

ACKNOWLEDGMENTS

In 2014, Al Song of the Smith Richardson Foundation reached out to me proposing that I write a new book on Japan's strategy toward China. It was the centennial of the First World War, and the Smith Richardson board was interested in supporting studies that would help illuminate ways that Asia could avoid the conflagration that had overtaken Europe in 1914. I was still working on my history of U.S. strategy in Asia, *By More than Providence*, and hesitated to launch a new book project so soon, but Al and his colleagues at Smith Richardson were characteristically patient, persistent, and generous in their support and encouragement.¹ With help from the indefatigable Teraoka Ayumi, Georgetown Master of Arts in Asian Studies (MASIA) grad and now doctoral student at Princeton, I launched the new project with a three-day gathering of American and Japanese diplomatic historians to consider Japan's options in the face of the China challenge. Warren Cohen, Peter Feaver, Will Inboden, Jonathan Steinberg, and Phil Zelikow joined me in Hakone, Japan, along with Hosoya Yuichi, Iokibe Makoto, Kitaoka Shiinichi, Sakamoto Kazuya, Nakanishi Hiroshi, and Shiraishi Takashi. It was a bilateral dream team of strategic thinkers, all of whom truly helped me to frame the overall approach to the book by drawing out important lessons from Japan's past and the statecraft of other powers throughout history.

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I would never have finished this or my earlier books if my wife Eileen Pennington and my children Xander and Virginia had not been so tolerant of my frequent cloistering in the study to write. "Quiet. . . your father is writing!" is a refrain many authors will appreciate and for which I owe my entire family a great deal.

As a scholar practitioner I try to convey through my work a sense of appreciation for those who have toiled in the policy world before us and a sense of inheritance and purpose for those who will follow. For those who write at the intersection of history and political science, however, it is also important not to obscure failures, tragedies, and biases. Being an idealistic realist is a tough balancing act that I hope I have achieved in these pages.