Today, the United States stands alone as the world's sole superpower. But even unrivaled military might is not enough to ensure America's safety from the unprecedented threats posed by non-state terrorism. Has the post-World War II ideal of a collective security, upheld through international collaboration, become obsolete in the face of an enemy that recognizes no borders or governments?

In the essays that follow, School of Law faculty Peter Danchin and Michael Van Alstine consider international law's influence and limitations in defining America's global rights and response in the face of threats to its national security.

An international human rights expert who also focuses on legal theory, Professor Danchin investigates sovereignty, security, and the question of whether peace can ever be attained through the rule of global law. A native South African educated in Australia, Danchin probes the realities of domestic autonomy vs. international self-defense in a work inspired by his forthcoming book.

Presidential powers have been debated since the Constitution was first crafted, and current headlines tout the fact that the controversy is fresher than ever. The Bush administration has taken liberties, according to some, especially in its foreign policy. Others argue that the President's charge to protect the country is clearly delineated in the threads of America's original mandate. International law scholar Michael Van Alstine, also Associate Dean for Research and Faculty Development, explores this historic struggle for executive power.