GARY HART

The SHIELD & the CLOAK

The Security of the Commons
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The social progress, order, security, and peace
of each country are necessarily connected
with the social progress, order, security, and peace
of all other countries.

—Pope John XXIII,

*Pacem in Terris* (1963)
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Two historic events, the end of the Cold War and the terrorist attacks on September 11, 2001, fundamentally altered the nature of national security and how to achieve it. The first eliminated the threat of nuclear attack from the Soviet Union. The second demonstrated America’s vulnerability to a kind of savagery never seen in our country’s history.

Taken together, these events present us with a threat and an opportunity. The opportunity is to redefine America’s role in the world. The threat is to the security of our national soil. Currently, we are misusing the opportunity by waging preemptive warfare in the Middle East and thus possibly increasing the threat. The confusion arises from our attempt to apply an old understanding of national security to an entirely new world.

In a previous book, *The Fourth Power: A Grand Strategy for the United States in the Twenty-First Century* (Oxford University Press, 2004), I argued for a new grand strategy for the United States in the post–Cold War world that applied our traditional economic, political, and military powers to the achievement of three large purposes—
achieving security, expanding opportunity, and promoting liberal democracy. I further argued that we possess a fourth power, the power of the principles embedded in our constitutional system and our founding purposes, that gives us leadership stature in the world, but only to the degree that we live up to those principles ourselves.

In *The Fourth Power*, I suggested that a larger understanding of security than that of the Cold War was required to respond to the new realities of the twenty-first century. Those revolutionary realities include globalization, information, the erosion of national sovereignty, and the changing character of conflict. That larger understanding of security, I argued, is also required to encompass energy security, environmental security, the security of the community, and the security of livelihood.

In this book, I explore what security means in this new age, above and beyond sheer military power, and propose specific military and nonmilitary ways in which we might go about achieving it. The first step in this process is to think differently, to think anew, in Lincoln’s words, to disenthrall ourselves from the simplistic, unilateralist notion that true security can be achieved merely by spending more money on weapons and by invading more countries.

As a product of the twentieth century, I understand the political inclination to see security in exclusively military terms. World War II was one of my first memories. A large number of members of my family participated. In many ways, we all participated. And the Cold War confrontation with communism was the central reality of most of my life. Consequently, when I was elected to the U.S. Senate, I joined the Armed Services Committee. For twelve years during the heart of the Cold War, I participated immediately and directly in virtually all the issues related to national security.

I studied naval warfare and strategy. I helped to found the Military Reform Caucus in the U.S. Congress which proposed a sweeping series of changes in personnel policies; bold departures in strategies, tactics, and doctrine; and dramatic changes in weapons procurement.
Many of those reforms are now being adopted almost twenty-five years later. I served on the first congressional committee to investigate the Central Intelligence Agency and uncovered, among many other un-American activities, CIA plots to assassinate Fidel Castro using major Mafia figures. Thereafter, I served as a charter member of the follow-up Senate oversight committee that prevented further abuses by our intelligence agencies.

I was particularly involved in arms control matters, including observing and participating in SALT (Strategic Arms Limitations Talks) and START (Strategic Arms Reduction Talks) negotiations in Geneva between the U.S. government and the Soviets. I studied issues such as “throw weight” (size of warheads) and “circular error probable” (accuracy) and listened to the nuclear priesthood discuss ways to conduct limited nuclear wars. I talked personally to Russian leaders in Moscow and, after lengthy discussions with President Mikhail Gorbachev in early December 1986, concluded that the Cold War was finally coming to an end, which it did shortly after I left the Senate. A large part of my decision to seek national leadership in the 1980s was to hasten that day so that my children’s generation could be more secure than mine.

Most recently, I was co-chair of the U.S. Commission on National Security for the Twenty-first Century. This was the most comprehensive review of U.S. national security since 1947, and it took almost three years. As early as September 1999, our commission predicted catastrophic terrorist attacks on America, and in our final report in January 2001, we warned the new president, George W. Bush, that this terrorist threat was sufficiently imminent to require a massive reorganization of the U.S. government to prevent such attacks. Nothing was done, our warnings were ignored by president and press, and eight months later more than three thousand Americans died. For this utter neglect, no one has been held accountable.

My preoccupation with national security is far from recent; indeed it has spanned three decades. It is the basis from which I argue
that the meaning of security must be more comprehensive today than it was in the previous century. There is an old saying that if you cannot solve a problem, make it bigger. By expanding the nature of security, I hope to make it more achievable.

In the Hilary (winter) term of 2005, I had the honor of being Visiting Fellow at All Souls College, Oxford, where the manuscript of this book was written. For their most warm and cordial hospitality, I owe a debt of deep gratitude to Warden John Davis and the Fellows of this extraordinary college.

In this effort, I have to thank a number of people: Jerry Cohen, Joyce Appleby, Jim Fallows, Bill Shore, Marcia Johnston, among others, for their critical and constructive review of this manuscript. And most of all, I wish to thank, once again, a superb editor, Dedi Felman, at Oxford University Press. She continues to ask the right questions.
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The Shield and the Cloak
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Imagine the twenty-first century as a three-dimensional chess game. One dimension represents the United States. One dimension represents the world of nation-states. The third dimension—a new one—represents stateless nations.

In the twentieth century, national security was mostly two-dimensional. The United States and its democratic allies, the white pieces, faced off against other nation-states—imperialist, fascist, or communist—the black pieces. The democratic nations, the white pieces, prevailed because our pieces together were more powerful and, in most cases, we moved them more cleverly. In the twentieth century, security was achieved by the clever positioning of powerful forces according to the rules of the traditional, two-dimensional game.

As of 9/11, a new third dimension, stateless nations, was forced onto the security chess board. Stateless nations, or “nonstate actors” as they are called, do not play with the same figures or pieces. No knights in uniform. No rooks sheltering established national wealth. No kings and queens enthroned in national capitals. They also will
not participate on the old two-dimensional chess board. Most of all, they refuse to play by the rules. So, security cannot be achieved in this new century by using the same pieces, even if you increase their size and power, and playing by the old rules.

Security can only be won by creating imaginative new pieces, deploying and maneuvering them much more creatively and swiftly, and consolidating the forces of the traditional two dimensions into a global commons—a figurative arena in which our collective security interests are deployed for the common good. We must also be willing to welcome new players, for example, by engaging China as we have in containing the North Korean nuclear threat, and to use our collective genius and wisdom to create new security rules for this new multilayered global chess game.

Our knights, our military forces, must look different, for example, like the Delta Forces in Afghanistan, and be trained and equipped differently. Our wealth must be brought out of its protective national castles and invested more wisely in mastering new sciences and technologies to reduce threats of climate change and pandemics. Our kings and queens, political figures out of touch with twenty-first-century realities, must be replaced by leaders smart enough to fully understand the new dimension and bold enough to define new rules for the new game. It also would not hurt if our bishops, our religious leaders, played a more enlightened and constructive role.

The new security will be both national and international, defensive and offensive. It will require a shield—and spear—representing new kinds of military forces, as well as a cloak that protects the global commons from nonmilitary threats. The old security required containing the Soviet Union within its borders. The new security requires a shield protecting the homeland from terrorists’ threat and a spear to pin the terrorists in their caves.

The old security required cooperation among Western armies. The new security requires cooperation among intelligence services.
The old security required massive weapons in massive numbers. The new security requires special forces, individual warrior teams, searching for terrorists in tunnels and caves.

The old security required economic dominance. The new security requires economic integration in a world of international markets, trade, and finance.

The old security meant prevention of nuclear war. In addition to that goal, the new security is a cloak composed of security of livelihood, security of energy, and security of the environment.

This book proposes a new strategy of the commons that includes major reforms of our conventional military forces, specific steps to increase homeland security, a profound shift in economic priorities from consumption to production, the creation of an elite human intelligence corps, a new fifth special forces service, urgent reductions in the Russian nuclear arsenal, an international peace-making force, and many other proposals that are meant to be interrelated and intertwined.

Two new approaches are proposed here: One is the notion that genuine security now requires military (shield) and nonmilitary (cloak) components; the other is that security can only be assured through international cooperation. Most important, this book recognizes that security in the twenty-first century is an entirely new and larger concept than it was in the era of the Cold War. Perhaps no event in recent times illustrates this truth more vividly than the massive natural assault on the U.S. Gulf Coast, and the resulting insecurity, caused by Hurricane Katrina in late August 2005.

A confluence of revolutionary tides at the beginning of the twenty-first century is massively altering the strategic environment. These tides will require the United States to accept a new idea of national and personal security, one that embraces protection against terrorism, a shield, and one that includes protection against economic hardship, environmental harm, and energy wars, a cloak. This reality demands
a profoundly different approach to security than we used in the most recent era.

My generation was bred to the challenge of security but in its former two-dimensional framework. As children of the last world war, we gained our maturity during the arms races, missile crises, and third world confrontations of the Cold War. “The Russians are coming,” we were told, “and they are thirty feet tall.” Never mind that they had no fleet to transport themselves to America’s shores. One way or the other, they were out to get us. The threat was the idea, and the idea became the reality.

Our nation had to be made secure, and security was the product of strength. Strength was measured almost exclusively in military terms—numbers and sizes of missiles, warheads, tanks, ships, and planes. One central organizing principle dominated the foreign and defense policies of the United States and most of its allies during the second half of the twentieth century—containment of communism. This principle had the enormous appeal of clarity and brevity. Containment meant to keep communism from spreading beyond the Iron Curtain. And we all knew what communism meant—godless, totalitarian, and treacherous. Security in the Cold War was almost exclusively the shield of military presence under which economic competition was played out, but this shield was deployed far from the United States.

The Cold War lent itself to the kind of thinking most Americans admire and prefer: direct, straightforward, unambiguous, and black and white. Though not apparent at the time, in hindsight the Cold War had its traditional, two-dimensional appeals. We knew who the enemy was, and we often forced unrelated local conflicts into this two-dimensional mold, and we knew what had to be done. To be secure, communism had to be contained. It provided a comprehensive world view, one that suited us and one that we sought to impose on the rest of the world, including, in places like Vietnam, where it did not exactly fit. Such debates over security as there were
occurred on the margins and focused primarily on numbers of troops and kinds of weapons.

Security, in its broadest sense, was understandable as much as anything else because it was played on the traditional chess board of great-power politics. We could not permit communism to expand in Asia, Africa, Latin America, or the Middle East. Otherwise, there was no stopping it, and we would be next. “Better fight them over there than over here” summarized the conviction of the person in the street and many politicians—and is echoed in the rhetoric supporting the Iraq war even today. We had let imperialism in Asia and fascism in Europe operate unimpeded for too long, and it cost all of us a lot of lives to crush them. We would not make that mistake with communism.

Two events occurred almost exactly a decade apart that changed all that. They marked the end of one kind of century, featuring the exclusively nation-state chess game, and the beginning of a totally new era. At the end of August 1991, the Soviet empire collapsed, and the strategy of containing communism became redundant. Ten years later, almost to the day, suicidal al Qaeda members destroyed an emblem of American capitalism and attacked the symbol of American military power. In that historic ten-year period, America made a crucial mistake, and we paid for it. We did not understand how profoundly the world was changing, that a new dimension had been added to the chess board, and therefore we did not forge a new understanding of security and how to achieve it.

Now, we must make up for lost time. Now, we must start at the beginning to understand security. But until we know what security means in this three-dimensional world, we cannot know how to achieve it. President George W. Bush has offered his substitute for the containment of communism. It is war on terrorism. Having defined his objective, he has offered his method—preemptive, even preventive, warfare. Though these are concepts known in international law, these are new doctrines for the United States. Justification for preemptive