

armed forces may grant excessive power to militaries that have retained autonomy vis-à-vis civilians in government long after democratization: as Mares and Palmer demonstrate, military autonomy under democracy has been sufficient to bring countries to war. Importantly, any alternative to calling on the armed forces requires a considerable increase in government knowledge about the security realm. Again, the Peruvian case is telling. Carlos Iván Degregori points out that in Peru the government failed to develop an effective counterinsurgency strategy and that instead, the army led that effort through experiential learning: “Strange as it may sound, in its own authoritarian way the repressive apparatus of the state learned more quickly than did Peru’s civilian governments and political parties” (*In the Wake*, 378).

American Force: Dangers, Delusions, and Dilemmas in National Security. By Richard K. Betts. New York: Columbia University Press, 2011. 384p. \$29.50.

The Logic of Positive Engagement. By Miroslav Nincic. Ithaca, NY: Cornell University Press, 2011. 224p. \$39.95.
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— Mark Peceny, *University of New Mexico*

The United States has spent trillions of dollars and sacrificed the lives of thousands of soldiers in a decade of frustrating and inconclusive war in Afghanistan and Iraq. Few would argue that the wars in these two nations have represented wise investments of American lives and treasure. As the United States moves to disengage from these decade-long interventions, the authors of the two books under review want to encourage the United States to move away from its overreliance on military force as a central instrument of American foreign policy.

Miroslav Nincic argues that positive engagement can provide a less costly and more successful mechanism for encouraging rogue regimes to rejoin the community of nations than has been the case for coercive strategies. Richard Betts suggests that now is the time for the United States to pursue a more restrained foreign policy and embrace “soft primacy and burden shifting,” rather than “trying to milk [primacy] forcefully to control world order” (*American Force*, p. 291). Each author presents sound, persuasive and well-reasoned arguments for charting a new path in American foreign policy. The analysis presented in each book, however, suggests that even after a decade of war and tremendous fiscal deficits, it will be difficult for the United States to set aside the mantle of liberal hegemony that has been the wellspring of its assertive militarized presence throughout the world.

The Logic of Positive Engagement clearly establishes that America relies on economic sanctions and/or military force to influence states opposed to the United States. Nincic argues persuasively that compellence strategies have often failed to bring about desired changes and can be extremely

expensive. He makes a plausible case that positive incentives can be as successful as negative sanctions in changing state behavior and at a lower cost. This is most likely to occur in reciprocal bargaining with explicit quid pro quos, but the author also draws upon Etel Solingen’s work on liberalizing coalitions to suggest that positive inducements could have more catalytic effects in changing the fundamental orientations of target regimes.

Nincic completed his book at an inopportune time, just prior to the Arab Spring of 2011. He points to Muammar Qaddafi’s Libya as an illustration of the success of positive inducements, noting that decades of unrelenting hostility to his regime had failed to bring about significant changes in Libyan behavior. But the deals struck with Qaddafi’s regime early in the first decade of the twenty-first century led to positive changes in Libyan foreign policy and a thawing of relations with the West (pp. 92–102). In the wake of his US-assisted overthrow and murder, however, it is hard to think that any dictator would view this experience as anything other than a cautionary tale for what might happen to those willing to seek accommodation with the US.

The cases outlined in detail by Nincic (Libya, Cuba, Syria, Iran, and North Korea) all illuminate a common dilemma. These regimes are likely to be most open to a positive accommodation with Washington when they are most vulnerable, at precisely the times when the United States is least likely to want to provide positive inducements. When Bashar al-Assad’s regime looked strong, which was the case in 2010 when this book was completed, the United States may have had incentives to offer positive inducements, at a time when the Syrian regime was unlikely to be open to such overtures on terms acceptable to Washington. Assad would surely welcome such positive engagement today, but it is hard to see the United States offering such engagement now. That the Arab Spring led to outcomes that cast some of this book’s contributions in an unexpected light should not lead policymakers to discount the potential contributions of positive engagement. There are no easy ways of dealing with the Qaddafis, Assads, and Kims of the world, and forceful regime change can be a bloody and problematic endeavor.

In *American Force*, Betts draws on two decades of published work to argue that a more restrained military posture might best serve American national interests. Chapter 3 argues that America would be better served by avoiding limited and impartial interventions to address humanitarian crises, because such are likely to prolong wars rather than resolve them. Given that threats from weapons of mass destruction increasingly come from difficult-to-deter nonstate actors with limited capabilities, Chapter 4 argues that the United States would be better served by renewed diplomatic efforts to discourage proliferation and more vigorous civil defense programs than by aggressive efforts to attack potential proliferators and state sponsors

of terrorism. Furthermore, Chapters 4 and 5 note that because American primacy “has animated both the terrorists’ purposes and their choice of tactics” (p. 110), “the best way to keep people from believing that we are responsible for their problems is to stay out of their faces” (p. 101). Chapter 6 makes a persuasive case that preventive war is almost never an appropriate policy choice. Chapter 7 argues that America’s “Big Small Wars” in places like Iraq and Afghanistan are increasingly unnecessary, ineffective, and inefficient. Chapter 8 points out the logical inconsistencies of a policy that says that the United States will fight for Taiwan only as long as it remains a rebellious province rather than an independent nation. Instead, Betts suggests that the most prudent policy for dealing with rising Chinese power may be to find a way to back away from America’s commitment to fight for Taiwan. A more restrained foreign policy should allow for a more restrained defense budget, according to Chapter 11.

Betts completed his book at a more opportune time than did Nincic. A self-described Cold War hawk (*American Force*, p. xi), Betts has been calling for a more restrained policy for the United States for most of the post–Cold War era at a time when the country has instead pursued increasingly more expensive, ambitious, and militarized policies. In the wake of the wars in Iraq and Afghanistan and the trillion dollar annual deficits that the government has faced in recent years, his prescriptions may face a more receptive audience among policymakers today.

Both authors understand, however, that old habits die hard. Nincic adopts a path-dependency argument. Starting from general insights of social psychology about the power of black-and-white views of the world and of the perceived legitimacy of punishing evildoers, he argues that after politicians had successfully punished one another for being soft on communism in the late 1940s, the domestic political constraints faced by political leaders throughout the Cold War were reshaped. In the wake of 9/11, the domestic politics of antiterrorism has been reminiscent of the domestic politics of the Cold War, making it prohibitively costly for any American policymaker to pursue policies of positive engagement with foreign leaders who could be labeled as friends of terrorists and implacable enemies of the United States (*Logic*, pp. 32–44).

Betts identifies specific barriers to the adoption of each of the initiatives he supports. In broad terms, however, he notes how difficult it will be to break the habits of liberal hegemony: “The shift from bipolarity to unipolarity unbound the United States and opened the road to moral ambitions” (*American Force*, p. 49). There is a deep consensus among American elites that active and assertive American leadership of the world is both necessary and appropriate: “Across the political spectrum, American elites do tend to conflate U.S. national security with international security. For liberals this means that what is good for the world is good for the United States, and for con-

servatives it means that what is good for the United States is good for the world” (ibid., p. 24).

In essence, a principal threat to US national security is the consensus among American elites that the exercise of liberal hegemony over the world should continue, as should the domestic political dynamics that punish any leader who might try to challenge that consensus by advocating for a more restrained foreign and defense policy. Can policy advocacy by academic scholars of international relations and American foreign policy help make the present era a critical juncture that will shift the United States to a new path? As Nincic notes, constraints within academic disciplines make it difficult for scholars to attempt to do so (*Logic*, pp. 44–57): “[P]olicy relevance has not . . . been much of a priority within the academic community, whose analytical efforts often appear self-referential and disconnected from the concrete world” (ibid., p. 182).

To the extent that scholars try to influence policy, they are often more successful at pointing out the failures of existing policies and making strong cases for their alternative policy prescriptions than they are at spelling out how these new policies could be adopted. A strength of Nincic’s work is his effort to systematically identify opportunities for dismantling the mechanisms of reproduction that sustain a foreign policy focused on negative sanctions and the use of force. Betts is also sensitive to this issue throughout his book, but never quite pulls together a sustained argument for the way in which the United States could move from liberal hegemony to soft primacy. His Chapter 10, which looks at whether it is even possible to pursue strategy given the complexity of psychological and domestic political processes that impede strategic decision making, could have provided an opportunity to examine this question in detail, but was instead focused on a more general examination of the possibility of strategic decision making. Although neither book compellingly argues how America can or will move to a more restrained foreign policy, both books present strong cases for the benefits of such a shift in American foreign policy at a time when significant change seems possible.

Reflexive Governance for Global Public Goods. Edited by Eric Brousseau, Tom Dedeurwaerdere, and Bernd Siebenhüner. Cambridge, MA: MIT Press, 2012. 376p. \$54.00 cloth, \$27.00 paper. doi:10.1017/S1537592713000819

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The major premise of this edited collection based on a series of presentations given at three European workshops held in 2006 and 2007 is that traditional approaches to understanding the provision of global public goods rest on two antiquated assumptions. The first is that these goods, including policy remedies to abate climate change, protect biodiversity, equitably manage natural resources, and prevent pollution, are largely defined by