very men who plotted against him, was pushed aside by Boris Yeltsin who was then serving as the elected president of the Russian republic within the Soviet Union. One republic within the Soviet Union after another, including Russia itself, declared independence from the Soviet state.

Although the Soviet Union proved unable to summon the coercive or normative power needed to ensure its survival, it had nevertheless clearly been viewed as legitimate by significant segments of the population, particularly Russians. The costly, seemingly miraculous victory in World War II; the remarkable economic recovery from the war; and the technological achievements exemplified by the 1957 launching of *Sputnik,* the first man-made satellite, all generated significant support for the Soviet system among the Soviet population and in many foreign countries as well. But Gorbachev's reforms allowed the Soviet citizen finally to evaluate more objectively the economic and political conditions of other countries, particularly the United States, which Soviet propaganda had long condemned as decadent, exploitative, and racist. In this sense, the United States contributed to the demise of the Soviet Union not only because of increased American spending on anti-Soviet "liberation" movements, military improvements, or regional alliances, but also because of the growing belief among Soviet citizens that Western values and institutions were more attractive. The Soviet Union officially ended its existence when the hammer and sickle flag was lowered for the last time over the Kremlin on December 31, 1991.

U.S.-Russian Relations in the Post-Soviet Period

U.S. foreign policy toward Russia in the post-Soviet period has sought to advance American values and interests. American values at stake in the U.S. relationship with Russia include the creation of democratic and free market institutions that could form the foundation for a pluralist Russian polity committed to respect for human freedom and prepared to contribute to a peaceful international order. American interests include arms control, nuclear nonproliferation, counterterror-ism, trade, and U.S. influence in the *near abroad,* as the Russians termed the former Soviet republics.

U.S. foreign policy has yielded only mixed results in promoting these American values and interests. Perhaps the most important achievement, for which Washington can take partial credit, is that the U.S.-Russian relationship is no longer marked by the zero-sum ideological contest that characterized the Cold War; instead, it is now defined by "normal" interstate competition. The possibilities for cooperation are now much broader, and the prospect of severe political or even military conflict is much reduced. Nevertheless, by late 2008, some observers were forecasting a new Cold War between Russia and the West. Russian President Vladimir Putin helped fuel such speculation, making a veiled comparison between U.S. foreign policy and that of Nazi Germany and harshly criticizing Washington for planning to create "one single center of power... one single center of decision making" in world affairs.[11]

The gradual deterioration in U.S.-Russian relations in the post-Soviet period is due in part to the growth of negative conditions in Russian domestic politics. However, it is also attributable to the emergence of significant and seemingly irreconcilable conflicts of interests relating to Russia's international status that have helped generate significant grievances among Russia's elites and mass public. Three broad themes reflect the changing character of U.S.-Russian relations in the post-Soviet period: the gradual weakening of the integration of post-Soviet Russia into the West, including reversals in democratization; the revival of Russia as a regional power and international actor; and the declining ability, for a variety of reasons, of the United States to shape Russian behavior in the international and domestic spheres, despite America's superpower status.

The Yeltsin Era. The leadership of Yeltsin was an essential factor in the collapse of the Soviet Union and in the course of U.S.-Russian relations in the first post-Soviet decade. Yeltsin was the product of the Soviet communist system, having climbed the ladder of the Soviet bureaucracy from provincial party leader to Politburo member in Moscow. After his break with Gorbachev and the communist party over the pace and nature of Soviet reform, Yeltsin was elected president of the Russian Soviet Federated Socialist Republic. From that position, he commanded enormous legitimacy and political power, enabling him to seal the fate of the Soviet Union and then emerge as the head of the newly born Russian Republic.

Achievements in U.S. -Russia Relations under Yeltsin (1991-1999). In the immediate post-Soviet period, Washington strongly supported Yeltsin, the first president of the new Russian state, as the most effective way to promote U.S. interests and values. On almost all foreign policy issues of importance to the United States, Yeltsin either backed Washington's initiatives or at least refused to obstruct them. Yeltsin's behavior was due in part to the realities of America's overwhelming power and the relative weakness of the new Russian state. Yet Yeltsin was also drawn to the United States, because he was ideologically comfortable with Western economic and political values. This comfort distinguished Yeltsin from Russian communists and ultranationalists, who were still a powerful force in Russian politics in the 19908. Yeltsin also relied on Western political and economic aid to advance his political survival, further strengthening his ties to the West.

One of Yeltsin's most significant contributions to American interests was his rejection of the Russian and Soviet imperial mentality. He allowed eastern and central Europe to rejoin the West and permitted the new states of the former Soviet Union to establish their independence. It is conceivable that if the first Russian president had been an ultranationalist or an unreformed communist, Russian troops might still be in Poland and in the Baltic republics.[12]

Dramatic progress also occurred in arms control and disarmament during the years of Yeltsin's administration. International concern about the safety and security of the former Soviet nuclear stockpile, plus cost considerations, prompted a 1992 decision by the individual nuclear powers among the new post-Soviet states to have Russia retain centralized command and control over the vast former Soviet arsenal. With American encouragement and financial aid, particularly through the creation of the Nunn-Lugar Cooperative Threat Reduction (CTR) programs, the four nuclear successor states—Russia, Belarus, Kazakhstan, and Ukraine—signed a protocol in Lisbon in May 1992 assuming the responsibilities of the defunct Soviet Union under the 1991 Strategic Arms Reduction Treaty (START). Belarus, Kazakhstan, and Ukraine further committed themselves to joining the Nuclear Non-proliferation Treaty as non-nuclear weapons states. The denuclearization of Russia's neighbors was completed with the removal of the last Russian 88-255 from Belarus on June 30,1997. Driven by concerns over the possible theft of nuclear materials and their sale to terrorists, CTR programs also created employment opportunities and better working conditions for former Soviet nuclear scientists and provided secure storage facilities for Russian nuclear materials.

Fears about smuggling, mishaps, and accidental launches of nuclear weapons stimulated and sustained interest in Moscow and Washington in continued strategic arms reduction. START and subsequent agreements reduced the levels of nuclear weapons drastically from the ten to twelve thousand warheads deployed at the end of the 19805. START n, signed by Presidents George H. W. Bush and Yeltsin in January 1993, was ratified by the U.S. Senate in 1996 and by the Russian parliament in 2000. START n stipulates the elimination of all land-based missiles with multiple warheads and sets a limit of three thousand to thirty-five hundred deployed warheads for each side. As of mid-2007, negotiations were underway for START El, which would reduce active warheads to between two thousand and twenty-five hundred.

The high tide of U.S.-Russian cooperation occurred in 1997. In response to Washington's plans to expand NATO into eastern and central Europe, Yeltsin requested compensation.

President Bill Clinton responded by offering the Russian president, who faced rising political opposition at home, significant inducements that moved Russia closer to integration with the West. Russia was made a partner in the prestigious annual Group of Seven (67) summits, increasing Moscow's international influence and stature. Washington also promised the Kremlin that it would press for Russia's inclusion in important international institutions, such as the World Trade Organization and the Organization for Economic Cooperation and Development. Also significant, Russia and NATO signed the NATO-Russia Founding Act in Paris in May 1997, which established a formal mechanism to promote cooperation and to the "maximum extent possible... joint decisions and joint action with respect to security issues of common concern."[13]

The Failure to Establish Democracy in Russia. Washington had thrown its support to Yeltsin largely because he was—at least initially—an effective advocate of Russian democratization. Russian progress toward democracy promised to advance American values and also to strengthen American security interests, given the widely held view that democracies do not fight wars with each other. Yet these expectations were confounded, and Russia is still struggling to determine its fundamental political values. For some observers, the problem of self-definition remains the "single greatest challenge" facing Russian society.[14]

The problematic nature of Russian political identity and the failure of democratization are due in large part to the extraordinary political, economic, and social upheavals that convulsed Russia in its first decade of independence. Perhaps most important, Yeltsin embarked on a wrenching economic program of marketization and privatization that helped impoverish many Russians while creating a small group of oligarchs who came to control much of Russia's national wealth.[15] As Russia descended further into economic and political instability and corruption in the 19905, Yeltsin became isolated and dictatorial as he grew increasingly unpopular.

Changing Russian Assessments of U.S. Foreign Policy. By the close of the twentieth century, Russia's elites and masses widely believed that the West, particularly the United States, opposed vital Russian interests. This perspective was fueled by accumulated grievances against the West and by Russian fears of international isolation and even encirclement by hostile powers. Against the backdrop of Russia's weakness and America's unchallenged global power, Russian elites (liberal and otherwise) broadly criticized the United States for its early advocacy of rapid Russian marketization and privatization and for its support for Yeltsin despite the rampant corruption and ineffectiveness of his regime.

The expansion of NATO during the 19905 and NATO's military campaign in support of the Kosovar Albanians against traditional Russian ally Serbia in 1999 were also especially contentious issues. NATO enlargement and the Kosovo campaign were stark reminders for Russia that it was simply too weak to have its objections to Western policies taken into account. This relative weakness was particularly painful for Russia's political and military elites, many of whom had •recently stood at the helm of the Soviet superpower. Believing that the West had pledged at the end of the Cold War not to expand NATO, Russians were understandably concerned for their security as such countries as Poland, the Czech Republic, and Hungary (which had once provided a buffer between the Soviet Union and the West) became members of one of the most powerful alliances in history. Most Russian critics failed to acknowledge that the unfortunate history of these states as unwilling members of the oppressive Soviet "outer empire" had determined their foreign policy preferences and alliance choices. Even committed Russian democrats often believed that the United States was behaving like a "rogue hegemon," exploiting Russia's weakness, challenging its core national interests, and undermining the Russian state as a viable institution. The extent of anti-American and anti-Western attitudes was also influenced by a near collapse of the Russian economy in 1998. One 1999 Russian survey found that 41.1% of the respondents felt that the West was attempting to turn Russia into a

Third World country; some 37.5% felt that Western nations were intent on breaking up and destroying Russia completely.[16] In other polls, 72% of the respondents described themselves as "hostile toward the United States,"[17] and 69% believed that the West desired the collapse of the Russian economy.[18] By then deeply unpopular with a collapsing political base, Yeltsin was less and less able to insulate Russian foreign policy from this rising tide of nationalist ferment.

The Advent of Putin and the Rise of the Militocracy. Yeltsin's abrupt resignation in December 1999 elevated Putin, his prime minister and a former lieutenant colonel in the KGB, to acting president. This set the stage for Putin's election as president the following March. If Russian democratization under Yeltsin had suffered from mismanagement and frequent neglect, under Putin it suffered from direct assault.

An important development of the Yeltsin period had been the gradual acceptance by most Russian elites—at least in principle—of elections, markets, and private property. However, the most influential elites under Yeltsin—the oligarchs—did much to corrupt each of these, primarily by pressuring the Russian state to favor their private interests. Putin moved early to diminish the power of the oligarchs, in effect transferring their political influence to the *siloviki,* top state officials with backgrounds in the Interior Ministry, the military, and the Federal Security Service (FSB; the successor to the KGB). These "uniformed bureaucrats" now formed a "militocracy" that shared Putin's desire to create a strong Russian state and revive Russian patriotism.[19] Largely hostile to political pluralism and highly vigilant against domestic and external enemies, real or imagined, this group reflected and supported Putin's worldview. Putin clamped down on the media, referring to his critics as "traitors," and worked to control and diminish Russian civil and political society across the board, including restricting the activities of nongovernmental organizations (NGOs). After the politicized arrest of the famous oil tycoon Mikhail Khodarkovsky in October 2003 for economic crimes, even the once-powerful Russian oligarchs were driven from any oppositional role in politics.

Despite Putin's assault on the political freedoms gained during the Yeltsin period, the Kremlin's efforts to restore the power of the Russian state, internally and externally, buoyed Putin's popularity among Russian elites and the mass public.[20] Many Russians regret the collapse of the Soviet Union not only for the loss of domestic economic and political stability but also for the collapse of Russian global power and prestige. When asked in a survey after the American-led invasion of Iraq in 2003—which Russia vocally and unsuccessfully opposed—how they wanted Russia to be perceived by other nations, 48% of survey respondents said "mighty, unbeatable, indestructible, a great world power." Only 3% of the respondents wanted Russia to be viewed as "peace-loving and friendly," and only i% said "law-abiding and democratic."[21] Although other surveys reveal strong support for democratic values among most Russians, in practice, democratization in Russia suffered significant setbacks under Putin, in part because of the acquiescence of much of Russian society to his authoritarian style.[22] This Russian acquiescence to authoritarianism was also shaped by a rising tide of Russian nationalism, stoked by the Kremlin's control of Russian mass media, which maintains that the Kremlin is protecting Russia from Western—particularly American—attempts at "regime change" in Russia.

The Continuing Crisis in Chechnya. Putin's approach to the crisis in Chechnya, which reflected his efforts to rebuild the power of the Russian state, was a primary source of his initial popularity and authority.[23] The secessionist movement in Chechnya and Moscow's brutal and ineffective efforts to reign it in sharpened Russia's sense of insecurity in the 19905 and even sparked fears of the collapse of the newborn Russian state. Under Yeltsin, the weakness of the Russian state was on full display during the disastrous Russian-Chechen war of 1994-1996, in which the well-organized and highly motivated Chechen rebels fought the ill-prepared, conscripted Russian Army to a humiliating standstill and eventually forced the Russian Army's

withdrawal from Chechen soil. The war left Chechnya in ruins, wracked by violent feuds among rival warlords, the collapse of social order, and the rise of Islamic radicalism and terrorism.

Convinced that Russia was a paper tiger after the defeat in Afghanistan and the humiliation of the first Chechen War, Chechen radicals believed that a second war would destroy the political center in Chechen politics and propel them to power at the head of an independent trans-Caucasus Islamic state. To this end, Chechen militants launched terror campaigns, including deadly bombings of residential buildings in Moscow and an armed incursion into neighboring Dagestan. These provocations prompted Moscow to launch the second Russian-Chechen War in 1999 during Putin's brief tenure as Yeltsin's prime minister. This time Russian forces, better organized and facing a badly divided Chechen opposition, scored significant successes in the field, eventually pacifying most of the countryside. Although Chechen separatists led by Shamil Basayev committed several spectacular and brutal acts of terrorism during 2003 and 2004, by 2006 Basayev had been killed, and many other radicals had been killed or captured or had accepted amnesty. Moscow installed an oppressive and corrupt government in Chechnya, led by Ramzan Kadyrov, the leader of a prominent and rapacious Chechen militia.[24]

Although in 2007 Moscow claimed victory in the Chechen conflict, which the Kremlin had framed as Russia's battle against international terrorism, the entire North Caucasus region remains unstable. It seems likely that popular support in Chechnya for secession will reignite if its profound socioeconomic problems continue to fester. Also, as insurgency has waned in Chechnya, it has grown in its neighbors. Chechen militants have assisted in this development, but local Islamic radicals have taken the lead in Ingushetia, North Ossetia, and Kabardino-Balkariya (see Map 22.2). Russian authorities have aggravated this growing potential for instability and terrorism by persecuting observant Muslims as likely insurgents, by failing to address endemic poverty and joblessness, and by condoning widespread corruption.

Clearly, the Chechen wars have damaged the prospects for Russian democratization. The brutalities and failures of the first Chechen War generated a groundswell of criticism in Russian society, throwing Yeltsin off balance and severely damaging his authority. The Putin administration learned from this experience and effectively used the specter of Chechen terrorism and separatism to muzzle criticism of the second Chechen War and to build public support for further empowerment of the Russian state. Due primarily to its competing foreign policy priorities, the United States has been unwilling to level consistent or significant criticism against the Kremlin for the extreme violations of Chechen human rights by Russian security forces and their proxies.

Russian Foreign Policy under Putin. Despite some worsening of relations as the 19905 drew to a close, the United States and Russia once again seemed to be on a path toward cooperation after the tragic events of September u, 2001. Putin was the first foreign leader to contact President George W. Bush after the traumatic terrorist attacks on U.S. soil. Putin offered Bush a partnership based on Russian support for U.S. global leadership, the U.S. invasion of Afghanistan, and the establishment of U.S. bases in former Soviet Central Asia. In exchange, the United States would embrace Russia as a major ally and recognize the post-Soviet space as Russia's legitimate sphere of influence.

Although Moscow provided significant aid to the United States and the Afghan Northern Alliance in defeating the Taliban in Afghanistan, Washington's response to Putin's overtures fell well short of the full partnership sought by the Kremlin. Putin's discomfort deepened when George W. Bush decided in December 2001 to pull out of the 1972 Anti-Ballistic Missile Treaty, the arms control agreement designed to prevent either signatory from gaining a decisive advantage through the deployment of antiballistic missile (ABM) systems. In 2007, Washington announced plans to field a limited ABM system, including a radar installation and ten interceptor missiles, in Poland and the Czech Republic. Although Washington argued that the system was

intended to defend Europe against the missiles of a "rogue" state, such as Iran or North Korea, the Kremlin strongly condemned the proposal and warned that, as a consequence, Russia might again target Europe with its nuclear arsenal.

Opposition to American foreign policy goals gradually crystallized in the runup to the second Iraq war. In 2002, Russia joined Germany and France in opposing Washington's efforts to obtain UN support for an invasion of Iraq. Moscow's opposition was likely based on two factors. First was Putin's concern that the unilateralism of the Bush administration, within the context of American unipolarity and in the absence of a strategic partnership with the United States, was undercutting his efforts to restore Russia's status as a great power.

The second likely factor was Moscow's long-standing relationship with Baghdad. Iraq had been a Soviet client during the Cold War, and the resounding defeat of Saddam Hussein's Soviet-equipped army in 1991 was viewed as a humiliation by the Soviet political elite and the leadership of the Red Army. Moscow maintained close ties with Baghdad in the post-Soviet period, largely due to economic motivations, particularly arms sales. In the 2003 crisis over Iraq, Russia sought to support its old client and to resist the expansion of U.S. power in the Middle East. In 2004, Russia suffered another reversal, again at the hands of NATO, when Estonia, Latvia, Lithuania, Bulgaria, Romania, Slovakia, and Slovenia were admitted into the alliance. Although NATO officials maintained that the latest round of enlargement did not threaten Russian security, the incorporation of the Baltic states, which had been constituent republics of the Soviet Union from 1940 to 1991, brought the alliance to Russia's doorstep.[25]

The Near Abroad: The "Color Revolutions." In addition to the entry of Lithuania, Latvia, and Estonia into NATO, other developments complicated Russia's relationship with the "near abroad." Even under Yeltsin, Russian elites assumed that the former Soviet space would be part of Russia's sphere of interest. This assumption was based on the history of Russian imperialism in Eurasia and the long-standing socioeconomic and cultural ties between Russia and the peoples of the new post-Soviet states. The diaspora in the near abroad of up to 25 million ethnic Russians reinforced Russia's strong interest in the region.

Although Russia was profoundly weak in comparison to the United States, it overshadowed other post-Soviet countries in economic and military terms and so could continue to view itself as the dominant regional power. This self-image was challenged by the enlargement of NATO and the establishment of American bases in Central Asia after 9/11 and, most importantly, by an unexpected wave of democratization in Georgia (the "Rose Revolution," 2003), Ukraine ("The Orange Revolution," 2004), and Kyrgyzstan (the "Tulip Revolution," 2005). The events in Ukraine and Georgia, where electoral fraud by the semiauthoritarian regimes mobilized broad-based opposition, were of particular concern because of their proximity to Russia, Russia's unsuccessful efforts to tilt the elections, the distinctly pro-Western tenor of the political upheavals, and the important role that Western assistance played in supporting democratic forces in those countries. This assistance included the direct aid of Western governments to local actors in civil society, as well as the careful work of Western NGOs devoted to civic and political education.[26]

The "color revolutions" in Ukraine, Georgia, and even Kyrgyzstan may very well produce stable democracies on Russia's borders that may one day have positive effects on domestic politics in Russia.[27] In any case, the color revolutions have already served as stark reminders to Russia's elites of the eastward spread of Western influence and Russia's questionable ability to control events in contiguous states.

Fearing democratic contagion in Russia itself, the Kremlin characterized the political upheavals as meddling by an unsavory alliance of domestic opposition groups and foreign interests seeking to destabilize the region. On this basis, Moscow denounced the Organization for Security and Cooperation in Europe, which had uncovered and publicized electoral fraud in the pivotal elections in Ukraine. Within Russia, more stringent controls were placed on the

freedom of the media, civic organizations, NGOs, and opposition groups and parties. These preventive, authoritarian measures prompted Western criticism, leading to a further cycle of mutual recrimination.

   Russia Resurgent. Russia's increasing assertiveness in the near abroad and on the international stage became a mark of Putin's leadership.[28] Having pacified Chechnya and neutralized Chechen terrorism by 2005 (if only temporarily), Moscow moved to roll back Western influence in Central Asia. In May 2005, the authoritarian regime in Uzbekistan put down protests in the provincial city of Andijan, leading to the deaths of hundreds of civilians. Criticized by the West, Uzbekistan sought Russia's support, arguing that it was battling the mutual threat of Islamic radicalism. The- Kremlin sided with the Uzbek government, emboldening it to terminate basing rights that the United States had used to support military operations in Afghanistan. In 2006, Uzbekistan joined the Moscow-led Collective Security Treaty Organization, whose membership includes many of the new states of the former Soviet Union. As a further example of Russia's assertiveness, Russia has not only repeatedly used its natural gas monopoly in the Ukraine to remind the former Soviet Republic of the wisdom of accommodating Moscow's interests, but it has also laid claim (via a capsule containing a Russian flag it planted in the Arctic sea floor) to the Arctic's potential oil and gas reserves.
   Perhaps the most significant examples of Russian resurgence in the foreign policy arena come from Russian-Georgian relations. Moscow has continued to put pressure on Georgia, led by a strongly pro-Western government after its "Rose Revolution" of 2003, using its support for the separatist regions of Abkhazia and South Ossetia within Georgia to force the country to conform to Russian interests in the Caucasus.[29] Georgia's President Mikheil Saakashvili refused to yield ground and appealed to the United States. Moscow revealed its increased willingness to oppose U.S. interests when Putin warned Washington not to interfere in the diplomatic furor that erupted after Georgia arrested four Russian Army officers in late 2006 on charges of espionage. Russia imposed a full-scale transport and trade embargo on Georgia, and the officers were eventually released.
   Conflict in Georgia reached a new level of intensity in 2008, with the spark being developments in South Ossetia. In response to a series of violent incidents including some against ethnically Georgian residents of South Ossetia, Saakashvili launched a military operation in South Ossetia in August 2008. The response by Russia, which had stationed peacekeepers in South Ossetia since the early 19903, was dramatic. "Russia's disproportionate counter-attack" involved not only the reinforcement of Russian peacekeepers in South Ossetia but also the "movement of large forces into Abkhazia and deep into Georgia, accompanied by the widespread destruction of economic infrastructure, damage to the economy, and disruption of communications and movement between different regions of [Georgia]."[30] According to U.S. Secretary of State Condoleezza Rice, Russia's actions amounted to a "full scale invasion across an internationally-recognized border."[31] Russia subsequently recognized the independence of Abkhazia and South Ossetia, citing the aspirations of the peoples of these regions as well as its responsibility to protect Russian citizens living outside the borders of the Russian state (see also Chapter 23). Throughout this crisis, Putin—who had yielded the Russian Presidency to Dmitry Medvedev after 2008 presidential elections—appeared still to be decisively in charge from his new position as Russia's Prime Minister.[32]
   The scope, scale, and immediacy of the Russian actions in this crisis suggest that Russia had motivations as well as intended effects beyond the situation in South Ossetia. With regard to motivations, these probably included "pushback against the decade-long eastward expansion of the NATO alliance" and "anger over issues ranging from the independence of Kosovo" to U.S. initiatives to place missile defense systems in eastern Europe.[33] The intended effects of Russia's actions in Georgia appear to include sending a message to former Soviet Republics such as Georgia and Ukraine that Russia still intends to exercise a degree of control in what

Russia considers its rightful sphere of influence, and that it is not permissible for these two countries to obtain the NATO memberships that both Georgia and Ukraine have expressed interest in obtaining.[34]

Russia has also increasingly charted its own course outside its own perceived sphere of influence. It invited the Hamas leadership in Palestine to visit Moscow and offered financial assistance to the group after the United States and the European Union (EU) withdrew economic support. Russia has also declared that it opposes any sanctions against Iran for its program of uranium enrichment and has asserted that it would continue its arms trade and nuclear cooperation with Tehran in the face of European and American opposition. Moscow joined Beijing in calling for the withdrawal of the U.S. military from Central Asia, and China and Russia have begun to conduct joint military exercises.

A number of factors explain Russia's willingness and ability to disagree with or actively confront the Western powers, particularly the United States. For the near abroad, one factor is that Russia's influence in the former Soviet space, except for the Baltic region, has risen because U.S. influence has declined. Despite their spectacular electoral victories in the color revolutions, pro-Western forces in Georgia and particularly in the Ukraine have yet to consolidate their power. For these two countries, and even more for other post-Soviet governments, the economic and political presence of the West is limited because of geographical distance and because of the heavy American focus on the Middle East. Much of the region is still tied together by Soviet-era economic and energy infrastructures and by common knowledge of the Russian language. Given that significant Western investment, let alone membership in the EU and NATO, is not yet a viable option, a number of these countries are drawn to Russia as they seek development and security. In addition to the occasional use of military power, Russia has also sought to enhance its "soft power" by increasing regional investment and serving as an economic magnet for its post-Soviet neighbors.[35]

The rise of Russia as a dominant regional power also rests on its remarkable recovery since its economic collapse of 1998. Russia possesses vast natural resources that account for 80% of its exports. It is the world's largest exporter of natural gas and second-largest exporter of oil. The dramatic rise in the price of oil, from $i i a barrel in 1998 to more than $100 a barrel in 2008 has been the driving force behind Russian economic growth, which has averaged between 6% and 7% per year. Russia has also increased exports of other natural resources, particularly metals, and of manufactured goods, such as machinery.

Russia's emergence as an energy superpower under Putin has clear implications for global and regional security. On the one hand, Russia has used its newfound wealth primarily to support greater state-led economic modernization and not to strengthen its military power, which has grown only modestly. Although Russia's defense budget was $31 billion in 2007, up from $8 billion in 2001, Russian military spending was still far less than that of the United States.[36] On the other hand, Russia has not always used its economic power responsibly. In January 2006, Gazprom, the Russian government-controlled energy giant, abruptly turned off natural gas supplies to the Ukraine in a disagreement over prices, inadvertently creating shortages in western Europe. Efforts by the West to have Russia ratify the European Energy Charter, which calls for good governance and transparency, were turned back by Moscow. Russia's influence in global and regional energy security is likely to increase over at least the next decade or two. In mid-2007, Russia signed an agreement with Turkmenistan and Kazakhstan for the construction of a gas pipeline that would tie these countries to the European gas supply network. The agreement was an important coup for Russia in its efforts to check the power of the United States, which had sought for fifteen years to divert regional energy supplies in Central Asia away from Russian control. Equally important, as demonstrated by the just-cited case of the Ukraine, Russia has shown its willingness to wield oil and gas as a political weapon. Moscow believes, in the words of an influential Russian politician, that "Europe's reliance on

Russian energy" will force the West to acquiesce in Russia's attempts to increase its political weight in the near abroad.[37]

U.S. Policy Challenges for the Future

U.S.-Russian relations in the twenty-first century demonstrate the limits of American power and influence in the former Soviet space. These limits are evident as the United States seeks to promote democracy, regional stability, and Russia's integration into global institutions.[38] If a state is self-sufficient or nearly so (as is Russia) and possesses vast natural resources, its rulers can more easily refuse to consider political reforms that might improve state capacity (including authentic democratization) but that might also weaken their power. Such rulers can also skillfully exploit the reliance of external actors on trade or strategic cooperation with their country. In Russia's case, European reliance on its energy resources and America's desire for Russian support for nonproliferation regimes enable Moscow to fend off international demands for political liberalization or foreign policy moderation.

Furthermore, location and size matter, even in the era of globalization. Leadership, of course, also matters. Although Moscow was closer to American political values during the Yeltsin period and was also more sensitive to Western pressure and foreign policy preferences, those proclivities have now faded. The ascendance of nationalistic and frequently anti-American elites within an increasingly authoritarian political setting, coupled with Russia's burgeoning energy wealth, has hardened the Kremlin's stance toward the West. On certain fundamental political and economic issues, Russia and the United States are now divided and are likely to remain so for the foreseeable future. The United States wants Russia to be a liberal democracy with a transparent market economy, and it also wants much the same for the countries in Russia's sphere of influence. For its part, Russia wants the United States to treat it as an equal and on its own terms.[39] Russia will resist Western influence in the former Soviet space and turn a deaf ear to Western calls for democratization in Russia itself. Flush with oil wealth and emboldened by U.S. difficulties in Iraq and Afghanistan, the Kremlin is critical of what it sees as a hegemonic U.S. foreign policy only thinly disguised by the rhetoric of democracy promotion.

Russian observers, such as Dmitri Trenin, criticize Russia's slide into authoritarianism, seeing it as akin to tsarism, and feel that "traditional" Russian liberalism, which was supported in the late 19805 and early 19905 by intellectuals who were disinterested in Russian nationalism and patriotism, has run its course. In this view, Russia must now wait for the growth of a new kind of liberalism that integrates democracy and nationalism as core values. Trenin hopes that the growing urban middle class in Russia will eventually become the standard bearer of this new ideology but also maintains that this process of ideological renovation will take years and may produce unanticipated and unwelcome results.[40]

This assessment does not mean that the United States will be unable to advance its core values and interests in its relations with Russia. The strongest checks on full-blown authoritarianism in Russia and on significant and sustained confrontation between Russia and the United States are twofold. First, Russia is no longer guided, as it was under communism, by a messianic ideology that seeks to create a new civilization in opposition to Western institutions and values. Russia's elites are not ideologically hostile to civil and political freedoms, although they are certainly opposed to the constraints that authentic democratic institutions would place on their power. Second, those elites embrace strong, albeit selective, relationships with the West for instrumental reasons. The Kremlin's conceptualization of Russian modernization is shaped in large measure by a view of the external world—and particularly the global economy—that is at best wary. But Russia's political elites also believe that Russia's membership in key Western institutions and its integration into the world economy are necessary for Russian modernization, which over the long term will ensure Russia's status as a great power.

Under these conditions, Russia for the foreseeable future will likely be neither for nor against the West but rather a partner or an opponent, depending on the issue at hand. The content of U.S. policy and the quality of U.S. diplomacy by the new Obama administration will play an important role, for unwise policies and pressure can ensure opposition. The challenge for the United States is to craft policies that blend and balance restraint, cooperation, and activism. Increasing economic investment in Russia can also be important in helping nurture an independent Russian middle class and by injecting Western managerial expertise, with its attendant emphasis on transparency and good governance in the marketplace.

In the end, Russia will determine its own future. It is significant that Russia's attempts to secure its position as a great power have focused primarily on the development of its economic, rather than military, assets. This shift in national perspective on the part of Russia's elites, which marks a sea change from the reliance of the Soviet Union on military power, contributes to American national security. Nevertheless, if Russia slips further into autocracy and continues to rely on its energy resources as the primary source of its economic strength, it will remain a one-dimensional power very much like the Soviet Union, lacking strong, pluralist institutions and possessing relatively few durable ties to the West.

Discussion Questions

1. Compare Soviet foreign policy under Stalin, Khrushchev, Brezhnev, and Gorbachev; identify elements of continuity and change.
2. Did Marxist-Leninist ideology lead or follow Soviet foreign policy?
3. What developments best explain the collapse of the Soviet Union in 1991?
4. What aspects of U.S. national security policy now call for enhanced cooperation between the United States and the states of the former Soviet Union? What, specifically, are American interests in the region?
5. In what way has the foreign policy of Russia and the other former Soviet republics changed as a result of the end of the Cold War?
6. How might the United States enhance its influence in former Soviet space, particularly in the strategically important area of Central Asia?
7. What are the most effective U.S. instruments for supporting stability in former Soviet space?
8. To what extent—and with what instruments—should the United States promote democratization in the post-Soviet region?
9. How might Russian influence in Eurasia and the world increase in the next decade?

Recommended Reading

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Internet Resources

Carnegie Moscow Center, www.carnegie.ru/en
The Collective Security Treaty Organization, www.cagateway.org/en/topics/23/84
Eurasia Daily Monitor, www.jamestown.org/edm
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Johnson's Russia List, www.cdi.org/russia/johnson/default.cfm Radio Free Europe/Radio Liberty, www.rferl.org Russia's presidential Web site, www.kremlin.ru/eng/ Russia, U.S. Department of State, www.state.gov/p/eur/ci/rs Strategic Studies Institute of the U.S. Army War College, www.strategicstudiesinstitute.army.mil

Notes

Chapter 1: The International Setting

1. J. Boone Bartholomees, Jr., ed., "Guidelines for Strategy Formulation," in *U.S. Army War College Guide to National Security Policy and Strategy,* 2nd ed. (Carlisle Barracks, PA: Strategic Studies Institute, 2006), 388.

2. See also Joseph S. Nye, Jr., "Redefining the National Interest," *Foreign Affairs* 78, no. 4 (July/August 1999): 22-35; and the Commission on America's National Interests, *America's National Interests* (Cambridge, MA: The Commission on America's National Interests, 2000), esp. 5-8.

3. See, for example, Thomas F. Homer-Dixon, *Environment, Scarcity, and Violence* (Princeton, NJ: Princeton University Press, 1999); Ole Waever et al., *Identity, Migration, and the New Security Agenda in Europe* (New York: St. Martin's Press, 1993); and National Intelligence Council, *Global Trends* 20/5: *A Dialogue About the Future with Nongovernment Experts,* NIC 2000-02, December 2000.

4. Human Security Centre, *Human Security Report* 2005: *War and Peace in the 2lst Century* (New York: Oxford University Press, 2005), *viii.*

5. George W. Bush, *Department of Homeland Security* (Washington, DC: The White House, June 2002), 8.

6. In the interests of space, and because of its decline over time, not discussed here is Marxism. For its basic tenets, see Robert Gilpin, "Three Ideologies of Political Economy," in *Understanding International Relations,* 5th ed., ed. Daniel J. Kaufman et al. (New York: McGraw-Hill, 2004); 426-428. For its translation into a theory of international relations, see V. I. Lenin, *Imperialism: The Highest Stage of Capitalism* (New York: International Publishers, 1939). Perhaps the Marxist perspective persists most strongly among dependency theorists who examine the role of the capitalist developed world in contributing to underdevelopment in other parts of the world. See Theotonio Dos Santos, "The Structure of Dependence," *American Economic Review: Papers and Proceedings* 9, no. 2 (May 1970): 231-236. For a more recent view, see Kema Irogbe, "Globalization and the Development of Underdevelopment of the Third World," *Journal of Third World Studies 22,* no. I (2005): 41-68.

7. Kenneth N. Waltz, *Theory of International Politics* (New York: McGraw-Hill, 1979), 131.

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