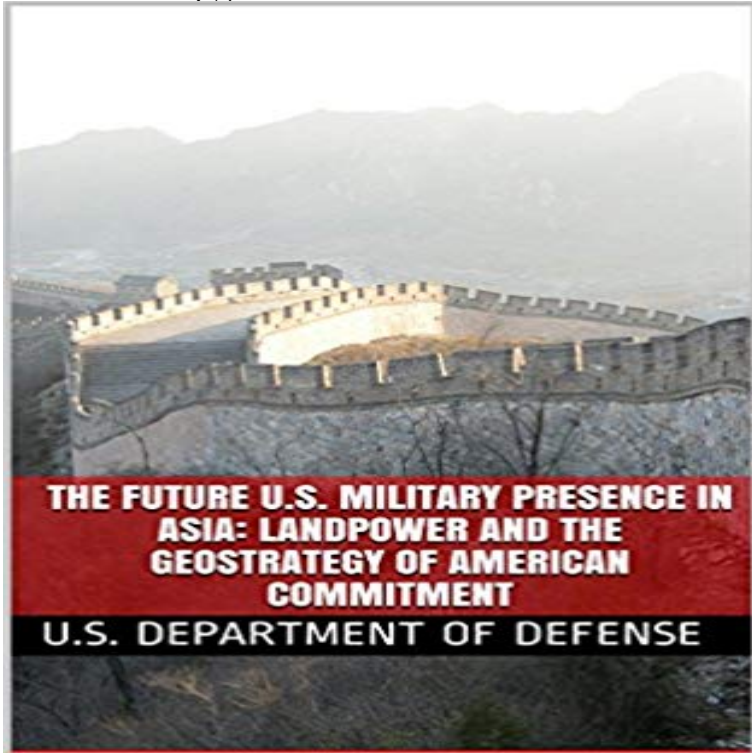


The Future U.S. Military Presence in Asia: Landpower and the Geostrategy of American Commitment



The United States strategic framework in the Pacific has three parts: peacetime engagement, as described above, which includes a forward presence; crisis response, which builds on forward-stationed forces, the boots-on-the-ground and, if necessary, fighting and winning any conflict that might develop. The mechanisms to carry out this strategic framework are embedded in the regular contacts and engagement activities that the United States carries out with friends and allies in the region. What the future will look like in Asia will be determined largely on what happens on the Korean Peninsula. It could be changed by such eventualities as a resurgent, expansionist, or nationalistic Russia. But the dialogue that is taking place among strategists in Seoul and Tokyo needs to be broadened to include the United States. It also must become a public debate. The tyranny of distance requires a United States military presence, and the governments of Korea and Japan must involve their own voters in a civil debate, setting forth the case for a new security structure. This is important not only for domestic political reasons in Asia, but because the American people need to know that there is a civil debate about the subject among their allies, and that the alliances that have kept Asia safe, peaceful and prosperous for 55 years are still useful, welcome, and healthy.

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