

Acknowledgments

It is surreal to finish a book during a global pandemic. On the one hand, there is so much uncertainty and anxiety that it is difficult to concentrate. On the other hand, working on a book is an excellent distraction from events swirling around outside. Quarantine in particular is an odd, if useful, forcing mechanism.

Long before the final push to complete the manuscript, this book benefited from the support, feedback, and advice of many communities and individuals. At the George Washington University (GW), Charlie Glaser, Jim Goldgeier, and Elizabeth Saunders believed in my work perhaps before I did. Their patience and guidance then and now has been invaluable.

I was tremendously lucky to receive the support of a Stanton Nuclear Security Fellowship that brought me to Cambridge, Massachusetts, and the Security Studies Program (SSP) at the Massachusetts Institute of Technology. Owen Coté and Barry Posen were generous with their time and their literature recommendations. My development as an academic soared through participation in two groups within SSP: the Strategic Forces Working Group and the International Relations Work-in-Progress Group. At the time, no similar organization existed at GW, and it was with these two groups that I learned how to think—about both my own work and that of others. I am grateful to the members of both groups.

My stay in Cambridge continued through the generosity of the International Security Program's Project on Managing the Atom (MTA) at Harvard University's Kennedy School of Government and Belfer Center for Science and International Affairs. What began with a one-year fellowship morphed into two additional years of work. There I found, in Paul Avey, Gene Gerzhoy, Evan Perkoski, Mike Poznansky, Miranda Priebe, Jaganath Sankaran,

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That perfect-for-me academic job turned out to be in the Sam Nunn School of International Affairs at the Georgia Institute of Technology. Though I never expected to live in the South, I have been gifted with tremendous colleagues and countless opportunities. Though no one could recall previously holding a book workshop in the department, my colleagues and department chair took to the idea and generously supported the effort without hesitation. Jenna Jordan and Adam Stulberg kindly shepherded the workshop and made sure that the conversation stayed on track. Jenna has read the complete book more times than is reasonable. I am tremendously grateful for her friendship, as well as her time and dedication in helping to make the book better. I am also indebted to book workshop participants—Mälfrid Braut-Heghammer, Matthew Fuhrmann, Scott Sagan, and Todd Sechser—for taking the time out of their busy lives to treat the manuscript with such care. It goes without saying that the substantive feedback and presentational advice of this group of scholars was outstanding. The support, encouragement, and kindness they showed throughout the process were what surprised me. These four scholars model not only the best of the political science discipline but also the generosity and support of exceptional mentorship.

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To my mind, mentors can be found in many different places. Through Jim Goldgeier and the Bridging the Gap project, I met Naazneen Barma, Brent Durbin, Bruce Jentleson, Jordan Tama, and Steve Weber. Their vision, advice, kindness, and humor have made this journey intellectually richer and much more enjoyable than I would have thought possible. Through Bridging the Gap and by virtue of living in Washington, DC, I found great friends in Jeff Colgan and Michael Weintraub. They are always ready to lend an ear, offer

professional advice, find an escape route at a conference, and laugh at whatever shenanigans come our way. This book—along with the rest of my scholarship and, frankly, my sanity—owes a tremendous debt of gratitude to the writing groups that have been a consistent feature of my life. At GW, the Yentas—Shannon Powers and Amir Stepak—kept me laughing and kept me writing. More recently, the RED writing group has become my lifeline. Elizabeth Acorn, Danielle Gilbert, and I have met nearly weekly for the last few years. I hope someone is keeping track of the many publications and professional successes that emerged during this time. Reading each word of this book repeatedly, they have pushed me to clarify and improve at every stage. They have also offered invaluable professional advice along the way. Dani painstakingly edited the final manuscript. Each sentence is tighter and the manuscript that much stronger for her skill and dedication. Honorary RED member Jonathan Pike offered suggestions at critical junctures.

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Over the years, I have benefited from the support and encouragement of friends and family near and far. The Qs—especially my partners in crime here in the Southeast—Molly Berkemeier and Paige Price Cone—have become coauthors but, more important, friends since a conference brought us together in South Bend, Indiana. The Ron family made my research trips to Israel and my life a wild and wonderful adventure. They welcomed me into their homes and were inquisitive and supportive of the project. Niv in particular provided love, laughter, and cheerleading when I needed it most and Veuve Clicquot for important celebrations. I hope I have done the chapter on Israeli decision-making justice, though any mistakes in the book remain my own.

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proud and candidly a little relieved to be able to show all of these friends a final product.

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All Options on the Table

