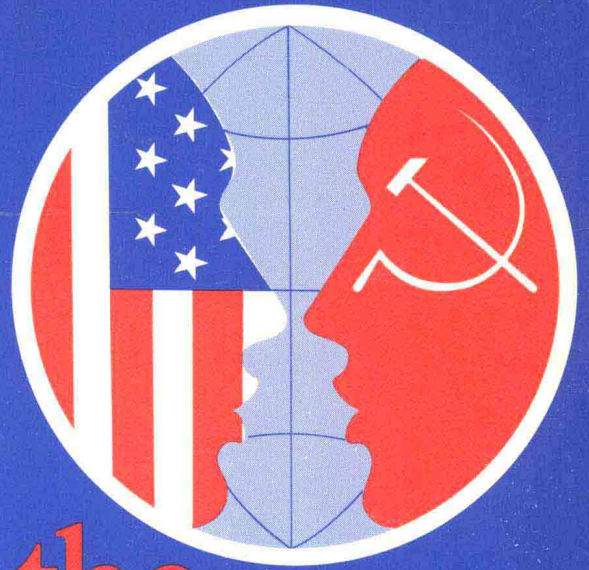


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# the UNITED STATES and



# the SOVIET UNION

## Choices for the 21st Century

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# the UNITED STATES and the SOVIET UNION



## Choices for the 21st Century

**Center for Foreign Policy Development at Brown University**

*Written by*  
Mark Lindeman  
*with*



**The Dushkin Publishing Group, Inc.**

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The Center for Foreign Policy Development was established at Brown University in 1981 to develop—through interaction among specialists, elected officials and the public—policies for dealing with the Soviet Union and nuclear weapons that most effectively serve the interests of the United States.

The Center is affiliated with the Institute for International Studies at Brown University, and is supported by private contributions, foundation grants, and Brown University. The Chair of the Board of Advisors is Thomas J. Watson, Jr., former U.S. ambassador to the Soviet Union and Chairman Emeritus of the IBM Corporation.

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the  
**UNITED  
STATES**  
and the  
**SOVIET  
UNION**



**Choices for the 21st Century**

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The purpose of this book is to encourage students to think through some of the difficult issues of United States–Soviet Union relations, as both nations enter the 21st century. By presenting four alternative Futures for United States–Soviet Union relations in 2010, this book will help students consider what policies they think the United States should follow in the years ahead.

We encourage students to develop additional Futures of their own that are both imaginative and realistic.

This book is based upon an earlier three-year research project, *The Public, the Soviets, and Nuclear Arms*, conducted jointly by the Center for Foreign Policy Development at Brown University and the Public Agenda Foundation. This book is part of a larger project of the Center for Foreign Policy Development, *Choices for the 21st Century*. The project includes development of curricular materials on a range of foreign policy issues for use at the secondary, undergraduate, and adult education levels.

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## Preface

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The international arena is changing in ways that few people could have imagined several years ago. Dramatic political shifts in the Soviet Union and Eastern Europe are bringing an end to the Cold War. Europe—East and West—is in the midst of sweeping political and economic transition. This is a time of remarkable opportunity and challenge for the United States as it reevaluates and recasts its foreign policy.

Mikhail Gorbachev's reforms in the Soviet Union have provoked a new and heated debate concerning both their scope and their implications for U.S. policy. Some observers see the current trends as providing an opportunity to end the Cold War and to supplant competition with cooperation in many regions and on many common problems. Other observers argue that the Soviet changes do little or nothing to make the U.S. safer, and provide no justification for unilateral reductions in U.S. defense efforts, preferential economic treatment, or other concessions to the Soviet Union.

*The United States and the Soviet Union: Choices for the 21st Century* addresses both the changing face of U.S.-Soviet relations and the continuing threat of nuclear war—issues crucial to our national and international security. The central question of this book is: How should the United States proceed in its relationship with the Soviet Union? The question sounds simple, but it is anything but simple to answer. This material is designed to help college students of all levels grapple with central conceptual and policy issues in a time of rapid change.

This book presents four alternative “Futures,” or long-term goals, for U.S. foreign policy. As students examine each Future, they will consider its historical roots and fundamental beliefs, economic costs, and near-term policy implications. They will weigh arguments, pro and con, concerning the Future's feasibility and impact upon the rest of the world.

The Futures are a product of the joint Center for Foreign Policy Development/Public Agenda Foundation project, *The Public, the Soviets, and Nuclear Arms*. The Futures are neither predictions for the year 2010 nor prescriptions for U.S. policy. They work best as springboards for helping students examine what constitutes a sound and stable foreign policy—and are not to be used as definitive presentations of the country's policy options.

Each Future embodies a set of beliefs about the Soviet Union and nuclear arms that many Americans share. Together the Futures present a full spectrum of views on U.S.-Soviet relations. While they offer a long-term perspective, each Future also describes a set of policies the United States must implement today if we are to head toward that Future.

Future 1, *U.S. Has the Upper Hand*, emphasizes the uncertain future of Soviet reforms and ethnic disputes throughout Eastern Europe and the Soviet Union. It calls for U.S. military superiority to hedge against these uncertainties and to counter other threats to U.S. interests. Future 2, *Eliminate the Nuclear Threat; Compete Otherwise*, calls for the United States and Soviet Union to make deep reductions in nuclear arms and limit their competition in volatile regions. However, technological, economic and political competition would continue. Future 3, *Cooperative Problem Solving*, argues for extensive U.S.-Soviet cooperation on common problems as the best way of building an improved relationship and permanently reducing the risk of nuclear war. The central concern of Future 4, *Defend Only North America*, is the danger resulting from U.S. military commitments abroad. This Future argues that the United States should end these alliance agreements and redirect its resources to issues at home, such as the economy and education.

Four additional chapters provide background information on U.S. foreign policy, the Soviet Union, nuclear arms and arms control, and global security issues. These chapters are designed to give students an understanding of relevant historical events and current debates within each topic. Each chapter contains discussion questions to focus student inquiry and serves as a basis for further discussion and research.

After students work with the Futures framework, we encourage them to formulate, individually or in groups, their own Future 5, taking into account questions of feasibility and risk. The student text provides guidance on developing a Future 5, as well as a bibliography of selected organizations and publications for research or other projects. An Instructor's Resource Guide offers suggestions for adapting the Futures to various class settings.

*The United States and the Soviet Union: Choices for the 21st Century* is intended for all levels of college classes in International Relations, U.S. Foreign Policy, Soviet Studies, Arms Control, and other courses treating U.S. nuclear and Soviet policy. This material does not presuppose any specific background in the topic matter, but encourages students to apply and build on their present knowledge. These materials can be used as units spanning several class sessions or as the framework for an entire course. They can be used to conclude a course or unit on related issues, or to introduce students at the beginning of the course to key issues that they will consider in more detail later.

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## Acknowledgments

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Hundreds of people helped develop the Futures framework on which this text is based. Here we can only acknowledge a few whose contributions have continued into the present work. At the Center for Foreign Policy Development, Mark Garrison, the Center's director, has unstintingly supported the work of our Choices Education Project. Research director Richard Smoke has provided, often on short notice, his incisive comments on draft text more times than we care to remember. At the Public Agenda Foundation, John Doble and Deborah Wadsworth have offered their advice and logistical support in developing educational materials.

The Choices Education Project itself is an uncommonly collaborative enterprise. Susan Graseck, project director, supplies much of the project's vision and focus, but—unlike most focused visionaries—is a joy to work with. Jacqui Deegan and Anne Stauffer, co-authors of this text, have redeemed it at dozens of points where my knowledge, language, or patience failed me. Patricia Keenan, Curriculum Coordinator, visiting Research Associate William Rose, and Louise Davidson, Project Assistant have helped to shape the instructor's resource guide for its intended audience. Kristen Welsh and Laura Collins offered diligent and tolerant research assistance. Karl Berger, author of the related high school materials, has been an enthusiastic co-conspirator. Ann Hart, Debra Javeline, Maryam Mohit, and Anne Paris contributed to earlier editions.

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*The Choices for the 21st Century Education Project* is an extension of the previous research project, *The Public, the Soviets, and Nuclear Arms*, conducted jointly with the Public Agenda Foundation. We gratefully acknowledge the generous support for this previous project from The Bohen Foundation, Carnegie Corporation of New York, The Ford Foundation, The George Gund Foundation, The William and Flora Hewlett Foundation, John D. and Catherine T. MacArthur Foundation, Joyce Mertz-Gillmore Foundation, North Shore Unitarian Universalist



Veatch Program, and an anonymous contribution from a member of the Rockefeller family.

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Mark Lindeman  
for the Choices Education Project

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# Introduction

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The essence of democracy is that the people should have a voice in the decisions that affect their lives and welfare, and the two most important things that any government can do to its citizens are to demand their money or their lives. In no area of government can officials ultimately spend more money or end more lives than in the field of international affairs. So from the standpoint of giving citizens more control over the issues that truly count, debate about foreign policy should be even more vigorous than that about domestic policy.

—Charles William Maynes, “America Without the Cold War,”  
*Foreign Policy*, no. 78 (Spring 1990), p. 6.

**W**e live in a rare moment in history when sweeping changes are occurring in many nations simultaneously. The rapid and continuing changes in the Soviet Union and Eastern Europe, though distant from our own shores, confront the United States with a complex challenge. For over forty years we have viewed the Soviet Union as our principal political and military adversary. How should we proceed in our relationship with the Soviet Union now? As we reassess the Soviet threat, we must also consider the continuing possibility of a nuclear war, especially as more countries gain access to nuclear weapons. And we must confront an array of challenges which stem from other changes in the world; these include economic competition with other nations, global warming and other environmental threats, and the threat of terrorist attack.

Are these challenges too large for the United States to overcome? Probably not: the United States has successfully confronted huge threats in the past. Indeed, many of the changes in the world offer new hope of peace and prosperity for the United States and other nations. However, the complexity of these circumstances does make it much more difficult to decide on the nation's direction. Should the United States try to help Soviet leader Mikhail Gorbachev implement his reforms, or should we try to further weaken the Soviet Union? Should we agree with the Soviets to cut both sides' nuclear weapons and armed forces? If so, what cuts will make us safer? Should we devote more of our resources to economic and military aid around the world, or should we concentrate on problems at home? Should we use military force to overthrow hostile governments,

or should we seek improved relations with them? These questions, and others like them, fuel continual debate, and national policy tends to shift back and forth among various answers. In this time of global upheaval, the United States must settle on its long-term goals in order to avoid dangerous mistakes.

Consensus among Americans on policy goals does not, in itself, ensure that we will reach those goals—not when we share the planet with the Soviets and billions of other people, and confront many problems that we do not yet know how to solve. And, even after deciding on general goals, the United States will naturally have to adjust to future changes in the international scene. Still, the more completely American citizens can agree on the goals of U.S. foreign policy, the better the odds of achieving them.

## **Promoting a Constructive Public Role: The Four Futures**

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Experts and non-experts both have an important role to play in determining the United States' direction in the coming decades. Consider the debate over what kind of nuclear arms control treaties, if any, the United States should work toward. There are many technical facts and debates involved in arms control that most people will never bother to learn. (Just what is the difference between an SS-18 and SS-19? What is the military significance of the Krasnoyarsk radar?) Many of these details are important, not just for negotiating the fine print of treaties, but for deciding what sort of treaties (if any) the United States should seek. On these issues the United States needs expert guidance.

However, in a representative democracy the public should form considered opinions on the long-term goals of U.S. foreign policy, in order to provide guidance to experts and policymakers in framing the short-term policies to reach those goals. Deciding on these long-term goals involves considering certain risks and trade-offs. These are, of course, mainly questions of values. For instance, is it more important to defend democracy abroad or to keep the United States out of war? In many cases the United States can avoid choosing between such values, but when a choice must be made, we cannot depend on experts to make it. Experts can clarify the goals and trade-offs the nation must consider, and lay out specific policy choices along with their costs and risks. But experts have no special insight into which goals are most important, and which risks are worth taking. These are decisions of national scope which all Americans must make together.

The Futures framework offers one way of approaching such decisions. The four alternative Futures for the United States in the year 2010

offer divergent responses to security problems posed by the Soviet Union and nuclear weapons. Each Future proposes one way to deal with both the Soviet Union and the nuclear threat. Each Future presents a goal that at least some experts consider attainable in the next twenty years, together with the policies the United States would have to follow to attain it. Each Future makes different assumptions about the greatest threats to the United States and how the United States should address these threats. The Futures are not predictions about what will actually happen by 2010, and they certainly do not illustrate all the viable policies that the United States might follow. Rather, they are models of some basic choices the United States might make about its goals and priorities.

### The Four Futures Are:

- **Future 1: The United States Has the Upper Hand** The United States achieves dominance over the Soviet Union in order to guarantee its security and that of other free peoples.
- **Future 2: Eliminate the Nuclear Threat; Compete Otherwise** The superpowers significantly reduce the threat of nuclear war but continue to compete politically, economically, and technologically.
- **Future 3: Cooperative Problem Solving** The United States and the Soviet Union work together on problems of common concern in order to reduce significantly their mutual hostility.
- **Future 4: Defend Only North America** The United States ends its military commitments overseas and concentrates on problems at home.

### The Futures in Your Class

The Futures were originally designed to encourage the public to think about foreign policy topics in a new way. Americans are constantly inundated with news reports about current foreign policy issues. However, citizens rarely have an opportunity to discuss these issues and work out their own views. This text is designed to help you think realistically about the choices you face. It presents distinct alternatives that illustrate both the advantages and disadvantages of setting various priorities. No one Future can be easily dismissed, and together they span a broad spectrum of American opinion. Your own priorities may differ substantially from any of these Futures, but you will have to address the arguments raised by each of them.

Your task is to weigh each Future's advantages and disadvantages, to consider whether it seems attainable, and to assess the risks if we try and fail to implement a Future's goals. You also may want to consider issues

that none of the Futures address, and ask yourself what policies might answer these concerns, and also if these policies are worth the costs and risks they entail. Finally, you may decide which of these four Futures seems most advantageous, or you may develop a Future of your own which, in your mind, represents the best way of setting priorities among our nation's interests.

## **What Follows**

The next chapter introduces the security issues treated in this material in more detail. First it presents a historical overview. Then it spells out some questions that any strategy for enhancing United States national security must come to terms with. You may wish to reread the next chapter after reading through the Futures.

Then come four chapters that present the Futures themselves. Each chapter details the assumptions one Future makes about threats to U.S. security, the implications for U.S. policy in the 1990s, and many of the arguments for and against that Future. As you read about the Futures, you can begin to evaluate their pros and cons, to pose questions that will help you judge the Futures, and to think about a preferred Future of your own.

After the chapters on the Futures are several chapters presenting further information on the Soviet Union, nuclear weapons, and global issues. They are designed to sharpen your thinking about the Futures and the security threats they address. The last of these chapters, History and the Futures, provides examples of how supporters of each Future might interpret several historical events.

Finally, a short chapter suggests how to go about creating your own preferred Future Five, and another chapter offers ideas for further research and action. These two chapters, along with a voting ballot provided at the end of the book, challenge you to sort out your opinions and questions about the many difficult issues raised in the text.

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# The U.S. Search for Security: Past and Present

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**M**any people believe that with dramatic political changes in the Soviet Union and Eastern Europe, and new threats facing the United States, the United States must rethink its national security policy. Policymakers and others are hotly debating how much U.S. policy should change. One thing is certain: many of the key issues remain the same as in previous debates about U.S. security policy. What role should the United States play in the world? What kind of relationship with the Soviet Union should the United States work toward? What nuclear weapons and other military forces should the United States have to protect itself? This chapter reviews how these debates have unfolded over the past fifty years, and considers where they stand today.

## The Origins of Containment: From Isolationism to Activism

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For over a century after the United States gained independence, it largely avoided entering entangling alliances and military rivalries with other nations. Most U.S. leaders sought to protect the young nation from getting involved in Europe's seemingly endless wars. The United States focused instead on domestic prosperity and expansion. This policy has been called isolationism.\* It did not mean total seclusion from the rest of the world. The United States traded and had friendly relations with other countries, but did not get caught up in conflicts between other nations.

Yet Americans were no strangers to war. Its isolationist policy did not prevent the United States from confronting foreign nations in the course of its expansion: By 1900 the United States had fought several

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\*Underlined terms are defined in the Glossary beginning on p. 143.



wars against other countries.<sup>1</sup> Much of the nation's expansion in the 1800s came at the expense of Native Americans, who were driven west in a series of small wars. The United States was at odds with Great Britain over U.S. westward expansion and British attacks on U.S. merchant ships. In the War of 1812, the British and Native Americans fought against the United States. The British briefly gained control of Washington, D.C., but the United States retrieved all its territory in the peace settlement. In the Mexican War of 1846, the United States annexed much of what is now the U.S. Southwest. In the Spanish-American War of 1898, the United States gained control of Cuba, the Philippines, Guam, and Puerto Rico, chipping away at the once-powerful Spanish empire.<sup>2</sup> The United States also sought greater international influence, and pursued trade opportunities around the world. For instance, it took the lead in declaring an "open door" policy for trade with China around 1900 ensuring a place for the United States alongside the European powers competing for the Chinese market.

The country avoided getting caught up in quarrels among other nations. In time, the United States considered itself almost invulnerable to outside attack. Thus when World War I broke out in 1914, most Americans, including President Woodrow Wilson, thought the United States should stay neutral. They believed the country had nothing to gain by taking sides. The United States did stay out of the war until 1917, when Germany's attacks on the merchant ships of the United States and other neutral countries brought the United States directly into the conflict. Although Wilson had tried to avoid taking sides in the war, he chose not to sacrifice U.S. security for the sake of neutrality. Wilson eventually decided that the United States should play an active role in preventing future wars around the world. After the war, he worked for the establishment of a League of Nations intended to promote lasting peace. To help it keep the peace, the League could declare economic sanctions, and even threaten military action, against any aggressor nation. The League was established, but Wilson could not persuade the U.S. Senate to ratify U.S. membership. Too many senators feared the League would drag the United States into a war.

Throughout the 1930s and as late as 1941, a strong isolationist movement opposed U.S. involvement in the growing conflicts in Europe. These conflicts were spurred in part by the rise of Adolf Hitler's Nazi Party and its military buildup in Germany. Since many U.S. isolationists during much of the 1930s thought that Hitler fundamentally wanted peace, they believed Germany's neighbors should make some concessions to Hitler's territorial demands. This was a view shared by many in Europe. The isolationists argued that even if Nazi Germany was able to conquer Europe, it did not threaten the United States itself. The

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1. However, the highest toll in U.S. lives occurred during the U.S. Civil War of 1861-65, in which over 600,000 Americans were killed.

2. The United States later relinquished control of Cuba and the Philippines.