



# Isolationism Reconfigured (American Foreign Policy for a New Century)

*Eric A. Nordlinger*

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**Isolationism Reconfigured (American Foreign Policy for a New Century)** Eric A. Nordlinger

This iconoclastic and fundamental work, Eric Nordlinger's last, advocates a new variant of isolationism, a "national strategy" confining U.S. military actions largely to North America and to neighboring sea-and air-lanes but encouraging international activism and engagement in nonsecurity realms. In Nordlinger's view, disengaging from security commitments on distant shores would liberate the United States to use its resources and decision-making powers to act more effectively abroad in matters of economic policy and human rights. A national strategy would then become a powerful new method of encouraging international ideals of democracy, and isolationism would be freed of its previous associations with appeasement, weakness, economic protectionism, and self-serving nationalism.

Nordlinger draws on the recent historical record to show that a national strategy would have lessened the perils of earlier decades, including those of the Cold War. While real dangers did exist during this period, engaged strategies, such as containment, too often exacerbated them. The United States could have effectively and far less expensively helped to deter Communist aggression in Europe and Asia by encouraging other nations to make larger investments in their own protection. Marshaling impressive empirical evidence in defense of a controversial position, this final work by a leading scholar of international affairs is essential reading for scholars, practitioners, and lay readers alike.

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