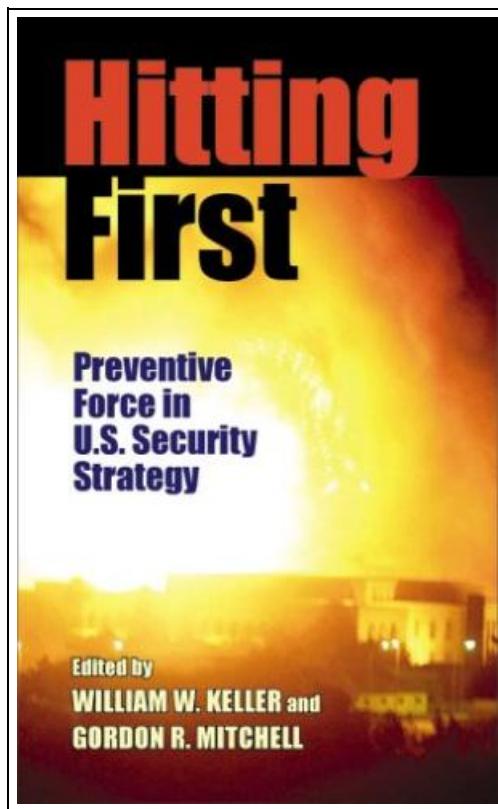


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University of Pittsburgh Press, United States, 2006. Paperback. Condition: New. Language: English . Brand New Book. The U.S. war in Iraq was not only an intelligence failure - it was a failure in democratic discourse. Hitting First offers a critical analysis of the political dialogue leading up to the American embrace of preventive war as national policy and as the rationale for the invasion and occupation of Iraq. Taking as its point of departure the important distinction between preemptive and preventive war, the contributors examine how the rhetoric of policy makers conflated these two very different concepts until the public could no longer effectively distinguish between a war of necessity and a war of choice. Although the book focuses on recent events, Hitting First takes into consideration the broader historical, ethical, and legal context of current American policies. Precedents are examined for preventive military action based on conventional as well as nuclear, biological, and chemical weapons threats. The authors also consider recent examples of the rhetoric of humanitarian intervention, which have tended to undermine traditional notions of national sovereignty, making purportedly morally justifiable actions easier to entertain. Intelligence gathering and its use, manipulation, and distortion to suit policy agendas are also analyzed, as are the realities of the application of military force, military requirements to sustain a policy of preventive war, and post-conflict reconstruction. Hitting First presents a timely and essential view of the lessons learned from the failures of the Iraqi conflict and offers a framework for avoiding future policy breakdowns through a process of deliberative public and governmental debate within a free market of ideas. The critiques and prescriptions offered here provide a unique and valuable perspective on the challenges of formulating and conducting national security policy while sustaining the principles and institutions of American democracy. This collection...

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