Enduring without an Enemy: NATO's Realist Foundation

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Summary/Abstract: NATO's present raison d'être is rooted in its members' national interest having defensive and offensive elements, consisting in both security and autonomy. With security from other great powers all but assured, members seek a greater offensive capacity to shape the international environment. The United States wants legitimacy from its European partners in order to facilitate offensive operations while several European states desire military capabilities for force projection. NATO as an institution is well-suited for hashing out the terms of this exchange, but NATO, as a realist's bargain, portends a troubled marriage, in which levels of anxiety and...
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