

Contents

Introduction — XI

Chapter 1: Trump and America's role in the World — 1

- The starting point — 1
- Trump's narcissism — 2
- Political philosophy and populism — 3
- Authoritarian tendencies — 5
- Inexperienced, unpredictable, incompetent, and corrupt — 7
- The U.S. role in the world at the end of Trump's presidency — 9

Chapter 2: Biden confronts the challenge of de-Trumping U.S. foreign policy — 14

- Restoring American leadership: Biden's prime objective — 15
- Diplomacy Rooted in Democracy: liberal democracy at home and abroad — 16
- China: the leading nation-state challenger — 17
- Russia: defense, deterrence, and careful cooperation — 19
- North Korea: danger in a small package — 20
- Iran, Middle East: a new focus — 20
- Afghanistan: intending to head for the exits — 21
- Cuba and Latin America: rejecting Trump unilateralism — 22
- Immigration: seeking more humane approach — 23
- Counterterrorism: working with allies — 24
- Pandemic policy: top domestic priority influencing foreign policy — 24
- Climate change: returning to the Paris Climate Accord — 25
- Domestic "soft power" issues: fighting U.S. drift toward authoritarianism — 26
- Foreign policy based on strong, united nation: Biden seeks bipartisanship — 27

Chapter 3: Biden's beginning a mixed bag — 29

- Restoring American leadership: the right words — 29
- Diplomacy Rooted in Democracy: restoring relations with allies — 31
- China: seeking multilateral support for hard line toward Beijing — 32
- Russia: don't trust, do verify — 33
- North Korea: seeking contact, unsuccessfully — 34
- Iran, Middle East: back to the nuclear deal — 35

Afghanistan: preparing to leave — **36**
Cuba and Latin America: frustrated with Cuban repression — **37**
Immigration: new policies, but dealing with a surge — **38**
Counterterrorism: new challenges after Afghan withdrawal? — **39**
Pandemic policy: administration's biggest early success — **39**
Climate change: building foundation for international cooperation — **40**
Domestic "soft power" issues: "building back better" — **41**
Foreign policy based on strong, united nation: it takes two to tango — **44**

Chapter 4: What obstacles stand in Biden's way? — 46

Diplomacy Rooted in Democracy: restoring trust in U.S. model will not be easy — **46**
China: presenting a competing model to liberal democracy — **50**
Russia: still actively interfering in Western democracies — **53**
North Korea: small country presenting big problem — **57**
Iran, Middle East: Biden needs Iran, Saudis, and Israel to cooperate — **60**
Afghanistan: Taliban takeover challenges Biden leadership goals — **62**
Cuba and Latin America: not so easy... — **64**
Immigration: policy may not produce substantial results for a long time — **66**
Counterterrorism: terrorist threats with roots abroad and at home — **69**
Pandemic policy: anti-vaxxers/maskers risk Covid-19 resurgence — **70**
Climate change: no time to waste — **72**
Domestic "soft power" issues: economic revival depends on pandemic control — **74**
Foreign policy based on strong, united nation: many threats to unity — **75**
Restoring American leadership: still in question — **76**

Chapter 5: Why does it matter whether Biden brings America back? — 78

In historical context — **78**
The bottom line — **81**
Democracy at home, key to leadership abroad — **83**

Bibliography — 85

About the Author — 92