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National Security Dilemmas: Challenges and Opportunities

Colin Gray

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A contemporary primer on the leading arguments about U.S. national security, *National Security Dilemmas* addresses the major challenges and opportunities that are live-issue areas for American policymakers and strategists today. Colin S. Gray provides an in-depth analysis of a policy and strategy for deterrence; the long-term U.S. bid to transform its armed forces' capabilities, with particular reference to strategic surprise, in the face of many great uncertainties; the difficulty of understanding and exploiting the challenge of revolutionary change in warfare; the problems posed by enemies who fight using irregular methods; and the awesome dilemmas for U.S. policy over the options to wage preventive and preemptive warfare. With forty years' experience as a strategist, within and outside of government, Gray uses a problem-solving motif throughout the book, suggesting solutions to the challenges he identifies. The book's master narrative is that the United States must take a more considered strategic approach to its security dilemmas. Too often, the country's leaders decide on a policy and then move to take action, all the while neglecting to devise a plan that would connect its political purposes to military means. While many of Gray's judgments here are critical of current ideas and behavior, he crafted them as helpful guides should planners adopt them when revising policies and approaches. Strategy is a practical matter; truly it is the zone wherein theory meets practice. This text can be used as an expert guide to the major national security challenges of today. It both explains the structure of these challenges and provides useful answers. With a foreword by Lt. Gen. Paul K. Van Riper, USMC (Ret.), Bren Chair, Marine Corps University, Quantico, Virginia.

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