

Special Providence: American Foreign Policy and How It Changed the World

Walter Russell Mead

"God has a special providence for fools, drunks and the United States of America."--Otto von Bismarck

America's response to the September 11 attacks spotlighted many of the country's longstanding goals on the world stage: to protect liberty at home, to secure America's economic interests, to spread democracy in totalitarian regimes and to vanquish the enemy utterly.

One of America's leading foreign policy thinkers, Walter Russell Mead, argues that these diverse, conflicting impulses have in fact been the key to the U.S.'s success in the world. In a sweeping new synthesis, Mead uncovers four distinct historical patterns in foreign policy, each exemplified by a towering figure from our past.

Wilsonians are moral missionaries, making the world safe for democracy by creating international watchdogs like the U.N. Hamiltonians likewise support international engagement, but their goal is to open foreign markets and expand the economy. Populist Jacksonians support a strong military, one that should be used rarely, but then with overwhelming force to bring the enemy to its knees. Jeffersonians, concerned primarily with liberty at home, are suspicious of both big military and large-scale international projects.

A striking new vision of America's place in the world, *Special Providence* transcends stale debates about realists vs. idealists and hawks vs. doves to provide a revolutionary, nuanced, historically-grounded view of American foreign policy.

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