PREFACE

The terrorist attacks of September 11, 2001, the first significant assault on mainland America in almost 200 years, had a drastic impact on both public thinking and public policy. For one, they shattered the "myth of invulnerability" that had persisted even during the Cold War, leaving people searching for reassurance. For another, they prompted the government to declare that the Cold War doctrines of deterrence and containment are largely irrelevant and that new threats require new thinking about defense policy. According to President George W. Bush, the gravest danger is that even weak states and small groups could attain a catastrophic power to strike great nations with weapons of mass destruction; assurance that this threat can be blocked will require building up homeland defense, "transforming the military" and adopting a new strategy of striking first at potential attackers.[1]

As Mr. Bush pointed out, these are not the only elements of a revised security policy, which will include gathering broad coalitions to promote peace, preventing the spread of violence and working for a just and peaceful world[2]—aspirations whose achievement will require a truly comprehensive approach to the formulation of that policy. Many factors will enter into that formulation, ranging from definitions of the threat to definitions of justice, from determination of the measures needed to quell terrorism to selection of those required to promote regional security.

We neither can, nor wish to, engage in this process but we do think we have something to contribute to it: an understanding of three important elements that should not be overlooked or scanted by policymakers.

- The first of these is religion. Although commonly viewed as a force for peace, religion can also be an incentive to conflict; in fact, it is identified as such in 15 of the 39 conflicts currently raging in the world.[3] Without understanding the reasons why believers may see war as a preferred option, it may be impossible to understand the cause of a given conflict; without appreciating what religion can and cannot do to ameliorate it, peace may be harder to achieve. And yet, as Douglas Johnston and Cynthia Sampson note in the

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1 Commencement Address at the United States Military Academy, June 1, 2002, recorded by THE N.Y. TIMES, www.nytimes.com, June 6, 2002, at 3 and 4.

2 *Id.* at 5 and 6.

3 THE DEFENSE MONITOR XXXI, No. 1, 4.

seminal work, *Religion: The Missing Dimension of Statecraft*,[4] under the right circumstances it can be a force for peace.

- In a sense, the same can be said about international law, which is often regarded as an obstacle to desired uses of force rather than as a set of rules that should influence choices among them. True, that law is viewed by many as weak (since its constraints are limited), as ambiguous (since it attempts to reconcile contradictory principles such as state sovereignty and state responsibility) and as inequitable, since it favors strong powers over weak ones. Yet it does provide guidelines for behavior and a basis for reaching judgments about the legality—and consequently the morality—of actions by states, by warring groups and by individuals. And ignoring or circumventing it to obtain transitory advantages may not only slow progress toward a more just and more equitable "law of nations" but may inspire other states to behave in like manner, to the detriment of international security—and that of the United States.
- Finally, we must remember that the use of force is influenced not only by the interests and the policies of those wielding the military instrument but by its internal dynamics. Without an appreciation of those dynamics neither policymakers nor peacemakers are likely to make correct choices; as General Andrew Goodpaster, former Supreme Allied Commander, Europe, said during the conference which preceded this publication, "If war is too important to be entrusted to generals, it is too difficult to be entrusted to amateurs."[5]

This is particularly true since we are concerned not only with the role of force in conflict but with its role in conflict resolution, in bringing about peace when all other instruments of policy have failed to do so. Although this is of general concern, it has special application in intrastate conflicts, since these are widely viewed as posing the greatest threat to international peace and security and as having the greatest likelihood of triggering an interstate conflict.[6] Moreover, such conflicts not only pose

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[4] RELIGION: THE MISSING DIMENSION OF STATECRAFT, (Johnston, Douglas & Cynthia Sampson, eds., 1995).

[5] Goodpaster, Andrew J. "Religion, Law and the Role of Force: Operational Aspects." P. 8

[6] This opinion was strongly expressed during the Millennium Session of the United Nations; in fact, President Clinton declared that," We find today fewer wars between nations but more wars within them. Such internal conflicts, often driven by ethnic and religious differences, took five million lives in the last decade, most of them completely innocent victims." (Transcript of address at the United Nations, September 6, 2000: N.Y. TIMES, Sept. 7, 2000, A16.) And Mr. Clinton joined representatives of other member states in saying that "the international community must take a side . . . ," a view reflected in the United Nations Millennium Declaration, which stated that "Responsibility for managing . . . threats to inter-

operational problems for the armed forces, they also pose political ones, in that military intervention, even for humanitarian purposes, is widely regarded as a transgression upon the rights of sovereign states and hence as a violation of the Charter of the United Nations. Since Afghanistan, Angola, Sudan, Yugoslavia and other states in which such conflicts have occurred are frequently underdeveloped, underorganized or both, the imposition of "peace" by external forces may not last without the creation of a new and different entity. Thus, Mr. Bush's objective of promoting "moderation and toleration and human rights,"[7] like other efforts to establish a "just peace," may require nation-building on a scale scarcely imagined.

Obviously, this is not an issue with which we can deal in this book—though it is one of which we must remain conscious throughout all our endeavors. What we *will* do is:

- Examine, in Part I, the ways in which religion, law and force work to generate, to curb and to help put an end to armed conflict;
- Focus, in Part II, on their potential impact on the resolution of intra-state conflicts;
- Consider, in Part III, the results of our inquiry, with particular reference to their implications for policies that propose to achieve "peace with justice" through the use of force.

In this way, we hope to focus attention on three of the factors influencing policy choices and policy outcomes in this new and troubled world.

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national peace and security must be shared among the nations of the world and should be exercised multilaterally"—with the United Nations playing the central role. (*Id.* Sept. 9, 2000, A4.) This does not, of course, rule out interventions by individual nations, either under UN auspices or without them, as evidenced, among other instances by the situation in Congo, where three African states have been fighting in support of the government and three others against it.

7 *Speech at West Point, loc. cit.*, 7.