



The Big Stick: The Limits of Soft Power and the Necessity of Military Force

Eliot A. Cohen

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In *The Big Stick*, Eliot A. Cohen argues that the United States must use military power in support of its foreign policy, but that doing so will be increasingly difficult. The United States must continue to assume primary responsibility for maintaining world order, or risk a chaotic international environment reminiscent of the 1920's and 1930's -- but this time with far more devastating weapons in dangerous hands. America faces major national security challenges: a rising China, enduring jihadi movements, states like Russia and Iran that attempt to upend regions they seek then to dominate, and precarious ungoverned regions from anarchic lands such as Libya to the intangible arena of cyberspace. To confront these problems, our government must revive old concepts such as mobilization and in some cases, preemption and, more importantly, engage in original thinking about how, and under what conditions, the United States should use force – as it will undoubtedly find itself compelled to do.

Combining the scholarship of a prize-winning historian, the experience of a former senior diplomat, and the fluency of a gifted essayist, Cohen shows how America must rethink and reorder its armed strength to meet the needs of a world in flux.

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