

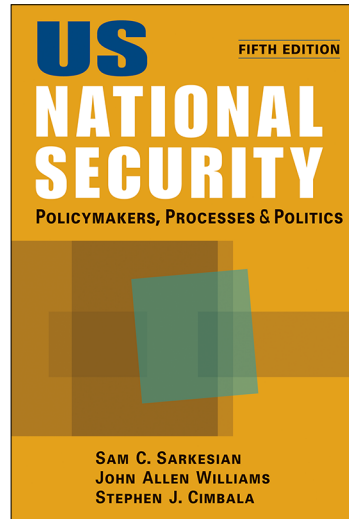
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US National Security:
Policymakers,
Processes, and Politics

FIFTH EDITION

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1 National Interests and National Security

The optimism engendered by the end of the Cold War was shattered by the terrorist attacks of September 11, 2001. The United States found itself in a “war on terror”—or, more precisely, a war on those who would use terrorist tactics against the United States and its allies—the implications of which are as yet unclear. This struggle will continue into the indefinite future and is in addition to new state-to-state challenges that could pose significant dangers for the United States.

The international strategic landscape of the twenty-first century continues to be shaped by complex and contradictory forces. The world is characterized by unrest and changing patterns of interstate relationships, as well as conflicts within states caused by ethnic, religious, and nationalistic differences. International terrorism, drug cartels, and vulnerabilities to threats made possible by information-age technology add to the turmoil. US national security policies are complicated, ambiguous, and even inconsistent in this new environment due to the unpredictable and sometimes confusing characteristics of the international arena, genuine differences of opinion about how to respond, and increasingly constrained resources to devote to defense.

Disputes within and among the national security establishment, Congress, and the public were muted in response to the September 11 attacks, but only temporarily. The United States soon found itself involved in wars in Iraq and Afghanistan, both of which proved more difficult to prosecute than many expected. Although formal military operations are now over in Iraq and US troops are expected to be out of Afghanistan by the end of 2014, the nature of US continuing commitments in both places is not yet clear.

At the same time, US attention has shifted toward nuclear weapons programs in North Korea and Iran and the increasing power and assertiveness of a rising China. North Korea does not deny that it has such a program, and Iranian denials ring hollow among outside observers. While no military confrontation with China seems likely in the near future, tensions over the status of Taiwan and Chinese territorial claims in the South China Sea could eventually have a military dimension—a tragic development if it should occur.

National Security

The ambiguous and challenging international security landscape of the twenty-first century has clouded the concept and meaning of US national security.¹ The integration of national interests into meaningful national security policy has become more difficult. Recognizing the problems of defining and conceptualizing national security, we offer a preliminary definition that includes both objective capability and perception: *US national security is the ability of national institutions to prevent adversaries from using force to harm Americans or their national interests and the confidence of Americans in this capability.*

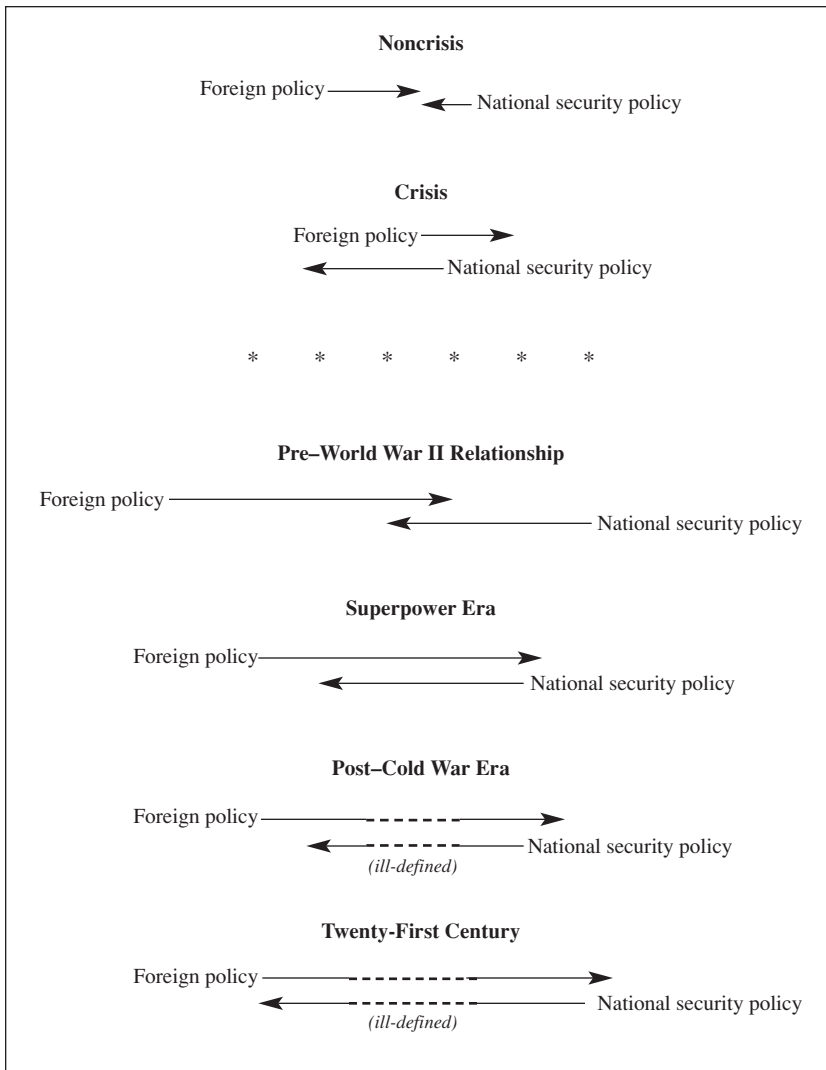
There are two dimensions of this definition: physical and psychological. The first is an objective measure based on the strength and military capacity of the nation to challenge adversaries successfully, including going to war if necessary. This also includes a more prominent role for intelligence, economics, and other nonmilitary measures as well as the ability to use them as political-military levers in dealings with other states. The psychological dimension is subjective, reflecting the opinion and attitudes of Americans on the nation's ability to remain secure relative to the external world. It affects the people's willingness to support government efforts to achieve national security goals. Underpinning this is that the majority of people have the knowledge and political will to support clear policies to achieve clear national security goals.

National Security, Foreign Policy, and Domestic Policy

National security must be analyzed in the context of foreign policy, defined as the policies of a nation that encompass all official relations with other countries. The purposes of US foreign policy are multidimensional. The goal is to enhance conditions favorable to US national interests and to reduce those detrimental to US national interests. The instruments of foreign policy are primarily diplomatic and political but include a variety of psychological and economic measures.

In the immediate past, national security differed from foreign policy in that national security purposes were narrower and focused on security and safety, and national security was primarily concerned with actual and potential adversaries and their use of force or threat to do so. This means there was a military emphasis, which usually is not the case in foreign policy. National security policy increasingly overlaps with foreign policy, however, sometimes blurring any distinction. But much of foreign policy requires compromise and negotiations—the dynamics of give-and-take—associated with traditional diplomacy. This kind of work is primarily a matter for the US Department of State, with long-range implications for national security policy. These relationships are shown in Figure 1.1.

Figure 1.1 National Security and Foreign Policy



Source: Adapted from Col. William J. Taylor Jr., "Interdependence, Specialization, and National Security: Problems for Diplomats, Soldiers, and Scholars," *Air University Review* 30, no. 5 (July–August 1979), pp. 17–26.

Note: The gap between foreign policy and national policy indicates the relative degree of "closeness" between foreign and national security policy. The arrows indicate the relative degree of overlap. As shown, during times of crisis, the gap between foreign and national security policy is minimal and virtually nonexistent. In the twenty-first century it is often difficult to clearly separate foreign policy and national security because the use of force has become closely connected with a variety of peacekeeping missions, humanitarian crises, operations of war, and operations other than war; many such missions are extensions of foreign policy or a combination of national security and foreign policy, particularly in combating international terrorism.

4 US National Security

Until recently, most Americans felt that US values could not be imposed on other states unless survival was at stake. National security is now seen by many to include the projection of US values abroad. This adds to the confusion and highlights the interrelationship among foreign, domestic, and national security policies. An observation made a decade ago remains relevant: "America's concept of national security today is infinitely more complex than at any time in its history. The same is true for the relationship between the foreign and domestic components of national security."²

The difficulties of determining US national interests and establishing national security priorities are compounded by the increasing linkages between a number of national security and domestic policies. The domestic economic impact of certain national security policies links US domestic interests and policies to the international security arena. This is seen in economic sanctions, embargos on agriculture exports to adversaries or potential adversaries, diminished foreign oil sources, border security, and the export of technologically advanced industrial products.

Owing to the special characteristics of our democratic system and political culture, it is increasingly difficult to isolate national security issues from domestic policy. Besides the relationship and link between foreign and national security policies, domestic interests are important in establishing national security priorities and interests.³ The primary distinction between foreign and domestic policy and national security policy rests in the likelihood of the use of the military as the primary instrument for implementing national security policy. Although many other matters are relevant to US national interests, they are best incorporated into foreign policy and the overlap between such policy and national security.⁴

These observations are the basis for defining national security policy, expanding on the concept of national security: *National security policy is primarily concerned with formulating and implementing national strategy involving the threat or use of force to create a favorable environment for US national interests.* An integral part of this is to prevent the effective use of military force and/or covert operations by adversaries or potential adversaries to obstruct the ability of the United States to pursue national interests.

National security means more than the capacity to conduct international wars. In light of the characteristics of the international arena and contemporary conflicts, challenges to US national security might take any number of nontraditional forms. In this new era, international terrorism, weapons of mass destruction, including chemical and biological warfare (WMD), and information warfare are increasingly important dimensions of national security. Of course, the capacity to deter nuclear war and wage conventional conflicts remains essential for the conduct of US national security policy.

National security policy must be carefully developed and implemented according to priorities distinguishing survival (i.e., vital) interests from others. Too often, national security is used synonymously with any interest, suggesting that all interests are survival priorities. Taking a page from Sun-tzu, if almost everything is a matter of national security, then the concept of national security becomes virtually meaningless.⁵ If national security policy and strategy followed such a pattern, the United States would have to defend everything everywhere; as a result it would be unable to defend anything. Resources and personnel would be scattered across the globe and rarely be in a position to bring sufficient force to bear, even if survival were at stake.

Short of clear threats to US territory, Americans often disagree over priorities. Even when there is agreement on priorities, there is disagreement on resource commitment and strategy. Yet a system of priorities provides a way to identify levels of threats and helps in the design of strategies. The relationship between national interests and national security is particularly important in this new era. Henry A. Kissinger wrote some four decades ago, "What is it in our interest to prevent? What should we seek to accomplish?"⁶ The same questions continue to challenge policymakers, scholars, and elected officials. The answers were elusive at the start of the post-Cold War period and became even more complicated after September 2001.

The US war against terrorism became the dominant theme in 2001, spelled out in the Bush Doctrine of President George W. Bush, but this theme was complicated by the US involvement in Iraq and Afghanistan, the troubling issues with Iran and North Korea, and a variety of issues linked to homeland security.⁷ Just what is the US national interest? At first glance the answer seems relatively simple: it is to promote US values and objectives. To promote these includes protecting them by implementing effective national security policies.

Upon closer examination, however, these answers are inadequate, and they raise additional questions. What are US values? How are they reflected in national interests? What is the relationship between national security and national interests? What is national security? How should US national security policy be implemented? For the past three decades these questions have been addressed by many US politicians and scholars. If they agree on anything, it is that there is no agreement.

Each generation of Americans interprets national values, national interests, and national security in terms of its own perspective and mind-set. Although there is agreement about core elements, such as protection of the US homeland, opinions differ about the meaning of national security, the nature of external threats, and the best course of conduct for security policy. The answers to Kissinger's questions are even more elusive today. National interests encompass a wide range of elements that underpin an open system and society such as the United States.

It is to be expected that in a country with a diverse population and multiple power centers there will be different interpretations as well as outright differences. Recognizing that these matters are rarely resolved by onetime solutions and that they are, at best, ambiguous, we explore the concepts of national security, national values, and national interest. In the process, we design a framework for analyzing national security policy.

In any case, the United States is in the world to stay. Americans can neither withdraw from external responsibilities nor retreat to isolation. Regardless of the policies of any administration, the United States has links to most parts of the world: politically, economically, culturally, and psychologically. What the United States does or does not do has a significant impact on international politics.

National Interests

US national interests are expressions of US values projected into the domestic and international arenas. The purpose of interests includes the creation and perpetuation of an international environment that is most favorable to the peaceful pursuit of US values. Americans tend to believe that their own democracy is safer in an international system that expands democracy and open systems. (At issue, of course, is where open systems can be successful and what costs are justifiable to support them.) Similarly, the United States wishes to prevent the expansion of closed systems by their use of force or indirect aggression. In the twenty-first century, the domestic arena has become an important consideration in pursuing national interests because of asymmetrical threats, the information age, and international terrorism.⁸ Such concerns were heightened by the September 11 terrorist attacks and increased with the US involvement in Iraq.

Three statements serve as reference points. First, US values as they apply to the external world are at the core of national interests. Second, pursuing national interests does not mean that US national security strategy is limited to the homeland. This may require power projection into various parts of the world, especially when combating international terrorism. Third, the president is the focal point in defining and articulating US national interests.

National interests can be categorized in order of priorities as follows:

First Order: vital interests. This requires protection of the homeland and areas and issues directly affecting this interest. This may require total military mobilization and resource commitment. In homeland defense, this also may require a coordinated effort of all agencies of government, espe-

cially in defense against terrorist attacks and information warfare. The homeland focus was highlighted by the creation of a new cabinet-level Department of Homeland Security by President George W. Bush following September 11. The purpose is to coordinate the efforts of a number of agencies in countering terrorism in the United States.

Second Order: critical interests. These are areas and issues that do not directly affect the survival of the United States or pose a threat to the homeland but in the long run have a high propensity for becoming First Order priorities. Critical interests are measured primarily by the degree to which they maintain, nurture, and expand open systems. Some examples include US economic competitiveness, energy crises, and the emergence of new regional hegemon. Many also argue that moral imperatives are important in shaping national interests.

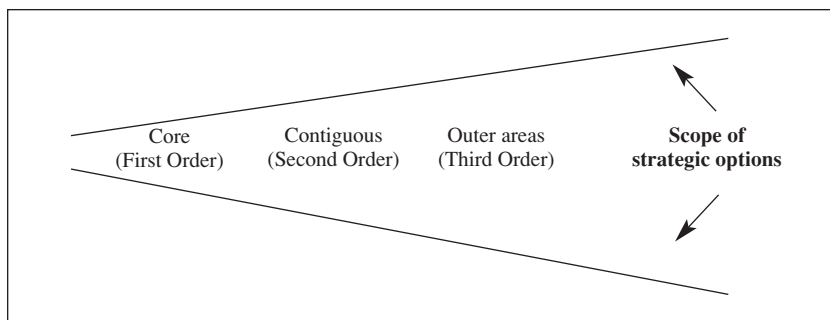
Third Order: serious interests. These are issues that do not critically affect First and Second Order interests yet cast some shadow over them. US efforts are focused on creating favorable conditions to preclude Third Order interests from developing into higher-order ones.

All other interests are peripheral in that they have no immediate impact on any order of interests but must be watched in case events transform these interests. In the meantime, peripheral interests require few, if any, US resources.

Categories of priorities such as these can be used as a framework for systematic assessment of national interests and national security and also as a way to distinguish immediate from long-range security issues. Such a framework can provide a basis for rational and systematic debate regarding the US national security posture and is useful in studying national security. Today there is rarely a clear line, however, between categories of interests or complete agreement on what interests should be included in each category. Many changes have expanded the concept of national interests to include several moral and humanitarian dimensions, among others.

A realistic assignment of priorities can be better understood by looking at geopolitical boundaries of core, contiguous, and outer areas (see Figure 1.2). In specific terms, at the core of US national interests is the survival of the homeland and political order. But survival cannot be limited to the “final” defense of the homeland. In light of international terrorism and today’s weapons technology, weapons proliferation, and chemical/biological warfare, homeland survival means more than retreating to the borders and threatening anyone who might attack with total destruction. By then it is too late for national security policy to do much good, and in the new war the attacker can be difficult to identify.

If national interest is invoked only when the homeland is directly threatened and survival is at stake, then the concept may be of little use and

Figure 1.2 US National Security Priorities

too late to overcome the peril. If the concept is to have any meaning for policy and strategy, then it must be something more. Developing this broader view sparks a great deal of debate and disagreement between the executive and legislative branches of government and in the US political arena. The media also frequently become involved.

Policymakers rarely have the luxury of endless debate, nor do they have unlimited time or all necessary facts in a given situation. Yet policy must be made and strategy options examined, chosen, and implemented regardless of conditions, even while disagreements remain intense.

The fact is that policy must be determined and implemented at some point. Before that, national interests for the particular situation must be identified and articulated. At the same time, national interests over the long range must be considered. Custom, usage, and constitutional powers give the president a basis for articulating their meaning. Initiatives in foreign and national security policy usually rest with the president as the commander in chief of US armed forces, the chief diplomat, and chief of state.

To be sure, Congress has an important role, but the president must take the lead and is the country's only legal representative with respect to foreign relations. For better or for worse, the president articulates the national interests, and Congress responds. The same holds true with respect to the president and the variety of interest groups in the government bureaucracy and public arena. Members of Congress find it very difficult to force a president committed to a course of action to change direction in national security policies, even in the case of a long war that has become unpopular. In particular, Congress finds it difficult to stop a war that the president feels should be continued.⁹ The "nuclear option" of shutting off funding, as was done to stop the war in Vietnam, is difficult to do politically and has many unpredictable effects.

US Values and National Interests

US values are based on what is required for the philosophical, legal, and moral basis for the continuation of the US system. These attributes are deeply engrained in our political system and domestic environment; they also apply to the way in which the public perceives justice in the international system and “just cause” in the conduct of war. In other words, values are principles that give the US political system and social order their innate character and are the basis of further principles upon which to base national interests.

The Value System

The growing heterogeneity of US society notwithstanding, modern US values derive primarily from the Judeo-Christian heritage, the Anglo-Saxon legacy (including the Reformation, the Renaissance, the philosophies of John Locke and Jean-Jacques Rousseau, among others, and the principles rooted in the American Revolution), the Declaration of Independence, and the US Constitution. From among these many historical reference points, we identify at least six fundamental values that define the United States and its role in the international world.¹⁰

First, *there is the right of self-determination*, a dual concept in this context: it applies not only to the nation-state but also to people within that state. Each nation-state is presumed to have the right to determine its own policy and to govern in any way it chooses as long as it does not threaten neighbors or oppress its own people. At the same time, people within that nation-state also have the right of self-determination. From the US perspective, this means that through free and fair elections people in a nation-state have the right to determine how and by whom they will be ruled, with the option to replace rulers as they see fit.

There is another dimension, as well: an emerging right claimed by minority groups to demand autonomy as a matter of self-determination. This duality of self-determination and state sovereignty creates serious problems in determining appropriate and legitimate action on the part of the United Nations (UN), regional organizations, and the United States. This duality also has important implications for US military strategy. Moreover, this duality can lead to a dangerous confrontation between minority groups within a state demanding self-determination and the state itself, as occurred in the former Yugoslavia (i.e., between Albanians and Serbians in Kosovo, a province in Serbia) and is occurring in Iraq, among other states. The United States and the North Atlantic Treaty Organization (NATO) intervened on behalf of the Albanian majority in Kosovo at the expense of the

sovereignty of Serbia.¹¹ Ideally, self-determination is accomplished within a system of laws and peaceful change. The peaceful partition of the former Czechoslovakia into the Czech Republic and Slovakia is an example of this.

Second, it follows that *there is an inherent worth of any single individual* in his or her relationship to others, to the political system, and to the social order. What does this mean? Put simply, every person is intrinsically a moral, legal, and political entity to which the system must respond and whose rights must be respected. Each individual has the right to achieve all that he or she can, without encumbrances other than protection of fellow citizens, homeland protection, and survival. Individual worth must therefore be reflected in economic, political, and legal systems.

Third, *rulers owe their power and accountability to the people*, which is the essence of democratic political legitimacy. The people are the final authority: there is a continuing responsibility by elected and appointed officials to rule and function according to moral and legal principles, and the people have the right to change their leaders. Furthermore, individual worth necessitates limited government with no absolute and permanent focal point of power. To ensure this, rule and governance must be open; that is, decisions and policies must be undertaken in full public view, with input from a variety of formal and informal groups. The system of rule must be accessible to the people and their representatives. This is the essence of what are called “open systems.”

Fourth, *policies and changes in the international environment must be based on the first three values outlined above*. Therefore, peaceful change brought about by rational discourse among nation-states is a fundamental value. The resort to war is acceptable only if it is clearly based on homeland protection and survival or other core values, and only if all other means have failed. In this respect, diplomacy and state-to-state relationships must be based on mutually acceptable rules of the game.

Fifth, *any system professing such values and trying to function according to their principles must be protected and nurtured*. Nation-states whose values are compatible with US values are thought to be best served by an international order based on those same values. The United States continues to discover the limits of the possible in trying to spread democracy to areas of the world unprepared to nurture it, however.

Sixth, *US values are grounded in the Judeo-Christian heritage that predated the founding of the republic in the late eighteenth century*. For many Americans, this instills a sense of humanity, a sensitivity to the plight and status of individuals, and a search for divine guidance. These characteristics are consistent with the precepts of other religious traditions, including Islam.

We do not suggest that these values are perfectly embodied in the US system. There are many historical examples of value distortions and their

misuse to disguise other purposes. But these values are esteemed in their own right by most Americans and are embodied in the political-social system. Furthermore, the system of rule and the character of the political system have institutionalized these values, albeit imperfectly. The expectations of most Americans and their assessment of other states are, in no small measure, based on these values.

American Values: Into the Twenty-First Century and Beyond

The early years of the republic saw little need to translate values into the external world, as the interest of the United States rarely extended beyond its own shores. Yet it was during this time that the United States became a great power, partly as the result of acquiring territory in the Spanish-American War in 1898. Within two decades, US involvement in World War I was seen as a way to make the world safe for democracy and subdue a tyrannical Old World power.

The collapse of the old order in Europe following World War I set the stage for the continental evolution of both democratic regimes and tyrannical Marxist-Leninist and Fascist systems. Until that time, Pax Britannica had provided a sense of stability and order to European affairs as well as a security umbrella for the United States in its relationships with Europe. But for many Americans, involvement in a conflict to save Europe seemed to be a mistake. The United States withdrew into isolationism with the “Back to Normalcy” policy of President Warren Harding in 1921, which ended only with the gathering clouds of World War II. Although the United States did participate in disarmament negotiations during the interwar period, many view the failure to join the League of Nations and participate actively in it as a contributing factor to World War II, and this decision was a serious step back from President Woodrow Wilson’s Fourteen Points for a new world order.¹²

Even in the aftermath of World War I, Americans were accustomed to a world dominated by a European order compatible with US values and interests. Although an imperfect order, it did not offend the US value system. At the beginning of the twentieth century, US values were expressed by progressivism, reflected in Theodore Roosevelt’s presidency and later by Franklin Roosevelt’s New Deal. Franklin Roosevelt’s “Four Freedoms” from his 1941 State of the Union address—freedom of speech, freedom of worship, freedom from want, and freedom from fear—remain excellent examples of US values.

Between the two world wars, Americans presumed that US interests were also world interests. US values were viewed as morally unassailable and therefore to be sought after by the rest of the world. In this context, US national security was primarily a narrow focus on the protection of the home-

land, which required few armed forces and a simple military strategy. Furthermore, there was little need to struggle with issues over US values and how to protect them in the external world, except occasionally for the sake of international economics. We passed to others, primarily Britain and France, responsibility for keeping the democratic peace. Most Americans wanted no part of the “European War” (which started in 1939) until the surprise Japanese bombing of the US Pacific Fleet in Pearl Harbor on December 7, 1941.

Regardless of the US desire to return to isolation following the successful conclusion of World War II, US interests were increasingly threatened. Parts of Europe and Asia were smoldering from the war, and it soon became clear that US responsibilities extended beyond the nation’s borders. In addition, it was perceived that democracy and US values could not be nurtured and expanded if we simply stayed at home; if democracy was the demand, then it required our presence in all parts of the world. Beyond protection of the US homeland, then, what did the United States stand for? And how did it intend to achieve its goals—whatever they were?

These questions were easier to answer in the negative: the United States was against Marxist-Leninist and other authoritarian political systems determined to subvert or overthrow the international order based on self-determination. The policy of containment reflected a US policy consensus to prevent the expansion of the Soviet Union and its Communist system. Positive responses to such questions were seen in the US role in rebuilding Europe, especially the economic recovery program known as the Marshall Plan. All of this placed the United States in the leadership role of the West and was consistent with the earlier Puritan view of Americans as a chosen people.¹³ For many, the second half of the twentieth century was the “American Century,” and such a notion would provide the moral basis for involvement in the Korean and Vietnam Wars.

But the end of the Cold War and the emergence of a new security landscape caused many Americans to focus on domestic issues. There was a turning inward, reinforced by the conviction that the United States had won the Cold War and the danger of a major war had diminished considerably. But this new landscape was muddled and obscured by the fog of peace. Indeed, one expert even argued that the United States would miss the Cold War, with its moral certainties and predictable (if difficult) responsibilities.¹⁴

Turning inward, Americans faced issues of diversity: gender, race, sexual orientation, and the integration of various groups with non-Western heritages. Some argued that the United States might never have been a true melting pot of culture, yet it had benefited greatly from the waves of immigrants who brought along their rich heritage. Others argued there was the risk of cultural erosion from the increasing prominence of non-Western cultures.¹⁵ Arguments about “multiculturalism” and the degree to which that is consistent with “Americanism” continue to flourish.

The New Era

In the new era it is difficult to agree on the principles of US values as they apply to the international order. Issues of multiculturalism and diversity have called into question the very meaning of Americanism and the US value system. For example, in viewing the US domestic system, former chairman of the US Joint Chiefs of Staff and later secretary of state Colin Powell wrote:

And Lord help anyone who strays from accepted ideas of political correctness. The slightest suggestion of offense toward any group . . . will be met with cries that the offender be fired or forced to undergo sensitivity training, or threats of legal action. Ironically for all the present sensitivity over correctness, we seem to have lost our shame as a society. Nothing seems to embarrass us; nothing shocks us anymore.¹⁶

In citing the “balkanization” of the United States, syndicated columnist Georgie Anne Geyer argued that we must return to the idea of US “citizenship.” She criticized the decline of the nation-state as the focus of individual loyalties.¹⁷ She concluded, “I remain convinced that the nation will rally at this important moment in a Renaissance to preserve the best of the past and to mate it with the best of the present and the future—so that we can and will be *Americans once again*.”¹⁸ Others argue, however, that most Americans are in the middle of the political spectrum and embrace God, family, and country. As Alan Wolfe contended, we are “one nation, after all.”¹⁹ These disagreements remain unresolved and affect US responses to national security challenges.

As some critics point out, spokespersons for various groups in the United States often use terms such as “our people” or “my people” in referring to their particular racial, ethnic, or religious group to the exclusion of others. This tends to distinguish and separate one group from Americans in general. But as President Franklin D. Roosevelt remarked in 1943 when activating the predominantly Japanese-American 442nd Combat Team, “Americanism is a matter of heart and mind; Americanism is not a matter of race or ethnicity.”

Nonetheless, US involvement in foreign lands and non-Western cultures can cause domestic problems if one group within the United States supports a like-minded group abroad regardless of US policy interests. The greatest charge is that such a development can increase balkanization here. But as noted earlier, a number of Americans and policy elites gravitate toward the middle of the spectrum, preferring an inclusive instead of an exclusive definition of Americanism. Clearly, demographics and cultural issues have an impact on US national security policy and strategy. When the national interest is clear and the political objectives are closely aligned

with that interest, there is likely to be strong support by Americans for US actions. But US involvement in cultures and religions abroad can have domestic repercussions, such as involvement in the conflict in the Middle East between Israel and the Palestinians and US involvement in Iraq and Afghanistan. This makes it more difficult to project US values into the international arena. In sum, the commitment of the US military in foreign areas will not draw support from the public unless it is convinced that such matters are part of the vital interests of the United States.

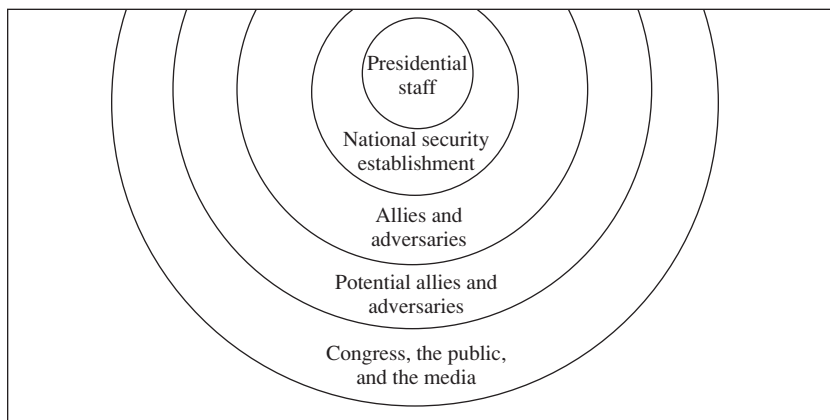
The Study of National Security

The exploration of national security and all its dimensions—including policies and priorities—leads to some basic questions. How can national security be studied? What fundamental principles provide the bases for US national security policy and strategy?

There are three major approaches to the study of national security: the concentric-circle approach, the elite-versus-participatory policymaking approach, and the systems-analysis approach; all concentrate on the way in which policy is made. They should be distinguished from studies that examine national security issues, such as US nuclear strategy or US policy in the Middle East. The three approaches should be further distinguished from studies of government institutions.

The concentric-circle approach places the president at the center of the national security policy process (see Figure 1.3). The president's staff and

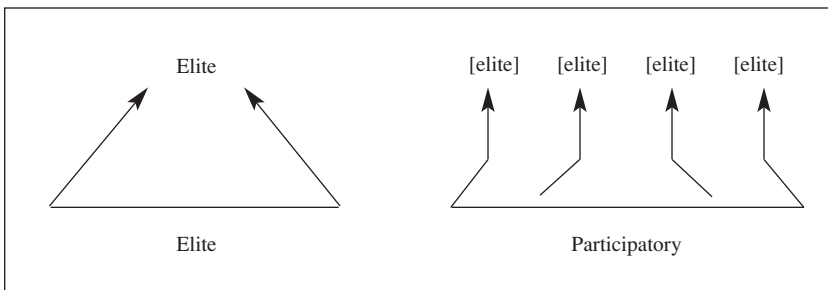
Figure 1.3 Concentric Circle Approach



the national security establishment provide advice and implement national security policy. This approach shows the degree of importance of various groups as the primary objects of national security policy. For example, a major objective is to influence the behavior and policies of allies as well as adversaries. At the same time, Congress, the public, and the media have important roles in the national security policy process. The more distant circles represent government structures and agencies, constituencies, and the media. The farther the institutions are from the center, the less their direct influence on national security policy. The problem with this approach is its oversimplification of the national security policy process and its presumption of rationality in decisionmaking.

The elite-versus-participatory policymaking approach is based on the view that democracy's basic dilemma is that the policy process is dominated by elites (see Figure 1.4). National security policy is undertaken by elites within the national security establishment, but that elite group must in turn develop support in the broader public. On the one hand, the elites have the skill and access to information to formulate national security policy, in contrast to an uninformed and unorganized public. On the other hand, for national security policy to be successful in the long run, there must be some degree of participation by the public and political will within the body politic. The elite model sees national security policy as being made by a small circle that includes the president, his staff, key members of Congress, high-ranking military officers, and influential members of the business community. The assumption is that this is a cohesive elite whose own interests override other concerns. The participatory model assumes the existence of a variety of elites who represent various segments of the public, interest groups, and officials. In this model, the same elites rarely control all aspects of national security policy. Coalitions are formed for particular issues, then reformed for other issues. This approach struggles to reconcile the skill and power of the elite with the demands of participatory democracy.

Figure 1.4 Elite and Participatory Models



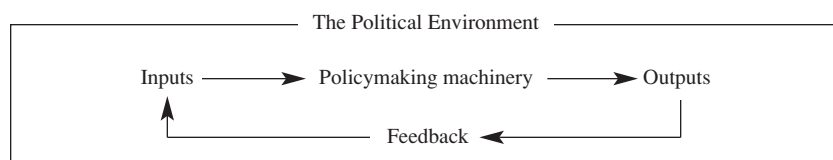
The systems-analysis approach emphasizes the dynamic interrelationships among variables at all stages of the security decisionmaking process (see Figure 1.5). Many inputs go into the policy process. The policymaking machinery must reconcile competing interests and design a policy acceptable to most. In turn, the impact of policy must be measured by feedback on policy effectiveness and how it is perceived by those affected.

All three approaches, as well as variations, are useful in the study of national security policy; this book incorporates something from each. We examine the formal national security establishment on the assumption that the president and government entities established by law form that establishment and are at the center of the policy process—the concentric-circle approach. We examine the National Security Council (NSC) and the Department of Defense from the concentric-circle approach and partly from the elite-versus-participatory approach. Finally, as for the formal policy process, most attention is given to the national security network—a systems-analysis approach that considers many power clusters within the governmental structure, the political system, and the international environment that have an impact on the national security establishment and the policymaking process.

The *national security establishment* is a normative-analytical term referring to those responsible for national security decisionmaking as well as a descriptive term that identifies a set of actors and processes that actually produce security policy outcomes. Often, however, the character and personality of the president lead to the creation of informal and parallel structures and processes for developing national security policy. This sets up a series of policy power clusters that form a national security network that drives the national security establishment and the formal policymaking process. The relationships among and within these power clusters and their actual powers are dependent upon the way the president exercises his leadership and views on how the national security establishment should function.

We consider four major power clusters within the US command structure, whose powers vary according to presidential leadership and preferences: (1) the policy triad, consisting of the secretary of state, the secretary of

Figure 1.5 Systems-Analysis Approach



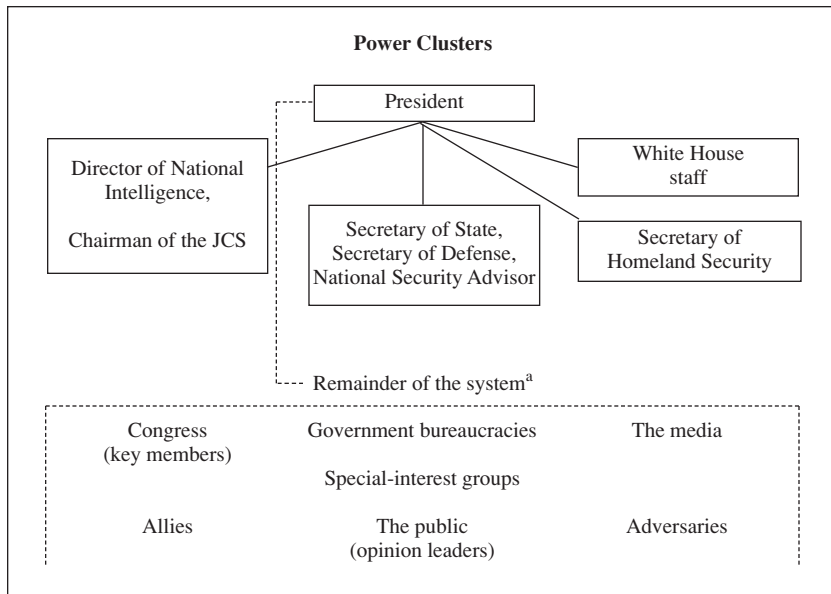
defense, and the national security advisor; (2) the director of national intelligence and the chairman of the Joint Chiefs of Staff; (3) the president's closest White House advisers, such as the White House chief of staff and the counselor to the president; and (4) the secretary of Homeland Security.

These four power clusters are extremely important in shaping national security policy (see Figure 1.6). They represent critical parts of the national security establishment but operate in ways that reflect presidential leadership style and the mind-sets of those within the three power clusters. As such, they may or may not be compatible with the formal national security establishment. Put another way, the national security establishment is fluid and dynamic, and the policymaking process is not as rational and systematic as one is led to believe or as one might hope.

As Frederick Hartmann and Robert Wendzel noted in the 1980s,

The defense planning process . . . is beset with multiple dilemmas. Assessing the threat and acquiring the force structure to meet that threat require an efficient crystal ball—not only in the sense of defining the future in the here and now in terms of events and dangers; the process also requires accurately estimating the national mood years before the critical event.²⁰

Figure 1.6 Policy Power Clusters and the National Security System



Note: a. Objects of national security policy and inputs into national security policy.

Conclusion

There is a set of boundaries, constraints, and limitations that cannot be separated from the operations of the US national security establishment. The policy process cannot be viewed apart from these considerations. As a result, there is likely to be internal disagreement and debate within the national security establishment, between the establishment and other branches and agencies of government, and between all of these and the public. When we add the differing views of allies and adversaries, it is clear that simply examining the establishment or the policy process is not sufficient to explain the complexities and complications inherent in US national security.

All of this is exacerbated by the diffusion and decentralization of power within the US political system, within and among the branches of government, and also within the general population. Participatory politics and single-issue politics, the erosion of political party cohesion, changing domestic demographics, the policy role of the media, and internal power problems within government have made it very difficult for the president to undertake foreign policy or national security initiatives that are perceived as outside the mainstream or as requiring a new kind of military posture or preparedness. The exception may be the war on international terrorism. To induce changes and to place his stamp on national security policy, the president must build a political base within the government and activate the general public as well as convince the media of the appropriateness of new policies and strategies. This usually means that they must be seen as major national security issues, with the US position clearly proper and morally correct, and must involve acceptable risk and a high expectation of success.

The US fear of concentration of power is ingrained in the constitutional principles of separation of powers and checks and balances; these have provided clear limits to the exercise of power of any one branch of government. Yet these restraints can also prevent effective response to challenges that require a concentration of power to succeed. Thus the problem is self-contradictory, and the legal niceties of US constitutional practice can be problematic in the international security setting, where power and politics are often inextricable. It is in this context that the US national security establishment and the process by which security policy is formulated and implemented meet their greatest test. Such a test is evident in the struggles between the president and Congress over the war power and how to meet our national security objectives.

In this book our primary concern is the US national security establishment and the security policy process. In addition, we examine the international security setting, the factors that affect the substance of US national security policy, and the presidential mandate. All of these matters have become exceedingly complicated by the disagreements within the United

States over involvement in Iraq and Afghanistan, the proper response to international terrorism, and troublesome issues regarding Iran, North Korea, and a rising China. The chapters on the establishment and the national security process are focused on these issues.

Notes

1. See John Allen Williams, "The Military and Society Beyond the Postmodern Era," *Orbis: A Journal of World Affairs* 52, no. 2 (Spring 2008), pp. 199–216.

2. David Jablonsky, "The State of the National Security State," in David Jablonsky, Ronald Steel, Lawrence Korb, Morton H. Halperin, and Robert Ellsworth, *US National Security: Beyond the Cold War* (Carlisle, PA: Strategic Studies Institute, US Army War College, July 26, 1997), pp. 39–40.

3. See Charles W. Kegley Jr. and Shannon L. Blanton, *World Politics: Trend and Transformation*, 14th ed. (Stamford, CT: Cengage Learning, 2013).

4. Carnes Lord, "Strategy and Organization at the National Level," in James C. Gaston, ed., *Grand Strategy and the Decisionmaking Process* (Washington, DC: National Defense University Press, 1994), pp. 141–159.

5. *Sun Tzu: The Art of War*, translated and with an introduction by Samuel B. Griffith (New York: Oxford University Press, 1971).

6. Henry A. Kissinger, *American Foreign Policy: Three Essays* (New York: W. W. Norton, 1969), p. 92. This was written before Kissinger became assistant to President Richard Nixon for national security affairs (a position that is known widely as national security advisor) and then secretary of state.

7. There are a number of publications and reports regarding the US involvement in Iraq and Afghanistan. See, for example, Lee H. Hamilton, Lawrence S. Eagleburger, and James A. Baker III, *Iraq Study Group Report* (US Institute of Peace, 2006); Thomas E. Ricks, *Fiasco: The American Military Adventure in Iraq* (New York: Penguin Press, 2006); Thomas E. Ricks, *The Gamble: General David Petraeus and the American Military Adventure in Iraq, 2006–2008* (New York: Penguin Press, 2008); David C. Hendrickson and Robert W. Tucker, *Revisions in Need of Revising: What Went Wrong in the Iraq War* (Carlisle, PA: Strategic Studies Institute, US Army War College, December 2005); and Michael R. Gordon and Bernard E. Trainor, *Cobra II: The Inside Story of the Invasion and Occupation of Iraq* (New York: Random House, 2007).

8. See Thomas E. Copeland, ed., *The Information Revolution and National Security* (Carlisle, PA: Strategic Studies Institute, US Army War College, August 2000); John Allen Williams, "Understanding Asymmetric Warfare: Threats and Responses," *National Strategy Forum Review* (Summer 2007), pp. 23–26; and John Allen Williams, "Terrorism: The New Threats," *National Strategy Forum Review* (Winter 2004), pp. 7–9.

9. See Richard E. Grimmitt, *Congressional Use of Funding Cutoffs Since 1970 Involving U.S. Military Forces and Overseas Deployments* (Washington, DC: Congressional Research Service Report RS 20775, January 16, 2007).

10. See Eugene R. Wittkopf and James M. McCormick, eds., *The Domestic Sources of American Foreign Policy: Insights and Evidence*, 5th Ed. (Lanham, MD: Rowman and Littlefield, 2007).

11. David Scheffer concluded, "I propose that we are witnessing the end of sovereignty as it has been traditionally understood in international law and in state

practice. In its place we are seeing a new form of national integrity emerging.” David Scheffer, “Humanitarian Intervention Versus State Sovereignty,” in United States Institute of Peace, *Peacemaking and Peacekeeping Implications for the United States Military* (Washington, DC: United States Institute of Peace, May 1993), p. 9.

12. See James M. McCormick, *American Foreign Policy and Process*, 4th ed. (Itasca, IL: F. E. Peacock, 2004), pp. 28–30.

13. See, for example, Kenneth D. Wald and Allison Calhoun-Brown, *Religion and Politics in the United States*, 5th ed. (Washington, DC: CQ Press, 2006). Also see Douglas Johnston and Cynthia Sampson, eds., *Religion: The Missing Dimension of Statecraft* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 1994).

14. See John Mearsheimer, “Why We Will Soon Miss the Cold War,” *Atlantic*, August 1990, pp. 35–50.

15. Samuel P. Huntington, *The Clash of Civilizations and the Remaking of World Order* (New York: Simon and Schuster, 1996). See also Samuel P. Huntington, “The Clash of Civilizations?” *Foreign Affairs* 72, no. 3 (Summer 1993), pp. 22–49. For a critique of the Huntington thesis, see Shireen T. Hunter, *The Future of Islam and the West: Clash of Civilizations or Peaceful Coexistence?* (Westport, CT: Praeger, 1998).

16. Colin Powell, with Joseph E. Persico, *My American Journey* (New York: Random House, 1995), p. 610.

17. Georgie Anne Geyer, *Americans No More: The Death of Citizenship* (New York: Atlantic Monthly, 1996).

18. *Ibid.*, p. 339.

19. Alan Wolfe, *One Nation, After All: What Americans Really Think About God, the Right, the Left and Each Other* (New York: Viking, 1999). See also David Gergen, “One Nation, After All,” *US News and World Report*, March 16, 2000, p. 84, and James MacGregor Burns and Georgia J. Sorenson, with Robin Gerber and Scott W. Webster, *Dead Center: Clinton-Gore Leadership and the Perils of Moderation* (New York: Oxford University Press, 2000).

20. Frederick H. Hartmann and Robert L. Wendzel, *Defending America's Security* (Washington, DC: Pergamon-Brassey's, 1988), p. 146.