

HUDSON INSIDER



A Letter from Our President

John P. Walters, President and CEO, Hudson Institute

Dear Friends of Hudson,

My colleagues and I hope you are having a happy and healthy start to 2026. We are deeply grateful for your friendship and support, which made last year one of the most productive in the Institute's history and positioned us to confront the growing geopolitical challenges the United States and our allies face. The first year of the second Trump administration was more focused on foreign policy than many thought it would be. Fortunately, our experts at Hudson anticipated both the challenges and opportunities and, as a result, were able to have a major impact on policy.

It was wonderful to see so many of you at our annual Herman Kahn Award Gala in New York City this past November as we honored Palantir Cofounder and CEO Dr. Alex Karp. Few have done more to advance Hudson's mission of promoting American global leadership than Alex, both through his work at Palantir and in his personal capacity. With the Western values that have undergirded America's success since its founding facing attacks from across the ideological spectrum, Alex reminds us that these ideals are worth defending: "I'm most proud of the fact that we've been able to shift the culture in Silicon Valley away from being skeptical of America to being pro-America," he said in his acceptance remarks. As you know, Hudson has argued for more than 60 years that American global leadership depends upon American technological leadership. Alex and his Palantir colleagues—among them Hudson Distinguished Fellow Mike Gallagher—are changing the way the

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United States and our partners think about Western defense and the private sector's role in upholding international security.

Hudson Institute Trustee and Palantir CTO Shyam Sankar delivered a heartfelt and moving introduction, noting how Alex understands that “the West needs to defend itself with both wisdom and strength.” There's no better way to describe what we are doing at Hudson Institute as we seek to promote both smart diplomacy and unrivaled American hard power dominance.

In December, Hudson hosted a major conference to highlight how antisemitism on both the left and the right threatens American national security. Organized by Hudson's Center for Peace and Security in the Middle East, directed by Senior Fellow Mike Doran, the conference brought together thought leaders to spotlight how America's main adversaries—China, Russia, Iran, and North Korea—amplify antisemitic voices in American discourse to undermine the vital US-Israel alliance. Representative Brian Mast (R-FL), chairman of the House Foreign Affairs Committee, and Dr. Sebastian Gorka, deputy assistant to the president for counterterrorism, delivered keynote remarks. This work will help to inform and guide the center's efforts in the year ahead.

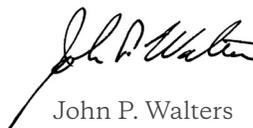
Looking to Capitol Hill, Hudson Senior Fellows William Chou and Michael Sobolik worked with Representative Rob Wittman (R-VA) to strengthen the SECURE Minerals Act, crafted to ensure the United States and our partners no longer depend on adversaries for critical minerals. We also hosted Senator Steve Daines (R-MT), Representative Pat Fallon (R-TX), United Nations Ambassador Mike

Waltz, and Under Secretary of State Jacob Helberg for discussions on American policy and global affairs.

Our work would not be possible without your support, and I hope you are proud of your investment in Hudson and our experts. In 2025, we published a record-breaking 84 original research reports and memos that shaped policy discussions in Washington and allied capitals. Our experts, particularly Walter Russell Mead, Mike Doran, Nadia Schadlow, Bryan Clark, Mike Gallagher, and Michael Solon, were featured regularly in major publications, including *The Wall Street Journal*, *The New York Times*, *The Washington Post*, *The Dallas Morning News*, *The Free Press*, and countless others. Nikki Haley, Rebeccah Heinrichs, Peter Rough, H.R. McMaster, Patrick Cronin, and John Lee appeared prominently on television networks from Fox News and CNN to the BBC and i24.

We live in the most unsettled international security environment since the end of World War II, and the challenges facing America and our allies in the years ahead remain immense. Because of you, Hudson is positioned to tackle these challenges head-on. I look forward to seeing you in Washington and around the country in the coming weeks and months as we continue our joint effort to promote American global leadership and ensure security, freedom, and prosperity.

Sincerely,



John P. Walters
President and CEO, Hudson Institute



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EVENTS AND MEETINGS at Hudson



Under Secretary of State for Economic Affairs Jacob Helberg sat down with Joel Scanlon to discuss the Pax Silica initiative and the global AI race.



Congressman John Moolenaar, chairman of the House Select Committee on the CCP, spoke with David Feith about the US-China relationship in an era of rising geopolitical competition.



Congressman Rich McCormick, a member of the House Armed Services and Foreign Affairs Committees, sat down with Jason Hsu to discuss how the US can secure its leadership in AI.



Venezuelan opposition leader Leopoldo López Mendoza joined Hudson for a conversation on his political imprisonment, the arrest of Nicolás Maduro, and next steps in Venezuela.



Congressman Brian Mast, chairman of House Foreign Affairs Committee, gave a keynote during Hudson's conference on antisemitism and national security.



Hudson hosted Ambassador Kang Kyung-wha for a conversation on US-South Korea relations and the Republic of Korea's policy toward China.



Senator David McCormick sat down with Joel Scanlon to examine how the Nippon Steel deal advances US national security.



Latvian Foreign Minister Baiba Braže participated in a fireside chat with Peter Rough on the future of her nation's foreign policy.



EXPERT SPOTLIGHT

Q&A with Rebecca L. Heinrichs

Rebecca L. Heinrichs is a senior fellow at Hudson Institute and the director of its Keystone Defense Initiative.

1. What is your assessment of President Trump's National Security Strategy?

The NSS maintains that the US is a global superpower with vital interests that span geographic regions. America cannot guarantee its citizens' prosperity and security or defend our way of life by abandoning allies or retreating into our immediate neighborhood. The NSS gives special attention to defending the Western Hemisphere, and that's a welcome change, because China, Russia, and Iran have exploited weak narco-communist states in Latin America. Ensuring adversaries cannot coerce the US so close to our shores will allow America to more credibly project power abroad and defend our interests in Europe, the Indo-Pacific, and the Middle East.

2. How should the US modernize its nuclear forces?

This is the first time the US has faced two nuclear peer adversaries: China and Russia. Now that New START has expired, the Trump administration should reverse changes the Obama administration made to comply with the treaty. The lowest-hanging fruit is reopening the launch tubes for Trident II missiles that were closed in 2011. Moreover, B-52s that carry only conventional weapons should also be able to carry nuclear weapons. Without increasing the number of nuclear weapons in the arsenal, the US can increase the number of warheads on the Trident II submarine-launched missiles and the Minuteman IIIs.

President Trump has indicated he wants the United States to test nuclear weapons "on an equal basis" as

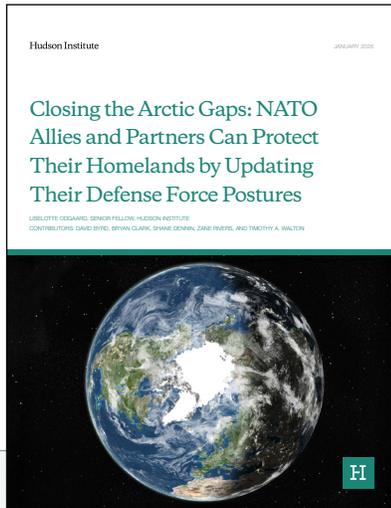
other countries' testing programs, specifically those of Russia and China. US military officials have indicated that Russia "probably is not adhering to the nuclear testing moratorium in a manner consistent with the zero-yield standard." And according to Under Secretary of State Tom DiNanno, China has conducted nuclear explosive tests. Both Russia and China are improving their nuclear forces, and the US should not be restrained in doing whatever is necessary to bolster our nuclear deterrent.

America should also execute the nuclear modernization program of record. This means looking for more cost-effective ways to deliver the Sentinel ICBM program and resist pressure to delay the program or reduce testing of Minuteman IIIs in the hopes of extending their life. We are out of time, so we need to cut through bureaucratic red tape to make the Sentinel program go faster for less money. We should also increase the number of *Columbia*-class submarines from 12 to 15. Last, we should acquire at least 300 B-21 bombers, which will be necessary for the two-nuclear-peer environment.

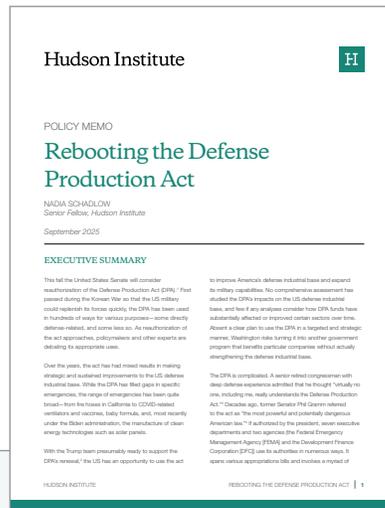
3. How does antisemitism threaten America?

Antisemitism is a means to attack America's most basic civilizational core. The Judeo-Christian founding of the US is the source of our strategic culture, which begins with the reality that all human beings are possessed with dignity and have natural rights that just governments rightly defend. Our adversaries reject this reality, and they know that inflaming antisemitism creates divisions in America as well as confuses and weakens our alliance with Israel, a pillar in the international system that greatly benefits the American people. It is in our national interest to maintain the taboo on antisemitism and to strengthen our alliance with Israel.

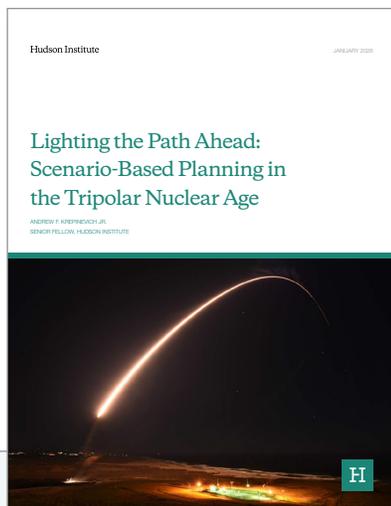
NEW BY Hudson Authors



Russia and China's cooperation in the Arctic is a homeland security concern for the United States and its allies. Drawing on a Hudson war game, Liselotte Odgaard identifies how Washington can close the security gaps in a vital region.



Nadia Schadlow explains how the Trump administration can reboot the Defense Production Act to respond to China's alarming military buildup.



As a new tripolar nuclear system with China and Russia emerges, Washington cannot wait to respond. Andrew Krepinevich Jr. lays out six vignettes to help US policymakers as they revise America's nuclear strategy.



Luke Coffey, Can Kasapoğlu, and Tom Dueterberg explain how the US can force Putin to the negotiating table, including through additional secondary sanctions, a pro-America energy policy, and military cooperation with Ukraine.

HERMAN KAHN Award Gala

Hudson presented Palantir Cofounder and CEO Dr. Alex Karp with the 2025 Herman Kahn Award at its annual gala in New York City.



SAVE THE DATE

Walter P. Stern Policy Conference

June 8-10 | Washington, DC

For more details, please contact
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