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Defense of the West: book review

Rynning, Sten

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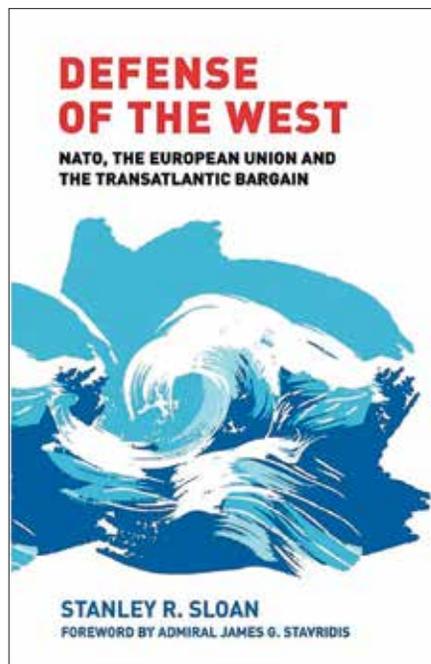
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Perhaps the most significant issue with deriving policy implications from the analysis is Kroenig's definition of superiority itself. In the book's foundational quantitative analysis, superiority is defined by the difference between two nuclear states' numbers of warheads. Kroenig acknowledges that this is an imperfect measure but downplays the limitation's importance. A true accounting of superiority would address not only warhead counts but also a wide variety of capabilities such as command and control, delivery vehicles, readiness posture, defenses, and the like. In a nuclear peer relationship, as between the United States and Russia, policymakers will never really think about superiority in the way that Kroenig measures it. And in other key relationships, like between the United States and China, capability disparities are so large that superiority as a policy choice is remote from the most important drivers of nuclear strategy.

By the same token, the rationales underpinning the expansion or modernization priorities of today's major nuclear powers are not tied to the aggregate nuclear balance among countries. Instead, they are efforts to enhance deterrence and resilience under specific, stressful scenarios where nuclear attack could conceivably be contemplated.

In this sense, the book's title works better as a riposte to Jervis than as a policy guide. The "logic of American nuclear strategy," after all, has been shaped by many considerations, with "superiority" being just one among them. And readers should be particularly hesitant to accept Kroenig's implication that a U.S. arsenal far larger than Russia's would be an unambiguous and unvarnished benefit to U.S. national security. Nevertheless, Kroenig certainly succeeds in showing how and why strategic superiority can matter, and his analysis will undoubtedly earn a prominent place in both academic and policy debates in the years ahead. JFQ

Michael Fitzsimmons is a Visiting Research Professor in the Strategic Studies Institute at the U.S. Army War College.



Defense of the West: NATO, the European Union and the Transatlantic Bargain

By Stanley R. Sloan
 Manchester University Press, 2016
 \$34.95 400 pp.
 ISBN: 978-1526105752

Reviewed by Sten Rynning

In this timely book, one of the most seasoned observers of Atlantic security affairs, Stanley Sloan, offers insights about the future of the North Atlantic Treaty Organization (NATO). These insights are linked to a detailed examination of the Alliance's origins and development. Sloan pinpoints three key alliance drivers—national interests, common values, and political leadership—and offers a carefully circumscribed optimistic conclusion: common national interests and values are strong, but political leadership is volatile and in need of constructive and effective management.

Sloan's circumscribed optimism turns out to be quite justified. Shortly after the publication of the book, Great Britain decided to exit from the European Union and Donald Trump was elected President of the United States. Trump had been

initially hostile toward the Alliance, labeling it "obsolete," then declaring that it no longer was. He disappointed Allies at his visit to NATO headquarters on May 25, 2017, when he refused to explicitly back the Article 5 clause. Trump's speech reflected the inward looking and dark "American carnage" view of his inaugural speech, which is at odds with the reassurances of traditional U.S. policy and the speeches of Secretary of Defense James Mattis.

Sloan is to the point when he writes that if the Allies want NATO, they can have it but they should consider putting some actions behind their words. Put differently, they can wreck the Alliance by not investing in it. There is probably sufficient commonality of values and interests to justify and prolong NATO as it currently exists, but new nationalist values are entering the arena, and the political leaders promoting these new values have no real appreciation for the Alliance, past or future. This goes not only for President Trump, but also the Brexit movement, which pretends to be pro-NATO but is openly disdainful of its European Allies.

The book offers a framework for appreciating this challenging situation. Like this reviewer and other observers, Sloan did not foresee that the disruptive power of nationalism would come from the United States and instead zooms in on European developments. Naturally, we should not discard the possibility that by holding back on his NATO commitment, President Trump was simply seeking better burdensharing. There is widespread agreement, also in Europe, that European defense budgets must increase to correct the trans-Atlantic bargain. However, by reducing NATO to a transactional money exchange—a type of U.S. welfare project for European Allies—and by being silent on collective geopolitical interests, President Trump is effectively jeopardizing the political foundation of the Alliance. Sloan's book is an ideal gateway to appreciate this challenge and its serious implications.

The buildup to the book's concluding section on NATO's potential for change is built on a thorough historical review.

The initial section explores Cold War NATO, and a second section investigates post-Cold War NATO adaptation. It is manifestly clear in this investigation that NATO walks on two legs: one military and one political. Both are needed to keep NATO standing. The most explicit statement to this effect was the so-called Harmel Doctrine. This doctrine, formulated by then-Belgian Minister of Foreign Affairs Pierre Harmel, was adopted by the Alliance in December 1967. The doctrine advocated a strong defense combined with good diplomatic relations with the Warsaw Pact states. It reverberated through the making of all European consultation and disarmament mechanisms (the Conference on Security and Cooperation in Europe) and the post-Cold War era where NATO became the prime motor of continental order. The Alliance's extension eastward thus followed. The U.S. congressional decision to back NATO enlargement defines one of the most illuminating sections and most personal moments for the author.

As the book makes amply clear, continental order in Europe is based on a mix of allied military strength and political commitment to principle. *Defense of the West* effectively communicates that if Allies allow collective principles to erode, they are tempting adverse political change of continental consequences. The same can be said for the global order, which is American-inspired and American-led. The book mentions, but does not delve into, this global dimension, which is evident in NATO's global network of partners that was dramatically extended and solidified by the Afghan campaign of the last decade. For Sloan, political principle both in Europe and globally amount to the same thing: a liberal-democratic reservoir of energy supportive of the U.S.-led international order. However, it is a potential for support that will be realized only by steady political leadership and continued engagement. Secretary Mattis's new defense strategy contains an entire line of effort that appears to recognize that.

Sloan has, over the course of decades, tracked the trans-Atlantic bargain and probed the potential for a fully fledged

Atlantic community. Today, the bargain remains, while the community is a vision struggling against nationalist values.

Defense of the West reads exceptionally well. More importantly, its clear argument that NATO has endured on account of interests, values, and leadership make it ideal for personal reflection or classroom education. Anyone who takes an interest in the future of the Alliance, Europe, and global security will find this book simultaneously thought-provoking and indispensable. JFQ

Sten Rynning is Professor of International Relations in the Department of Political Science at the University of Southern Denmark, where he also heads the Center for War Studies. Dr. Rynning was a Visiting Professor at American University when he wrote this review.

New from NDU Press

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Like, Comment, Retweet: The State of the Military's Nonpartisan Ethic in the World of Social Media
by Heidi A. Urben



Past research contends that with the exception of voting in Presidential elections, military officers' political participation is fairly muted.

Through a survey of more than 500 military elites attending the United States Military Academy and National Defense University, this case study seeks to establish the nature and extent of political expression throughout social media and whether such expression is in keeping with the norm of nonpartisanship.

Findings suggest that while most military elites continue to identify as conservative and Republican, fewer appear to do so today than at any other time over the past 30 years. Military elites who identify as liberals and Democrats are more likely to have more politically diverse military friends on social media, but are also more likely to report feeling uncomfortable by their friends' politics. This study concludes by considering the implications these findings carry for the norms of an apolitical, non-partisan military.



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Book Review: NATO and American Security NATO and American Security. "Cotkin provides a gracefully written and consistently intelligent defense of James and pragmatism that deserves a wide audience among intellectual historians and their students."--Robert C. Bannister, 'American Historical Review.' Read more. Article. Juror decision-making in rape cases : effects of age and attractiveness of the victim and sex of the Nora Karin. Villemur.