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The Search for Strategy: Politics and Strategic Vision

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be selected, and how the number of such nations would be kept small. A fit between the suggested roles and the forces to accomplish them would be achieved by major restructuring that would include "a significant reduction in the size of the U.S. ground and naval forces," capabilities to provide a "core contribution to the strategic intelligence evaluations that assess the emergence of new threats," and "important elements of the reconnaissance strike military forces."

Perry later defines reconnaissance strike forces as C3I (i.e., command, control, communications, and intelligence), precision-guided munitions, and defense suppression. For a patient—the U.S. military—that is not currently sick, this amounts to strong medicine. For a nation that since World War II has pursued a much more ambitious and active security vision, here is a radical shift of long-term goals.

Global Engagement has been expertly edited and copiously footnoted, and its arguments have been presented with elegance and consistency. Its policy approach and the means to accomplish the objectives it details, however, suffer from a fatal shortcoming. That is, insofar as it mirrors the thinking of the years between World Wars I and II, it helps to ensure that the current post-Cold War phase will become yet another interwar period. Its apparently flawless argument and seamless logic echo the Pact of Paris (or the Kellogg-Briand Pact) of 1928: the contracting powers "agree that the settlement or solution of all disputes or conflicts, of whatever nature or origin, which may arise between them shall never be sought except by pacific means." Like Kellogg-Briand, global engagement cannot grapple with the truly malign, the immoral, and the evil forces in the world. As a consequence, again like Kellogg-Briand, it risks catastrophic failure as a policy guide.

In the final analysis, *Global Engagement* offers solutions for a globe on which the sun never ceases to shine. Because its policy approach provides an exercise in virtual reality, readers should be cautioned to remove their helmets at the end of the book.

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Guertner, Gary L. *The Search for Strategy: Politics and Strategic Vision*. Westport, Conn.: Greenwood, 1993. 328pp. \$59.95

Gary L. Guertner has expertly consolidated an extraordinary collection of

works written by an exceptional group of scholars and practitioners. The authors address the complex issues confronting United States strategists in the "new world order" and also its capacity to promote its national interests in that

dynamic, uncertain, and unpredictable environment. This aim is effectively achieved in the book's central thesis, that the dominant factor in the search for strategy is the domestic political environment. Guertner then applies the concept to two distinct yet inextricably related areas. Part I, "Strategy as Politics," comprises a series of studies that describe the process of strategy formulation in the contemporary U.S. domestic political environment. It addresses the difficulty of designing a coherent national strategy through a rational, calculating process in a democratic or otherwise politically decentralized system. Not surprisingly, the text postulates that in such conditions strategy formulation does not derive from a single vision but rather from an intensely political process heavily influenced by parochial interests, conflict, bargaining, and ultimately compromise. In short, we do what we can agree to do—usually reduced by consensus to the lowest common denominator. The impact of this state of things is brought home by, among others, Robert Art, Gordon Adams, and Gary Guertner. Art explores two fundamental questions. How well suited is our strategy to the needs of the post-Cold War world? Does the top political and military leadership carry sufficient weight in the defense bureaucracy to make its decisions stick? In the first instance, he contends that critical correctives must be applied before the national military strategy can be fully effective, and second, that a key element in realizing these correctives will be officers capable of subordinating service parochialism to the interests of an effective, coherent,

national military strategy in the wake of the Goldwater-Nichols Act. Adams reinforces this concept in his discussion of how difficult the services' job will be in Congress if they fail to speak with one voice. Guertner continues this tack in his exploration of the domestic political environment in which the services must compete for the resources necessary to implement the national military strategy.

Parts II, III, and IV specifically investigate national military strategy, emphasizing elements of greatest value while recognizing both funding constraints and increasingly complex challenges to the evolving U.S. global leadership role, and identifying strategic concepts that appear to be the most prudent. The future of deterrence, technological superiority, and collective security and defense are considered and analyzed.

In Part II, George Quester and Robert Haffa, like Guertner, note theories and strategies of nuclear deterrence that appear adaptable to the conventional side of the equation. Conditions now exist, they argue, in light of the end of the Cold War and the resultant decoupling of nuclear and conventional forces, that are amenable to general, extended conventional deterrence.

Part III consolidates the issues of deterrence and technology, examining our ability effectively to integrate technological benefits at reasonable cost and, perhaps more importantly, without developing strict dependence on those emerging technologies. The authors remind us that we should embrace technology as a potential force multiplier but must avoid the tendency

to view it as a panacea. Additionally, the dilemma involving foreign technology is explored: since the U.S. has no monopoly upon innovation, research, and development, it must strike a balance between access to foreign technological sources and undesired diffusion of its own advances. This topic leads to a discussion of the problems surrounding arms proliferation, of both the conventional and nuclear, biological, and chemical (NBC) genres. Likewise, the growing contradiction between selling arms to allies to preserve longstanding military commitments while simultaneously pursuing multilateral constraints on potentially destabilizing weapons transfers is one of the many policy dilemmas facing the contemporary strategist and decision maker.

Part IV addresses the concepts of collective security and collective defense. As a strategic concept, neither is new. At the conclusion of both world wars and the Cold War, there was hope for some form of collective system that would either prevent or contain future conflicts. The Gulf war reinforced those hopes. The authors remind us that no nation can be consistently relied upon to place collective interests or those of another state above its own. They suggest that nations will not perceive each threat in the same way and as a result will be reluctant to undertake identical risks or costs associated with military action. Therefore, they argue, collective security has its limits and must be supplemented with varying levels of individual defense.

The book concludes that in the political processes of a democracy there

will inevitably be conflicts involving strategy. Three steps are recommended to minimize conflict and obstacles to coherent strategy formulation. First, strategic vision must be clearly articulated at the top to enable the bureaucracy and Congress to stay in focus. Next, the American public and policy makers should reexamine their notions of "victory" as a permanent end-state. Finally, the popular domestic concept of "victory" tends to exacerbate the natural tension between domestic and foreign policy resources. These notions are guaranteed to stimulate debate and discussion in any wardroom, as will the other thoughts, ideas, and proposals offered for consideration by the authors.

The book's final paragraph should more than sharpen the reader's appetite for this collection of writings: "The search for strategy has consequences that are vital to the nation. This volume is not intended to provide a strategy for the new world order, or even an ideal process for formulating strategy. Its purpose is to emphasize the search itself as important and worth our best efforts and attention at a time when familiar landmarks have vanished and no new strategic vision has attracted a national consensus."

I heartily endorse this book to all military officers and their civilian counterparts throughout the U.S. Department of Defense and national security bureaucracy. It will profoundly influence their views regarding the difficult and politically complex process of strategy formulation.

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