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Principles of Global Security

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and management problems will be solved any time soon. One can only hope, nevertheless, that this book's comprehensive recommendations will encourage and guide courageous leaders to make a start.

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Steinbruner, John D. *Principles of Global Security*. Washington, D.C.: Brookings Institution Press, 2000. 270pp. \$44.95

Unconvincing—that one word accurately describes this effort of the prolific author and former Brookings fellow John Steinbruner to explain why and how the “potentially catastrophic consequences of traditional security practices” mandate radical changes in U.S. defense policies.

Steinbruner argues that discontinuities in the international system make obsolete the realist view that nation-states need to rely on military power for their security. From this premise, he implies that the United States should not seek to maintain military superiority over potential opponents. In this new formula, deterrence, which he describes as a Cold War doctrine, should be “subordinated to the countervailing idea of reassurance.” Globalization, Steinbruner holds, has made it “too expensive to rule by force,” and competition among nations or societies is being replaced by cooperation; therefore, the whole notion of needing a strong military defense is dangerous. Unfortunately for his premise, Steinbruner then turns around and uses a pseudo-realist argument to explain why other nations would “naturally” seek to oppose and confront American military superiority in a world in which they are

benefiting from United States–led globalization.

At its core, the book's fundamental problem is that it approaches all military issues as if they were but subsets of strategic nuclear deterrence. The irony of this approach—Cold War thinking at its grimmest—appears completely to have eluded the author, who spent much of his scholarly career worrying about issues of deterrence theory and nuclear command and control. At the same time, Steinbruner does not see the end of the Cold War as a victory for deterrence or democratic ideology. Referring to it rather as an unexpected “spontaneous event” that took everyone involved by surprise, he sees it as the result of “the working of very large forces”—presumably the forces of globalization, although he is never very clear on that.

Steinbruner's treatment of globalization itself—which he describes only in terms of advances in technology and population dynamics—is disappointing. Others have written much better treatments. The book does not contain a serious examination of the direct impact of globalization on national security or military forces, only a continuing assertion that globalization has effects and that, whatever they are, they justify adoption of the author's “reassurance” policies. These policies are similar to, but more radical and seemingly less practical than, those put forward as “cooperative security” by former secretary of defense William Perry. He certainly would not agree with Steinbruner that all national militaries must be equalized in capabilities and force structure. Steinbruner cites the nuclear Non-Proliferation Treaty (NPT) and the founding of Nato as examples of reassurance and equal treatment of nations in regard to security, but he forgets to

mention violations of the NPT or to explain why nations would have joined Nato had there been no inequitable Soviet threat. Even those who share the author's beliefs in a smaller American defense structure or minimal deterrence would be confused by many of his supporting reasons. At one point, Steinbruner castigates the former colonial powers for not intervening quickly enough in the civil wars of their violence-prone former colonies. How would they do so without possessing superior military force? Steinbruner describes the internal conflict that plagues much of the world, including terrorism, as a "contagion"—as if it were a theoretical illness that had nothing to do with actions of actual people. As in the logic (some might say illogic) of the prisoners' dilemma and tit-for-tat games once used to describe the theory of nuclear deterrence, neither the magnanimity nor the fears of the human spirit play a role in this book's equation.

Despite the publisher's reputation and the implied support of influential (mostly retired) authorities, serious students of globalization or defense policy should avoid this book. It is not merely a weak argument; these are not principles of global security for the real world.

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Williams, Cindy, ed. *Holding the Line: U.S. Defense Alternatives for the 21st Century*. Cambridge, Mass.: MIT Press, 2001. 289pp. \$21.95

This is the rare book that actually lives up to its blurbs. It should be required reading for U.S. defense planners, especially Bush administration officials for whom

increasing defense spending rather than "holding the line" is an article of faith. They would profit greatly from the volume's analysis of where *not* to look for the savings that might pay for the administration's promised transformation of the military. *Hint*: cutting infrastructure will not pay for military transformation.

Cindy Williams, a senior research fellow in the Strategic Studies Program at MIT and a former assistant director for national security at the Congressional Budget Office, has assembled an impressive group of contributors. In a focused, well integrated volume, they take on a range of pressing defense issues that converge on a central, critical question: how can the U.S. military be reshaped—transformed—while holding the line on defense spending? Holding the line means maintaining defense spending at about \$300 billion (in fiscal year 2000 budget-authority dollars) for ten years. That amount, it is argued, is sufficient for transformation if it is spent effectively and efficiently—which requires merely discarding outmoded strategy and force structure.

In her introductory chapter, Williams lays the foundation for what follows with an instructive discussion of the post-Cold War drawdown, the pressures generating rising defense costs, the reasons we should not succumb to those pressures, and the need to reconcile strategy and practice and to recalibrate the two-major-theater-wars yardstick that was used to size U.S. conventional forces after the Gulf War. An effective force-protection device, the two-major-theater-wars standard is both the source of rising defense costs and an obstacle to a fiscally responsible transformation of the U.S. military. Williams is especially struck by the fact that each service's share of defense