

Cimbala, Stephen J. Collective Insecurity: U.S. Defense Policy and the New World Disorder. Westport, CT: Greenwood, 1995.

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The transition from the Cold War to the new strategic landscape has prompted any number of studies, assessments, historical analyses, and recommendations regarding US national security policy. To say that the landscape remains unclear and that US policy is still groping for the proper directions may well be an understatement. The search for relevancy in both strategic planning and military restructuring remains a pressing and unresolved issue in American policy-making circles, both civilian and military. This book is a valuable guide in coming to grips with these issues.

With an eye to what may be over the horizon, the author offers a sweeping overview of the changing nature of collective security and US defence policy. The Cold War security environment is examined, how this has changed with the demise of the Soviet Union, how all this may play in the remainder of this century and into the next, and what principles should guide US policy.

Three parts shape the book's conceptual framework: US Defence Policy in the Cold War; Russian Arms and Aims in the New World Order; and Collective Security, Obstacles and Options. Security issues evolving from the Cold War and the new US-Russian security relationships connect all three sections.

There is an excellent summary of US national strategy and defence policy during the Cold War period. This lays the groundwork for the remainder of the book. One important aspect in this part is the study of civil-military relations, with particular focus on those evolving during the Gulf War. Subtitled, "The voyage of Discovery," the author looks at evolving American civil-military relations under the Bush administration and its spillover into the next administration. The author partly concludes that "Powell's and OSD's responses to these new environments demonstrate a search for conceptual framework for military planning, not usurpation by the military or lapse of civilian control." (p. 56)

Following this summary, attention is placed on the political-military dynamics within Russia and their impact on former Republics and the United States. In "Doing Away with Nukes," and how this may affect Russia, the author writes, "As the text already suggests, minimum deterrence is on balance the right way to go, but it raises important policy-planning issues that until now have been smothered under the weight of force ponderosity and doctrinal complacency." (p. 111) And the author stresses the importance of re-examining nuclear deterrence as it evolved in the Cold War and what this means in the new environment.

The final part of the book examines the changing military system within Russia and how this impacts on the United States. From this reference point, the efforts by the US to adopt a new force structure and strategy are examined. Here the author argues the need to break loose from the superpower mentality and Cold War ghosts to examine more fruitfully and comprehensively the new conflict patterns and design a relevant strategy. In

this examination, prevailing issues of force structure and strategy are analyzed, including the Bottom Up Review and the notion of two Major Regional Contingencies.

To emphasize the need for new thinking, a point is made about the erosion of the notion of nation-state. This is shown by the shift of conflict patterns from interstate to intrastate (sub-state) dimensions. Thus, unconventional conflicts and peacekeeping operations are becoming the rule rather than the exception.

What should draw the attention of those in policy-making circles, is the final chapter, "Conclusions." Eight policy-making reference points are offered. These range from the inability of states to maintain internal order and political legitimacy, domestic US politics and their importance in commitment of military force to the use of "soft power."

Finally, the author cautions against a return to isolationism as well as the danger of over commitment. He offers options on how to find a useful middle ground between these two extremes from a permanent assignment of military contingents to the United Nations to the "deputizing" of states to act as regional fire fighters.

There is one problem that any number of readers may face. This is the book's assumption that readers fully understand various concepts and the implications of US and Russian military strategy and doctrines. These include, for example, nuclear realism, structural realism, long cycle theory, nuclear positivists, nuclear agnostics, nuclear neo-realists, proliferation positivism. In addition, the scope of the study and the various conceptual and analytical dimensions may be too much for a reader to digest in one volume.

While these may be seen as weaknesses by some, it reflects the author's intellectual insights and conceptual skills. In brief, the book is a sophisticated analysis and offers rich intellectual insights. Further, the book identifies key issues for the US in the remainder of this century and into the next. Policy -making reference points and arguments for new thinking in dealing with the emerging strategic landscape are particularly challenging. In this respect the title of the book is quite appropriate. Not only does the author show that the new environment is primarily characterized by collective insecurity, but he also identifies what the US needs to do to respond to this state of affairs.

This is an important book, particularly for those trying to decipher the meaning of the new international landscape. Equally important, the author does not stop with analyses of this new landscape, but offers important insights in how to come to grips with it from the US perspective. In doing so, the author has raised intellectual and analytical horizons to a higher level, going beyond budgetary defence issues and short-term tactical responses.

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