

WORLD POLITICS DEBATED



a reader in
contemporary issues

THIRD EDITION

Herbert M. Levine

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A Reader in Contemporary Issues

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PREFACE

The third edition of *World Politics Debated* is significantly different from the second edition. Changes include some reorganization of the book, the selection of new topics, the addition of recent articles, and the updating of other material. New topics include debates on realism, the Reagan Doctrine, the nonaligned movement, strategic defense, Israeli-Arab relations, and the impact of domestic reform on Soviet foreign policy. In addition, every effort was made to select current readings, and more than 80 percent of the articles are new to this edition. Chapter introductions, Questions for Discussion, and Suggested Readings have been updated.

Although there have been many revisions for the third edition, the book has retained its basic focus on the changing character of power in the international arena. Some of the debate questions of the second edition, such as those dealing with the decline of the nation-state, the effectiveness of the United Nations, and the relevance of the balance of power in the nuclear age, have been retained because of their continuing interest. As with the first two editions, the editor has attempted to present strong arguments for each contending viewpoint so that readers may carefully analyze issues of world politics.

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As in the past, I received editorial support from my editors at McGraw-Hill. I am indebted to Jim Anker, the political science editor, who guided the

development of the book; and to Annette Bodzin, the project supervisor, who managed its production. Ann Hofstra Grogg copyedited the manuscript with extraordinary attention to detail and with a magnificent command of the rules governing grammar and style.

Herbert M. Levine

INTRODUCTION

Power is a concept central to politics. It is also an ambiguous concept. A standard definition of power—and the one used in this book—is the ability to make someone do what he or she may not want to do.

This book deals with the changing nature of power in world politics since the end of World War II. It is organized into sections discussing the international system, goals, instruments of power, constraints on war, and the future world order.

Each chapter begins with an introduction describing the significant power relationships in the postwar period. Relevant issues are highlighted, and for each there is an Affirmative and a Negative position. The readings are taken from diverse sources, including magazines, newspapers, government documents, and books. They reflect a variety of ideological and national viewpoints and are selected because of their value in a debate framework. Questions for Discussion and Suggested Readings follow each debate to encourage further thought and study.

The purpose of the debate format is to stimulate interest in the subject matter of world politics. Debate is a pedagogical device that encourages critical thinking. But it also presents some problems. Of necessity, it restricts focus on a single issue from only two sides. When evaluating an issue, consequently, readers should keep in mind that there may be no clear Yes or No answer. Often each of the two views presented has some merit, and readers must decide for themselves what to accept and what to reject.

Another problem of the debate format is that the question asked may seem to imply that it is the only issue worthy of consideration for that topic. To counter this impression, the introductory essay in each chapter often suggests other questions requiring examination, although space limitations of the book prevent them from being examined.

Moreover, the debate format may seem to imply that the arguments pre-

sented for saying Yes or No on an issue are always those given in the readings. In reality, on many issues entirely different positions are sometimes taken that reject the arguments made on both sides presented here. In other words, there is often a much wider variety of views than the debate format can accommodate.

In spite of these problems, the debate format offers opportunities for critical investigation. A useful way to evaluate a debate is first to discover the specific differences between the two viewpoints and then to analyze the differences by answering the following questions:

1. Do the contending authors disagree about the facts?
2. Is there a disagreement about the consequences of certain actions?
3. Does the disagreement arise because the backgrounds of the authors differ, so that each author perceives events from a different perspective?
4. Are the disagreements related to the different ideological orientations of the authors?
5. Are there ways of looking at the issues involved other than those presented in the readings?

These five questions do not constitute the only ones that may be considered. They do, however, offer a framework for evaluating the readings and reaching informed opinions about the questions raised.

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