When the most recent previous version of this book (the fourth edition) first appeared, President Barack Obama had been in office for a little over a year. In that period, the Great Recession of 2008 had cratered the economy, creating a firestorm of political recrimination and a plethora of mostly contradictory advice from economists on how to fix the problem. In the national security arena, the president was in the process of terminating American combat operations in Iraq, a promise he had made during the 2008 campaign and which he had fulfilled before he stood for reelection in 2012. The parallel American involvement in Afghanistan had actually broadened enough that some observers were beginning to refer to the conflict as “Obama’s War,” even if the root of American combat participation in Afghanistan dated to 2001. Politically, gridlock was firmly in partisan place.

Things have both changed and remained the same since. The economic recovery has begun, but the legacies of the recession are still with us in the form of concerted and virtually universal demands for deficit and debt reduction. How to accomplish that task remains a prominent political element of governmental gridlock, as both politicians and economists continue to fight over the nature and severity of the problem and the consequences of different solutions. Politically, Obama has been returned to office, but the Congress remains divided with one party controlling the House of Representatives and the other the Senate. The result was a quandary that suggested the deep schizophrenia of the electorate. The people clamor rhetorically for an end to governmental inaction and elect a government divided along partisan lines that cannot possibly govern and that guarantees the perpetuation of inaction. Go figure!

At the level of traditional national security concern, the landscape has changed dramatically. There are no longer American combat forces in Iraq and the administration has vowed the last combat forces will be out of Afghanistan by the end of 2014, a deadline they are almost certain to exceed, possibly by half a year. Terrorism, the motive national security force since 2001, has been dramatically reduced. Represented by the assassination of Osama bin Laden, the central threat posed by Al Qaeda (AQ) has faded; what is left are the annoying but limited threats represented by so-called AQ affiliates and franchises like Al Qaeda on the Arabian Peninsula (AQAP), principally in Yemen, and Al Qaeda in the Islamic Maghreb (AQIM). The sum of the terrorist threat is not inconsequential, but it is almost certainly far smaller than the perceived threat in 2001. The rest of the world landscape is relatively tranquil, with violence isolated in places like Syria and Mali, neither very high on the U.S. national security priority list.
These three themes dominate the environment in which national security policies, the subject of this book, are honed and likely will be crafted in the foreseeable future. The domestic influence is dominated by partisan political gridlock, which makes decisive political action about anything virtually impossible. The effect is to inhibit change. The economic climate continues to be dominated by the determination that deficits and debt must be reduced. This cuts national security in contradictory ways. Part of deficit and debt reduction involves reduced government spending, and the national security budget is not exempt from federal frugality. The question is not whether but how much reduction there will be, how much the national security establishment will have to participate in belt tightening, and what effects that will have on American defense efforts and capabilities. Ironically, political gridlock probably means that decisive guidelines about how the national security establishment will reshape itself are unlikely, since the content of such guidelines would require a consensus on the problem and its solutions that clearly does not exist. At the same time, reduced defense spending would also likely slow economic recovery. The external threat environment is not very helpful in this assessment, since it is a very ambiguous environment in which there are no major, compelling threats and where there is abundant opportunity to disagree about what threats there are and what—if anything—to do about them. That disagreement, of course, is what the current political environment is best at highlighting.

**NEW TO THIS EDITION**

The new environment forms the backdrop around which the text has been revised. This fifth edition, in fact, represents the most complete and thorough revision of the text since the first edition was published in 2003. Mechanically, there are three major elements of this change. First, the ordering of the chapters has been changed to reflect the structure of the new threat environment. Fully eight of the fourteen chapters have been moved from their positions in the last edition. Second, two new chapters have been added to reflect different levels of influence in the subject material. Third, the arguments and supporting material in almost all the chapters have been substantially rewritten to enhance the flow and emphases of this new edition. It is not unfair to say that this is a substantially new book. Within each of these sources of change has also been a very conscious attempt to improve the logical flow of the contents of the book. Rather than being a simple survey of factors in the national security equation, instead the attempt has been made to craft the contents as a coherent “story” of this important area of national policy that begins with basic concepts, moves through the past to the present, and concludes with some guesses about the future.

The nature and extent of changes can be summarized as follows:

- As already noted, the ordering of chapters has been changed to improve the flow of the arguments of the book. To accommodate this rearrangement, the text is now divided into four, rather than three, major Parts.
- The major parts have been changed to reflect the rearrangement of ideas and the flow of the argument based around the three themes of economic constraints, the domestic political environment, and the changing nature of the international threats.
- Three new chapters are included. Chapters 1 and 14 reflect the movement toward a more thematic approach to the material, while Chapter 7 grounds the national security debate more intimately as part of the broader domestic political debate.
- Major revisions have been made in four chapters to reflect changing circumstances and conditions of national security. Chapter 2 more fully explains the role of the Cold War worldview (or paradigm) on shaping policy in a changed environment. Chapter 6 reflects institutional change in the national security area more fully. Chapter 10 provides more of a retrospective analysis and assessment of post-9/11 involvements including terrorism, Afghanistan, and Iraq. Chapter 12 explores in depth why American interventions in domestic conflicts should be deemphasized in the future.
- The complexity and influences of a very changed intermestic environment on policy choices in the upcoming years is presented to provide the reader with criteria on which to make personal judgments about national security concerns.
- The Obama team for a second term is now in place, including like-minded people like Secretary of State John Kerry, Secretary of Defense Chuck Hagel, and CIA Director John Brennan, and the framework within which they are likely to view the world is presented and explained.
- This text is available in a variety of formats—digital and print. To learn more about our programs, pricing options, and customization, visit www.pearsonhighered.com.

FEATURES

The book is a blend of continuity and changes. Many of the same themes that have been found in previous editions are maintained, including many of the historical analyses and observations about the distinctive American way of viewing national security concerns. The discussions of these elements have been changed, sometimes expanded and sometimes condensed, to reflect more fully current and likely future trends and problems the United States will face. The most recent fourth edition began the process of reordering some of the organization of the presentation of materials, and this process is continued to an arguably logical conclusion in this edition, as reflected in the rearranged and modified Table of Contents.

Modifications to the Table of Contents are evident in two prominent ways. This current edition is most obviously changed in its organization and number of chapters. The addition of a chapter on the domestic “battleground” replaces earlier chapters that have been condensed, and tightening of other materials made this possible without an overall expansion of the length of the
text. At the same time, the Table of Contents was reorganized into four rather than three parts better to capture the flow of the material. The underlying rationale of the change also represents change. The four parts of the book are sequential and cumulative, each contributing to the “story line” in reinforcing ways. The first part introduces basic notion and dynamics of national security, and the second part places these concepts within historical perspective from the founding of the American republic to today. The third part describes both the international and domestic (hence “intermestic”) nature of the contemporary environment and the challenges it presents, and the fourth part culminates the progression by examining current and future problems and challenges to the national security.

Part I of the new text, “The Conceptual Nexus,” consists of two chapters that try to frame the overall subject area. Chapter 1, “National Security for a New and Changing Era,” introduces the idea of the intermestic (part international, part domestic) nature of the national security environment, including the evolving nature of international threats and a domestic political overcast of austerity on the political system. Chapter 2, “The Concepts and Logic of National Security,” focuses on the distinctive vantage point of national security within the political spectrum, including an emphasis on the most basic concepts that define that perspective: the ideas of security, interests, and power that are at the core of the conceptual framework of this area. This chapter concludes by applying the concepts to the basic construct that organized thinking about much of post–World War II national security, the realist paradigm.

Part II, “The Historical Context,” consists of three chapters, the major purpose of which are to explain how the U.S. experience has shaped its current set of perceptions about the world. They are presented roughly chronologically. Chapter 3, “Influences from the Past,” looks primarily at the formative period after the American Revolution and how that period helped shape matters related to national security, and the chapter also lays out more contemporary influences on basic American attitudes. Chapter 4, “The Post-1945 Challenge: The Nature and End of the Cold War,” begins the process with an overview of how the unique American experience with national concerns has helped shape how the United States tends to look at national security concerns. Chapter 5, “Moving to the Present: The Post–Cold War World,” begins the process of moving that experience toward the present, examining the Cold War period that dominated the second half of the twentieth century and remains a conceptually important factor in the current assessment.

Part III, “Intermestic Environments and Change,” consists of four chapters that look individually and cumulatively on contemporary influences on policy. Chapter 6, “The Domestic Political Setting,” examines how perceptions of the international threat environment have helped shape the formal and institutional setting in which national security policy is made. Chapter 7, “Domestic Battlegrounds and National Security,” looks at the extreme polarization of contemporary American politics and how it affects the political system. Chapter 8, “The Phenomenon and Impact of Globalization,” looks at the phenomenon of globalization as it has evolved over the past two decades and
how that influence has affected national security. Chapter 9, “‘Legacy’ Military Problems,” analyzes the growing intertwining of global economies and how this affects international politics, and specifically national security.

The analysis culminates in Part IV, “The Contemporary Environment and Challenges.” This part consists of five chapters that view the current conflict environment to which the United States must respond, with particular emphasis on internal developing world conflicts that continue to dominate the landscape of international violence and instability. Chapter 10, “The Legacies of 9/11: Terrorism, Iraq, and Afghanistan,” examines the role and mission of current forces and how they have been affected by recent U.S. military adventures that arose from the post-9/11 experience. Chapter 11, “International Change: Asymmetrical Warfare,” looks at so-called asymmetrical warfare, which has been the primary new military form of challenge facing the United States. Chapter 12, “The Menu of Activism: Peacekeeping, State Building, and Development,” looks at various military and nonmilitary approaches to and problems surrounding national security. Chapter 13, “New Dimensions and Approaches,” widens the scope by looking at other concerns now often described in national security terms, border security, natural resource security, and environmental security. Chapter 14, “Looking Ahead,” attempts to bring the previous discussions together to help frame current and future national security concerns and approaches.

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