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Dr. Inside and Dr. Outside: Physicists Involved With National Security and Foreign Policy

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Physicists have had a special interest in American national security and arms control since at least the Manhattan Project. They have served our country in uniform and in the career civil service. Some have left academic careers for brief periods to work as political appointees, consultants, or resident scholars and then returned to an academic life, but often with changed goals. Some have tried government life and left nearly immediately, while others dipped a toe in and decided to stay. I will look at real-life examples, mostly using real names, drawn from my career and circle of colleagues to try to explain why some physicists have been extremely successful, why others have not, and what happens to a physicist who moved to Washington and decides to stay. I will also discuss routes into public service for those interesting in giving it a try.