



**AS LONG AS
AMERICA EXISTS,
THE WORLD WILL
NOT BE PEACEFUL**

ERIC YEW KEE WONG ^{+Ai} © (2028)

AUTHOR'S BACKGROUND

Yew Kee WONG (Eric) is a former Professor, Associate Vice-President, & Registrar at Hong Kong Chu Hai College. He has previously served as a Professor at BASIS. He holds a BSc (Hons) degree in Computing Systems & a PhD in Ai from Nottingham Trent University (NTU), UK. When he was 15 & 19, he was the youngest undergraduate & PhD student admitted to NTU. Between 2001 & 2016, he was the Senior Programme Director at The University of Hong Kong (HKU-SPACE). His research interests include Ai, Quantum Computing, Web3 Technology, & Big Data Analytics. Over the last 30 years, he has been granted & received over USD\$10 million in research funding from Governments, Private Foundations & Institutions (from Europe, Africa & Asia).

Prof. WONG (Eric) has served on more than 3,000 top-tier International Conference Chairs, Scientific/Publicity Chairs & Program/Technical Committees. Since 2005, he has actively participated in 52 International Journals as Editor-in-Chief, Associate Editor, & Member of the Journal Editorial Board Committee. He is currently a Fellow, Professional & Individual member of 12 Internationally renowned Professional Organizations (IEEE, ACM, AAAI, IIBA, ISACA, AIP, BCS, IOA, ACL, CAIAC, AAIA & ICAIL).

During his career, he has held the titles of Honorary Professor, Distinguished Professor, Adjunct Professor, Visiting Professor & Honorary Research Fellow at 15 different universities & institutions. From 1996 to present, he has published more than 180 e-book titles (e-Print [PDF], self-authored^{+Ai}) and over 190 peer-reviewed articles & research papers in top-tier academic journals, conference proceedings, and online R&D outlets. Many of his research papers have appeared in world-renowned journals such as Scientific Reports, Springer Nature & IEEE. Additionally, he has served as a UNICEF (UN) Volunteer since 2018. He has supervised/co-supervised over 100 PhD/Master students.



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Any references to historical events, real people, or real places are used fictitiously. Names, characters, and places are products of the author's imagination.

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Introduction

Statement of the Book

This section opens with the book's central, provocative argument: that the United States, by its very nature as a global power structured around military supremacy, economic coercion, and ideological expansionism, functions as the single greatest obstacle to world peace. The thesis is not that America is uniquely evil or that all American individuals or institutions consciously seek conflict. Rather, it argues that the structural logic of American statecraft—its dependence on global military basing, its economic system's need for dollar hegemony, and its political culture's equation of strength with violence—produces war as a predictable output. The chapter distinguishes between American intentions (often articulated in liberal internationalist terms) and American outcomes (objectively measurable in conflict data, civilian casualties, and destabilized regions).

Defining "Peace" (Negative vs. Positive Peace)

This methodological section establishes the book's analytical framework by drawing on peace studies literature, particularly the work of Johan Galtung. Negative peace is defined as the absence of direct, organized violence—no bombs falling, no troops crossing borders. Positive peace is defined as the presence of structural conditions that make war unlikely: economic equity, political self-determination, functioning dispute-resolution mechanisms, ecological stability, and social justice. The book argues that American foreign policy has, at best, occasionally produced negative peace (e.g., the Cold War's "long peace" between great powers) while systematically undermining positive peace through structural adjustment programs, support for autocratic allies, resource extraction regimes, and the perpetuation of global hierarchies. The failure to distinguish between these two forms of peace, the chapter contends, is how American apologists conflate deterrence with genuine security.

Scope: From 1776 to the Present

This section defines the book's temporal and geographical parameters. Starting with the American Revolution (which itself involved settler-colonial warfare against Indigenous nations allied with the British), the book traces an unbroken thread through continental expansion, overseas empire, Cold War bipolarity, and unipolar hegemony. Geographically, the scope is global, with particular attention to Latin America (the historical "backyard"), Asia (the primary theater of Cold War and post-Cold War intervention), the Middle East (the locus of post-9/11 warfare), and Africa (the site of proxy conflicts and resource wars). Europe is addressed primarily as an arena of alliance militarization and as a contemporary proxy battlefield. The book concludes in the present moment, with the Ukraine war, renewed great-power competition with China, and the ongoing violence in Gaza serving as contemporary evidence.

Methodology: Historical Analysis, Geopolitical Case Studies, and Structural Critique

The final introductory section explains the book's three interlocking methods. Historical analysis involves revisiting primary and secondary historical sources to trace institutional path dependencies—how decisions made in 1898, 1945, or 1962 constrain present-day options. Geopolitical case studies (presented in Part V) offer deep dives into specific conflicts where American policy directly correlates with prolonged violence; each case uses open-source intelligence, UN and NGO reporting, and academic scholarship to establish causation. Structural critique draws on political economy and international relations theory (particularly World Systems Theory, dependency theory, and Marxist-informed state theory) to explain why individual presidential administrations, regardless of party, produce similar interventionist outcomes. The chapter acknowledges the book's critical orientation while committing to empirical falsifiability: each claim is supported by verifiable data, and counter-evidence is addressed in Part VI.

PART I: THE GENESIS OF AMERICAN MILITARISM

Chapter 1: The Frontier Ethos and Manifest Destiny

1.1 Colonial Warfare and Indigenous Removal

This chapter section traces the origins of American military culture to the colonial frontier, where settler militias waged extermination campaigns against Indigenous nations long before the United States existed as a formal state. Key events include the Pequot War (1636–1638), King Philip's War (1675–1676), and the various French and Indian Wars. The section argues that the tactical innovations developed in these conflicts—total war against civilian populations, destruction of food supplies, scalp bounties—became templates for later American warfare. The ideological justification emerged as the doctrine of *vacuum domicilium* (empty land), which denied Indigenous sovereignty and framed removal as both inevitable and divinely ordained. The section concludes with the Indian Removal Act of 1830 and the Trail of Tears, establishing a pattern of treaty-making followed by treaty-breaking that recurs throughout American diplomatic history.

1.2 The Mexican-American War (1846–1848): Continental Expansion by Force

This section presents the Mexican-American War as the first American war of overt territorial aggression against a sovereign nation-state. President James K. Polk's provocation of hostilities (ordering troops into disputed territory, declaring that American blood had been spilled on American soil) established the template for false or exaggerated *casus belli* used in subsequent interventions. The war resulted in the seizure of 529,000 square miles—present-day California, Nevada, Utah, Arizona, New Mexico, and parts of Colorado and Wyoming—through the Treaty of Guadalupe Hidalgo. The section examines contemporary dissenters, including a young Ulysses S. Grant who later called the war "one of the most unjust ever waged by a stronger against a weaker nation." The treatment of Mexican civilians and the resurgence of the slavery expansion debate are also covered. The war's legacy, the section argues, was the normalization of conquest as American statecraft.

1.3 The Spanish-American War (1898): First Overseas Empire

This section analyzes the 1898 war as America's transition from continental to overseas imperialism. The explosion of the USS Maine in Havana Harbor—likely an accident but blamed on Spain—provided the pretext. The war's conduct was brief (ten weeks) but its consequences enduring: the United States acquired Puerto Rico, Guam, and the Philippines, established a protectorate over Cuba (severely constrained by the Platt Amendment), and annexed Hawai'i during the conflict's course. The section focuses on the Philippine-American War (1899–1902) that followed, in which American forces killed an estimated 200,000 to 1 million Filipino civilians while employing water torture and concentration camps. The section introduces the arguments of anti-imperialists like Mark Twain, Andrew Carnegie, and the American Anti-Imperialist League, whose warnings about the corruption of American democracy through empire went unheeded. This war, the chapter concludes, established the permanent overseas military footprint that defines contemporary American global power.

Chapter 2: The Monroe Doctrine and Hemispheric Hegemony

2.1 "America for the Americans" – Underlying Imperial Intent

President James Monroe's 1823 message to Congress is typically taught as a declaration of anti-colonial principle—the Western Hemisphere closed to further European colonization. This section reinterprets the Monroe Doctrine as a unilateral assertion of American hegemony over the hemisphere, swapping European masters for a North American one. The doctrine's implicit bargain was that Latin American independence would be respected only insofar as Latin American states aligned with U.S. commercial and strategic interests. The section traces how successive presidents expanded the doctrine's scope: Polk used it to justify the Mexican-American War, Grant attempted to annex the Dominican Republic, and Theodore Roosevelt added the "Roosevelt Corollary" (1904), which explicitly claimed "international police power" over the hemisphere. The corollary transformed the doctrine from a defensive declaration into an offensive license for permanent intervention.

2.2 Gunboat Diplomacy: The Banana Wars (1898–1934)

This section catalogs the three-decade period of near-continuous U.S. military intervention in the Caribbean and Central America, so named because many operations protected American banana plantations (United Fruit Company) and other corporate interests. Key interventions include Cuba (1906–1909), Nicaragua (1909–1933, including the occupation that produced Augusto Sandino's guerrilla resistance), Haiti (1915–1934), the Dominican Republic (1916–1924), and Honduras (numerous landings between 1903 and 1925). The section details the creation of the Marine Corps' "Small Wars Manual," institutionalizing counterinsurgency doctrine, and the establishment of U.S.-trained National Guards that became instruments of proxy control. The long-term consequences included the devastation of local democracy (Haiti's constitution was literally rewritten by U.S. Marines), the creation of dependency relationships, and the embedding of anti-American sentiment that would later fuel leftist movements.

2.3 CIA Interventions in Guatemala (1954), Cuba (1959–), and Chile (1973)

This section examines the Cold War intensification of hemispheric intervention, focusing on three paradigmatic cases. Guatemala (1954): The democratically elected president Jacobo Árbenz pursued land reform (Decree 900) that threatened United Fruit's vast holdings. The CIA organized a paramilitary invasion, a psychological warfare campaign, and a rebel radio station, overthrowing Árbenz and installing a military dictatorship that descended into a 36-year civil war with 200,000 dead. Cuba (1959–present): After Fidel Castro's revolution expropriated U.S.-owned properties, the CIA conducted the Bay of Pigs invasion (1961), launched Operation Mongoose (a terror campaign including assassination attempts), and imposed a trade embargo that continues today—the longest unilateral sanctions regime in modern history. Chile (1973): President Salvador Allende, a democratically elected socialist, faced CIA funding for opposition groups, strikes, and ultimately a military coup led by General Augusto Pinochet. The coup killed Allende and installed a dictatorship that murdered approximately 3,000 people. This section argues that these interventions, framed as anti-communist, were fundamentally about maintaining economic control and preventing any model of development independent of U.S. corporate interests.

Chapter 3: The Arsenal of Democracy Becomes the Arsenal of War

3.1 WWII: The Shift to Permanent Wartime Economy

This section traces how World War II transformed the American economy from a New Deal mixed economy into a permanent war economy. Before Pearl Harbor, President Franklin Roosevelt had already begun converting civilian industries to military production, creating the "arsenal of democracy." The war's end did not bring demobilization of the industrial base; instead, the National Security Act of 1947 created the Department of Defense, the National Security Council, and the Central Intelligence Agency—institutions designed for permanent Cold War. The section presents data on military spending as a percentage of GDP: from 4 percent pre-war to 38 percent at the war's peak, stabilizing at 7-15 percent for the remainder of the 20th century. The political economy of Congressional districts dependent on defense contracts is introduced as a structural driver of militarism. The section argues that World War II, rather than a one-time emergency, habituated the United States to war as normal governance.

3.2 The Atomic Monopoly and Hiroshima-Nagasaki

This section examines the atomic bombings of Hiroshima (August 6, 1945) and Nagasaki (August 9, 1945) not primarily as the final act of World War II but as the first act of the Cold War. Drawing on revisionist historiography (Gar Alperovitz, etc.), the section argues that Japan was already seeking surrender before the bombs were dropped, with the sole condition being the preservation of the emperor (a condition the United States ultimately accepted anyway). The bombings are reinterpreted as a demonstration of power directed less at Tokyo than at Moscow—a signal that the United States would dominate the postwar order. The section documents the human toll: 140,000 dead in Hiroshima by year's end (including radiation effects), 70,000 in Nagasaki, with thousands more dying in subsequent years from radiation illness. The moral arguments for and against the bombings are presented, with the conclusion that even on utilitarian terms (saving lives by avoiding invasion), the bombings fail justification given Japan's imminent surrender. The atomic monopoly, the section argues, established a template for absolute American military supremacy that would prove impossible to relinquish.

3.3 From Isolationism to Global Military Reach

The final section of Chapter 3 traces the ideological transformation from American isolationism (a tradition stretching from George Washington's Farewell Address through the interwar period) to global interventionism. Key turning points include the Lend-Lease Act (1941), which ended nominal neutrality; the Truman Doctrine (1947), which committed the United States to "support free peoples resisting subjugation"—a blank check for intervention anywhere; and the Korean War (1950-1953), which transformed NATO from a defensive alliance into a standing army. The section documents the explosive growth of overseas basing: from zero permanent overseas bases before World War II to 30,000 such bases (including temporary wartime facilities) by 1945, consolidating to approximately 800 permanent bases by the Cold War's end. The section concludes by framing the transition as not merely strategic but ontological: the United States had redefined itself from a republic that sometimes fought to an empire that is always prepared to fight.

Part II: The Cold War – Institutionalizing Global Conflict

Chapter 4: The Bipolar Prison

4.1 NATO, SEATO, and the Militarization of Alliances

This section analyzes the alliance systems created between 1949 and 1955 as mechanisms that entrenched rather than resolved the Cold War divide. The North Atlantic Treaty Organization (NATO, 1949) is examined not as a purely defensive response to Soviet aggression—a narrative complicated by the fact that the Soviet Union had demobilized from 11 million to 3 million troops after WWII while the United States maintained global force projection—but as an instrument for containing not only the Soviet Union but also European neutralism and decolonization movements. The Southeast Asia Treaty Organization (SEATO, 1954) extended the alliance framework to Asia, formally entangling the United States in Indochina. The section documents how these alliances locked member states into American-defined security frameworks, requiring basing rights, intelligence sharing, and coordinated militarization. The Central Treaty Organization (CENTO) in the Middle East is also covered. The argument is that alliance militarization created a self-reinforcing cycle: alliances required threats to justify their existence, which required interpreting every leftist movement as Soviet proxy, which produced interventions that created anti-American resentment, which became new threats.

4.2 Korea (1950–1953): The First Proxy War

This section presents the Korean War as the template for Cold War limited war—a conflict fought indirectly between superpowers, on someone else's territory, with catastrophic civilian consequences but without direct superpower confrontation (except for Chinese intervention). The war's origins are traced to the 1945 division of Korea at the 38th parallel, accepted by the Soviet Union (which had declared war on Japan in August 1945) and the United States. Elections were held only in the South under UN supervision, creating the Republic of Korea (Syngman Rhee), while the North established the Democratic People's Republic of Korea (Kim Il-sung). North Korea's June 25, 1950 invasion is acknowledged as the immediate cause of fighting, but the section contextualizes this within two years of border clashes and Rhee's own stated desire to invade the North. The UN Security Council's authorization of force (Resolution 82) was only possible because the Soviet Union was boycotting the Council over China's representation—a procedural accident with enormous consequences. The section documents the war's conduct: the Inchon landing, the drive to the Yalu River (which provoked Chinese intervention), the stalemate around the 38th parallel, and the devastating civilian toll—approximately 2.5 million dead, mostly Korean civilians, plus 1 million homes destroyed, including the near-total destruction of Pyongyang by aerial bombing. The armistice (signed July 27, 1953) never became a peace treaty, leaving the Korean Peninsula technically at war for over 70 years—a permanent American military presence (28,500 troops) and a divided nation.

4.3 Vietnam (1955–1975): Total War Without Declaration

This extended section examines the Vietnam War as the culminating catastrophe of Cold War interventionist logic. It begins with the First Indochina War (1946–1954), during which the United States funded 80 percent of French war costs despite advocating for decolonization elsewhere—because the Viet Minh were communist-led. The Geneva Accords (1954) temporarily divided Vietnam at the 17th parallel with elections scheduled for 1956 to reunify the country. When elections appeared likely to be won by Ho Chi Minh (the popular nationalist leader who had defeated the French), the United States and South Vietnamese Prime Minister Ngo Dinh Diem refused to hold them. From 1955 to 1965, the U.S. escalated from military advisors (the Military Assistance Advisory Group) to covert operations, including the Phoenix Program (targeted assassination of Viet Cong cadre) and the Gulf of Tonkin incident (1964), in which an alleged—and likely fabricated—attack on a U.S. destroyer was used to secure Congressional authorization for open warfare (the Gulf of Tonkin Resolution). The section documents the conduct of the war: Operation Rolling Thunder (the sustained bombing campaign against North Vietnam, 1965–1968), the use of Agent Orange and other chemical defoliants (contaminating 3 million hectares and causing generations of birth defects), the My Lai Massacre (1968, 500 unarmed civilians killed), and the secret bombing of Cambodia (Operation Menu, 1969–1970), which destabilized Cambodia and enabled the Khmer Rouge's rise. The human toll is detailed: 1.3 to 4 million Vietnamese, Lao, and Cambodian civilians dead, 58,000 American military dead, and 2 million Southeast Asian refugees. The war's conclusion—the Fall of Saigon (April 30, 1975)—is presented not as a defeat but as a necessary end to a war that the United States could not win because the premises for fighting were false. The War Powers Act (1973), passed over President Nixon's veto, is discussed as a failed attempt to constrain presidential war-making authority.

Chapter 5: Covert Warfare and Regime Change

5.1 Iran (1953) and the Overthrow of Mossadegh

This section provides a detailed account of the CIA's first successful regime change operation (TPAJAX Project). Prime Minister Mohammad Mossadegh had nationalized the Anglo-Iranian Oil Company (later BP), which had controlled Iranian oil since 1913. The British government requested American assistance; the CIA, directed by Kermit Roosevelt Jr., organized protests, bribed politicians, and spread propaganda depicting Mossadegh as a communist ally (despite his anti-communist stance). The coup of August 19, 1953 reinstalled the monarch, Shah Mohammad Reza Pahlavi, who ruled as a U.S.-backed dictator for 26 years. The section traces long-term consequences: the Shah's secret police (SAVAK), trained by the CIA, tortured and killed thousands; the 1979 Iranian Revolution, which overthrew the Shah; the hostage crisis; and the resulting enmity that shapes Middle East geopolitics to this day. The section argues that no single American intervention more directly caused its own later "blowback"—the term CIA coined for such unintended consequences.

5.2 Indonesia (1965) and the Mass Killings

This section examines an often-overlooked mass atrocity enabled by American covert action. President Sukarno had pursued a non-aligned foreign policy, accepting aid from both the Soviet Union and the United States while maintaining independence from both. He also cultivated a large Communist Party (PKI), the largest non-ruling communist party in the world. When a failed coup (allegedly by PKI elements, though the evidence remains contested) killed six generals, General Suharto seized power and, with CIA-supplied lists of PKI members, initiated a purge that killed an estimated 500,000 to 1 million alleged communists and their families, including ethnic Chinese Indonesians. The section documents the U.S. role: while not directly conducting killings, the CIA provided operational support, communications equipment, and intelligence, while the U.S. government publicly praised the killings as "the beginning of sanity" (the U.S. ambassador's words). Suharto's subsequent 31-year dictatorship (which included the 1975 invasion of East Timor, another atrocity with U.S. weapons and diplomatic cover) is presented as a direct outcome of American willingness to accept mass murder in exchange for favorable investment climate and anti-communist alignment.

5.3 Afghanistan (1979–1989): Arming the Mujahideen

This section analyzes the largest CIA covert operation in history: arming and training the Afghan mujahideen following the Soviet invasion of Afghanistan (December 1979). Operation Cyclone channeled approximately \$3 billion (in 1980s dollars) through Pakistan's Inter-Services Intelligence (ISI) to a diverse array of mujahideen factions. The section documents the consequences: the weaponry (including Stinger anti-aircraft missiles) ultimately contributed to the Soviet withdrawal (1988–1989), but the same fighters, networks, and weapons later became Al-Qaeda, the Taliban, and other extremist groups that would turn against the United States. The section highlights the specific role of Osama bin Laden, whose services the CIA engaged for logistics and recruitment, and the decision to funnel resources disproportionately to Islamist factions (Gulbuddin Hekmatyar, who used U.S. weapons to target other mujahideen groups) rather than nationalist ones. The long-term "blowback" includes 9/11, the subsequent War on Terror, and the enduring instability of Afghanistan and Pakistan. The section concludes that Afghanistan represents the most dramatic demonstration of the Law of Unintended Consequences in modern American foreign policy.

Chapter 6: The Nuclear Sword of Damocles

6.1 MAD Doctrine and the Arms Race

This section explains the doctrine of Mutually Assured Destruction (MAD) and its implications for global peace. Under MAD, the superpowers deliberately built arsenals capable of destroying each other several times over, on the theory that certainty of retaliation would prevent first strikes. The section traces the arms race's escalation: from the U.S. atomic monopoly (1945–1949), to Soviet acquisition of the bomb (1949), to the hydrogen bomb (1952, U.S.; 1955, USSR), to intercontinental ballistic missiles (ICBMs, late 1950s), to multiple independently targetable reentry vehicles (MIRVs, 1970s). The section argues that while MAD did prevent direct superpower war, it created "war by proxy" as a necessary outlet for competition. More fundamentally, MAD held the entire planet hostage to a single failure of command and control—a risk that became more acute as nuclear proliferation spread beyond the two original superpowers. The psychological effects of living under constant annihilation threat (civil defense drills, fallout shelters, "nuclear anxiety" as a psychiatric diagnosis) are also documented.

6.2 Cuban Missile Crisis – The World's Closest Call

This section provides a minute-by-minute reconstruction of the October 1962 crisis, drawing on recently declassified tapes from ExComm (the Executive Committee of the National Security Council). The crisis began when U.S. intelligence discovered Soviet medium-range ballistic missiles in Cuba, capable of striking most of the continental United States. The section presents the crisis as the point at which nuclear war came closest to occurring—with several potential flashpoints: the U.S. naval blockade ("quarantine"), the downing of a U-2 over Cuba (whose pilot, Major Rudolf Anderson, was the crisis's only direct fatality), and the Soviet submarine B-59, which nearly launched a nuclear torpedo after being depth-charged by U.S. destroyers (only the refusal of the submarine's second-in-command, Vasily Arkhipov, prevented launch). The resolution (Khrushchev agreeing to remove missiles in exchange for a secret U.S. commitment to remove Jupiter missiles from Turkey and a public pledge not to invade Cuba) is examined as a lesson in nuclear brinkmanship. The section argues that while the crisis was resolved peacefully, it demonstrated that MAD works only if both sides are rational and in control—and that the world was saved by luck as much as by statesmanship.

6.3 Nuclear Proliferation as a Result of U.S. Hegemony

The final section of Chapter 6 traces the causal link between American nuclear supremacy and the spread of nuclear weapons to other states. The section argues that the United States' refusal to pursue serious disarmament (despite obligations under the Nuclear Non-Proliferation Treaty, NPT) incentivized other states to seek their own arsenals. Case studies include:

- Israel: U.S. tacitly accepted Israel's undeclared nuclear program (Dimona, 1960s onward) despite official non-proliferation policy
- India: Pursued weapons after China's 1964 nuclear test (which itself was driven by U.S. nuclear threats during the Korean War)
- Pakistan: Developed weapons explicitly to counter India, with technology and centrifuge designs stolen from a Dutch company with U.S. oversight
- North Korea: Withdrew from the NPT in 2003, citing the U.S. list of "axis of evil" states (2002) and the Iraq War as evidence that only nuclear weapons deter American invasion

The section concludes that American nuclear policy—maintaining first-strike options, modernizing arsenals while demanding non-proliferation from others—has been the single greatest driver of the very proliferation it claims to oppose.

Part III: The Unipolar Era – America as Global Policeman (1991–2020)

Chapter 7: The Gulf War and the New World Order

7.1 Operation Desert Storm – Coalition or Command?

This section analyzes the 1991 Gulf War as the first major post-Cold War conflict and the model for "coalition warfare." Following Iraq's invasion of Kuwait (August 2, 1990), President George H.W. Bush assembled a UN-authorized coalition of 35 nations to expel Iraqi forces. The section examines the war's conduct (Operation Desert Storm, January 17–February 28, 1991): 100,000 sorties, 88,000 tons of bombs, the "highway of death" (retreating Iraqi forces destroyed on the Basra road). While technically a UN operation, the section argues that strategic command remained entirely American (General Norman Schwarzkopf), coalition partners were junior participants, and key decisions—including the decision to stop short of Baghdad and leave Saddam Hussein in power—were made unilaterally. The war's stated objectives (liberate Kuwait) were achieved, but the section raises questions about unstated objectives: the demonstration of American post-Cold War supremacy ("the New World Order") and the establishment of permanent U.S. military presence in Saudi Arabia—a presence that Osama bin Laden cited as justification for the 9/11 attacks.

7.2 The No-Fly Zones and Continued Bombing of Iraq (1991–2003)

This critical section documents the low-intensity war that continued between the Gulf War and the 2003 invasion: twelve years of near-continuous airstrikes against Iraq. The no-fly zones (northern zone established April 1991 to protect Kurds; southern zone established August 1992 to protect Shia) were not authorized by any UN resolution; they were unilaterally imposed by the United States, Britain, and France (France withdrew in 1998). The zones enabled regular bombing of Iraqi air defense systems, with strikes occurring on average every two to three days for twelve years. The section catalogs major bombing campaigns:

- Operation Provide Comfort II (1991–1996): northern zone
- Operation Southern Watch (1992–2003): southern zone
- Operation Vigilant Warrior (1994): massive deployment in response to Iraqi troop movements
- Operation Desert Strike (1996): cruise missile strikes after Iraqi incursion into Kurdish territory
- Operation Desert Fox (1998): four days of intensive bombing (600 sorties, 400 cruise missiles) following Iraq's expulsion of UN weapons inspectors

The section argues that these sustained strikes—never declared as war, never debated in Congress (except the War Powers Act's 60-day limit, which was circumvented by calling strikes "enforcement" rather than war)—amounted to a decade-long war by executive action alone.

7.3 Sanctions and Civilian Deaths – A Quiet War

This section examines the UN sanctions regime against Iraq (1990–2003) as a form of structural violence with catastrophic humanitarian consequences. UN Security Council Resolution 661 imposed comprehensive sanctions following Iraq's invasion of Kuwait; after the war, sanctions were maintained to compel Iraqi disarmament. The sanctions blocked food, medicine, and essential civilian goods—though exceptions were theoretically possible, the U.S. and U.K. blocked many contracts through the sanctions committee. The results, as documented by UNICEF, the World Health Organization, and the UN Food and Agriculture Organization, include:

- 500,000 excess child deaths (under age 5) between 1991 and 1998
- Widespread malnutrition: from 4 percent to 25 percent of children chronically malnourished
- Collapse of water treatment infrastructure: increased rates of typhoid, cholera, and hepatitis
- Destruction of the Iraqi middle class and civil society

The section notes that Madeleine Albright (U.S. Ambassador to the UN, later Secretary of State) was asked on 60 Minutes in 1996 whether half a million dead children was "worth it." She answered, "I think this is a very hard choice, but the price—we think the price is worth it." The section argues that sanctions killing civilians is legally and morally indistinguishable from bombing killing civilians; the only difference is that bombing kills immediately while sanctions kill slowly. The sanctions regime, the section concludes, was a quiet war of attrition that killed more Iraqis than all the bombing campaigns combined.

Chapter 8: The War on Terror – Permanent Insecurity

8.1 Afghanistan (2001–2021): 20 Years of Occupation

This section provides a comprehensive accounting of the United States' longest war. Following the September 11, 2001 attacks, the U.S. demanded that the Taliban government of Afghanistan hand over Osama bin Laden; the Taliban requested evidence of his involvement (the U.S. had not yet released any evidence) and suggested trying him in an Islamic court. The U.S. refused and launched Operation Enduring Freedom on October 7, 2001. The initial invasion quickly toppled the Taliban (December 2001), but the war then shifted to counterinsurgency, lasting 20 years through three presidencies (Bush, Obama, Trump, Biden). The section documents:

- Troop levels: Peak of 100,000 U.S. troops (2010–2012) plus 40,000 from NATO allies
- Civilian casualties: Approximately 46,000 Afghan civilians killed (directly by war-related violence), 70,000 injured; estimates rise to 150,000+ including indirect deaths (disease, malnutrition from war disruption)
- Military deaths: 2,461 U.S. military personnel, 3,836 U.S. contractors, 1,144 allied troops, 66,000+ Afghan military and police
- Financial cost: \$2.3 trillion (including long-term veteran care costs, which will continue for decades)
- Displacement: 2.7 million Afghans internally displaced, 2.5 million refugees (primarily in Pakistan and Iran)

The section examines the war's conduct: night raids (which the UN documented as a primary driver of civilian casualties and popular resentment), drone strikes (including the 2021 strike that killed an aid worker and seven children—later admitted as a "tragic mistake"), and the infamous Battle of Kamdesh (2009, 8 Americans killed, the deadliest engagement of the war). The August 2021 withdrawal and the fall of Kabul (in which the Taliban retook the country in days rather than the months or years predicted by U.S. intelligence) is analyzed as the war's final verdict: after 20 years of occupation, \$2.3 trillion, and thousands of lives, the Taliban rule Afghanistan unchanged from 2001. The section argues that the war was unwinnable not due to tactical failures but because occupation of a hostile rural society by a foreign power with incompatible culture and objectives is structurally impossible.

8.2 Iraq (2003): The False WMD Pretext and De-Ba'athification

This section examines the 2003 invasion of Iraq as the most consequential foreign policy disaster of the 21st century. The invasion, authorized by Congress in October 2002 (the Authorization for Use of Military Force Against Iraq Resolution), rested on three claims by the Bush administration:

1. Iraq possessed weapons of mass destruction (WMDs) that posed an imminent threat
2. Iraq had operational ties to Al-Qaeda
3. Iraq had attempted to purchase yellowcake uranium from Niger

All three claims were false, known to be false at the time (as later documented by the Senate Intelligence Committee and the 9/11 Commission), and deliberately presented as true through the "stovepiping" of raw intelligence (bypassing normal analysis) and the creation of the Office of Special Plans (a parallel intelligence assessment unit run by Pentagon hawks). The section documents the invasion's conduct (Operation Iraqi Freedom, March 20–May 1, 2003) and the disastrous post-invasion decisions, particularly:

- De-Ba'athification (Order 1): The complete purging of Ba'ath Party members from government, including teachers, engineers, and civil servants. This removed the entire administrative class, leaving no one to run hospitals, schools, or water treatment plants—and provided the newly jobless Sunni Arab elite with incentives to join the insurgency.

- Disbanding the Iraqi Army (Order 2): The dismissal of the entire 350,000–400,000 Iraqi military, without pay or pensions. Hundreds of thousands of trained soldiers with access to weapons caches became unemployed and angry—the ideal recruiting pool for insurgent groups, including what would become ISIS.

The section documents the human toll: 200,000–300,000 Iraqi civilians killed (estimates vary, with the Iraq Family Health Survey at 151,000 and the Lancet at 650,000 as the extremes), 4.6 million displaced, 4,500 U.S. military dead, 32,000 U.S. wounded. The section concludes that the Iraq War, based on lies and incompetently managed, destroyed a functional state, empowered Iran (Iraq's Shia majority government is closely aligned with Tehran), and created the conditions for the rise of ISIS—which took control of Mosul in 2014 and required another American war to defeat.

8.3 Drone Wars, Black Sites, and Extrajudicial Killing

This final section of Chapter 8 examines the infrastructure of the War on Terror that operated outside traditional legal frameworks. Drone warfare (particularly under the Obama administration, which conducted 563 strikes compared to Bush's 57) is analyzed as a technology that lowers the threshold for killing because it entails no risk to American pilots. The section documents "signature strikes" (attacks based on behavior patterns—"military-age males" gathering—rather than positive identification), "double-tap" strikes (attacking first responders who arrive at a previous strike site), and civilian casualties (the Bureau of Investigative Journalism estimates 6,000–10,000 civilians killed in Pakistan, Yemen, and Somalia alone). Black sites (secret prisons in countries including Poland, Romania, Thailand, and Diego Garcia) are examined for their use of "enhanced interrogation techniques"—torture, including waterboarding (simulated drowning), sleep deprivation, stress positions, and rectal rehydration. The Senate Intelligence Committee's 2014 report (the "Torture Report") is cited extensively, documenting that the CIA lied about the effectiveness of torture (no actionable intelligence was obtained that could not have been obtained by other means), lied to the White House, and lied to Congress. Extrajudicial killing includes the killing of Anwar al-Awlaki (a U.S. citizen in Yemen, killed by drone strike in 2011 without charge or trial) and his 16-year-old son (killed two weeks later in a separate strike). The section argues that the War on Terror normalized the assumption that the president has the authority to kill any person anywhere on earth designated an enemy—an assumption with no statutory basis and no meaningful oversight.

Chapter 9: The Rise of the Interventionist Doctrine

9.1 Kosovo (1999): Humanitarian War or Strategic Expansion?

This section analyzes the NATO bombing campaign against Yugoslavia (March 24–June 10, 1999) as the first war fought explicitly under a "humanitarian intervention" doctrine. The immediate cause was the Serbian campaign of ethnic cleansing against Kosovo Albanians (approximately 800,000 displaced, 10,000 killed). NATO's intervention, authorized by no UN Security Council resolution (Russia and China would have vetoed), consisted of 78 days of airstrikes against Yugoslav military and infrastructure targets. The section examines the consequences: Serbian forces withdrew, Kosovo Albanians returned, and Kosovo eventually declared independence (2008, recognized by the U.S. and most NATO states but not by Russia or China). The section raises critical questions: Was intervention genuinely humanitarian, or did it serve NATO expansion's strategic interests (including the first out-of-area operation for an alliance designed for European defense)? Did the bombing campaign itself violate the UN Charter's prohibition on the use of force except in self-defense or with Security Council authorization? The "responsibility to protect" (R2P) doctrine, later adopted by the UN (2005), emerged from the Kosovo precedent. The section argues that while Kosovo may have been a morally justifiable intervention (a "lesser evil"), it created a precedent for humanitarian war that would later be invoked to justify the Iraq War—a catastrophic misapplication.

9.2 Libya (2011): Regime Change and State Collapse

This section examines the 2011 NATO intervention in Libya as a case study in the dangers of "humanitarian" regime change. During the Arab Spring, protests against Muammar Gaddafi's 42-year dictatorship were met with violent crackdowns. UN Security Council Resolution 1973 authorized a no-fly zone and "all necessary measures" to protect civilians. NATO (led by the U.S., France, and the U.K.) interpreted this as authority to provide air support to rebel forces—effectively fighting a proxy war on the rebels' side. The section documents the outcome: Gaddafi was captured and killed (October 20, 2011), but without his strongman rule, Libya collapsed into civil war between rival militias. The consequences include:

- 20,000+ Libyans killed between 2011 and 2020
- 400,000 internally displaced, 1 million+ in need of humanitarian assistance
- The rise of ISIS in Libya (2015–2016, controlling 200+ miles of coastline)
- The reopening of the trans-Mediterranean migrant route, with thousands drowning
- The slave markets documented by CNN (2017)

The section argues that Libya demonstrates the failure of humanitarian intervention when it is not accompanied by a genuine commitment to post-conflict reconstruction—a commitment the Obama administration (calling it "leading from behind") was unwilling to make. The intervention, initially supported by liberals, is now widely recognized as a disaster, with President Obama later calling failure to plan for the aftermath his "worst mistake."

9.3 Syria (2014–present): Proxy Warfare via ISIS and Rebels

This section examines the most complex of the post-9/11 interventions: the long-running war in Syria, which has killed an estimated 500,000+ people and displaced 13 million (half the prewar population). The section distinguishes between different phases and actors:

- Early phase (2011–2014): The U.S. initially avoided direct intervention, providing non-lethal support to "moderate rebels" (the CIA's Timber Sycamore program, 2013–2017). Meanwhile, Iran and Russia supported the Assad regime.
- Anti-ISIS phase (2014–2019): After ISIS captured Mosul (Iraq) and Raqqa (Syria), the U.S. launched Operation Inherent Resolve—airstrikes against ISIS that eventually killed thousands of civilians (Airwars estimates 8,000–13,000 documented civilian deaths from coalition airstrikes).
- Proxy escalation (2015–present): Russia's direct military intervention (September 2015) saved the Assad regime; the U.S. responded by arming the Syrian Democratic Forces (SDF, a Kurdish-led alliance). This put the U.S. in de facto alliance with the PKK (designated a terrorist organization by both the U.S. and Turkey), creating intense conflict with NATO ally Turkey.
- Trump withdrawal and resurgence (2018–2020): President Trump announced withdrawal in 2018, then partially reversed; the 2019 Turkish incursion into northern Syria (following Trump's green light) displaced 200,000.

The section documents specific atrocities in which U.S. policy was complicit: the 2017 Raqqa bombing (which the UN described as "the worst destruction of a city in modern times," comparable to Dresden or Hamburg), the 2018 Douma chemical attack (which the U.S. attributed to Assad, though doubts remain about attribution methodology), and the continuing humanitarian crisis. The section concludes that the Syrian war demonstrates the impossibility of "limited" intervention in a complex civil war: every weapon supplied, every airstrike conducted, and every alliance formed produces unanticipated consequences, prolongs the conflict, and increases civilian suffering.

Part IV: Structural Drivers of American Conflict

Chapter 10: The Military-Industrial Complex

10.1 Eisenhower's Warning and Its Fulfillment

This section begins with the full text of President Dwight D. Eisenhower's January 17, 1961 farewell address, in which he warned of "the military-industrial complex"—"the conjunction of an immense military establishment and a large arms industry." Eisenhower, a five-star general who commanded NATO, specifically warned against "the acquisition of unwarranted influence... sought by the military-industrial complex" and cautioned that "we must never let the weight of this combination endanger our liberties or democratic processes." The section traces how Eisenhower's warning has been fulfilled: military spending as a share of the federal budget (approximately 15-20 percent of discretionary spending, though when veterans' benefits and Homeland Security are included, the share rises to 50-60 percent of discretionary spending); the growth of defense contractors from small suppliers to multinational conglomerates; and the institutionalization of annual "must-pass" defense authorization bills that cannot be amended or filibustered without accusations of undermining troop support. The section argues that the military-industrial complex is not a conspiracy—no secret meetings are necessary—but a structural reality: jobs depend on military contracts, Congressional districts compete for bases and factories, and the resulting political economy makes disarmament almost impossible.

10.2 Top 10 Defense Contractors – Profiting from War

This section provides a detailed profile of the corporations that receive the largest share of the Pentagon's budget (approximately \$400 billion of the \$850+ billion annual defense budget goes to private contractors). Each profile includes annual defense revenue, major weapons systems, revolving door relationships, and controversies:

Rank	Company	Defense Revenue (2023)	Major Products
1	Lockheed Martin	\$67 billion	F-35 fighter, Javelin missiles, THAAD
2	Raytheon Technologies	\$40 billion	Patriot missiles, Tomahawk, radar systems
3	Boeing	\$34 billion	Fighter jets (F-15, F/A-18), bombers (B-52 modernization), drones
4	Northrop Grumman	\$33 billion	B-21 Raider bomber, Global Hawk drone, shipbuilding
5	General Dynamics	\$32 billion	Abrams tanks, submarines (Virginia-class), combat systems
6	BAE Systems (UK)	\$26 billion	Combat vehicles, electronics, ship repair
7	L3Harris	\$17 billion	Communications, electronic warfare, night vision
8	Leidos	\$14 billion	Defense IT, intelligence services
9	HII (formerly Huntington Ingalls)	\$10 billion	Aircraft carriers, submarines
10	Booz Allen Hamilton	\$8 billion	Defense consulting, cybersecurity

The section documents profit margins (typically 10-15 percent for weapons, higher for services), stock performance (defense stocks consistently outperform the S&P 500 during wartime and under Democratic and Republican administrations alike), and the mechanisms of profit-maximization (cost-plus contracts guarantee profits regardless of performance; the F-35 program, for example, has cost \$1.7 trillion for 2,500 aircraft—\$680 million per plane—and remains plagued by 800+ technical deficiencies). The section argues that the profit motive creates institutional pressure for permanent war: peace would be a business disaster.

10.3 Lobbying, Revolving Door Politics, and Think Tanks

This final section of Chapter 10 maps the influence networks that translate defense industry money into defense policy. Lobbying: The defense industry spends approximately \$100-150 million annually on direct lobbying (though this figure excludes campaign contributions, which are far larger). Top spenders include Lockheed Martin (\$16 million/year), Boeing (\$15 million), and Raytheon (\$12 million). The section documents the "revolving door" between the Pentagon and defense contractors:

- Secretary of Defense James Mattis (Trump) joined the board of General Dynamics after leaving
- Secretary of Defense Mark Esper (Trump) was a lobbyist for Raytheon before joining the administration
- General Dynamics' board includes former CIA Director Michael Hayden and former National Security Advisor James Jones
- The 2018 GAO report found that nearly 400 senior Pentagon officials had taken jobs with defense contractors within two years of leaving government

Think tanks provide the ideological infrastructure: the Center for Strategic and International Studies (CSIS, 50 percent funding from defense contractors), the American Enterprise Institute (AEI), the Atlantic Council (heavily funded by Lockheed, Raytheon, and Northrop), and the Heritage Foundation. These institutions employ former officials, produce "independent" reports recommending increased military spending, and provide speaking platforms for hawkish policymakers. The section concludes that the military-industrial complex is not an accidental byproduct of defense needs but a self-reproducing system in which profits, jobs, political power, and intellectual authority are aligned toward the single policy outcome of permanent military expansion.

Chapter 11: Economic Imperialism

11.1 The Petrodollar System – Oil, Dollars, and Military Bases

This section explains the relationship between the dollar's status as the world reserve currency, global oil trade, and American military power. In 1971, President Nixon ended the dollar's convertibility to gold (the "Nixon Shock"), moving the world to fiat currency. To maintain demand for dollars, the U.S. made a deal with Saudi Arabia (1974): Saudi Arabia would price oil exclusively in dollars and invest its dollar reserves in U.S. Treasuries; in exchange, the U.S. would provide military protection to Saudi Arabia (including the guarantee that enabled the House of Saud to survive the 1979 Iranian Revolution and the 1991 Gulf War). All OPEC nations eventually followed suit. The result is the "petrodollar system": every country needs dollars to buy oil, creating permanent demand for dollars, which allows the U.S. to run persistent trade deficits and finance military spending through debt (since other countries must hold dollars as reserves). The section argues that this system gives the U.S. "exorbitant privilege" (French President Valéry Giscard d'Estaing's phrase) but also creates structural pressure for military intervention: any country attempting to price oil in another currency (e.g., Saddam Hussein's switch to euros in 2000, Gaddafi's proposal for a gold-backed African dinar, Iran's oil bourse) faces regime change or war. The section concludes that the petrodollar is the hidden economic logic behind many interventions that appear to be about democracy or human rights.

11.2 Sanctions as Warfare (Iran, Russia, Venezuela, Cuba)

This section documents the expansion of economic sanctions from a diplomatic tool to an alternative form of warfare. The Treasury Department's Office of Foreign Assets Control (OFAC) administers 30+ active sanctions regimes covering 20+ countries. The section examines:

- Iran: Sanctions imposed since the 1979 hostage crisis, dramatically expanded after 2006 over the nuclear program. The 2012 sanctions (cutting Iran off from SWIFT, the global banking messaging system) caused the Iranian rial to lose 90 percent of its value, inflation to reach 40 percent, and the economy to contract by 18 percent—but did not change Iranian nuclear policy (negotiations succeeded only after sanctions were partially lifted in 2015, then reimposed when the U.S. withdrew from the JCPOA in 2018). The section documents humanitarian exemptions that in practice are nearly impossible to use: medicine and food are legally permitted but banks refuse to process payments due to fear of secondary sanctions.
- Russia: Following the 2014 annexation of Crimea and 2022 invasion of Ukraine, the U.S. imposed sanctions on Russian oligarchs, banks, and energy exports. The section examines effectiveness: while the Russian economy contracted sharply in 2022 (GDP - 2.1 percent), it rebounded to growth in 2023 and 2024 (IMF forecasts). More importantly, sanctions accelerated de-dollarization: Russia, China, Iran, and others are developing alternative payment systems (SPFS, CIPS, BRICS Pay) and trade in national currencies—potentially weakening the petrodollar system long-term.
- Venezuela: Sanctions imposed beginning 2017 targeting the Maduro government and oil exports. The documented effects include electricity blackouts (inability to import parts for the electrical grid), medicine shortages (the UN reported 40 percent of hospitals lacking basic medicines), and hyperinflation (1,000,000 percent at peak). Critics argue that sanctions exacerbate humanitarian crises while failing to achieve regime change (Maduro remains in power as of 2026).
- Cuba: The longest-standing sanctions regime (since 1960, codified in the Helms-Burton Act of 1996). The section documents the cumulative effect: estimated at \$1.3 trillion in economic damage. UN General Assembly resolutions condemning the embargo pass each year (185-2 in 2023, with only the U.S. and Israel voting against); the U.S. ignores them.

The section argues that sanctions are not a peaceful alternative to war but a form of war by other means, targeting civilian populations (who bear the primary burden) rather than regimes, with little evidence of effectiveness in achieving stated objectives.

11.3 World Bank, IMF, and Structural Adjustment as Control Mechanisms

This section examines the Bretton Woods institutions (International Monetary Fund and World Bank) as instruments of American economic power. While nominally international (the IMF has 190 member countries), both institutions are structured to give the United States effective veto power (16 percent voting share at the IMF, 15.5 percent at the World Bank, and 187 votes out of 635 at the Inter-American Development Bank). The section documents:

- Structural Adjustment Programs (SAPs): Loan conditions imposed on developing countries facing debt crises. Standard conditions include: austerity (cutting spending on health and education), privatization (selling state-owned enterprises—often to U.S. corporations), trade liberalization (opening markets to U.S. exports), and currency devaluation. Case studies include:
- Sub-Saharan Africa (1980s-1990s): SAPs coincided with the "lost decade" of development; per capita incomes fell, public health spending was halved, and debt burdens increased despite repayment.
- Argentina (1990s-2001): IMF-prescribed convertibility plan (1 peso = 1 dollar) led to overvaluation, capital flight, and the 2001 collapse (default on \$95 billion, the largest sovereign default to that date).
- Greece (2010-2015): The Troika (IMF, European Commission, ECB) imposed austerity that reduced Greek GDP by 25 percent, unemployment to 28 percent (60 percent youth), and has been described by subsequent IMF analysis as unnecessary and damaging.
- The "Washington Consensus": The set of 10 policy prescriptions promoted by the IMF, World Bank, and U.S. Treasury that defined development orthodoxy from 1989 to the early 2000s. The section argues that the Consensus systematically favored U.S. corporate interests over local development priorities, locking countries into commodity-export economies and preventing industrialization.

The section concludes that the Bretton Woods institutions function as mechanisms of "neocolonialism"—controlling developing economies through debt and conditionality rather than direct political rule, but with comparable effects on sovereignty and living standards.

Chapter 12: The Doctrine of Full Spectrum Dominance

12.1 800+ Overseas Military Bases – A Global Archipelago

This section maps the geography of American military power. The Department of Defense's official Base Structure Report lists approximately 800 overseas sites (ranging from large bases like Ramstein Air Base in Germany—50,000 personnel—to small cooperative security locations with no permanent personnel). The section categorizes basing by region:

- Europe: 200+ sites (primarily Germany, Italy, UK, Turkey). Legacy of the Cold War, now oriented toward Russia and Middle East projection.
- East Asia: 200+ sites (Japan: 120 sites including Okinawa's 32 bases on 15 percent of the island; South Korea: 73 sites including Camp Humphreys, the largest overseas base). Oriented toward China and North Korea.
- Middle East: 100+ sites (Qatar: Al Udeid Air Base, forward headquarters of CENTCOM; Bahrain: Naval Support Activity, headquarters of the Fifth Fleet; UAE: Al Dhafra Air Base; Kuwait: Camp Arifjan; Iraq/Syria: 12+ smaller sites). Oriented toward Iran and counterterrorism.
- Africa: 30+ sites (Camp Lemonnier in Djibouti, the only official "base" but numerous smaller facilities across the Sahel). AFRICOM (established 2007) formalized African basing.
- Latin America: Limited formal basing after Cold War base closings but numerous "cooperative security locations" (e.g., Comalapa Air Base in El Salvador, Manta in Ecuador until 2009, Palanquero in Colombia for "counter-narcotics").
- Indo-Pacific: 50+ sites (Guam: Andersen Air Force Base and Naval Base Guam; Australia: rotational presence at Darwin; Singapore: naval logistics; Diego Garcia: major naval support facility, leased from UK against Chagosian wishes).

The section examines the strategic function of basing: power projection (most of the world is within 7 days of a U.S. carrier strike group, hours of a bomber from Guam or Qatar), intelligence collection, and the ability to respond to any crisis anywhere. Critics argue that bases create permanent targets (the 1983 Beirut barracks bombing, 1996 Khobar Towers, 2012 Benghazi) and generate local resentment that fuels insurgencies. The section concludes that the base network constitutes an empire of bases—a global archipelago of American sovereignty—that makes peace impossible because it normalizes American military presence everywhere.

12.2 Naval Supremacy – Controlling the World's Sea Lanes

This section examines the U.S. Navy's capacity to control the world's oceans. Key statistics:

- Fleet size: 291 deployable battle force ships (2025), including 11 aircraft carriers (the rest of the world has 22 total, with China second at 3). The U.S. Navy's tonnage exceeds the next 13 navies combined.
- Carrier strike groups: Each Nimitz- or Ford-class carrier (100,000 tons, 5,000 crew, 70+ aircraft) is more powerful than most national air forces. The U.S. maintains 6-8 carrier strike groups at sea at any time, with 2-3 in the Western Pacific alone.
- Submarines: 68 nuclear-powered submarines (50 attack, 14 ballistic missile, 4 guided missile). The Ohio-class SSBNs carry 20 Trident II D5 missiles each, with up to 12 independently targetable warheads per missile—a single submarine can destroy 240 cities.
- Maritime chokepoints: The Navy maintains the ability to interdict or control the Strait of Hormuz (20 percent of global oil transit), the Malacca Strait (30 percent of global trade), the Suez Canal, and the Panama Canal.

The section argues that global naval supremacy serves two functions: global commons protection (preventing piracy, maintaining freedom of navigation—functions that benefit all states) and global power projection (the ability to project force anywhere on earth, which intimidates potential rivals and enforces the global economic order). The section documents specific confrontations where naval power was used to assert dominance: the 1995-1996 Taiwan Strait crisis (carrier groups deployed after Chinese missile tests), the 2016 South China Sea arbitration (carrier strike groups sailed within 12 nautical miles of Chinese-occupied islands), and the 2018-2022 Freedom of Navigation Operations in the Black Sea (transits that Russia treats as provocations). The section concludes that naval supremacy, like overseas basing, normalizes American military presence across 70 percent of the earth's surface—the oceans—with no international oversight or permission required.

12.3 Space Force, Cyber Command, and the Weaponization of Technology

This final section examines the extension of American military supremacy into new domains. The Space Force (established December 20, 2019) is the first new military service since the Air Force (1947). Its mission includes protecting U.S. satellites (GPS, communications, surveillance), denying space to adversaries (via anti-satellite weapons, jamming), and eventually space-based weapons. The section documents:

- The 2007 Chinese anti-satellite test (destroying a weather satellite at 800 km altitude, creating 3,000+ pieces of debris)
- The 2019 Russian anti-satellite test
- U.S. Space Command's "Space Warfighting Readiness" exercises (conducted 2020-2024)
- The Outer Space Treaty (1967), which prohibits weapons of mass destruction in orbit but does not prohibit conventional space weapons

Cyber Command (USCYBERCOM) conducts offensive cyber operations. The section documents known operations:

- Olympic Games (2006-2010): U.S. and Israel inserted the Stuxnet worm into Iranian nuclear centrifuges, destroying 1,000+ centrifuges at Natanz. Widely considered the first act of cyber warfare (though no formal declaration of war existed).
- Russian power grid infiltration (2019): The New York Times reported that the U.S. had inserted malware into Russia's power grid, potentially providing the ability to shut it down.
- Various kinetic-cyber operations: Drone strikes initiated by cyber intrusion (hacking into a target's phone to geolocate them), campaign disruptions (alleged interference in Russian elections, though never acknowledged).

The section concludes that the weaponization of space and cyberspace removes the last sanctuaries from war. In a world of space-based weapons and cyber capabilities, every satellite is a target, every computer network is a battlefield, and there is no way to opt out. The doctrine of Full Spectrum Dominance—dominating land, sea, air, space, and cyberspace simultaneously—is the logical endpoint of American militarism: a world in which the United States is capable of fighting and winning a war anywhere, any time, against any combination of adversaries. But the existence of that capability, the section concludes, is itself a provocation and an engine of conflict.

Part V: Case Studies – Where America Goes, Peace Leaves

Case Study A: The Korean Peninsula

This case study examines the 70+ year division of Korea as a direct and ongoing consequence of American military policy. The section begins with the 1945 division, agreed upon by two colonels working late at night with no Korean input. The failure to hold unified elections (1948), the creation of separate states, and the 1950-1953 war are summarized from Chapter 4. The focus is on the post-armistice period:

Perpetual division: The Demilitarized Zone (DMZ), 2.5 miles wide and 160 miles long, remains the most heavily fortified border on earth—2 million landmines, 1 million troops facing each other, with the U.S. maintaining 28,500 troops and tactical nuclear weapons (until 1991) in the South.

Annual military drills: The U.S.-South Korea "Foal Eagle" and "Key Resolve" exercises involve tens of thousands of troops, carrier strike groups, and nuclear-capable bombers. North Korea responds with missile tests and artillery drills; each cycle of escalation brings the peninsula closer to accidental war (as in 1976 (axe murder incident), 2010 (shelling of Yeonpyeong Island), and 2017 (the "fire and fury" exchange between Trump and Kim Jong Un)).

The nuclear dimension: North Korea's nuclear program (first test 2006, hydrogen bomb 2017) is presented as a rational response to perceived threat: having witnessed the fates of Iraq (no WMDs, invaded anyway) and Libya (gave up nuclear program, NATO regime change), North Korean leaders concluded that only nuclear weapons guarantee regime survival. The section documents the failure of six-party talks, the 2018 Singapore summit (which produced no concrete agreement), and the 2019 Hanoi summit collapse.

Human cost of division: 10 million families separated by the DMZ with no communication for 70 years; the humanitarian crisis in North Korea (famine 1995-1997 killed an estimated 500,000-3 million) exacerbated by sanctions that block food aid; the South Korean anti-war movement (which has grown as younger generations reject the "absorption" unification model).

The case study concludes that the Korean Peninsula is the longest-running American-caused conflict—a war that never ended, kept alive by U.S. military presence and the structural inability to sign a peace treaty (which would require withdrawing U.S. troops, which no administration will do).

Case Study B: The Israeli-Palestinian Conflict

This case study examines the role of American policy in perpetuating the Israeli-Palestinian conflict, the world's most intractable. The section begins with the U.S. recognition of Israel (1948, within 11 minutes of declaration) and tracks the evolution of the "special relationship":

Military aid: The U.S. has provided Israel with approximately \$150 billion (inflation-adjusted) in military aid since 1949, currently \$3.8 billion annually (10-year Memorandum of Understanding signed 2016). This aid makes Israel the largest cumulative recipient of U.S. foreign aid; per capita, it is by far the largest. The aid comes with no conditions regarding human rights or settlement policy.

UN Security Council vetoes: The U.S. has vetoed 45+ UNSC resolutions critical of Israel (as of 2024), including resolutions condemning settlement construction, annexation of East Jerusalem, the 2006 Lebanon War, the 2008-2009 Gaza War (Operation Cast Lead), the 2014 Gaza War (Operation Protective Edge), and the 2023-2024 Gaza war. The section argues that the veto has shielded Israel from diplomatic consequences, enabling continued settlement expansion and military operations.

The settlement project: The 1967 occupation of the West Bank, East Jerusalem, Gaza, Golan Heights, and Sinai (returned to Egypt 1982) has been followed by settlement construction that the International Court of Justice (2004) and successive UN resolutions have declared illegal. Settler population: 0 in 1967, 500,000+ today (including East Jerusalem). The section documents U.S. policy: every administration has officially opposed settlements, but none has imposed consequences (e.g., deducting settlement-related spending from aid). The Trump administration (2019) declared that settlements are not inconsistent with international law—reversing 40 years of official policy.

The Oslo process and its failure: The 1993 Oslo Accords created the Palestinian Authority and promised a two-state solution within five years. The section argues that the process failed because the U.S., as the sole mediator, systematically favored Israeli positions: on borders (U.S. accepted Israeli annexation of settlement blocs), on Jerusalem (U.S. recognized it as Israel's capital in 2018, moving the embassy from Tel Aviv), on refugees (U.S. defunded UNRWA, the Palestinian refugee agency), and on security (Palestinian state would be demilitarized and surrounded by Israeli forces). The 2023-2024 Gaza war, which killed 40,000+ Palestinians (as of mid-2024), is examined as the direct outcome of this failure: a permanent conflict sustained by unconditional American military, diplomatic, and financial support.

The case study concludes that the Israeli-Palestinian conflict is not a "tragedy" with both sides equally culpable but a structurally asymmetrical conflict in which one party has a superpower patron and the other does not. As long as the U.S. provides unconditional support, there will be no pressure for a just resolution.

Case Study C: Yemen

This case study examines the 2015-present Yemen civil war, the world's worst humanitarian crisis (according to the UN, 2021: 377,000 dead from direct war and indirect causes). The section focuses on the U.S. role, which is often omitted from American news coverage:

The Houthi movement (Ansar Allah): A Zaydi Shia revivalist movement that emerged in the 1990s, took control of Sana'a (the capital) in 2014, and ousted the internationally recognized government (backed by Saudi Arabia and the UAE).

The Saudi-led coalition: In March 2015, Saudi Arabia formed a coalition of nine Arab states to intervene against the Houthis. The coalition received from the United States:

- Weapons: Billions in arms sales (aircraft, precision-guided munitions, bombs) approved by the U.S. government
- Intelligence: Target selection assistance, aerial refueling (U.S. KC-135 and KC-10 tankers refuel Saudi and UAE jets mid-mission)
- Logistics: Maintenance of coalition aircraft, training of coalition forces
- Diplomatic cover: UNSC resolutions that condemned Houthis while ignoring coalition violations of international law

The conduct of the war: The coalition's air campaign deliberately bombed civilian infrastructure (the UN documented 60+ verified strikes on hospitals, schools, markets, and wedding parties). Specific attacks include:

- August 2015: Airstrike on a Sana'a dairy factory killed 30 civilians
- October 2016: Airstrike on a funeral hall in Sana'a killed 155, wounded 500+
- August 2018: Airstrike on a school bus killed 40 boys (ages 6-11)
- November 2021: Airstrike on a detention center killed 70+

The blockade: The coalition imposed a naval and air blockade on Houthi-controlled ports (including Hodeidah, which handled 80 percent of humanitarian imports). The blockade prevented food, medicine, and fuel from entering, causing:

- Acute malnutrition in 2 million+ children
- Cholera outbreak (2016-2021): 2.5 million cases, 4,000+ deaths
- Famine conditions in 2021 (400,000 children under 5 at risk of death from malnutrition)

U.S. complicity: The section documents how the Obama, Trump, and Biden administrations each knew of and enabled these actions. The Obama administration (2015-2016) provided targeting assistance despite internal State Department and USAID warnings. The Trump administration (2017-2021) dramatically increased arms sales to Saudi Arabia (including a \$15 billion package in 2017) and vetoed a congressional resolution to end U.S. involvement (2019). The Biden administration (2021-present) announced an end to "offensive" support but continued weapons sales (including a \$650 million missile sale in 2023) and intelligence sharing. A 2024 ceasefire reduced violence, but the humanitarian crisis continues (20 million Yemenis need aid, 14 million in acute need).

The case study concludes that Yemen is a "textbook case" of American-enabled atrocity—not a war the U.S. started or directly fights, but a war the U.S. sustains for geopolitical reasons (countering Iranian influence) at the cost of hundreds of thousands of lives.

Case Study D: Ukraine-Russia War

This case study examines the 2022 Russian invasion of Ukraine in the context of the long-running U.S.-Russia confrontation. The section begins with the post-Cold War period and the question of NATO expansion:

NATO expansion history: 1999: Poland, Hungary, Czech Republic; 2004: Bulgaria, Estonia, Latvia, Lithuania, Romania, Slovakia, Slovenia; 2009: Albania, Croatia; 2017: Montenegro; 2020: North Macedonia. The section documents the 1990 "Baker-Gorbachev conversation" (Secretary of State James Baker told Gorbachev that NATO would expand "not one inch eastward")—an informal assurance that Russia treats as a broken promise. The section also notes that no senior Russian official threatened war over expansion until 2007 (Putin's Munich speech).

The 2014 Maidan Revolution and Crimea annexation: The section neutrally describes events: President Yanukovich's rejection of an EU association agreement (under Russian pressure); mass protests; the February 2014 shooting of protesters (100+ killed); Yanukovich's flight; the installation of a pro-Western government; Russia's annexation of Crimea (March 2014, following a referendum rejected by Ukraine and most of the world) and support for separatists in Donbas. The Minsk Agreements (2014, 2015) are documented as failed ceasefire agreements.

The 2022 invasion: Russia's full-scale invasion (February 24, 2022) is acknowledged as an act of aggression in violation of the UN Charter. The section then examines the U.S. response:

- Military aid: \$75+ billion (as of 2025) including HIMARS, artillery, air defense (Patriot, NASAMS), tanks (Abrams), F-16s, and intelligence support (real-time targeting data).
- Sanctions: Sweeping sanctions on Russian banks, oligarchs, and energy exports (though waivers for European energy continued into 2023).
- Proxy dynamic: The U.S. has stated that Ukraine must fight "for as long as it takes" but has ruled out direct intervention (no troops, no NATO-enforced no-fly zone). This is described as a "controlled proxy war"—avoiding direct U.S.-Russia confrontation while enabling Ukrainian resistance.

The consequences: The section documents the human toll (100,000+ Ukrainian military dead, 200,000+ wounded, 50,000+ Russian military dead (U.S. estimates), 30,000+ Ukrainian civilian dead, 10 million displaced) and the global economic impact (energy and food prices, grain blockade). The section also addresses the argument that the war could have been avoided: critics argue that neutral Ukraine (the Finnish model, in NATO only after joining the EU) was possible; supporters argue that Russia would have invaded regardless (the 2014 invasion precedent). The case study concludes without resolving this debate but notes that the U.S. promotion of NATO expansion without a credible security architecture for Russia contributed to the conditions that made war possible.

Case Study E: Latin America's Northern Triangle

This final case study examines Honduras, El Salvador, and Guatemala—the "Northern Triangle" of Central America—as a laboratory of American intervention and its long-term consequences. The section traces the cycle:

The Cold War interventions (recapped from Chapter 2): Guatemala 1954, El Salvador 1980s (U.S.-backed death squads killing 70,000+ civilians), Honduras 1980s (Contra supply base, CIA's "Operation TANGO" for training Nicaraguan Contras). These interventions destroyed democratic movements and created a political culture of impunity and violence.

Free trade and structural adjustment: The CAFTA-DR agreement (2005) opened Central American markets to U.S. exports (flooding local markets with subsidized corn, destroying small farmers) while protecting U.S. corporate investors (ISDS provisions, intellectual property rules favorable to pharmaceutical companies). The IMF and World Bank imposed privatization of utilities, labor flexibility (weakening unions), and austerity. The results: increased inequality (Gini coefficient 0.5+ in all three countries), growth of the informal economy (60-70 percent of employment), and the creation of a low-wage export assembly (maquila) sector that employs young women at \$3-5 per day.

The rise of maras (gangs): The U.S. deportations of MS-13 and Calle 18 members (beginning in the 1990s, accelerating after the 1996 Illegal Immigration Reform and Immigrant Responsibility Act) exported street gangs from Los Angeles to Central America. Deported gang members, who had been socialized in U.S. prisons (often in the country's most violent conditions), reconstituted gangs with American-style organization and weaponry. The gangs now control territory across the Northern Triangle, with homicide rates in the 2010s among the highest in the world (Honduras: 85 per 100,000 at peak, 10x the U.S. rate).

The migration crisis: The combination of violence, poverty, and corruption has driven 500,000+ Northern Triangle migrants annually to the U.S. border (2014-2024). U.S. policy responses have oscillated between detention/deportation (the Trump administration's Remain in Mexico policy) and managed processing (the Biden administration), but neither addresses root causes. The section documents U.S. aid to the region (\$4 billion under the Biden administration's "Root Causes" strategy), but notes that 80 percent of the aid is conditioned on migration enforcement (police training, border control) rather than economic development or anti-corruption.

The case study concludes that the Northern Triangle is a complete cycle of American-generated instability: intervention destroys democracy, trade agreements create poverty, deportations export gangs, and the resulting migration is treated as a security threat requiring more enforcement. The region is not "naturally" violent; it was made violent by U.S. policy, and U.S. policy continues to treat symptoms rather than causes.

Part VI: Counterarguments and Rebuttals

Chapter 13: "But Without America, Wouldn't There Be More War?"

This chapter addresses the most common objection to the book's thesis: the claim that American military power, for all its flaws, functions as a global stabilizer—that without the "Pax Americana," the world would return to the great power wars of the early 20th century.

13.1 European Peace Project – EU vs. NATO-led Stability

This section examines the claim that NATO has kept the peace in Europe since 1945. The rebuttal proceeds in three steps:

First, the European Union—not NATO—is the primary engine of European peace. The EU's origins in the European Coal and Steel Community (1951) created economic interdependence so deep that war between France and Germany became unthinkable. The single market, Schengen Area, and Erasmus Programme transformed European identity. NATO, meanwhile, fought a Cold War that could have gone hot at any moment and has fought wars in Bosnia, Kosovo, and (in alliance with the U.S.) Afghanistan and Libya.

Second, Europe was not at peace during the Cold War—it was divided by the Iron Curtain, with hundreds of thousands of troops facing each other across the Inner German Border. Peace was a function of bipolar stalemate, not American benevolence. The section notes that the most peaceful period in European history (1945-present) coincides with the period of American military dominance, but correlation is not causation; the same period also coincides with European integration, the spread of democracy, and nuclear deterrence.

Third, post-Cold War NATO expansion has actually increased European insecurity, provoking Russia and moving the dividing line eastward. The section cites the 1997 founding act of NATO-Russia relations (which Russia understood as a commitment not to deploy "substantial combat forces" in new member states) and the subsequent violation of that understanding (U.S. troops stationed in Poland and the Baltic states since 2017). The war in Ukraine is presented as the direct consequence of this dynamic.

13.2 China, Russia, and Regional Powers – Do they fill the void?

This section addresses the argument that if the U.S. reduced its global military footprint, China or Russia would become hegemonic aggressors. The rebuttal:

On China: China's military spending (approximately \$300 billion annually) is 30-40 percent of U.S. spending, and China has 2 overseas bases (Djibouti, with a second in Cambodia planned) compared to America's 800. China's foreign policy has been characterized by non-intervention (the Five Principles of Peaceful Coexistence) and economic statecraft (Belt and Road Initiative) rather than military intervention. The section acknowledges China's aggressive claims in the South China Sea and its treatment of Uyghurs in Xinjiang but argues that these are regional issues, not global expansion. More importantly, the section argues that a multipolar world does not require any single hegemon; China would be constrained by India, Japan, Russia, and a unified Europe.

On Russia: Russia's GDP (\$2.2 trillion) is smaller than Italy's; its military spending (\$86 billion) is 10 percent of the U.S. total. Russia is a declining power demographically and economically, incapable of global hegemony. Even in its "near abroad," Russia's invasion of Ukraine has backfired (strengthening NATO, unifying Europe against Russia, devastating the Russian economy). The section concludes that the "Russian threat" is vastly overstated by U.S. hawks who benefit from threat inflation.

On regional powers: The section argues that the most likely outcome of U.S. withdrawal is not Chinese or Russian hegemony but regional balances of power: a European security architecture led by Germany and France, an Asian balance between China, Japan, India, and Southeast Asian states, and a Middle East balance between Iran, Saudi Arabia, Turkey, and Israel. These regional systems would not be peaceful—they would have their own conflicts—but they would not be global wars, and they would not involve the United States subsidizing foreign militaries with American lives and treasure.

13.3 The Myth of the "Benevolent Hegemon"

This final section deconstructs the idea that the United States is a uniquely benign superpower. Drawing on the historical evidence presented in Parts I-III, the section argues that the "benevolent hegemon" narrative depends on:

- Selective memory: Remembering the Marshall Plan (1948-1952, \$13 billion in aid to Europe) while forgetting the contemporaneous interventions in Greece (1947-1949, supporting a monarchist government against communist insurgency) and Italy (1948, CIA funding to keep the Communist Party out of government)
- Forgetting the Third World: The benevolent hegemon narrative focuses on Europe and Japan (where U.S. policy was indeed reconstructionist) and ignores Latin America, Africa, and Asia, where U.S. policy was extractive and violent
- Conflating intentions with outcomes: Even assuming good intentions (debatable), the outcomes of U.S. interventions—Vietnam, Iraq, Libya, Yemen—are objectively catastrophic
- Ignoring alternatives: The section cites comparative evidence from countries that pursued independent foreign policies (e.g., Costa Rica, which abolished its military in 1949) and thrived without American protection

The section concludes that the "benevolent hegemon" is a myth that serves the interests of the military-industrial complex by legitimizing continued dominance. The empirical record shows that where America intervenes, peace departs; where America is absent, conflicts are smaller, shorter, and more often resolved by diplomacy.

Chapter 14: Is Peace Even Possible Under Any Superpower?

This chapter engages with the structural pessimism that underlies much realism in international relations: the view that great powers inevitably compete, and that the best one can hope for is managed competition rather than genuine peace.

14.1 Thucydides' Trap and Power Transition Theory

This section explains the two dominant theories of great power war. Thucydides' Trap (named after the historian who wrote the Peloponnesian War) holds that war becomes likely when a rising power challenges an established hegemon. The section documents historical examples (the Peloponnesian War, the Thirty Years' War, World War I, World War II) and applies the framework to U.S.-China relations. The question: is the trap inevitable? The section presents Graham Allison's work (2017) showing that of 16 historical cases of power transition, 12 ended in war—but 4 did not, suggesting that peace is possible with skillful statecraft.

Power transition theory (A.F.K. Organski) holds that war is most likely when a rising power's capabilities approach parity with the hegemon, and when the rising power is dissatisfied with the existing order. Applied to the present: China is rising, but is it dissatisfied? The section notes that China has benefited enormously from the existing global order (WTO accession, open markets) and has not proposed a fundamental alternative (Belt and Road supplements rather than replaces existing institutions). The implication: war is not inevitable, but it becomes more likely if the hegemon treats the rising power as an enemy.

14.2 The Multipolar Alternative

This section presents the case for multipolarity—a world with multiple centers of power rather than one or two. Advantages of multipolarity:

- No single point of failure: Unipolarity means that a single decision by a single president can plunge the world into war. Multipolarity diffuses decision-making.
- Balancing, not bandwagoning: In a multipolar system, states balance against any power that becomes too threatening (as European powers balanced against Napoleonic France, Kaiser's Germany, and Nazi Germany). In a unipolar system, states bandwagon with the hegemon (as most of the world has done with the U.S. since 1991).
- Regional solutions: A multipolar world would allow Europe to handle European security, Asia to handle Asian security, etc.—more appropriate and less escalatory than global interventionism.

The section acknowledges the risks of multipolarity: the 19th century Concert of Europe (1815-1914) kept great power peace for a century but ultimately failed in World War I. However, the section argues that the 19th century example is not predictive: modern economic interdependence, nuclear weapons, and international institutions create constraints that did not exist in 1914.

14.3 Short-term stabilization ≠ long-term peace

This final section distinguishes between two meanings of "peace." Negative peace (the absence of direct violence) is what the U.S. provides: suppressing conflicts through force, as a police officer suppresses a fight by arresting everyone. But this is not positive peace (the presence of conditions that make conflict unnecessary). The section argues that:

- Suppression without resolution merely postpones conflict (the lid will blow off when the suppressor weakens)
- The suppressor's presence is itself a cause of conflict (resentment, blowback)
- The suppressor has no incentive to resolve the conflict (since resolved conflicts would eliminate the rationale for suppression)

The section concludes with a metaphor: the United States is a global fire department that starts most of the fires it fights, then charges for its services, and has no interest in fireproofing. Short-term stabilization (negative peace) is not the same as long-term peace (positive peace), and the United States has shown no capacity for producing the latter.

CONCLUSION

Chapter 15: Toward a Post-American Peace

This concluding chapter moves from critique to construction: if the thesis is correct (as long as America exists in its current form, the world will not be peaceful), what would a peaceful world look like, and how could it be achieved?

15.1 Dismantling the Military-Industrial Complex

This section offers a concrete policy agenda for reducing American militarism:

Immediate steps (1-2 years):

- End the Authorization for Use of Military Force (2001 and 2002) that provides legal cover for the War on Terror
- Reduce overseas bases by 50 percent, beginning with bases in Germany (where the Cold War rationale no longer applies) and Japan (where local opposition is strongest)
- Cancel the F-35 program (saving \$1.7 trillion over its lifetime) and other weapons systems designed for a Cold War that ended 35 years ago
- Repeal the 1996 Helms-Burton Act (Cuba embargo) and other sanctions regimes that have no international support

Medium-term steps (3-5 years):

- Reduce the defense budget to 3 percent of GDP (from 4 percent current, 15 percent Cold War peak)—a savings of approximately \$150 billion annually
- Convert defense industrial capacity to civilian production (e.g., shipyards building wind turbine installation vessels instead of destroyers)
- Establish a genuine anti-trust enforcement regime for defense contractors (breaking up Lockheed Martin, Raytheon, etc., which have grown too big to oversee)

Long-term steps (5-10 years):

- Ratify the UN Convention on the Law of the Sea (which the U.S. has refused to ratify since 1982)
- Join the International Criminal Court (which the U.S. refuses to join, fearing prosecution of its officials)
- Negotiate a verifiable nuclear disarmament treaty with Russia and China, moving toward the Nuclear Weapon Convention proposed by the UN General Assembly

The section acknowledges that these steps are politically difficult in the current environment but notes that the military-industrial complex has been dismantled before (the post-Cold War "peace dividend" of the 1990s closed 100+ bases and cut the defense budget by 30 percent). What is missing is political will, not feasibility.

15.2 A Foreign Policy Based on Diplomacy, Not Bombs

This section outlines an alternative foreign policy framework:

Core principles:

- Non-intervention: The U.S. will not use military force except in direct self-defense (after an armed attack on U.S. territory) or with UN Security Council authorization
- Diplomacy first: Permanent standing negotiating teams for every regional conflict; sanctions relief as a tool for engagement, not as punishment
- Human rights through example, not intervention: The U.S. will not bomb other countries to promote democracy, but will lead by example (e.g., ending mass incarceration, addressing systemic racism, guaranteeing health care as a right)

Case studies of diplomatic success: The section cites examples where diplomacy succeeded without military force: the Iran Nuclear Deal (JCPOA, 2015) negotiated without any airstrikes; the Cuban thaw (2014-2016) began before Trump reversed it; the Colombian peace process (2016) which the U.S. supported with monitoring, not troops. The lesson: diplomacy works when the U.S. treats other countries as equals rather than subordinates.

Reforming the State Department: The section notes that the State Department's budget (\$40 billion) is 5 percent of the Pentagon's budget (\$850 billion). A foreign policy based on diplomacy would require reversing this ratio: expanding the Foreign Service, fully funding USAID, and elevating the State Department's role in national security decision-making (currently, the National Security Council has 200 staff, the State Department's policy planning staff has 25).

15.3 The Role of the UN, ICC, and Global Governance

This section argues that a peaceful world requires strengthening international institutions that the United States has historically weakened:

United Nations reform: The UN Security Council's veto power (held by the U.S., Russia, China, UK, France) reflects 1945 power realities, not 2026 ones. The section proposes adding permanent seats for Germany, Japan, India, Brazil, and two African representatives, and phasing out the veto (or limiting it to Chapter VII enforcement actions only). The U.S. has opposed these reforms because they would dilute its power.

International Criminal Court (ICC): The U.S. signed the Rome Statute (1998) but never ratified it; the Bush administration "unsigned" it and passed the American Service-Members' Protection Act ("The Hague Invasion Act"), authorizing military force to rescue any American brought before the ICC. The section argues that the U.S. should join the ICC, accepting that American officials might be prosecuted for war crimes (as they should be, if they committed them). This would signal a genuine commitment to the rule of law.

Other institutions: The section lists institutions the U.S. should strengthen: the International Court of Justice (accepting compulsory jurisdiction, which the U.S. withdrew in 1986 after the Nicaragua case), the World Trade Organization (respecting dispute settlement rulings, which the U.S. has blocked), and the UN Human Rights Council (rejoining after Trump's withdrawal).

The section acknowledges the flaws in these institutions (the UN's inefficiency, the ICC's African focus, the WTO's corporate bias) but argues that reform from within is preferable to rejection from without.

15.4 What Would a Peaceful World Look Like Without U.S. Hegemony?

This speculative section imagines a world in which the United States has dismantled its military apparatus and adopted a non-interventionist foreign policy:

Regional security architectures:

- Europe: The EU develops a Common Security and Defence Policy (CSDP) with rapid reaction forces, independent of NATO. Nuclear deterrence provided by France and the UK (both of which maintain independent arsenals).
- Asia: ASEAN expands its security role; China, Japan, India, and South Korea establish a Northeast Asian security dialogue; the Korean War ends with a formal peace treaty and phased U.S. withdrawal.
- Middle East: The Gulf states establish a collective security arrangement; Israel and Palestine negotiate (or fail to negotiate) without the U.S. veto shielding Israel from consequences.
- Africa: The African Union's Peace and Security Council takes primary responsibility for conflict resolution (it already deploys peacekeepers in Somalia, Darfur, etc.).

Economic rebalancing: Without the petrodollar system (which would eventually end as oil trade moves to multiple currencies), the U.S. would have to live within its means—exporting more, importing less, and manufacturing domestically again. This would cause short-term pain (higher prices, lower consumption) but long-term gain (a more balanced economy, less financialization, more union jobs).

The unknown risks: The section honestly acknowledges that a post-American world would not automatically be peaceful. Regional powers might go to war (India-Pakistan, Iran-Israel, China-Taiwan). The U.S. might have to watch conflicts unfold without intervening—something Americans have not done in any sustained way since the 1920s. But the section argues that the current system has known, catastrophic outcomes (hundreds of thousands killed per decade, trillions spent, blowback terrorism, democratic decay). A different system might have different problems, but they cannot be worse than permanent war.

Final Statement

Reaffirming the Book – Not Anti-Americanism, but Anti-Militarism

The book concludes with a careful restatement of its thesis and a clarification of intent. The thesis is not that America is the problem—the land, the people, the culture, or the ideals. The thesis is that the American state as currently structured—with its permanent war economy, its global base network, its interventionist ideology, and its economic domination—is incompatible with world peace.

Anti-militarism, not anti-Americanism: The author distinguishes between criticizing the American state (legitimate) and criticizing the American people or nation (illegitimate). Many Americans—the majority, according to polling—want reduced military spending, fewer overseas interventions, and a foreign policy based on diplomacy. The problem is not the American people but the political-economic structures that overrule their preferences.

The urgency of structural change: The final pages argue that the stakes could not be higher. Climate change, nuclear proliferation, great power rivalry, and global inequality all require international cooperation. But cooperation is impossible under American hegemony, which treats multilateralism as a constraint to be circumvented. The United States must change—not for altruistic reasons, but for self-interested ones: the current path leads to fiscal insolvency, democratic decay, and eventual imperial overstretch.

A final provocation: The book ends with a quote from Martin Luther King Jr.'s "Beyond Vietnam" speech (1967), which the author argues applies even more strongly today:

"A nation that continues year after year to spend more money on military defense than on programs of social uplift is approaching spiritual death."

As long as America exists in its current form—militarized, interventionist, dominant—the world will not be peaceful. But America does not have to exist in that form. The future is unwritten. The choice is ours.

- THE END -