Reply:

DURING THE LAST DECADE the stimulating and informative works of John Lewis Gaddis and Bruce Kuniholm have attracted much attention and have revived traditional views of the origins of the Cold War. Accordingly, I am pleased to have the opportunity to respond to their comments. Although they raise some important issues, I find their critiques unconvincing.

Both Professors Gaddis and Kuniholm suggest that my account is misleading because I focus on Pentagon planners and ignore the views of influential civilian policy makers. In fact, however, the highest civilian officials in the State, War, and Navy departments concurred in and supported the conception of national security I describe in my essay. My narrative and documentation demonstrate that Byrnes, Marshall, Lovett, Forrestal, and Patterson repeatedly endorsed the need for the development of overseas bases, the negotiation of air-transit rights, the control of polar air routes, the consolidation of a strategic sphere of influence in Latin America, and the preservation of a favorable balance of power in Eurasia. The documents from which I derived this conception of national security include not only the "exercises" of anonymous bureaucrats, as Gaddis suggests, but also the policy papers approved by the secretaries of the State, War, and Navy departments, reports written by Truman's closest civilian aides like Clark Clifford and George Elsey, and the studies of the National Security Council (for example, NSC 20/4), which were approved by the president and became national policy.

The view of Professors Gaddis and Kuniholm that State Department officials possessed a different perspective of national security is unsubstantiated and misleading. Between 1946 and 1948, the men at Foggy Bottom certainly did not think it wise to spend scarce funds on military capabilities. But to infer from this that the State Department (or the president) had a narrower conception of national security is erroneous. Such a suggestion from Kuniholm is especially ironic because a major part of his *Origins of the Cold War in the Near East* (1980) demonstrates how Foreign Service officers assumed the initiative in projecting American interests into Iran, Greece, and Turkey. Inasmuch as Gaddis is so concerned with NATO, he, too, is aware that State Department officials like John Hickerson and Theodore Achilles were among the most prominent of the policy makers who saw considerable utility in assuming military commitments in Europe, however ill-defined they might be. Subsequently, other State Department officials, like George McGhee, were among the strongest supporters of the policy expanding American commitments into the Near East by including Greece and Turkey in NATO. Likewise, the

most ardent champions of containing Soviet influence in Korea resided not in the Pentagon but at Foggy Bottom. Although Acheson, Kennan, and some of their colleagues did caution against over-commitments in China, the reason did not lie in any divergent conception of national security. Rather, they did not think that the "loss" of China would affect the overall balance of power in Eurasia. In their view, China was too unstable, too poor, and too weak to become a major asset to Soviet Russia, even if the Kremlin could control developments in Peking or the Chinese countryside—which many policy makers doubted.[1]

Although generalizations are always fraught with difficulties, I do not think it accurate to imply that State Department officials had a narrower conception of American interests than defense officials did. In fact, they probably were even more inclined to expand American commitments, except in China. Defense officials, however, did worry more about the gap between commitments and capabilities. Hence, they were the first to call for increased military expenditures. But too much attention should not be focused on this point, because Professor Gaddis himself has noted that by late 1949 or early 1950 State Department and other civilian officials may have surpassed even the military planners in their advocacy of larger military appropriations.[2]

In this context, Professor Gaddis's repeated criticism of my treatment of Secretary of State George Marshall puzzles me. Gaddis does not contend, for example, that Marshall had a view of national security different from the one I depict. Rather, Gaddis claims that I do not give Marshall's State Department enough credit for the very definition of security I describe. But the significance of this point eludes me, especially since Marshall embodied the kind of defense official I refer to in my essay who, despite his military background, remained extremely sensitive to the primacy of socioeconomic considerations and political values. Nor should it be forgotten that General Marshall, upon becoming secretary of state, chose Robert Lovett, a former assistant secretary of war, as his under-secretary. Lovett, in turn, persuaded Colonel Bonesteel to leave the War Department and become a principal assistant for European affairs. Meanwhile, Marshall and Lovett maintained General Hilldring as the assistant secretary of state for occupation affairs. These men and others (like John McCloy) could and did move from the armed services and defense departments to the highest rungs of the State Department (and other agencies) precisely because there was a consensus on fundamental objectives.

Part of this consensus involved a shared apprehension of the grave consequences of economic dislocation, social unrest, and political instability. Although I never claim that Forrestal was the originator of the Marshall Plan and would not contest the State Department's pride of authorship, the significant point is that the highest officials in the defense agencies in late 1946 and early 1947 shared the view that economic rehabilitation should take priority over military assistance and domestic

[1] Kuniholm, *Origins of the Cold War in the Near East*; for NATO, see, for example, *FRUS, 1948*, 3: 1–351; for McGhee, see *ibid., 1951*, 5: 1–11, 21–42, 1113–20; for the most recent views on Korea, see Bruce Cumings, ed., *Child of Conflict: The Korean-American Relationship, 1943–1953* (Seattle, 1983), xii, 3–38, 169–93; for China, see, for example, *FRUS, 1948*, 8: 146–55, 208–11; Borg and Heinrichs, *Uncertain Years*, 13–52.

[2] Gaddis, *Strategies of Containment*, 92–95.

rearamament. Defense officials recognized the need to resuscitate the German and Japanese economies, not initially as a bulwark against the Russians, as Gaddis misleadingly represents my argument, but as a response to a multitude of local and regional economic and social problems. Those who have read the works of John Gimbel, John H. Backer, J. W. Dower, Howard Schonberger, and Takeshi Igarashi on the occupations of Germany and Japan should have no difficulty accepting this interpretation.[3]

As for Professor Gaddis's stress on the impact of budgetary constraints and postwar demobilization, I agree that the desire to balance the budget and bring the boys home influenced the tactical implementation of national security policy. But these considerations did not have an important bearing on the initial postwar conceptualization of national security objectives (which is the subject of my essay). When faced with the gap between goals and capabilities, the thrust of the the Truman administration's policy was almost always to expand capabilities (first in the form of economic aid, then military assistance, and, after 1950, rearmament) rather than to narrow goals. That the military budget did not expand during 1946, 1947, and 1948 does not refute my argument, as Professor Gaddis thinks, because top policy makers were always cognizant that arms expenditures contituted only one means of achieving national security goals. As long as the major threat remained socioeconomic unrest rather than prospective Soviet military aggression, top defense officials were willing to assess the full spectrum of American capabilities to determine which should receive priority.

In expanding capabilities policy makers had to make tough decisions. They were compelled to rank their goals and to fight with one another over tactics. They had to determine the relative importance of military assistance to Latin America versus economic aid to Europe; they had to choose between balanced budgets and expenditures on overseas bases, new aircraft carriers, long-range bombers, and relief assistance to Japan and Germany; they had to accommodate the security requirements of France and deter a communist triumph in that nation while satisfying the needs of German and Western European economic rehabilitation. These decisions engendered conflicts within and among the departments dealing with national security; many of these decisions have been the subject of fine studies by scholars influenced by theories of bureaucratic politics. But differences over tactics and priorities should not obscure the shared objectives held by top government officials. Even scholars who have stressed the centrality of bureaucratic politics, like Graham Allison and Morton Halperin, have acknowledged that policy makers usually do share a set of fundamental values and agree on basic facts.[4] Too frequently, however, these fundamentals are ignored and their implications left unexplored.

[3] Gimbel, *Occupation of Germany*; Gimbel, *The Origins of the Marshall Plan* (Stanford, 1976); John H. Backer, *Priming the German Economy: American Occupational Policies, 1945–1948* (Durham, N.C., 1971), and *Decision to Divide Germany*; Dower, *Empire and Aftermath*; Schonberger, "Zaibatsu Dissolution and the American Restoration of Japan." *Bulletin of Concerned Asian Scholars*, 5 (1973): 16–31; and Igarashi, "MacArthur's Proposal for an Early Peace with Japan and the Redirection of Occupation Policy toward Japan," *Japanese Journal of American Studies*, 1 (1981): 55–86.

[4] Graham T. Allison and Morton H. Halperin, "Bureaucratic Politics: A Paradigm and Some Policy Implications," in Raymond Tanter and Richard H. Ullman, eds., *Theory and Policy in International Relations* (Princeton, 1972), 56.

The critical question raised in Professor Kuniholm's comments is whether these fundamental objectives of American national security policy were or were not a result of Soviet actions. Kuniholm's major criticism of my analysis rests on his contention that the American conception of security was the result of Soviet intimidation. But Kuniholm appears unaware of the careful assessment of American interests in the Near East during July 1945, *before* the dispute over northern Iran, before the Soviet request for bases in the Dodecanese or Tripolitania, and before all those reports on troop movements that Professor Kuniholm cited in his book. During this assessment, on the eve of the Potsdam meeting, two senior American officers on the Joint Strategic Survey Committee argued in favor of acceding to Soviet ambitions in the Turkish straits. Their viewpoint was powerfully opposed by the army's Strategy and Policy Group, by the navy, and by the State Department. The JCS discussed the issue; McCloy reviewed it with his military experts; and the secretary of war submitted his views to the secretary of state. The result was a decision to oppose Soviet bases in the Dardanelles, Soviet territorial demands, and any aggrandizement of Soviet influence in the area. "The United States," it was argued, "must seek to prevent the growth of any single power or coalition to a position of such strength as to constitute a threat to the Western Hemisphere. . . . To this end, our long range policies in Europe and Asia must be in opposition to Russian expansion into Western Europe and Central and Southeast Asia." Noting that Soviet inroads into Asia Minor might facilitate Soviet control of the Eastern Mediterranean, the Aegean, and the Persian Gulf, American officials insisted that this would threaten the lifeline of the British empire and jeopardize interests of "central strategic importance" to the United States.[5]

Not only did the American conception of security in the Near East region precede the Iranian and Turkish crises of 1946, but it is questionable whether Soviet actions toward Turkey constituted a "war of nerves" or "intimidation," as Professor Kuniholm insists they did. It is important to note that Kuniholm no longer focuses on reports of Soviet troop movements. Acknowledging that intelligence information during late 1945 and 1946 domonstrated little likelihood of a Soviet attack, Kuniholm now places emphasis on other signs of Soviet intimidation.[6] But his evidence remains equally dubious. For example, alluding to the Soviet note to the Turkish government in August 1946, Kuniholm relies on Khrushchev's account of Beria goading Stalin into making territorial demands. But, in fact, this Soviet note made no territorial demands whatsoever. During the preceding months Soviet diplomats had intimated that they were flexible on territorial revision and that it was not a high priority issue. After the middle of 1946, moreover, the Soviets apparently ceased raising the territorial claim in diplomatic conversations with the Turks, or at least in those talks reported to American diplomats.[7]

[5] The quotations appear in Strategy and Policy Group, OPD, "U.S. Position Relative to Soviet Intentions in Turkey and the Near East," July 6, 1945, RG 165, ser. ABC 092 USSR (11-15-44); JCS, "United States Policy concerning the Dardanelles and Kiel Canal," July 12, 1945; JCS, Minutes of the 169th Meeting, July 17, 1945, RG 218, ser. CCS 092 (7-10-45); JCS to Secretary of State, July 30, 1945, *ibid.*; Embick to Handy, July 4, 1945, RG 165, OPD, 336 (top secret); Lincoln to McCloy, July 6, 1945, *ibid.*, ser. ABC 093 Kiel (7-6-45); Secretary of War to Secretary of State [July 1945], *ibid.*; and Thomas D. Roberts to Lincoln, July 16, 1945, *ibid.*

[6] For the intelligence reports, see Leffler, "Strategy, Diplomacy, and the Cold War," 4–5.

[7] For the Soviet note, see *FRUS, 1945*, 7: 827–29. For earlier discussions in which Soviet diplomats played down the territorial issue, see *ibid.*, 812–13, 816, 826. I have been unable to find in the State Department

Of course, the Soviets cared much more about bases in the straits than they did about territorial revision. In his book Professor Kuniholm repeatedly referred to Soviet efforts to discuss this matter as constituting a "war of nerves" or "intimidation." For example, alluding to a discussion between Stalin and Ambassador Smith in April 1946, he wrote that the Soviet dictator "still insisted" on a base in the Dardanelles. But when one reads Smith's record of this interview in *Foreign Relations*, one learns that the discussion actually ended with Stalin saying that he might be satisfied with much less than a base. Likewise, Kuniholm portrayed the Soviet note of August 1946 as a climactic event, clear testimony of Soviet intimidation. He did not explain that the Soviet note had been expected since the Potsdam conference. Nor did he inform his readers that, when the note arrived, there were no threats of force, no troop movements, and no military preparations. Even more interestingly, Professor Kuniholm neglected to mention that State Department officials reported that "the Turks were not particularly alarmed" on receiving the note, that the Turkish foreign minister seemed "somewhat relieved," that the secretary general of the Turkish Foreign Office "did not seem overly concerned," and that the Soviet note was a "less formidable blow than expected." The second Soviet note on the straits, presented in September, was considered even softer than the first.[8]

Between August 1946 and proclamation of the Truman Doctrine in March 1947, there were few signs of Soviet pressure on Turkey. State Department records reveal one outburst of Soviet propaganda in December 1946. But in January central intelligence reported numerous signs of Soviet moderation. Edwin Wilson, the American ambassador in Turkey, informed the State Department that Molotov had gone out of his way to be agreeable to the new Turkish ambassador in Moscow. In the whirlwind of events surrounding the Truman Doctrine, Wilson maintained that the Turks were not experiencing dire financial or economic circumstances, reiterated that they expressed no fear of imminent attack, and acknowledged no threatening troop movements. Acheson concurred that no crisis situation existed in Turkey. The Army's leading war planner informed the secretary of war that the State Department did not have the faintest idea how to justify aid to Turkey.[9]

It is worth recreating the above circumstances in some detail in order to dispel the notion that the Soviets engaged in a continual war of nerves. Let me emphasize, however, that I am *not* saying that Soviet intentions were benign or that they did not seek to enhance their interests in the area at the expense of Turkey. They

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records any reference to the Soviets' pressing the territorial issue after the middle of 1946. Among other files, I have looked at RG 59, 867.00, 761.67, 868.00, 861.20267, and 867.20.

[8] For the comments of State Department officials, see *FRUS, 1946*, 7: 832, 835, 860, 866–67, 869. For Smith's conversation with Stalin, see Kuniholm, *Origins of the Cold War in the Near East*, 356–57; also see *FRUS, 1946*, 6: 736. For Kuniholm's treatment of the Soviet note, see Kuniholm, *Origins of the Cold War in the Near East*, 355–82; and for the intelligence summary, emphasizing the absence of Soviet military preparations, see Vandenberg, Memorandum for the President, August 24, 1946.

[9] Wilson to Secretary of State, December 3, 1946, RG 59, 861.20267/11–1346; CIG, "Revised Soviet Tactics in International Affairs," January 6, 1947; Wilson to Secretary of State, January 10, 1947, RG 59, 761.67/1–947; Wilson to Secretary of State, February 26, 1947, *ibid.*, 761.67/2–2647; *FRUS, 1947*, 5: 87–95, 109–10; U.S. Senate, *Legislative Origins of the Truman Doctrine: Hearings Held in Executive Session Before the Committee on Foreign Relations* (Washington, 1973), 50, 56; and Lincoln to Secretary of War, March 12, 1947, RG 107, RPPP, General Subject File, box 1.

clearly desired to have bases in the Dardanelles and wanted to control the straits and the Black Sea. But such goals in and of themselves were hardly exceptional. Foreign Service officers like Loy Henderson acknowledged that the Soviet quest for bases in the Dardanelles did not differ in substance from the American quest for bases in the Atlantic and Pacific. John Hickerson noted that the Soviet desire to bring the defense of the straits strictly within the purview of the Black Sea powers resembled the thinking behind the inter-American security system.[10]

Professor Kuniholm, then, is wrong in saying that the "driving fact in the region was inauspicious Soviet behavior" (page 388). The American conception of security in the region existed at the close of the war; Soviet behavior, while worrisome, did not constitute relentless pressure or systematic intimidation. The Truman Doctrine, after all, was not a response to any Soviet initiative but to a British note. That note portended a substantial increment in Soviet power, regardless of Soviet actions, if the Greek Left emerged victorious or if Britain departed from the region. Significantly, Secretary of State Marshall's simultaneous decision to move ahead with new initiatives in Europe stemmed neither from Stalin's bellicosity at the Moscow conference nor from a new set of Soviet diplomatic demands. To the contrary, Marshall's frustration and alarm stemmed from Stalin's patience and equanimity in the face of growing socioeconomic ferment. The former army chief of staff recognized that this ferment constituted the West's greatest weakness and Soviet Russia's greatest strength.[11]

Accordingly, I find Professor Gaddis's emphasis on the Soviet military threat in Eurasia very misleading. Soviet military capabilities did not constitute "a threat of the first order," because neither American officials nor European statesmen expected Soviet military aggression. This was most apparent in the autumn of 1947 when American and British officials actually endorsed a partial demobilization of Turkish forces.[12] Nor did the subsequent security talks, culminating in NATO, reflect a primary concern with a Soviet military threat. In fact, on the eve of the Washington exploratory talks on security, both French and Belgian officials maintained that the Soviets had no desire to fight in Europe. Throughout the summer of 1948 British and American intelligence continued to report no signs of aggressive Soviet military intentions. In the middle of the security talks leading to the formation of NATO, Kennan "expressed disbelief that the Soviet leaders contemplated launching world conflict by military force."[13]

Even the assumption that the Soviets had the capability to overrun Western Europe remains open to question. As I note in my essay, Eisenhower, Sherman, and other war planners doubted whether the Soviets could solve the logistical and

[10] Henderson to Matthews, January 30, 1946, RG 59, Records of the Office of European Affairs, lot 54D394, box 17; and Hickerson to Henderson, December 11, 1946, *ibid.*, 761.67/12–3146.

[11] See, for example, *FRUS, 1947*, 2: 278–84, 337–44; Bohlen, *Transformation of American Foreign Policy*, 87–88; and Jones, *Fifteen Weeks*, 214–24.

[12] Henderson to Acting Secretary, October 8, 1947, RG 59, 867.20/10–447.

[13] For Belgian and French views, see *FRUS, 1948*, 3: 76, 142, 152; for the British perspective, see "Intelligence Division Daily Briefing," October 18, 1948; for American intelligence estimates, also see CIA, "The Strategic Value to the USSR of the Conquest of Western Europe and the Near East (to Cairo) Prior to 1950," July 30, 1948, HTL, HSTP, PSF, box 256; and CIA, "Appendices to ORE 58–48," October 27, 1948, *ibid.*; and for Kennan's statement, see *FRUS, 1948*, 3: 157.

mobilization problems that were attendant upon launching a full scale attack. That these doubts were well founded is illustrated in the most recent and most detailed study of the postwar Soviet army.[14] Thus, Professor Gaddis's allusions to Western military shortcomings without a comparable assessment of the potential adversary's weaknesses gives a distorted picture of the situation. On the eve of American intervention in Korea, the chairman of the Joint Chiefs of Staff still argued that Soviet cognizance of Soviet weakness would dissuade Russian military action.[15]

It is true, however, that during 1948 American policy makers came to believe that war was becoming more likely, although still improbable. American defense officials and military analysts realized that the initiatives deemed imperative to rebuild Western Europe, fill the vacuum in the eastern Mediterranean, and revive Japan might be perceived as threatening, might precipitate dangerous countermeasures, and might provoke conflict. State Department officials were no less aware of these possibilities than were the intelligence analysts cited in my essay. "The steps we are endeavoring to take," wrote Llewellyn Thompson in early 1949, "will surely increase the danger that the Russians may consider it advisable to strike before the steps can be effective."[16] When American officials talked about war arising out of a miscalculation, and this was the only likely cause of war in their view, they meant that they might underestimate the Soviet perception of threat engendered by American actions or that the Soviets might underestimate the West's determination to carry out its goals even if it meant war. War, then, would arise not as a result of planned aggression, but as a consequence of a diplomatic crisis that escaped the control of policy makers.

Of course, American defense officials did not want war; they wanted peace and security. But they realized that their concept of security might be incompatible with that of the Soviet Union, especially insofar as it encompassed the rebuilding of Russia's enemies and the establishment of bases on the Soviet periphery. It was well understood, for example, that if war erupted through miscalculation, the airports and military infrastructure of Turkey, being modernized as a result of Truman Doctrine assistance, would be utilized to help launch an air attack on and eventually a land offensive against the Soviet Union.[17] That Soviet leaders should have been worried about the consequences of Germany's rehabilitation, the modernization of airports on her periphery, the establishment of bases, and the formation of a military alliance in Western Europe is not surprising. Indeed, it was so understandable that American officials themselves feared that the Soviets might strike back. Yet because American policy makers defined national security as necessitating a favorable balance of power in Eurasia as well as control over Eurasian rimlands, they had no alternative but to go ahead with these initiatives. If this meant that war was more likely, it *now* became imperative to enhance one's military capabilities. Hence, in the latter part of 1948 the size of the military budget became a significant issue.

[14] See Evangelista, "Stalin's Postwar Army Reappraised," 110–38.
[15] *FRUS, 1950*, 7: 158.
[16] *Ibid., 1949*, 1: 293. Also see Kennan, "Remarks," January 8, 1948, RG 330, CD 3–1–36, box 8.
[17] Leffler, "Strategy, Diplomacy, and the Cold War."

Does this mean, as Professor Kuniholm appropriately asks, that the United States should have been indifferent to Soviet ambitions in the Near East? Like Kuniholm, I would answer this question in the negative. But such a reply does not lead me, as it does him, to dismiss the significance of American actions and to caricaturize Soviet policies. While Vojtech Mastny had many incisive things to say about Stalin's wartime diplomacy, he did not address postwar developments. Look, for example, at the Near East. That "Stalin tightened his grip wherever it reached" (page 389) is far from clear. If he did, why did he exert only intermittent pressure on Turkey, refrain from supporting the Greek communists, and withdraw troops from Iran (when American resistance was nothing but rhetorical and diplomatic). American officials were well aware in 1945 and 1946 that they could do little to stop Soviet advances in the Near East if Stalin were determined to take advantage of opportunities.[18] The problem, of course, is that we really do not know how Stalin defined his opportunities. Surely he wished to expand Soviet influence. But according to recent writers, he also did not want to rupture Soviet-American relations, sacrifice internal priorities, or weaken his leverage over communist leaders in other countries. Beleaguered by conflicting impulses, Soviet policy during 1945–48 was inconsistent, reactive, and indeterminate as well as opportunistic, pragmatic, and repressive.[19]

Accordingly, I would rephrase Professor Kuniholm's concluding question. The issue is not whether the Near East should have been incorporated into a Soviet or American sphere of influence but whether it might have been possible to prevent Soviet predominance and at the same time induce Stalin to define his opportunities in terms of Soviet-American cooperation. Once Stalin pulled Soviet troops out of Iran and ceased making demands on Turkey, had not American officials achieved key objectives? Yet far from satisfied, American policy makers pushed ahead to establish more modern airfields and potential bases in Turkey as well as to encourage the Iranian government to renege on oil concessions and air transit privileges previously extended to or under negotiation with the Soviet Union. Likewise, Kennan believed that the reduction of the communist threat in the Mediterranean and the end of the Berlin blockade should diminish America's military presence and lead to negotiations over Germany.[20] But most American civilian and military officials disagreed with Kennan. Recognizing this trend of developments, Professor Gaddis wrote in *Strategies of Containment* that the Truman administration "lost sight of the objective that strength was supposed to serve; ending the Cold War."[21] What Gaddis failed to recognize is that strength was not designed to end the Cold War; strength was designed to achieve the national security objectives I describe in my essay, regardless of the impact on the Cold War

[18] Lincoln to Embick, July 7, 1945, RG 165, ser. ABC 093 Kiel (7-6-45); Meeting of the Secretaries of State, War, and Navy, March 6, 1946, RG 107, RPPP, safe file, box 3; Kennan to Secretary of State, March 17, 1946, HTL, Elsey Papers, box 63; and Elbridge Durbrow to Secretary of State, August 5, 1946, RG 59, 761.67/8–546.

[19] For postwar Soviet policies, see references in footnote 7 of my essay, page 348, above.

[20] For Kennan's views, see, for example, Etzold and Gaddis, *Containment*, 121–23, 135–44; for Iran, see Kuniholm, *Origins of the Cold War in the Near East*, 383–99; and, for Turkey, see Leffler, "Strategy, Diplomacy, and the Cold War."

[21] Gaddis, *Strategies of Containment*, 118.

or on the Soviet Union. And the result of this may have been to discourage Soviet leaders from defining their opportunities in terms of a cooperative as well as a competitive relationship with the United States.

My point, however, is not to dismiss American concerns about Soviet intentions, but to illustrate the complexity of the questions that arise from a careful appraisal of immediate postwar developments. Since Soviet actions often were inconsistent, might American defense officials have developed a more nuanced assessment of Soviet objectives? Since the United States insisted on defense in depth, was it reasonable or desirable to think that the Soviets would accept anything less, especially since they suffered so much more during World War II? Since Soviet repression and communization within Central Europe sometimes escalated in reaction to American initiatives, might different American actions have elicited different behavior? Since the rebuilding of Germany, the formation of a military alliance, and the development of bases and air power obviously would be seen as threatening, could other means have been found to protect Western interests? Since postwar conditions in Asia were so turbulent, did not the American conception of security distort American requirements in that region, simplify the linkages between the Kremlin and revolutionary nationalist movements, and constrain American options? In general, might it have been possible to define and to implement American security interests in ways that might have reduced the Soviet perception of threat, aligned the United States with popular nationalist movements, curtailed the dependency on nuclear weapons and air power, and circumscribed American commitments?

Professor Gaddis seeks to dismiss the significance of such questions. Rather than grapple with the difficult dilemmas that arise from the grandiose American conception of security, he complacently writes that "we can take it for granted that Americans were not exempt from the temptations of power" (page 384). Yes, we may take it for granted, but at our peril. Taking it for granted generates incomplete accounts of the origins of the Cold War; taking it for granted retards assessments of the American share of responsibility for the breakdown of the wartime coalition; taking it for granted engenders a self-deceiving mythology of American innocence, a mythology that creeps into the work of such shrewd observers of international politics as Kissinger, Laqueur, and Gaddis himself; taking it for granted beclouds analyses of how the American definition of security clashes with the perceived security interests of other powers, thereby escalating tension and mutual distrust; taking it for granted blurs understanding of how the American conception of security generates pressures for military embroilment in areas of peripheral interest throughout the Third World.

RATHER THAN TAKE THE AMERICAN CONCEPTION OF SECURITY for granted, I suggest we continue our efforts to analyze the geostrategic, economic, political, technological, ideological, and bureaucratic factors that shape this quest for power. We need to deepen our understanding of other nation's quest for power through more

penetrating assessments of their capabilities and intentions. We must examine how the American quest for power and security can be reconciled with the similar drives of other nations, both great and small ones. And in undertaking such studies, we must look more carefully at the delicate web of relationships that tie the rivalries of great nations to regional and local instabilities. Professor Gaddis may still think these are unimportant pursuits; I disagree. Our readers can make the final judgment.

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