



The Life and Work of General Andrew J. Goodpaster: Best Practices in National Security Affairs (American Warriors)

C. Richard Nelson

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General Andrew J. Goodpaster (1915-2005) was a brilliant military leader, a scholar and, most of all, an exceptional presidential adviser who served under seven successive administrations. A respected strategist, he participated at the highest levels of government in many of the most important decisions of the second half of the twentieth century. As President Eisenhower's Staff Secretary, he was the de facto originator of the National Security Council process and served as a mentor and role model to his successors down to the present day. He was involved in many security challenges, such as establishing and sustaining NATO, planning for nuclear weapons and arms control, and implementing détente. He developed a collaborative method of approaching national security affairs—a style that reflected a strong capacity to engage effectively the necessary people to work together to achieve the best possible outcomes. In doing so, he learned and taught best practices in national security that still influence decision making today.

This biography shows the importance of experienced soldier-scholars with high integrity on national security teams and provides the first systematic mining of the documents Goodpaster wrote on national security. Organized chronologically, it demonstrates how Goodpaster was able to adapt best practices to a constantly changing political, military, economic and technological environment. It also explains why he was so frequently selected as an insider in national security decision making. His life and work reveal how best to approach complex national security problems and the kind of collaborative leadership needed to get the job done. Still today, his method confirms General Scowcroft's view that Goodpaster is "too important to ignore."

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