

## INTERNATIONAL SECURITY

PUAF 720  
Spring 2006  
Monday 4:15-6:45  
Room 1203  
Van Munching Hall

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### Course Description

The course is designed to review the principal features of international security as it is currently practiced. It does so by tracing the evolution of contemporary policy and other determining circumstances through the sequence of formative experience whereby current international security conditions developed. The underlying contention is that understanding the consequence of formative experience is indispensable for adequate comprehension of the prevailing concepts, organizing principles, military deployment patterns, legal regulations, and political relationships that determine the state of international security at the moment.

The period of time reviewed begins with the initiation of nuclear weapons programs during the course of World War II. Contemporary security policy has deeper historical roots, of course, but current conditions were heavily determined by the developments that occurred over the past six decades. Although it is common to assert that we are now in a new era, anyone who does not understand the formative events and enduring legacy of that period will certainly not understand the contemporary problems that are covered in the second half of the semester. The course reviews this history from contemporary perspective for the purpose of understanding the current implications. That is, of course, a revisionist perspective from the point of view of those who lived through the events in question, but it is legitimate and important to use the advantage of retrospect to understand current circumstances.

The course is intended to be useful and appropriate for all people of whatever national affiliation. There is heavy emphasis on the experience of the United States and of Russia as principal successor to the Soviet Union, and in fact the course has been shaped by a joint curriculum development effort involving the Center for International and Security Studies at Maryland and the Institute of USA and Canada Studies in Moscow. The reasoning is that the historical interaction between these two countries has disproportionately affected the international security conditions that all other countries now experience. Hence it seems important for anyone to understand this experience as a necessary foundation for any more focused national security perspective they might wish to develop.

### Readings and Resources

Since the course is primarily concerned with current policy rather than with history itself, some general familiarity with the time period in question must be assumed. The weekly reading assignments provide basic information on directly relevant events as well as historical documents of enduring importance. For those who wish to supplement their knowledge of historical context and current policy debates, supplemental readings are also suggested. The list of required readings is lengthy to provide a range of perspectives, so students need to make reasoned judgments about which readings deserve close scrutiny and which need a lesser degree of attention. The supplemental reading list is encouraged but optional. The syllabus provides a brief historical narrative for each class session. Those narratives provide context for the substantive discussions that will be developed in the class sessions, but do not attempt to summarize those discussions.

Although the course is focused on substantive issues of policy, underlying conceptual perspectives will be discussed. In particular the contention that security can only be based on national military power – the traditional realist argument – will be regularly contrasted with the aspiration to establish meaningful international regulation – an inherently important matter for the smaller countries. Those who have not been exposed to the classic realist texts may want to examine Hans J. Morgenthau, Politics among Nations 5<sup>th</sup> edition, and Kenneth Waltz, Theory of International Politics. “Is Anybody Still a Realist?” by Jeffrey W. Legro and Andrew Moravcsik International Security 24:2, Fall 1999, pp 5 – 55, provides a summary account of the many variations of the realist school. Barry Posen & Andrew Ross, “Competing visions for U.S. grand strategy,” International Security, Winter 1996/97, pp. 5-53 compares realist views with contrary perspectives that are actively presented in the United States.

Since much of Danger and Survival by McGeorge Bundy is assigned and all of it is relevant, course participants are encouraged to acquire a copy. Although the book is out of print, Anja Kuznetsova (room 4113 C, ext. 57614) has copies that she is prepared to sell and repurchase at the end of the semester. Several Pew Case Studies are assigned — they can be purchased for \$3.50 each at: <http://www.guisd.org/>. Richard L. Garwin and Georges Charpak, Megawatts and Megatons, (The University of Chicago Press, 2002), three chapters of which are assigned for the first week, provides a good summary account of nuclear technology that will be useful through the course and thereafter. Purchase of that volume is also suggested although not required.

### **Written Assignments and Grading**

For each of the fifteen course sessions except the last, there is a memo question posed that might be the topic of an analytic assignment in a contemporary policy setting. The questions are stated in the manner that thoughtful but busy and incompletely informed people might answer them. Some of the questions present significant issues of specification and clarification. All of them require the exercise of judgment. Course participants are required to prepare a memorandum of *no more than 1200 words* addressing three of these topics, one submitted on or before February 27, the second by April 3, and the third by May 1. Any topic can be chosen within each of these time segments, but the memorandum must be submitted before the class session to which it refers. An additional assignment will be presented at the last class session to be answered in *no more than 1500 words* and submitted one week later. Each of the first three memoranda will contribute 20% to the final grade. The last assignment will contribute 30%. Participation in class discussion will contribute 10%.

### **Schedule of Classes and Weekly Reading Assignments**

#### **January 30: Introduction: The Role and Character of Security Policy**

Security policy is the result of actions undertaken by entire societies over an extended period of time. It involves concepts of interest, organizing principles, military force deployments, operational practices, institutional arrangements, interstate relationships, and formal legal agreements, all of which evolve under the influence of formative experience. The outcomes achieved are determined by consequential choices among meaningfully different possibilities, but they are also strongly affected by circumstances that cannot be directly controlled – the laws of physics, for example, and the earth’s ecology. The interaction between given circumstance and human choice is conducted through organized institutions whose behavior is affected by considerations that extend well beyond the reasoned logic of expressed policy. Although security is generally considered to be the highest priority responsibility of any government, successful policy has long been and continues to be a significant challenge as yet only imperfectly mastered.

## Readings:

### Required:

- McGeorge Bundy, Danger and Survival: Choices About the Bomb in the First Fifty Years (New York: Random House, 1988), pp. 3-130, especially pp. 3-11; pp. 45-63; pp. 98-130
- Richard L. Garwin and Georges Charpak, Megawatts and Megatons, (The University of Chicago Press, 2002), pp. 13-79
- Martha Nussbaum, 'Patriotism and Cosmopolitanism,' Boston Review 19:5 (1994) and 'Can Patriotism be Compassionate?' Nation 273:20 (December 17, 2001), pp. 11-14

### Documents:

U.N. Charter <http://www.un.org/aboutun/charter/>

### Supplemental Readings:

- Kosta Tsipis, Arsenal: Understanding the Weapons in the Nuclear Age, (Simon and Shuster, New York, 1983), pp. 102-129
- Gar Alperovitz, 'Hiroshima: Historians Reassess,' Foreign Policy (Summer 1995)
- Gordon A. Craig and Alexander L. George, Force and Statecraft: Diplomatic Problems of Our Time (New York, Oxford: Oxford University Press, 1995), pp. 275-283
- Lawrence Freedman, 'International Security: Changing Targets,' Foreign Policy, Spring 1998, pp. 49-63

Memo Question: Was the development of nuclear weapons inevitable once the basic physical principles were understood?

## **February 6: Development of the Nuclear Arsenals**

The circumstances of World War II determined that the development of nuclear weapons would be initiated in United States. As a natural consequence of that fact, the pattern of nuclear weapons deployment that emerged in the aftermath was primarily shaped by judgments about security policy made in the United States. Those judgments were themselves shaped, however, by American reactions to external events, most notably the first Soviet nuclear weapons test in 1949 and the Korean War in 1950. Prior to the Korean War, the United States maintained only a small number of nuclear weapons that were held in secure storage and were not actively deployed. In reaction to the Korean War, nuclear weapons were produced in large number and assigned to operational forces under the assumption that they would be used for virtually all military missions. Over the course of the 1950s that assumption was revised as the implications of the massively destructive effects of nuclear weapons were absorbed. Operational control of nuclear weapons was largely but not completely centralized under a single strategic command. With a large number of weapons available that command developed mass attack options based largely on bomber force operations under the assumption of imminent threat. That assumption was based on projections of the Soviet nuclear weapons deployment schedule that proved in retrospect to be highly exaggerated. The pace of United States nuclear weapons deployments substantially outran that of the Soviet Union, but that was not authoritatively realized in the United States until 1961 when photoreconnaissance satellites finally provided decisive evidence. Shortly thereafter, the United States imposed a ceiling on the planned expansion of its nuclear forces, but did not reverse any of the deployment commitments that had already been made. As a result of the sequence, United States nuclear

force deployments were set at very high levels, were operationally configured to initiate attack on very short notice, and were primarily directed against the Soviet Union. That set the basic conditions of nuclear weapons deployment that still prevail. The explicit doctrine of deterrence evolved thereafter to rationalize and manage the result.

Historical accounts of the Soviet experience are not yet as detailed as they are for the United States, but it currently appears that Soviet nuclear force development tracked that of the United States somewhat reluctantly. One can presume a determined commitment to master the same technology but probably not an independent commitment to the same level of deployment. There is intuitive reason and some historical evidence to suppose that the Soviet military planning system would have preferred nuclear weapons deployments that were more limited in number and more focused on the principal point of military engagement in central Europe. At any rate, it is evident that the Soviet planning system did not program intercontinental range nuclear weapons deployments numerically comparable to those of the United States until after the experience of the Berlin crisis in 1961 and the Cuban crisis in 1962. By 1965, however, they had decided to match the overall size and basic operational character of the U.S. force.

#### Readings:

#### Required:

- McGeorge Bundy, Danger and Survival: Choices about the Bomb in the First Fifty Years, (New York: Random House, 1988) pp. 130-318  
William Taylor Fain & David S. Painter, "The End of the U.S. Atomic Monopoly," Pew Case Study #342 (1989)  
John Lewis Gaddis, We Now Know: Rethinking Cold War History (Oxford: Clarendon Press, 1998), pp. 85-110, esp. 92-102

#### Documents:

- Winston Churchill, 'The Sinews of Peace,' Westminster College, Fulton, Missouri, March 5, 1946; available at: <http://www.hpol.org/churchill>  
Acheson-Lillienthal Report on the International Control of Atomic Energy, March 16, 1946; <http://www.learnworld.com/ZNW/LWText.Acheson-Lilienthal.html>  
Baruch Plan (Presented to the U.N. Atomic Energy Commission, June 14, 1946) <http://www.atomicarchive.com/Docs/Deterrence/BaruchPlan.shtml>  
NSC 68 (United States Objectives and Programs for National Security, April 14, 1950) <http://www.fas.org/irp/offdocs/nsc-hst/nsc-68.htm>

#### Supplemental Readings:

- Albert Wohlstetter, 'The Delicate Balance of Terror,' Foreign Affairs 37:2 (January 1959)  
Lawrence Freedman, The Evolution of Nuclear Strategy (New York: St. Martin's Press, 1983)  
Herman Kahn, On Thermonuclear War, (New Jersey: Princeton University Press, 1961) esp. Preface and pp. 3-40

Memo Question: Was the size and operational configuration of the nuclear forces originally deployed by the United States and the Soviet Union strategically justified?

## **February 13: Alliance Confrontation**

The stimulus of the Korean War also triggered the global pattern of security organization that defined the cold war period – the confrontation of alliances led by the United States and the Soviet Union respectively. Each of the alliances positioned active military forces in Europe and attempted to prepare them for a large scale combined arms engagement.

The Western alliance (NATO) considered itself to be threatened by numerically superior Soviet ground forces inclined to undertake a surprise attack. In response to that assessment, NATO developed an integrated arrangement whereby national forces of the member countries were coordinated under United States military leadership. That was presented and widely received as a necessary reaction to the Soviet threat, although not so necessary that the member governments were willing to provide the large number of conventional force units that were said to be required to resist the threat. Economic development and the associated process of economic integration was the priority concern in Europe at the time. In addition to the concern for external threat, however, NATO's integrated command arrangements also provided reassurance within the alliance about the reemergence of Germany's military capability and generally disciplined all of Western Europe's historically contentious military relationships. The ability to do this by means of voluntary collaboration and induced consensus has arguably been NATO's most important and most enduringly relevant accomplishment.

The Eastern alliance (WTO) is now understood also to have been in significant part an exercise of internal control among the members. Its methods in that regard were based more on coercion than on consensus and proved not to be enduring. As with NATO, however, the WTO was explicitly focused on the external threat presented by the opposing alliance. Its internal assessments are not yet as well documented as they are for NATO, but the members of WTO were presumably aware of their numerical advantages if only by virtue of listening to continuous NATO complaints about those advantages. It is doubtful they believed they had the degree of superiority NATO calculated, particularly given that their internal relationships, implicitly based on coercion, imposed a significant burden on their combined forces. Their forces were operationally configured, however, for the rapid offensive assault against Western Europe that NATO feared. It would have been foolhardy for the members of WTO to initiate such an assault for reasons of ideology or imperial zeal, but not so foolhardy if they judged that war was about to be imposed on them as it had been in World War II. In that case they might have felt compelled to try to occupy Western Europe quickly and arrange a negotiated settlement before the American economy could grind out an overwhelming counterattack.

In this situation, neither side appears to have been confident in its capacity to assure vital security objectives in the European theater by conventional means alone. Both alliances attempted to compensate for their perceived conventional force vulnerabilities by evoking the superior firepower of nuclear weapons. Both equipped their European theater forces with nuclear weapons and developed detailed operational plans for using them separately from their main deterrent forces. They also developed doctrines of extended deterrence and flexible response to rationalize the arrangement. The result was a strong coupling between the main nuclear arsenals assigned to the general deterrence mission and the theater forces planning for a combined arms engagement across the central front in Europe. That coupling was said to bolster overall deterrence but it also generated inherent pressures for proliferation and created very extensive potential for an inadvertent triggering of the massive attack plans. In the Berlin crisis in 1961 and again in the Cuban crisis in 1962, the fragility of the alliance confrontation and the potential for disaster became alarmingly apparent, setting the stage for subsequent efforts to establish measures of restraint.

## Readings

### Required:

- McGeorge Bundy, Danger and Survival, pp. 319-462
- Margaret Ball, NATO and the European Union Movement (Westport, CT: Greenwood Press, 1974), pp. 31-73
- Kim Ian Moermond & Jack Snyder, "The Second Berlin Crisis, 1958-9," Pew Case #441
- Bruce J. Allyn, James G. Blight, and David A. Welch, 'Essence of Revision,' International Security 14:3 (Winter 1989/90) pp. 136-172
- Michael McGuire, Military Objectives in Soviet Foreign Policy, (Brookings, 1987, pp. 13-66, esp. 36-66
- Voitech Mastny, 'The Soviet Union and the Origins of the Warsaw Pact,' Parallel History Project on NATO and the Warsaw Pact; available at: [http://www.isn.ethz.ch/php/documents/collection\\_3/PCC\\_texts/introduction\\_55.htm](http://www.isn.ethz.ch/php/documents/collection_3/PCC_texts/introduction_55.htm)
- Vladislav Zubok and Constantine Pleshakov, Inside the Kremlin's Cold War: from Stalin to Khrushchev (Harvard University Press, 1996), pp. 36-78 (Korean war), pp. 236-274 (Berlin and Cuba)

### Documents:

- The North Atlantic Treaty, 4 April 1949; available at: <http://www.yale.edu/lawweb/avalon/nato.htm>
- George Kennan (Mr. X), 'The Sources of Soviet Conduct,' Foreign Affairs, (July 1947); available at: [http://highered.mcgraw-hill.com/olc/dl/35266/3\\_6.htm](http://highered.mcgraw-hill.com/olc/dl/35266/3_6.htm)
- John Kennedy's speech on the Cuban Missile Crisis in Robert F. Kennedy's, Thirteen Days, (New York: W.W. Norton & Company, 1969), pp.163-171
- Diplomatic record of 1959 Camp David summit (in CISSM file)

### Supplemental Readings:

- John Lewis Gaddis, What We Know Now (Oxford: Clarendon Press, 1998), pp. 54-85
- Desmond Ball, Politics and Force Levels: The Strategic Missile Program of the Kennedy Administration (Los Angeles: University of California Press, 1980)
- Sergei N. Khrushchev, Nikita Khrushchev and the Creation of a Superpower, (Pennsylvania State University, 1992)
- Ivo H. Daalder, The Nature and Practice of Flexible Response: NATO Strategy and Theatre Nuclear Forces Since 1967, (New York: Columbia University Press, 1991), pp. 1-127
- Graham Allison, Essence of Decision (Boston: Little, Brown, 1971)

Memo Question: Should the commitment to collective defense against external aggression embodied in article V of the North Atlantic Treaty be considered the defining characteristic of NATO?

## **February 20: The Origins of Arms Control**

In the immediate aftermath of World War II, the United States advanced a proposal, known as the Baruch plan, for internationalizing control over all aspects of atomic energy under conditions – most notably, veto free enforcement – that the Soviet Union immediately rejected. Whether or not the basic concept might have succeeded remains a matter of disputed conjecture, but it is evident in retrospect that the proposal was not presented or pursued in the manner that would have been required to make it

succeed. For more than a decade thereafter, formalized restraint on weapons development was advanced in all or nothing terms as summarized in the phrase “general and complete disarmament.” Meanwhile nuclear technology programs were pursued in most of the advanced industrial countries and in many of those aspiring to that status. The Atoms of Peace program initiated by the United States in the 1950s provided a substantial amount of scientific information and fissionable material in support of the various national programs. By the end of the 1950s, nuclear technology had acquired considerable momentum worldwide.

The process of imposing partial limits on weapons deployments began in the late 1950s with efforts to devise and negotiate a ban on nuclear weapons testing. That was motivated in part by public reaction to the effects of radiation released by atmospheric tests, but it also reflected a growing concern about the potential devastation of a nuclear war and about the proliferation of nuclear weapons technology. As it became apparent that the two principal protagonists – the United States and the Soviet Union – could not expect to preserve exclusive access to that technology and as their respective nuclear weapons programs matured to the point that they were each able to fit thermonuclear warheads within the payload limitations of ballistic missiles, the idea of banning further weapons tests was advanced as a partial measure of restraint that would be of sufficient mutual interest and general significance to be enacted without being accompanied by provisions for general and complete disarmament. Within the United States, the idea was examined in 1958 by a panel of specialists who determined that nuclear weapons tests conducted in the atmosphere, in space, or underwater could be reliably detected at long range by independently operated sensors, thereby allowing a ban to be verified. That assessment acknowledged, however, that tests conducted underground at low yield might not be detected by remote observation and that suspicious events of that sort would have to be resolved by direct inspection. Negotiations on the subject were unable to resolve disagreements over proposed inspection rules and nuclear weapons tests were used as a prominent instrument of coercive diplomacy in the 1961 Berlin crisis. In the aftermath of the Cuban missile crisis in 1962, the idea of an agreed ban on nuclear weapons testing became a major instrument of reconciliation. Since the major protagonists were unable to resolve the question of direct inspection, a treaty was presented and signed in July of 1963 banning nuclear weapons testing in those media – the atmosphere, space and water – where independent verification was considered to be assured. That was the initial element of what later developed as the arms control process. It did not significantly constrain the process of nuclear weapons development, but it did constrain the political use of weapons tests.

#### Readings:

#### Required:

- Thomas Schelling, ‘Reciprocal Measures for Arms Stabilization,’ pp.167-187 in Donald G. Brennan ed., Arms Control, Disarmament, and National Security (New York: George Braziller, 1961)
- National Academy of Sciences, Nuclear Arms Control: Background and Issues (1985), pp. 1-57 and 136-158
- Coit Blacker and Gloria Duffy, International Arms Control (Stanford University Press, 1984) pp. 117-147 (Agreements other than SALT and the NPT)
- Herbert York, ‘The Great Test Ban Debate,’ and ‘Military Technology and National Security,’ pp. 17-28 and 44-57 in Progress in Arms Control (San Francisco: W.H. Freeman and Company, 1979)
- David Holloway, Soviet Union and the Arms Race (New Haven and London: Yale University Press, 1985), pp. 65-85

## Documents:

- Statement of Basic National Security Policy, 1958 (Eisenhower administration)  
CISSM Files
- Secretary of Defense Robert S. McNamara, 'Speech on Anti-China Missile Defense and U.S. Nuclear Strategy,' address to the editors of United Press International, San Francisco, September 18, 1967.
- President John F. Kennedy, American University Speech, June 10, 1963; available at:  
<http://www.jfklibrary.org/j061063.htm>
- Limited Test Ban Treaty, (LTBT) 1963; available at:  
<http://www.fas.org/nuke/control/lbtb/text/lbtb2.htm>
- Strategic Arms Limitations Treaty I (SALT I) 1972; available at:  
<http://www.fas.org/nuke/control/salt1/text/salt1.htm>
- Anti-Ballistic Missiles Treaty (ABM), 1972; available at:  
<http://www.fas.org/nuke/control/abmt/text/abm2.htm>
- ABM--Additional text and additions; available at:  
<http://www.fas.org/nuke/control/abmt/text/index.html>
- Strategic Arms Limitations Treaty II (SALT II) 1979; available at:  
<http://www.state.gov/www/global/arms/treaties/salt2-2.html>

## Supplemental Readings:

- Thomas Schelling, Arms and Influence, (Westport, Conn.: Greenwood Press, 1976)
- Pavel Podvig, Russian Strategic Nuclear Forces, (MIT Press, 2001)

Memo Question: Can the general international interest in a comprehensive nuclear weapons test ban be validly overridden by any country's national interest?

## **February 27: Limits on Proliferation**

As the nuclear weapons test ban was developed, it was recognized that it would not by itself prevent the extensive proliferation of national nuclear weapons programs. Principal concern in that regard focused on Germany, not because the German government expressed active interest in a weapons program but rather because it appeared to have the strongest incentive and was acknowledged to have the scientific and industrial capacity required. The fear was that a German nuclear weapons program would undermine NATO's internal process of reassurance and would set a worldwide standard likely to be emulated by Japan in particular. Those concerns were reinforced by China's initial nuclear weapons test conducted in 1964. The initial effort to respond to the problem involved an American-inspired proposal to give Germany and other NATO members controlled access to nuclear weapons by developing a multilateral force within NATO, an idea that would qualify the established principle of strict national control.

There was simultaneous concern within the United States, however, that the multilateral force scheme would do more to stimulate proliferation than to contain it. In reaction to that concern, an assessment of United States interest in the process of proliferation, initiated in late 1964, concluded that it should be contained rather than encouraged and recommended that containment should be accomplished through a multilateral treaty. That judgment was clearly shared by the Soviet Union which was in the final stages of programming its own nuclear weapons deployment and was itself seriously worried about the prospect of a German nuclear weapons program in any form. Parallel American and Soviet drafts for a multilateral treaty were submitted to the United Nations in 1965 resulting in a General Assembly

resolution setting forth the basic principles of what became the Non-proliferation Treaty (NPT) three years later. That treaty formalizes a political deal whereby five states, who happen to be the five permanent members of the UN Security Council, are conceded temporarily the exclusive right to deploy nuclear weapons under the expressed conditions that they make a good faith effort to eliminate nuclear weapons and that in the meantime they not use nuclear weapons to attack or threaten any state that does not possess them. Many of the industrial states that were original parties to the NPT, including especially Germany and Japan, could have readily developed national nuclear weapons programs at the time it was signed and even more could now do so. The NPT, as the most consequential embodiment of the principle of mutual restraint for mutual interest, is the central element of current international security regulation.

#### Readings:

#### Required:

Bundy, pp. 463-516

Glenn Seaborg and Benjamin Loeb, Stemming the Tide (Lexington Books, 1987), pp. 309-382

National Academy of Sciences, Nuclear Arms Control, pp. 224-273.

Non-Proliferation Treaty (NPT); available at:

<http://www.state.gov/www/global/arms/treaties/npt1.html>

Francis J. Gavin, "Blasts from the Past: Proliferation Lessons from the 1960s," International Security, Vol. 29, No. 3, Winter 2004/05, pp 100-135; available at:

[http://muse.jhu.edu/journals/international\\_security/v029/29.3gavin.pdf](http://muse.jhu.edu/journals/international_security/v029/29.3gavin.pdf)

Coit Blacker and Gloria Duffy, International Arms Control, pp. 316-34

David Holloway, Soviet Union and the Arms Race (Yale Univ. Press, 1985), pp. 85-109

#### Documents:

President Eisenhower, United Nations General Assembly, 'Atoms for Peace,' 1953

available at: <http://www.eisenhower.utexas.edu/atoms.htm>

Treaty for the Prohibition of Nuclear Weapons in Latin America and the Caribbean (Treaty of Tlatelolco), 1968; available at:

<http://www.opanal.org/opanal/Tlatelolco/Tlatelolco-i.htm>

Biological Weapons Convention (BWC), 1975; available at:

<http://www.fas.org/nuke/control/bwc/text/bwc.htm>

Gilpatric Committee Report, 'A Report to the President by the Committee on Nuclear Proliferation,' January 21, 1965. Available at:

[http://www.gwu.edu/~nsarchiv/NSAEBB/NSAEBB1/nhch7\\_1.htm](http://www.gwu.edu/~nsarchiv/NSAEBB/NSAEBB1/nhch7_1.htm)

#### Supplemental Readings:

NTI tutorial on NPT; available at: [http://www.nti.org/h\\_learnmore/h3\\_tutorial.html](http://www.nti.org/h_learnmore/h3_tutorial.html)

Alva Reimer Myrdal, The Game of Disarmament: How the United States and Russia Run the Arms Race, pp. 159-207.

Kurt M. Campbell, et al., The Nuclear Tipping Point: Why States Reconsider their Nuclear Choices (Brookings, 2004)

William Burr and Jeffrey T. Richelson, "Whether to 'Strangle the Baby in the Cradle': The United States and the Chinese Nuclear Program, 1960-64," International Security, 25: 3 (Winter 2000/01) pp. 54-99; available at:

[http://mitpress.mit.edu/journals/pdf/isec\\_25\\_03\\_54\\_0.pdf](http://mitpress.mit.edu/journals/pdf/isec_25_03_54_0.pdf)

- Mark Cioc, Pax Atomica: The Nuclear Defense Debate in West Germany during the Adenauer (New York: Columbia University Press, 1988)
- Avner Cohen, Israel and the Bomb (New York: Columbia University Press, 1998)
- Paul M. Cole, 'Atomic Bombast: Nuclear Weapon Decision Making in Sweden 1945-1972,' The Washington Quarterly 20:2 (Spring 1997) pp.233-251
- Jim Walsh, 'Surprise Down Under: The Secret History of Australia's Nuclear Ambitions,' The Nonproliferation Review 5 (Fall 1997) pp.1-20; available at: <http://cns.miis.edu/pubs/npr/vol05/51/walsh51.pdf>
- Peter F. Liberman, 'South Africa's Nuclear Decisions,' International Security 27:1 (June 2002) pp.186-195
- David Albright and Corey Gay, 'Taiwan: Nuclear Nightmare Averted,' The Bulletin of the Atomic Scientists 54:1 (January/February 1998) pp.54-61
- John R. Redick, Nuclear Illusions: Argentina and Brazil Occasional Paper No. 25 (Washington: Henry L. Stimson Center, December 1995)

Memo Question: Is the elimination of nuclear weapons an international security interest that might eventually be accomplished or are there contradictory national interests that will indefinitely prevent such an outcome?

### **March 6: Hard Lessons - Vietnam and Afghanistan**

The basic configuration of military forces and associated security policies characteristic of the Cold War had been established by the mid 1960s even though the process of initial construction and subsequent technical improvement was not yet complete, particularly not within the Soviet Union. As of 1965, international security was broadly understood to be dominated by a confrontation between two alliance systems with the principal focus of military engagement occurring in central Europe. Local and regional conflicts throughout the world were assessed largely in terms of their implications for the global alliance confrontation. International politics was preoccupied with a contest between the two alliances for the allegiance of those countries that were not formally aligned with either and were not directly engaged in central Europe.

At that point, the United States considered itself to have a comfortably but not decisively superior strategic deterrent force that provided adequate compensation for an assessed disadvantage in conventional force capability assigned to central Europe. That combination was believed to assure core security objectives to a reasonable standard, but the contest for allegiance was perceived to be an unresolved danger. There was a strong inclination to interpret armed insurgencies directed against aligned governments as an organized strategic threat emanating from the opposing alliance. Indochina was considered to be the primary instance, and a commitment of United States military forces was made by analogy to the earlier defense of South Korea – strategic resistance to imperial aggression at a level of warfare falling just below the combined arms engagement of conventional forces. The indigenous roots of the conflict were not credited at the outset.

The inability to terminate the conflict despite superior military capability became a lesson in the limits of coercive power and the practical importance of legitimacy, both of which were absorbed to reasonable extent at the cost of major internal turmoil. The deeper implications for the prevailing strategic conception were not as clearly absorbed. Most notably the United States political system to this day has not recognized that the United States withdrawal from Vietnam quickly became a strategic victory when

China decided in the aftermath to normalize relations with the United States. That act began the process that ultimately dissolved the alliance confrontation of the cold war period.

For the Soviet Union, the comparable lesson on the limits of coercive power and the practical importance of legitimacy occurred in Afghanistan roughly a decade later. The internal motive for intervention appears to have been defensive rather than imperial in character as it was for the United States in Vietnam. The process of accepting defeat and undertaking withdrawal did not engage the broad citizenry to the same extent, but probably was comparably painful within the ruling establishment. The outcome is significantly related to the dissolution of the Soviet Union itself. Whether it is considered a defeat or a victory for Russia and the other successor states depends heavily on the perspective applied. That can reasonably be said to be an open question.

#### Readings:

#### Required:

- Bundy, pp. 517-542  
James Patterson, Grand Expectations (Oxford University Press, 1996), pp. 593-636 and 743-770  
Robert McNamara, In Retrospect: The Tragedy and Lessons of Vietnam (New York: Vintage Books, Random House, Inc.), pp. 127-319  
Douglas Pike, 'Conduct of the Vietnam War: Strategic Factors, 1965-1968,' US Army Command and General Staff College, session on 'The Evolution of Modern Warfare'  
Mark Galeotti, Afghanistan: The Soviet Union's Last War (London: Frank Cass, 1995) pp. 1-25, pp. 139-171  
Henry S. Bradsher, Afghan Communism and Soviet Intervention, (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 1999) pp. 262-325  
Maj. Gen. Oleg Sarin and Col. Lev Dvoretzky, The Afghan Syndrome. The Soviet Union's Vietnam (Presidio, 1993) (skim but focus on pp. 87-123 and 143-151)

#### Documents:

- Supreme Soviet Decree on political assessment of the decision to send Soviet troops to Afghanistan (Appendix D from The Afghan Syndrome: The Soviet Union's Vietnam)  
Galloway, John, The Gulf of Tonkin Resolution, (Rutledge, Madison, Taeneck, Fairleigh: Dickinson University Press, 1970), pp. 167-169  
Congressional Resolution on Iraq, October 10, 2002; available at: <http://hnn.us/articles/1282.html>

#### Supplemental Readings:

- Robert S. McNamara, James G. Blight and Robert K. Brigham, Argument Without End (New York: Public Affairs, 1999)  
Galloway, John, The Gulf of Tonkin Resolution, (Rutledge, Madison, Taeneck, Fairleigh: Dickinson University Press, 1970)  
Stanley Karnow, Vietnam: A History, The First Complete Account of Vietnam War (New York: The Viking Press, 1983)  
Alexander George, The Limits of Coercive Diplomacy: Laos, Cuba, Vietnam (Boston, MA: Little, Brown and Company, 1994)  
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Memo Question: What are the relative contributions of military power and political legitimacy in determining international security?

### **March 13: Bilateral Stabilization and the End of the Cold War**

The initial arms control agreements were multilateral in character and were primarily designed to restrict the large scale deployment of nuclear weapons to the two main protagonists. The process of imposing direct restraint on the two principal forces was bilateral in character and began after the respective political systems had imposed their own force ceilings through national planning decisions. In the United States, that process revolved around a contest between what was termed in the parlance of the time “assured destruction” and “damage limiting” strategic missions. The bilateral process was initiated by the United States in order to buttress resistance to the damage limiting mission which was considered likely to drive an indefinite arms race and to risk a breakdown of deterrence under crisis conditions. The term “stability” as it was used at the time reflected both concerns.

The initial agreements signed in 1972 established a ceiling on strategic nuclear weapons deployments that in the American perspective was designed to accommodate projected deployment plans. The agreement also limited ballistic missile defenses and established the principle that offensive and defensive force restrictions were to be directly related. It appears that the Soviet Union significantly reduced its deployment plan in reaction to the agreement and began to envisage a process of progressive accommodation that would include some form of constructive economic engagement. That broad formula was not accepted in the United States, however, and the intentions imputed to the Soviet Union were cast in standard confrontational terms.

As the process of bilateral stabilization progressed through a series of bilateral agreements it was subjected to sharp political dispute within the United States and was narrowly focused on a particular conception of stability featuring the interaction of land-based multiple-warhead missile forces. The associated contention that the Soviet Union would violate any agreement if it could thereby gain advantage did have the effect, however, of introducing a supplemental theme to the program of stabilization – the agreed exchange of information to document compliance. The agreements that emerged from the process – most notably the INF treaty and the START I treaty – have provisions for inspection and regular exchange of information that are arguably as significant, or more so, as the deployment restrictions they contain. The Conventional Forces in Europe (CFE) treaty signed in 1990 has yet more extensive information exchange provisions.

In retrospect it appears that the Soviet political leadership had a much broader agenda of accommodation in mind, major elements of which were pursued unilaterally. The internal economic reform effort and the process of disengagement in central Europe do appear to reflect an underlying security assessment, even if the eventual consequences were not anticipated. At any rate the immediate impulse for the process that ended the Cold War and transformed the basic circumstances of international security was provided by Soviet policy under Gorbachev. With the advantage of retrospect, elements of Gorbachev’s security policy can be detected much earlier in the historical sequence. It is important to note the scope of accommodation to which that policy evidently aspired has not as yet been achieved.

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Memo Question: Did the bilateral arms control treaties adequately stabilize nuclear weapons deployments?

## **March 20: The Cold War Aftermath**

The end of the Cold War was the consequence of a series of largely spontaneous events. As a practical matter, it produced a substantially different international security situation, but not as yet a new design. Established national security policies were adjusted but not fundamentally altered and the basic framework of international legal restraint was sustained. The sharp disparity in circumstance has created an inherent question, however, about the longer term viability of the security policies that were created over the course of the Cold War.

The most decisive effect was the dissolution of the conventional force confrontation in central Europe, a result that effectively removed the possibility of a combined arms engagement occurring on short notice on continental scale anywhere in the world. In response to that development, the United States reduced the number of its deployed forces and its defense budget by about 30%, but continued to use the contingency planning assumptions established during the Cold War as the basic guideline for developing and training its military establishment. In the absence of comparable competition, it set higher standards of aspiration for the performance of its conventional forces and sustained the full array of deterrent force missions. It also renewed its traditional alliance relationships and in the case of NATO extended them eastward in central Europe. The result was to create an unprecedented degree of superiority for the U.S. alliance system with regard to traditional military missions. The relative size and momentum of the United States defense budget in the new situation appears to assure that the advantage will be sustained and probably intensified over several decades.

That development assured that no state outside of the U.S. alliance system could achieve a comparable standard of protection, a fact that was particularly consequential for Russia as principal heir to the Soviet legacy. The smaller and declining size of the Russian economy would not sustain a military force capable of undertaking conventional force missions at the level of performance determined by the United States. There was no alternative alliance system, and no scope for creating one of comparable capacity. The protection offered by existing international agreements could not compensate for the inherent disparities in resources and exposure. In response to those circumstances Russia formulated a doctrine of general reliance on nuclear weapons to cover the basic array of security requirements, initiated a difficult and as yet incomplete effort of internal economic reform, and attempted general political accommodation. In their own estimation, none of those efforts have as yet adequately resolved the security problems imposed by the post Cold War situation.

The overall effect of those changes in circumstance made large scale imperial aggression a less prominent and less immediate problem than it was considered to be during the Cold War period. It was acknowledged that the United States alliance system could readily defeat any major instance and was not itself configured to seize and hold territory on continental scale. Localized civil conflict, terrorism, and smaller scale provocation or retribution operations have become more prominent concerns, however, suggesting that in the aftermath of the Cold War security would have to be pursued at higher resolution in space and time.

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Memo Question: Is the threat of invasion still a major international security problem?

## **March 27: Problems of Civil Conflict**

In the aftermath of the Cold War a number of regional conflicts that had been sustained as proxy battles between the contending alliance systems were settled, and aggregate measures of civil conflict declined substantially over the course of the 1990s. Reflecting the legacy of Vietnam and Afghanistan, most of the major military establishments emerged from the Cold War period internally disinclined to become entangled in what they understood to be indigenous conflicts, especially if those conflicts occurred in remote parts of the world. A series of internal civil conflicts did command international attention, however, and did induce varying degrees of forceful intervention despite the background reluctance. The United States undertook substantial interventions in Somalia, Bosnia, Kosovo, and most recently Afghanistan — operating through NATO in two of the four instances. The failure to undertake comparable action in Rwanda became a significant issue in retrospect. Russian forces intervened in an internal conflict in Chechnya and an external one in Tajikistan under similar circumstances. None of these operations is currently considered to be either a decisive success or a decisive defeat.

Lessons drawn from this case experience suggest that most of the interventions could have been significantly more successful with no greater commitment of resources had they been undertaken earlier with a clearer and more appropriate sense of purpose. In the major instances the direct combatants were not themselves capable of terminating the conflict regardless of their inclination to do so, and indefinite continuation proved to be a threat to regional and global order significant enough to force international reaction. The implication is that prevailing security policies have not yet completely adapted to an emerging problem for which they will eventually have to achieve a higher standard of performance.

The requirements for an effective response to instances of civil conflict are sufficiently different from traditional military missions that they cannot be readily improvised from established contingency plans. If civil conflict is assumed to be an enduring problem of major significance, it is reasonable to expect that accumulating experience will induce fundamental revisions in all the principal elements of policy from the determination of objectives; to the concept of operations; to the design, equipment and training of forces. A legal doctrine appears to be emerging, most clearly articulated up to this point in UN Security Council Resolution 1244 authorizing ground intervention in Kosovo. The insertion of US forces into Afghanistan in response to the terrorist attacks of September 11 appears to have established a principle of global engagement that had not been previously accepted. Defense policy guidance issued in the aftermath of those attacks instructed US forces to prepare for civil conflict intervention – the first time such a mandate had been officially stated. US forces would have to be involved in most instances of civil conflict intervention since they are uniquely capable of providing the transport, communication and combat support services required in remote locations.

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Memo Question: Is the control of civil conflict within sovereign states a general international interest?

### **April 3: The Legacy of Nuclear Weapons**

Political termination of the Cold War and dissolution of the main conventional force confrontation in central Europe did not fundamentally alter the operational pattern of nuclear weapons deployments but did alter the political presumptions under which those operations are conducted. In reaction to an attempted coup in the Soviet Union in 1991, most of the tactical nuclear weapons in American and Russian forces were withdrawn from active deployment, and the United States largely terminated the alert operations of its bomber forces. Those actions reflected the downgrading of extended deterrence missions associated with the central conventional force confrontation, but basic deterrent missions were continued. Those missions featured large scale retaliation to be directed primarily against the entire military infrastructure of the opposing force. The capacity to initiate such attacks within a few minutes was to be made continuously available. Russia and the United States continued to target their deterrent forces primarily against each other. It was generally assumed, however, that aggressive inclinations had receded and that deterrent force operations carried less of a burden than they had during the Cold War. It was also quickly recognized that the managerial control of nuclear weapons deployments in Russia would inevitably be substantially less robust than it had been in the Soviet Union.

In response to the problem of managerial control, the United States actively mediated the removal of Soviet nuclear weapons from Belarus, Kazakhstan, and Ukraine, so as to consolidate control of the inherited arsenal in Russia. The United States also initiated a program of assistance to Russia to support the dismantling of surplus weapons and to upgrade the physical protection of remaining weapons and of the fissile materials out of which they are fabricated. The United States did not substantially diminish the inherent threat that its deterrent forces present to Russia, however, and in fact has done more to intensify that threat than to diminish it. It equipped its submarine force with advanced capacity to attack hard targets; it continued active antisubmarine operations against the rapidly declining capacities of Russian naval forces; it formally introduced advanced conventional weapon strike capabilities as an integral element of deterrent operations; and it proclaimed the intention to deploy missile defenses and withdrew from the ABM treaty. It also advanced a more assertive doctrine of use, suggesting that the United States might initiate the use of nuclear weapons to prevent rogue states from acquiring them – a formulation that could be considered to have unspoken implications for those that had already acquired them. Given stark disparities in American and Russian military investment, these actions appear to make the Russian deterrent force progressively more exposed to preemptive attack. The same actions also pose an even greater threat on a more rapid schedule to the Chinese deterrent force.

The degree of legal restraint imposed on the current and projected deployment of nuclear forces by the 2002 Moscow treaty is yet more permissive than it was under the provisions developed during the Cold War. It is possible that a broad but as yet largely undefined process of political accommodation might compensate for the weakening of legally binding restraint, but it would be imprudent to count on that effect. The less benign prospect is that Chinese and Russian reactions to the intensifying pressures of United States deterrent force operations might generate active confrontation focusing on space assets. The simultaneous importance and vulnerability of space assets provides the best available strategic leverage to counteract the developing imbalance in capability.

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Memo Question: What is the appropriate priority of interest among preserving deterrence, threatening pre-emption, and assuring strict managerial control over the disposition of nuclear weapons?

## **April 10: Asian Security Arrangements**

Throughout the Cold War, Asia was a secondary locus of the global alliance confrontation. The disposition of conventional forces on the Korean peninsula was the next most important focus of hostile engagement after the central front in Europe, but it was never considered to be either as immediately threatening or as strategically significant. The United States alliance structure in Asia was bilateral rather than multilateral in character reflecting the judgment that war was unlikely to occur there on theater wide scale. Soviet forces were concentrated in Europe and were deployed in holding positions in Asia. Chinese forces were not configured for power projection. As normalization of relations between the United States and China proceeded in the wake of the Vietnam war, the sense of confrontation diminished in Asia more rapidly than it did in Europe. The process of internal transformation was controlled from the top in China as it proceeded more spontaneously, and in political terms at least, more radically in the Soviet Union and in Eastern Europe. China never allowed military investment to be the economic burden that the Soviet Union did. In the aftermath of transformation in Europe, Korea emerged by default as the major remaining location where combined arms warfare might be initiated on short notice and significant scale. It was obvious, however, that that contingency was not comparably demanding.

The major security question in Asia has to do with the character of the United States relationship with China in the transformed situation. Basic political accommodation and a reasonably extensive degree of economic engagement have not been accompanied by an authoritative determination as to whether the two countries are engaged in a refined form of military confrontation or alternatively whether the process of accommodation can be effectively extended to the security relationship. There is an evident inclination in the United States to project China as an eventual military opponent – certainly the most plausible and perhaps the only candidate at the moment for the role of major peer competitor. There is an evident inclination in China to work out terms of accommodation that would relieve China of the very considerable financial and technical burden of developing the military capacity that would be required to compete with the United States. In China's estimation, the situation in Taiwan and the implications of United States military development give some considerable urgency to the underlying question. The basis for a mutually acceptable resolution of the issue is not immediately apparent in the current policies of either country.

It also seems apparent that Asian security will be affected by a transformation of the situation on the Korean peninsula that must be presumed to be reasonably imminent. Despite its unusually belligerent historical behavior, North Korea has given significant indication over the past decade of a desire for political, economic, and security accommodation. Despite the notorious opaqueness of its internal deliberations, the reasons are not difficult to impute. Whether or not it is actually achieved, a negotiated accommodation that would effectively dissolve the residual military confrontation and would open the country to international engagement is certainly a plausible option. In the absence of that, the social equivalent of spontaneous combustion is also conceivable. The eventual outcome and the means by which it occurs are likely to have substantial effect on the United States relationship with China and on general security relationships in the region.

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Memo Question: Can military confrontation between the United States and China be prevented?

## **April 17: General Security Engagement in the Middle East**

From the moment that the state of Israel was formed, its security and general well being have been a major concern for the United States, and in the wars that were fought in 1948, 1967, and 1973, the possibility of a military confrontation between the United States and the Soviet Union hovered in the background. Neither of the Cold War protagonists ever became as directly engaged in military terms, however, as they were in Europe and Asia. Nor were they as indirectly engaged as they were in the more prominent proxy battles. There was an underlying imbalance in commitment, moreover, since the region did not have the domestic resonance or strategic significance to the Soviet Union that it had for the United States. On the whole, the alliance confrontation of the Cold War period bypassed the Middle East. Moreover, the economic shocks resulting from the strategically directed oil price increases and embargo actions in 1973 and again in 1979 were absorbed without any attempted resort to military power to mitigate or reverse them. The war between Iran and Iraq was fought without substantial external military involvement other than arms shipments which appear to have been induced more by commercial opportunity than by any security calculation.

Significant direct involvement of United States military forces in the region was triggered by Iraq's invasion of Kuwait in 1990 and the subsequent military campaign to reverse that action. Over the following decade, United States forces and other military units from the original coalition continuously engaged in a policy of active containment in order to prevent any repeated aggression by Iraq or the acquisition of advanced weapons that might confer the capacity for intimidation. Active containment involved combat air patrols to restrict Iraqi use of its own air space and naval patrols to enforce commercial trade restrictions imposed to induce compliance with the UN resolutions issued at the end of the 1991. Under the label "dual containment," the United States extended the policy to Iran as well, but without the active military enforcement applied to Iraq. In 2003, the George W. Bush administration repudiated the policy of active containment as it applied to Iraq, occupied the country by force, and deposed the ruling government. It did so having failed to secure UN authorization for the action. That development has intensified and redefined United States military involvement in the region with implications yet to be determined.

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Memo question: What implications for regional security can the forceful change of government in Iraq be expected to have?

## **April 24: Projected Proliferation**

The technologies that provide the basis for weapons of mass destruction are widely understood to include those relating to nuclear explosives, chemical agents and biological pathogens. The inherent danger, the threat of proliferation, and the state of control are substantially different for each of these technologies, however. In practical terms the differences are more significant than the similarities.

Nuclear weapons have by far the largest potential for physical destruction, but the fissile material required to generate an explosive chain reaction is difficult to acquire. The production of fissile material involves a chain of industrial activities that are generally quite visible, all stages of which have been subjected from the outset to national systems of accounting and physical control reinforced by international scrutiny. The degree of control actually achieved is not considered to be adequate, particularly not in Russia, but the regime of control formalized by the NPT is the principal foundation for the control of mass destruction technologies.

Given the broad accessibility of fissionable material and the inherently discriminatory character of the NPT regime, it is notable that all but four countries in the world formally adhere to the treaty. In addition to the eight countries that are considered to have immediate nuclear weapons capability only two – Iran and North Korea – are believed to be actively attempting to acquire it. Since the end of the Cold War, the NPT regime has been significantly strengthened by the adherence of France and China; by the agreed resettlement of Soviet nuclear weapons out of Belarus, Kazakhstan, and Ukraine, and their accession to the NPT as non-nuclear weapons states; by South Africa's renunciation and elimination of six clandestinely acquired nuclear weapons; by an advanced inspection protocol promulgated by the IAEA in reaction to Iraq's evasion of the earlier inspection procedure; by the 1994 agreement to terminate construction at North Korea's nuclear materials production complex, and by the indefinite extension of the NPT. The situation in South Asia, however – the assertive testing of nuclear weapons by India and Pakistan, their declared intentions to undertake active deployments, and the tension between them over Kashmir – put significant pressure on the regime. So did North Korea's announced withdrawal from the NPT in January of 2003, its apparent threat to proceed with a weapons program, and widespread suspicion that Iran is pursuing a weapons program within the legal framework of the NPT. There was internal pressure as well. At the 2000 NPT review conference, a series of expectations were imposed regarding progress toward eventual elimination of nuclear weapons that were starkly contradicted by the subsequent evolution of United States nuclear weapons policy. The 2005 NPT review conference was not able even to address, let alone resolve, any of the substantive issues. In all, the basic principle of mutual restraint still appears to be strong, but a radical breakdown of the entire NPT regime is also considered to be a possibility.

Chemical weapons are much less of a danger and are currently subjected to a more categorical form of control. They are a threat to human lives but not to physical infrastructure, and the degree of the threat is roughly proportional to the volume of material that would be used. Chemical weapons are banned by the CWC, and the ban is supported by an inspection arrangement, which in legal terms is the most developed of all the control arrangements. The CWC does not yet have the nearly universal adherence achieved for the NPT, however, and implementation of the legal inspection arrangements is still a work in progress. In all, the proliferation of chemical weapons is a significant concern yet to be fully mastered, but not a threat of magnitude comparable to nuclear weapons.

Biological pathogens do not threaten physical infrastructure, but they do threaten human lives in principle and in historically demonstrated fact to a unique extent. One can coherently imagine hundreds of thousands of people at risk from a particularly malicious use of chemical agents. Widely accepted calculations suggest that tens of millions are at risk from implementation of the nuclear war plans prepared by Russia and the United States. The 1918 influenza killed somewhere between 20 and 40

million people worldwide. In principle, the techniques of modern biology have made it feasible to construct a human pathogen that would put hundreds of millions of lives at risk or plant and animal pathogens that might devastate major segments of the agricultural economy. Because of the way biological pathogens work, they do not provide an especially compelling basis for weapons in the traditional sense of the term, but they do present the most serious potential threat of mass destruction currently known. The process that generates that threat is so intimately entangled in fundamental science and medical practice that it cannot be effectively controlled by the methods currently applied to nuclear weapons. There is good reason to believe that the inherent threat of biotechnology will be the occasion for devising new methods of control based upon forced transparency and active monitoring. In principle those techniques might also be used to achieve much more effective control over fissile materials and chemical agents as well.

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Memo Question: Can the process of proliferation be effectively controlled or must security policies be based on the eventual failure of control?

#### **May 1: The Problem of Terrorism**

As experienced to date, terrorism is a tactic used by the inherently weak against the inherently strong. The implicit purpose is to provoke a self-destructive reaction from the superior opponent. It is the equivalent of an autoimmune disease. Because of the imbalance in capacity that generates it, the phenomenon of terrorism has naturally limiting features. Terrorists that operate too frequently or too destructively are usually destroyed by their superior opponent before the intended self-destructive effects run their course. Over the past seven years the global number of casualties attributed to terrorism is five times less than the average murder rate in the United States alone. In terms of its directly destructive effects, terrorism is a minor social problem. In order to elevate it into a major international security concern, one has to assume either the capacity to provoke highly disproportionate self-destructive effects,

or an integral connection to the much more destructive phenomenon of civil violence, or the dedication and ability of terrorists to use one of the two major mass destruction agents – nuclear explosives or an advanced pathogen.

The first of these possibilities depends largely on the internal discipline of the victim – a fact that it is important for the United States to ponder in the wake of the 9/11 attacks. The second reinforces the topic of civil violence as an emerging security concern but does not appear to add any special requirements. It can be said therefore that the problem largely reduces to the third possibility, in effect giving additional impetus to the importance of working out generally equitable international security arrangements and especially to the development of advanced methods for controlling proliferation. Although there has been no actual example or documented attempt as yet, effective terrorist use of mass destruction technology would be a monumental problem. The relentless pressure of that possibility can be expected to have a meaningful effect over time on the entire pattern of international security relationships.

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Memo Question: Should the threat of terrorism be a primary international security priority?

### **May 8: Catalytic Issues**

It is reasonable to assume that international security arrangements are still in the process of adjusting to the change in circumstance associated with the end of the Cold War and the general process of globalization. There is as yet an unresolved debate about the nature of the adjustment. Those who believe in historical continuity tend to focus on the dominance of American military power to look for the eventual rise of a competitor to restore a system of confrontational balance. Those who perceive more fundamental transformation in progress tend to anticipate the protective elaboration of the general rule of law. As a practical matter, it is doubtful that debate will be decisively resolved anytime soon, if ever. But some evolution of international security arrangements will surely occur, and the debate over fundamentals will play out in the context of specific issues.

One can anticipate that problems relating both to the legacy of nuclear weapons and to the evolution of conventional force deployments will be embedded in discussions over space policy. The problems of proliferation will predictably feature evolving arrangements for protecting fissionable material and for regulating biotechnology. One can expect or at least hope that international response to indigenous civil conflict will become progressively more refined. As these substantive issues are dealt with, general international security will be disproportionately affected by the evolution of relations between the United States and five countries that are currently outside of its alliance system – Russia, China, India, Iran, and North Korea. And finally, the entire agenda is likely to be affected by the extended implications of the United States occupation of Iraq.

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