



CENTER FOR THE STUDY OF THE
PRESIDENCY & CONGRESS

A Defining Moment In Geopolitics

Applying the lessons of history to the challenges of today



2024

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New Phase in Strategic Competition

As the new year dawns, we enter the defining stretch in America's long political cycle, with another presidential election now on the horizon. Presidential elections always serve as important markers, with nominees attempting to galvanize voters with competing visions for the country's future. They are also inevitably divisive, as political tribes square off and seek to highlight the differences that separate us, rather than those that unify. Behind all the made-for-television spectacle and hoopla, and seemingly endless rallies and speeches, presidential elections are also defining moments: they set the nation's course both domestically and geopolitically, with impacts that will reverberate for years to come.

Whoever is eventually elected to guide the country for the next four years, the Center for the Study of the Presidency & Congress (CSPC) will do our part to prepare the next president and Congress to meet the challenges of an intensifying competition among major powers, and an unsettled world beset by conflict. The stakes in that global competition could hardly be higher, and it is one in which America must prevail.

In this new great power competition, we arrive at the end of the first phase. U.S. policymakers and lawmakers have found bipartisan consensus and broad public support for rising to the challenge of competing with an ascendant China, and opposing the aggression of a revanchist Russia.

In the geotechnology competition for supremacy in the technologies of the future, the United States has made important progress. The government has made substantial investments in the domestic production of key technologies, and implemented controls on exports that limit our rivals' ability to turn our own innovations against us. We have rallied allies and partners to embrace economic frameworks that will guide future commerce to our mutual benefit.

Yet in many ways that was the easy part. In the next phase of this geopolitical chess game, that opening gambit must be followed by interlocking moves that prepare the board for eventual checkmate. We must follow through and capitalize on each move advanced and rival piece taken.



That will require investing in workforce development and education to fill the growing jobs in semiconductor design and manufacture, for instance, and prepare Artificial Intelligence engineers and quantum scientists. We must create trade arrangements that diversify supplies of critical minerals, and reinforce connections with countries in the Global South. We have to stay focused on a grand strategy to win this long game.

At CSPC we have historically blended complimentary lines of effort in service to an overarching strategy. We regularly convene bipartisan officials from Congress and the Executive Branch with leaders from private industry and academia, searching for consensus and novel solutions to the challenges confronting the nation. We help prepare the rising generation of leaders, giving them the skills to understand complex issues, engage in civil debate, and appreciate public service. We identify and advocate for reforms to our political system to incentivize consensus-building.

We believe success in leveraging these complimentary initiatives is more important than ever, just as the United States must leverage all elements of national power in a time of intense global competition. In that sense a presidential election year is a powerful incentive, inspiring us to prepare recommendations for the next administration that prioritize strategies for success. We also remain committed to continue providing a venue for civil debate and deliberation, a launching pad for future leaders, and a set of workable plans to help our political leaders move the nation to higher ground. In short, we accept the challenge of these difficult times.

On behalf of our Trustees and staff, we welcome the opportunity to include you in our work as we forge ahead in the coming year, and remain grateful for the role you play in the mission of CSPC.

A handwritten signature in blue ink that reads "Glenn Nye". The signature is fluid and cursive.

Glenn C. Nye III, President and CEO
Center for the Study of the Presidency & Congress

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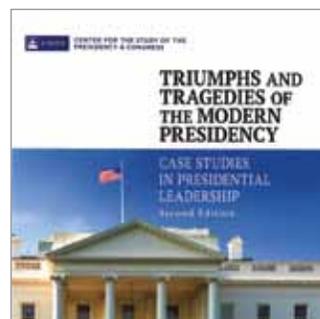
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Section One

Championing Bipartisanship, Civility and Informed Debate



THE PAST YEAR has brought profound challenges for America both at home and abroad. As a result of Russia's full-scale invasion of Ukraine in February of 2022, war of aggression by an authoritarian state against a democratic neighbor has returned to Europe for the first time since World War II, destabilizing the continent and darkening the councils of the Western alliance. In

October of 2023, a surprise attack on Israel by the Hamas terrorist group resulted in the deadliest days for Jews since the Holocaust, igniting a war in the Middle East that threatens to spread throughout the region and even draw the United States into the fighting. In the Indo-Pacific region, an ascendant China continues to bully and coerce its neighbors and challenge the rules-based international order that Washington, D.C. has helped uphold for over 75 years.

At this moment of great peril, U.S. efforts to come to the aid of its democratic allies have been hampered by nearly unprecedented Congressional dysfunction. After flirting with a debt default and government shutdown in the past year, the House has been periodically paralyzed by acrimonious leadership fights that were marked by some of the most disrespectful and offensive rhetoric in living memory.

At CSPPC we thus view it as part of our core mission to promote bipartisanship and civility in our politics, the better to reach the common ground necessary to move our nation forward. We do this by regularly convening leaders from the Executive and Legislative branches with experts from business and academia for civil discussions on how best to meet the many challenges facing the country, both domestically and overseas. We also engage regularly with the media, and provide expert analysis of the news of the day. In all of these efforts, CSPPC continues to embrace a spirit of bipartisanship, instinct for reaching across the political aisle, and deep expertise in matters of national security.

Towards a New Euro-Atlantic Security Architecture

As of this writing Russia's war of aggression against Ukraine is grinding towards its third year. Over the past year it has become increasingly clear that the conflict will not end any time in the foreseeable future. Russia has prepared for a long, drawn-out war of attrition and cruelty that has already seen casualties exceed two hundred thousand soldiers on both sides, and incalculable damage to Ukrainian civilians and infrastructure.

Russian President Vladimir Putin's strategy is to outlast Western resolve, and indeed cracks are beginning to appear. Political statements of commitment to Kyiv have become de rigueur from Western capitals, for instance, with the refrains of "for as long as it takes" or "for years" recently heard from U.S. President Joe Biden and United Kingdom Prime Minister Rishi Sunak, respectively, when discussing their commitment to Ukraine. What's lacking is a realistic strategic calculus and clear plans to maintain solid support for Ukraine over the long run.

Western commitment has been sorely tested over the past year as Ukraine's much anticipated counteroffensive failed to achieve a significant breakthrough against entrenched Russian defenses. Expectations of a major breakthrough by Ukrainian forces were perhaps overly optimistic, with advocacy replacing analytical rigor in many calculations. Western delays in delivering advanced weapons to Kyiv earlier in the year allowed Moscow's armed forces to dig in and fortify their positions. Claims that Kyiv could feasibly retake Crimea as part of that counteroffensive were overblown, and fueled less by clear-eyed analysis, and more by well-meaning cheerleading for Ukraine. With the bar for success set as the Ukrainian flag waving once more over Sevastopol, failure was all but guaranteed.

Any serious estimation of what goals Ukraine is capable of achieving must rate full territorial reclamation as unlikely under present circumstances and current levels of Western support. Circumstances can change, of course, and Black Swan surprises always lurk within the fog of war. But the odds currently are stacked against that outcome. The necessary, exponential increase in pressure on Moscow by the Western

alliance would likely provoke an unacceptable escalation in the conflict, with unpredictable repercussions. For Putin the stakes in his strategic misadventure in Ukraine are potentially existential, and Russia under his leadership is thus prepared for a long-term conflict that challenges Kyiv and punishes the Ukrainian people for the foreseeable future (see page 24).

Given that under present circumstances Kyiv can neither recapture its entire territory from Russian forces, nor ensure the country's long-term security, alternative strategies need to be considered. A search for such a strategy, in fact, drove Ukraine's push to try and join the NATO alliance ahead of the Vilnius Summit in the spring of 2023. Not surprisingly, Ukrainian President Volodymyr Zelensky aggressively campaigned and championed his nation's immediate accession to the defensive alliance. This was a very ambitious proposal, and potentially counter-productive. While NATO agreed to accelerate the accession process and suspend some of the prerequisite requirements for membership, a swift entry





Former President Ronald Reagan championed the strategy of “peace through strength,” combining the nation’s largest peacetime defense buildup with an outreach to the leaders of the Soviet Union, thus helping to secure victory in the Cold War.

was never seriously considered by an alliance of 30 nations that requires unanimity on such a fateful decision. A chief obstacle is NATO’s foundational Article Five, which holds that an attack on one member nation must be considered an attack on all members. Extending that protection to a nation openly at war with a nuclear-armed Russia would have all but guaranteed an escalation that President Biden has postulated could result in “World War III.”

Nevertheless, Russia’s war of aggression in the heart of Europe has forced a transformation on NATO. New regional defense plans, a more permanent forward-presence of NATO forces in the vulnerable East, and scalable battle groups as part of a reinvigorated rapid response force are all significant steps forward in bolstering alliance defenses and deterrence. Despite the significant degradation of Russian forces in Ukraine, the conflict has also sparked a wave of much-needed modernization in NATO militaries.

While Ukrainian membership in NATO seems possible

at some point in the future, alternative security guarantees such as those the United States provides to Israel and South Korea are under consideration, though discussions have not yet yielded anything definitive. In the interim, the United States has shown increased willingness to commit to Ukraine’s long-term defenses by supplying advanced weapons such as F-16 fighter aircraft and M-1A1 main battle tanks. Discussions are also underway to consider greater Western investments in Ukraine’s domestic defense industry, giving Kiev a self-sustaining defense industrial capability in lieu of immediate membership in NATO.

There is every possibility that the greater war in Ukraine becomes another frozen conflict in Russia’s “near abroad,” like the Donbass and Georgia before it. But Putin’s reckless aggression has awoken NATO from its long, post-Cold War slumber, and forged a Ukrainian national identity in opposition that seems likely to thwart the dictator’s dreams of a “Greater Russia” empire. □

Friday News Roundups

During a year of historic instability abroad and division at home, the Center for the Study of the Presidency & Congress (CSPC) offered analysis of each week’s news in our “Friday News Roundups.” These quick takes give our experts and researchers an opportunity to dig deep behind the headlines to provide insight and historic context. The timely commentary complements our longer-term work by allowing us to connect current events and deeper trends. The topics covered in the past year ranged far and wide, including a deteriorating U.S.-China economic relationship that is a major driver of the global economy; wavering U.S. military and economic support for Ukraine as it fights for its existence against Russian aggression; and a new alignment between the United States and India as the world’s oldest and biggest democracies, respectively.

Japan’s Will to Fight



The real significance of Japan’s latest national security doctrine is that the country now possesses counter-strike capabilities, Tokyo’s political euphe-

mism for both first and second strike capabilities. In other words, Tokyo has finally accomplished a major breakthrough in acquiring and using offensive capabilities masquerading as defensive through subtle reinterpretations of Article 9 of the Japanese constitution. In fact, with the 2015 security legislation now effective, Japan can, in theory, both legally and doctrinally enter wars even by launching surprise attacks. Since [Taro] Aso played an indispensable role in guiding Tokyo’s national security policy reform for decades, his statement reflected his confidence in his own accomplishment.

CSPC Senior Fellow Hidetoshi Azuma, August 11, 2023

Western countries must be open to shutting down economic channels that pose risks to their national interests.

CSPC Senior Fellow Robert W. Gerber, April 28, 2023

Outbound Investment Review Takes Shape



These [policy] differences represent broader tensions between U.S. national security policy objectives and U.S. economic policy, which has traditionally

embraced and encouraged free capital flows. For now, the administration is in the driver’s seat and looking to achieve a delicate balance between the two. The Treasury Department is currently undertaking a comment period and is expected to take a year to develop the specific regulations enabled by the Executive Order.

CSPC Vice President Erica Ngoenha, August 25, 2023

Tensions in the U.S.-China Economic Relationship



Some experts have argued that the trillion dollar bilateral U.S.-China economic relationship is in some ways a bulwark against direct military conflict between the United States and China. On the other hand, aspects of the bilateral economic relationship—notably forced joint ventures and certain types of investment—can serve to strengthen China’s civil-military apparatus. This is why

Evaluating Economic Security Tools



With China a litany of concerns, including human rights, economic imbalances, military development, and technology theft, have combined with political

pressure to push policymakers towards protecting critical technology, and reduce reliance on China. Both the White House and Congress have moved in this direction, with expansions of export controls and proposals to implement outbound investment review. These proposals recognize

both the growing China challenge and Americans' anger with Beijing, but good-intentioned policies that are poorly written or implemented do risk harming American companies and our own innovative edge.

CSPC Senior Vice President Dan Mahaffee, September 29, 2023

Losing Sight of Strategic Goals



Moving forward, American military aid shouldn't end for Ukraine, but it does need to include stipulations to ensure that Ukraine's military and strategic ob-

jectives remain relevant and yet avoid potential escalation. Ukraine must continue its fight, and NATO, American and European sponsorship should continue, but Ukraine's fight must remain within its borders for the express purpose of removing Russia entirely from legitimate Ukrainian claims.

CSPC Senior Fellow Ethan Brown, September 29, 2023

The Importance of U.S. Naval Supremacy in the Indo-Pacific



The U.S. Navy is instrumental in protecting American influence and power in the Indo-Pacific. To maintain that role, the United States will have to revital-

ize its maritime industrial base, and rapidly integrate cutting-edge technologies like Artificial Intelligence. Congress must also do its part, with lawmakers making the case for a strong Navy to local constituents to build political support, and devoting the resources necessary to maintain America's preeminence on the high seas.

CSPC Intern Kory Yueh, December 1, 2023

Responding to the Chinese Balloon Incursion



This balloon incursion is a reminder of the kind of multifaceted challenges that will arise in managing an increasingly tense U.S.-China relationship, where national

security concerns push up against continued economic interdependence. Policymakers have to manage these confrontations—look back to the EP-3 incident in the early days of the George W. Bush administration for an example of a tense mo-

ment even when underlying relations were calmer. Demonstrating strength while managing tensions is the challenge for U.S. leaders now—both in the White House and Congress—because this is the future of the U.S.-China relationship.

CSPC Senior Vice President Dan Mahaffee, February 3, 2023

Mr. Modi Comes To Washington



The United States and India need not be perfectly aligned to have a productive partnership, but the U.S. risks overestimating the strength of its relation-

ship with India. One U.S. official even recently declared the U.S.-India relationship to be “the most important bilateral relationship with the United States on the global stage.” For now, the U.S.-India relationship is still a marriage of convenience, and the United States should respond accordingly. Whether the relationship can develop into something more will largely depend on New Delhi's vision of the future.

CSPC Vice President Erica Ngoenha, June 23, 2023

What Makes a Healthy Innovation Ecosystem?



In the competition of systems, neither side can risk choking off the dynamism that leads to innovation. China risks stifling its innovation through govern-

ment policies, while the United States faces the challenge of ensuring that we have the workforce needed to drive innovation. Perhaps that should be the hot button issue for our school board meetings.

CSPC Senior Vice President Dan Mahaffee, July 21, 2023

Artificial Intelligence and Future World Order



In the coming decades, AI is the revolutionary force-of-nature that humanity must reckon with. The onus is on today's leaders to ensure that AI safeguards common

prosperity, rather than plots humanity's destruction. Regardless of how policymakers wish to regulate and contain AI innovation, it is certain that AI advances will outpace the speed at which legislation can catch up.

CSPC Interns Julian Mancillas and Kory Yueh, November 9, 2023

Timely Commentary on National Challenges

“The U.S. military has always held up a mirror to the society it serves, reflecting America’s strengths but also revealing its blemishes. In response to the racial crisis of the Vietnam era, the armed services concluded that they must embrace diversity in their officer corps as a national-security imperative.”

James Kitfield, CSPC Senior Fellow

Defense One,

November 11, 2023



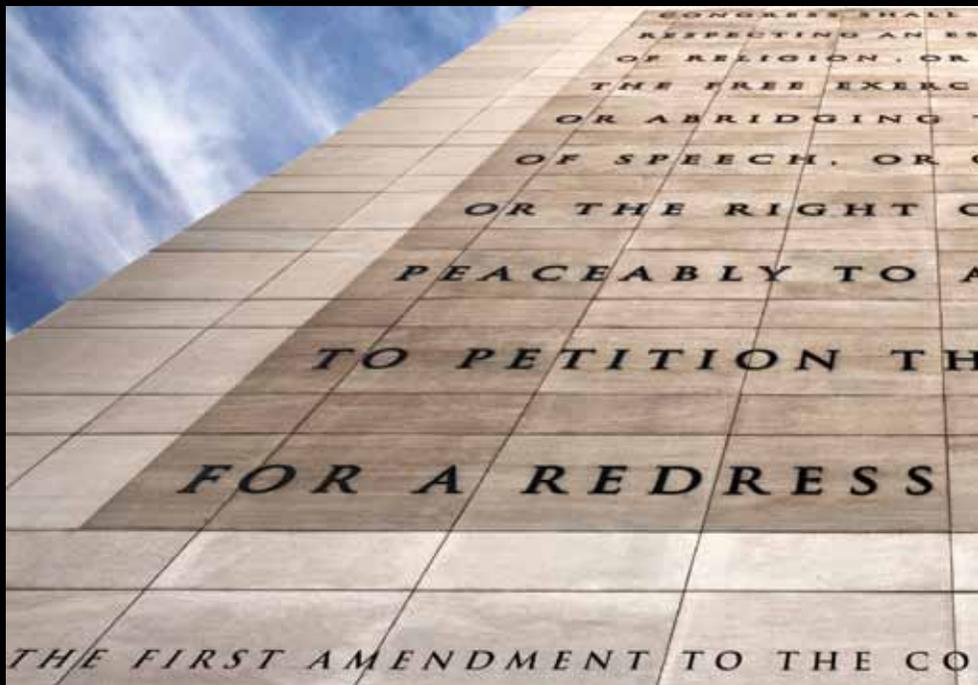
“Putting aside any partisan biases that I may have ... the institutional bias is that you don’t care who wins the contest for the next Speaker of the House, you just hope they win by 30 or 40 votes so that you can run the damn place.”

Dan Mahaffee,

CSPC Senior Vice President

Farrcast Podcast,

October 26, 2023



“Supporting Ukraine and ensuring that Moscow fails is also an indicator of American and Allied resolve in the face of naked aggression wherever it may manifest. To acquiesce to Russia’s designs is to invite further violence elsewhere.”

Joshua Huminski,

Director of the Mike Rogers Center for Intelligence & Global Affairs

The Hill, October 2023



“Lawmakers will make a deal; they’ll vote on it; and it’ll pass. Before the ‘X’ date is reached and the country defaults on its debt.”

Dan Mahaffee,

CSPC Senior Vice President

Farrcast Podcast, May 23, 2023



“The factors at play in this evolving conflict [Ukraine War] will force a decisive point sooner than later, and Kyiv, with Western involvement, must outline the conflict’s end state. In short, “Tell me how this ends.””

Ethan Brown, CSPC Senior Fellow

Diplomatic Courier, June 19, 2023



“The use of intelligence to support policy or diplomatic efforts and to achieve a strategic effect is, in and of itself, not novel. Intelligence is meant to inform policymakers and their decisions. What was novel [regards Ukraine] was the speed, frequency, and extent to which intelligence was disclosed to the broader public—intelligence which demonstrated significant human or digital penetrations into Russia’s political and military hierarchies, and which was designed to achieve a specific effect.”



Joshua Huminski, Director
Mike Rogers Center for Intelligence & Global Affairs
National Defense University *PRISM Journal*,
September 7, 2023



“During an earlier time of crisis, Ronald Reagan had the wisdom to recognize the U.S. military as a unifying force in society, and a pillar of American strength. Elected officials today who treat the military as just another cudgel to be wielded in a never-ending culture war are showing the opposite of political leadership.”

James Kitfield, CSPC Senior Fellow



Defense One,
May 30, 2023

“While the outcome of the war in Ukraine is unclear—though NATO member countries’ commitment to Kyiv’s ultimate victory is unquestioned—Moscow certainly appears to have suffered a strategic defeat with NATO’s expansion and renewed sense of purpose.”



Joshua Huminski,
Director Mike Rogers Center
for Intelligence & Global Affairs
The Hill, November 16, 2023

“I describe the flawed processes and political incentives that have brought us to this point, we cannot forget that we still have a say in this process, unlike the system created by those who aim to belittle America and push back against our power and values.”

Dan Mahaffee,
CSPC Senior Vice President



The Messenger,
October 23, 2023

“While Kyiv has openly declared its intention for deepened European Union integration, its sudden leap in European power rankings might be a challenge for the rest of the bloc. What remains unclear is how Ukraine’s rapid military growth will impact its future integration into the European Union, the North Atlantic Alliance, and, generally speaking, the wider balance of power in Europe.”



Ethan Brown and Veera Parko,
CSPC Senior Fellows
Diplomatic Courier, July 5, 2023

“Technology itself is neutral, though its use inevitably reflects the values and enhances the power of those who shape and wield it. Those who achieved breakthroughs that led to past industrial and technological revolutions, for instance, reaped the benefits and shaped the world to their ends.”



Dan Mahaffee,
CSPC Senior Vice President
The Hill, July 21, 2023

“Proponents of the liberal order believe they can cohabitate in a world of autocratic regimes, calling the dynamic ‘strategic competition,’ and they act as if that competition will sustain liberalism’s global primacy. Moscow, Beijing, and the other threats to international order, however, are not vectoring security capabilities to coexist with a system of rules and order.”

Ethan Brown,
CSPC Senior Fellow
NextGenWarBlog,
October 25, 2023



“China’s economic miracle is in real trouble. Clearly Beijing’s ‘Zero Covid’ policy backfired, exports are down precipitously, Chinese banks are overextended with huge debts tied to the real estate market, and the Chinese Communist Party has been unable to substitute domestic consumption for the lack of exports. Meanwhile, millions of Chinese young people are coming out of school unable to find jobs.”



James Kitfield, CSPC Senior Fellow
NPR 1A Friday News Roundup,
July 28, 2023

“Ukraine’s successes against Russia are worthy of praise and reflect the willingness of Ukrainians to fight and, equally important, the poor preparation and performance of Moscow’s forces. There are, absolutely, lessons to be learned. Yet the only thing worse than not learning battlefield lessons is learning the wrong ones, and forgetting that your adversaries are learning, too.”

Joshua Huminski,
 Director Mike Rogers Center for
 Intelligence & Global Affairs
Breaking Defense,
 May 15, 2023



“It’s hard to imagine Israel not using lethal force in response to the Oct. 7 terrorist attacks by Hamas, but there is a lot of disgruntlement [among career foreign service officers] at the State Department over the fact that the peace process between Israelis and Palestinians has been moribund for over a decade. In the Middle East diplomacy of the Trump and Biden administrations, the Palestinian question and two-state solution have remained largely an afterthought.”

James Kitfield, CSPC Senior Fellow
NPR 1A Friday News Roundup, October 20, 2023



“Security force assistance is a tool that remains underutilized. It is a tool that has proven to enable and facilitate strategic objectives so long as the will to sustain cooperation remains a pillar in American foreign policy. Such initiatives are perfectly suited to the objectives described in the 2022 National Security Strategy.”



Ethan Brown, CSPC Senior Fellow
Modern War Institute,
 April 7, 2023

“[Florida Governor Ron] DeSantis’s wartime service and military experience inform his stated determination to broaden his ‘war on woke’ to include the U.S. Armed Forces. Yet the elite SEAL team DeSantis served with more than 15 years ago was virtually all male and overwhelmingly white, and there are no female SEAL commandoes. By contrast, today’s all-volunteer U.S. military writ large is more diverse in terms of race, ethnicity, and gender than any in U.S. history.”

James Kitfield, CSPC Senior Fellow
Foreign Policy Magazine, November 9, 2023



“The U.S. and its allies must provide an answer to the critical first question—what is the best way to secure Ukraine’s long-term security? Only after answering that question is an effective discussion about the future of Europe’s security architecture possible.”

Joshua Huminski, Director Mike Rogers
 Center for Intelligence & Global Affairs
Diplomatic Courier,
 July 11, 2023



Timely Analysis & Reporting on National Defense

In 2024 the Center for the Study of the Presidency & Congress (CSPC) will continue its long tradition of operating at the intersection of strategy and national security. Our continuing focus on national security issues is all the more critical given historic levels of instability and tension in the rules-based international order as a result of the Israel-Hamas war in the Middle East, Russia's invasion of Ukraine in Europe, and China's threats and bullying targeting Taiwan in the Indo-Pacific.

Our ongoing work focusing on this great power competition includes regular analysis and media commentary by CSPC experts, including President and former Congressman Glenn Nye III; Dan Mahaffee, Senior Vice President and Director of Policy and lead on CSPC's "Geotech" project; Joshua Huminski, Director of the Mike Rogers Center for Intelligence and Global Affairs, and lead on CSPC's National Security Space Program; CSPC Senior Fellow and national security correspondent James Kitfield, a three-time recipient of the Gerald R. Ford Award for Distinguished Reporting on National Defense; Senior Fellow Ethan Brown, a former Air Force Joint Terminal Attack Controller; and Visiting Fellow Veera Parko, on loan from Finland's Interior Ministry.

"Just as it mattered a great deal who had the power to split the atom, it matters today who created Artificial Intelligence, holds the world's data, controls our digital connectivity, powers our future and rearranges the very building blocks of life itself."

— Dan Mahaffee, CSPC Senior Vice President
Farrcast Podcast, October 26, 2023



Nearly 400,000 service members are buried at Arlington National Cemetery, America's Valhalla, each one a poignant reminder that "freedom is not free."

"The Space Force next year will select launch providers for Phase 3 of the National Security Space Launch (NSSL) program ... This next phase of NSSL marks a significant evolution in how the Space Force approaches launch, leaning into the commercial market in a way that it had largely avoided in the past. The Space Force in this procurement is hedging against future uncertainty, trying to capitalize on commercial launch and build out the future."

— Joshua Huminski, Director
Mike Rogers Center for Intelligence & Global Affairs
SpaceNews, November 1, 2023

"While China and Russia have ramped up testing of advanced space weaponry in recent years and observers call for the U.S. to develop more offensive capabilities of its own, senior Pentagon officials have highlighted the fine line America faces in preparing for a potential conflict in orbit. On one hand, the threats are growing more and more pronounced. Yet the long-term effects of any kinetic actions in space, where debris can linger for decades, loom over all discussions of offensive space weapons."

— James Kitfield, CSPC Senior Fellow
Air & Space Forces Magazine, July 25, 2023

"There is value in keeping the adversary guessing about what one's purpose is. Strategy can always adapt and evolve based on changing battlefield circumstances and objectives ... allocating F-16s now makes no difference for Ukraine this week, next month, or even in this calendar year. But it does give Russia a clear understanding of its prospects for the rest of 2023."

— Ethan Brown, CSPC Senior Fellow
Nineteen45, June 9, 2023

Section Two

Defending Democracy at Home and Abroad



AS WE CONTEMPLATE the year ahead, authoritarian regimes have ignited wars of aggression against democratic allies in Europe and the Middle East, and in the Indo-Pacific an authoritarian China continues to bully neighbors and challenge the rules-based international order. Coming close on the heels of the worst pandemic in over a century, these conflicts have destabilized an already shaky global economy, creating fears and anxiety that have roiled domestic politics around the world.

A world in crisis has once again highlighted the indispensable role of the United States as the globe's preeminent economic power and leader of the alliance of democracies. Yet our own democracy has been weakened by deep divisions in the body politic, and a downward spiral in our political discourse whose origins are primarily structural. The American people are fed a steady diet of disinformation and divisive rhetoric, and our political system is awash in dark money, pay-to-play politics, and gerrymandered electoral maps designed to favor one party over the other.

The hallmark of the American political experiment, however, is an instinct for continual self-improvement and national renewal, which are core values at the Center for the Study of the Presidency and Congress (CSPC). To tackle our current challenges, CSPC has teamed with like-minded reform groups to form a "Fix the System" coalition driven not by partisan rancor, but rather by a bipartisan spirit of electoral reform. With a tradition of deep analysis of national security trends, CSPC also continues to bring a historical context and innovative solutions to the emerging era of great power competition.

War Returns to the Middle East and Europe



Attacks by aggressors against U.S. allies in the Middle East and Europe, combined with historic tensions along the U.S.-Russia-China major power axis, have created the most perilous geopolitical moment since the Cuban Missile Crisis more than half a century ago. This critical moment arrives at a time when Cold War muscle memory and expertise in managing strategic tensions among nuclear weapons powers have largely faded from memory, and with hyper-partisanship and political gridlock in Washington, D.C. hampering a timely and coordinated response.

Recognizing the huge stakes involved, and leaning into our mission to apply the lessons of history and seek bipartisan solutions to current challenges, the Center for the Study of the Presidency & Congress (CSPC) has in the past year hosted notable Russia and China hands, book authors

and nuclear weapons and strategic deterrence experts, bringing them together for frank discussions with key members of Congress and their staffs and other thought leaders in Washington, D.C. Discussions hosted over the past year in this series included discussions with: Oscar

The United States responded to the October 7, 2023 terrorist attack on Israel by deploying the Dwight D. Eisenhower aircraft carrier strike group to the Middle East to deter Iran and its terrorist proxies from escalating the conflict.

Jonsson, author of “The Russian Understanding of War: Blurring the Lines between War and Peace”; Mark Galeotti, author of “Putin’s Wars: From Chechnya to Ukraine”; Maj. Gen. Mick Ryan, author of “White Sun War: The Campaign for Taiwan”; and Lt. Gen. Frederick “Ben” Hodges III, former commanding general of U.S. Army Europe.

None of the experts consulted doubted the need for the United States to take great care in plotting the best path forward in a fraught strategic landscape.

A case in point is the attack on Israel launched by the Hamas terrorist group on October 7, 2023 that killed more than 1,200 Israelis in a “Black Swann” strategic surprise. The deadliest day for Jews since the Holocaust has dangerously destabilized the entire Middle East region. Israeli leaders have described the war as an existential fight for Israel’s survival, and if Iran-backed proxies Hamas, Hezbollah and the Houthis of Yemen were to gain the upper hand in fighting it is not inconceivable that Israel, an undeclared nuclear weapons state, would resort to directly threatening Tehran to deter it from further support.

Such a possibility would become far more likely if Tehran were to make a final sprint of just days to acquire its own nuclear weapon. U.S. officials believe that compressed timeline is possible because Iran returned to enriching and stockpiling nuclear fissile material in the wake of the United States withdrawing from the Iran nuclear deal in 2018. If Iran were to race to acquire a nuclear weapon in the midst of the current crisis, Israel and possibly the United States might feel compelled to strike with conventional forces, dramatically escalating the conflict. Wealthy regional rival Saudi Arabia would also likely respond to a nuclear-armed Iran by seeking its own nuclear arsenal, creating a potential tipping point towards nuclear proliferation in one of the world’s most unstable and war-torn regions. As of this writing in early 2024, the United States has already been drawn directly into the Israel-Hamas conflict, deploying two aircraft carrier battle groups to the region to deter Iran and Hezbollah, and responding with lethal counterstrikes after U.S. forces in Iraq and Syria came under fire from Iran-backed militias.

Russia’s war of aggression against Ukraine has also reached a perilous inflection point as of this writing. A

much anticipated Ukrainian counter-offensive planned for the spring and summer of 2023 mostly stalled in the face of stiff Russian defenses, and the war has settled into a grinding stalemate reminiscent of the trench warfare of World War I. Russian President Vladimir Putin’s strategy after major early setbacks is now clearly to freeze the conflict

Attacks by aggressors against U.S. allies in the Middle East and Europe have created the most perilous geostrategic moment since the end of the Cold War.

and wait until Western support falters, which shows signs of working. By year’s end, desperately needed U.S. support for Ukraine and Israel had stalled given partisan gridlock in Congress.

“The consensus view of the more than 40 experts I interviewed is that Russia has a deep-seeded view of their place in the world that harkens back to a 19th-century desire for empire, and that is fundamentally incompatible with the West’s view of the world,” said Keir Giles, author of “Russia’s War on Everybody,” speaking at an on-the-record event hosted by CSPC. “The bottom line is that Russia’ has become a rogue state, and it will remain a threat to the United States and its allies long after the war in Ukraine is decided.”

Indeed, even if the Ukraine War were to end, the conflict and Russian war crimes have made Putin a pariah in the Euro-Atlantic region for the foreseeable future, pushing Moscow further into the arms of China in a major strategic realignment. As nuclear weapons experts told CSPC, such a realignment of two peer nuclear competitors in China and Russia scrambles current theories of nuclear deterrence still based largely on the binary model of the Cold War. Because such a realignment upsets the equilibrium in nuclear weapons concepts such as “mutually assured destruction,” in the past year the U.S. Strategic Command, the steward of the U.S. nuclear arsenal, has begun rewriting its Cold War-era nuclear deterrence theory.

Such a fundamental rethinking of the very foundations of strategic deterrence is yet another sure indicator of this perilous geostrategic moment in world affairs. □

A New Phase in U.S.-China Relations

In the past year the pronounced shift in U.S.-China relations reached what can be best described as, in Winston Churchill's famous phrase, the "end of the beginning." Rising acrimony in the U.S.-China relationship based on a growing technological competition (see page 26) and security concerns have been tempered somewhat by the stubborn realities of economic interdependence. That reliance explains recent efforts by both Washington and Beijing to steer the relationship towards more manageable levels of tension.

Nevertheless, an era defined by a consensus in both countries about the mutual benefits of economic interdependence has come to an end. That consensus was undermined by the global pandemic that began in China, by Chinese President Xi Jinping's iron grip and hegemonic aspirations, and by a growing hawkishness towards Beijing in U.S. politics. The paramount question in geopolitics as the world's status quo and ascendant superpowers square off and look to an uncertain future is simple: how can this competition for power and global influence avoid escalating into disastrous conflict?

Certainly there is predicate for the increasing hawkishness in the United States, where a new consensus in the body politic backs a harder line with China. As the most powerful Chinese leader in a generation, Xi has largely abandoned China's economic openness and patient diplomacy in favor of a national security state intent on regional expansion and bullying "wolf warrior" diplomacy. The political consolidation of power by Xi Jinping has thus been accompanied by a marked shift in policy that emphasizes national security and focuses on the United States and its regional allies not as close economic partners, but rather as threats to Beijing's regional and global ambitions. That has pushed U.S. policymakers, lawmakers and industry leaders to reconsider ties to, and dependence on, China.

In response to economic turmoil and heavy indebtedness in the real estate sector, declining domestic consumer confidence and the economic hangover of Beijing's "Zero Covid" policies, the Chinese Communist Party (CCP) has decisively backed away from its previous economic model



As the most powerful Chinese leader in a generation, Xi Jinping has largely abandoned China's economic openness and patient diplomacy in favor of a national security state intent on regional expansion and bullying "wolf warrior" diplomacy.

of close engagement with the West. That policy shift has been accompanied by CCP crackdowns targeting industry leaders in the technology, finance, and real estate sectors. Raids have been conducted on Western "due diligence" and accounting firms in an effort to tighten control on information.

In response to new U.S. restrictions on China's access to technology in areas like semiconductors and Artificial Intelligence (AI), Beijing has implemented export controls

U.S.-China relations have been undermined by the global pandemic that began in China, by Chinese President Xi Jinping's iron grip and hegemonic aspirations, and by a growing hawkishness towards Beijing in U.S. politics.

to limit U.S. access to critical minerals necessary for the transition to a green economy. This escalating trade war and protectionism has prompted many Western corporations to search for new sources and supply chains. For foreign companies, the emphasis on national security policies

splitting off China-based subsidiaries. The term-du-jour for this decoupling is “de-risking.” Nations are also being forced to find a new equilibrium between these two superpowers. While U.S. allies carefully weigh their security concerns versus economic ties to China, many middle powers and nations in the “Global South” seek the benefits of relations with both the West and China. China is now positioning itself as a leader of these developing nations, dispensing loans and infrastructure projects through its “Belt and Road” initiative, and offering its model of state authoritarianism as a more stable alternative to Western democracy. China’s recent economic underperformance and difficulties have undermined that argument, however, and the narrative of China inevitably surpassing the United States as a global power has likewise been undercut.

Given those mounting tensions, it was a significant accomplishment that President Joe Biden and Xi Jinping were able to meet in November 2023 in San Francisco. Both sides maintain they are seeking to “find a new floor” underneath the sinking bilateral relationship, and find areas of increased cooperation. Better crisis management may prove the most substantive outcome of the meeting, with both sides agreeing to the resumption of important military-to-military engagements and a military hotline to avoid miscalculations. U.S. and Chinese diplomats also expressed cautious optimism in talks on climate change, reductions in Chinese exports of fentanyl precursors, and potential regulations governing Artificial Intelligence.

The U.S.-China relationship is entering a phase best described as a “new normal,” since a return to the “old normal” seems unrealistic. This new phase in relations between the world’s two superpowers will require careful management of tensions, and a clear-eyed understanding that allowing the relationship to veer from intense competition to confrontation and conflict would serve the interests of neither nation, nor the rest of an apprehensive world. □

by the CCP—programs like Military-Civil Fusion and ever-expansive laws on national security and intelligence gathering—blur the line between commercial engagement with Chinese industry, and technology transfers that could ultimately threaten U.S. and allied security.

As Washington and Beijing move in opposing directions, nations and corporations are forced to rebalance their equities between these two economic and military behemoths. Companies have hedged by diversifying supply chains and



Democracy at a Crossroads

The Center for the Study of the Presidency & Congress (CSPC) embarked in 2018 on a program to study and promote reforms to America's electoral system that would incentivize better cooperation among elected officials in Washington, D.C. Our primary motivation was frustration with the seeming inability of politicians in Congress to rise above tribal pressures. Too often CSPC's convening work and robust research seeking solutions to some of the most pressing challenges confronting the nation hit roadblocks of partisan gridlock,



derailing the consensus-building necessary for our system of republican federalism to work. The fundamental problem was not a lack of interest or knowledge about the issues involved, but rather a political system that rewards political combat over compromise.

Some progress has been made in reforming the electoral system that leads to such dysfunction. A number of states have begun implementing new election systems that

de-emphasize or eliminate partisan primaries that allow the most extreme elements of our politics to have outsized control over election outcomes. Other states have changed general election rules to require successful candidates to earn support from a majority of voters, rather than relying on a simple, hard-core plurality. Still others have focused on anti-gerrymandering reforms to create non-partisan voting districts.

We must dedicate ourselves as citizens to the hard work of reforming and strengthening our political system, and thus keep faith with the venerable tradition of preserving and passing along the bounties of the world's oldest democracy to the next generation of Americans.

Yet as we enter another presidential election year, our democracy remains on the brink. In the wake of a concerted effort by a U.S. president to forcefully overturn an election outcome he did not like, and a collective shrug by millions of voters, the country is confronted with existential questions about our democracy. How is it that a president who has shown contempt for the Constitution

mistrust that any behavior is considered allowable if it advances our political team, no matter the cost to our democratic values? Is winning the next election more important than protecting our democratic system, which requires the acceptance of fair elections regardless of their outcome, with the promise that the losing side will have a chance to come back and compete again on a level playing field? Are



Our greatest leaders honored in the Capitol Rotunda foresaw the dangers of the current moment of hyper-partisanship and extreme political division, warning that America's greatest vulnerability came not from foreign threats, but rather a threat from within.

and the government institutions that breathe life into its strictures remains a frontrunner to win another term? What is the origin of a cynicism so deep that it becomes acceptable to many of our fellow citizens that a president attempt to overturn a legal election outcome with threats and violence?

Our country cannot escape facing up to these and other foundational questions: Are we so steeped in tribal hate and

we so disillusioned with our governing institutions that we will reward authoritarian leadership that threatens the checks and balances our founders crafted to keep our experiment in democracy alive and durable?

Our greatest leaders foresaw the dangers ahead. Abraham Lincoln, who preserved the union through the Civil War, warned us that America's greatest vulnerability came not from foreign threats, but rather a threat from within. In

his farewell address, George Washington warned that partisan tribalism could be the nation's undoing.

“Let me...warn you in the most solemn manner against the baneful effects of the spirit of party generally. This spirit, unfortunately, is inseparable from our nature, having its root in the strongest passions of the human mind... The alternate domination of one faction over another, sharpened by the spirit of revenge, natural to party dissension, which in different ages and countries has perpetrated the most horrid enormities, is itself a frightful despotism.”

Washington well understood that the tendency toward political tribalism was in our nature, and that great care had to be taken to prevent the body politic from being consumed by its destructive forces. He foresaw that extreme partisanship and division could paralyze our government and render

turns this disposition to the purposes of his own elevation, on the ruins of public liberty.”

In this presidential election season our country must grapple with these foundational questions, and refuse to yield to the dark forces in human nature that our first president George Washington warned about. We must dedicate ourselves as citizens to the hard work of reforming and strengthening our political system, and thus keep faith with the venerable tradition of preserving and passing along the bounties of the world's oldest democracy to the next generation of Americans.

In this essential work we are in a race against time. Reforms are taking shape and on the agenda in many states, but those invested in the status quo or enabled by partisan dysfunction and voter cynicism continue to place barriers in



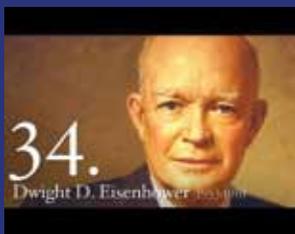
it dysfunctional, intensifying a downward spiral of public cynicism and disgust that ultimately undermines the democracy our founders worked so hard to design.

“This leads at length to a more formal and permanent despotism. The disorders and miseries which result gradually incline the minds of men to seek security and repose in the absolute power of an individual; and sooner or later the chief of some prevailing faction, more able or more fortunate than his competitors,

the path to reform. They are betting that if the reform process can be slowed, it will not bring benefits fast enough to win back public faith and put our democracy back on a sustainable path. Rather than focus on individual candidates, CSPC will thus continue working with like-minded reformers to improve the incentives in our politics, and reverse this downward spiral of extreme partisanship, government dysfunction and voter cynicism. □

Section Three

Project Solarium 2024



THE CENTER FOR THE STUDY of the Presidency & Congress (CSPC) was originally established more than 50 years ago at the behest of President Dwight D. Eisenhower, who longed for an institution that analyzed and captured the lessons of governance in much the same way that the war colleges of his day captured the lessons

of past military campaigns.

At the start of his presidency, Eisenhower also showed his penchant for deep analysis and out-of-the-box thinking by embarking on what became known as “Project Solarium”—a strategic review to evaluate different policy options in the earliest days of the Cold War. From that exercise, Eisenhower developed his administration’s “Long Haul” strategy that balanced the threats the United States faced overseas with the need for policies that enabled prosperity and strength at home. The result was America’s post-World War II ascendance as a global superpower and standard bearer for democracies and free peoples around the world.

“Project Solarium” is thus embedded deep in our DNA here at the Center. Through our Project Solarium programs, CSPC encourages new thinking to address major national challenges, and looks to bridge the gaps between government policymakers and lawmakers on the one side, and leaders in the private sector and academia on the other. In each of our projects we convene stakeholders and influential thought leaders and engage them in respectful dialogue that seeks to leverage emerging technologies and find novel solutions to the complex challenges facing our nation.

Space Force Embraces Commercial Launch



An excited crowd reacts to the successful launch of the SpaceX heavy-lift rocket "Starship," which may one day transport astronauts to the moon and beyond.

Throughout the past year, U.S. Space Force continued efforts to define and communicate its mission not just to the wider defense community, but also to the American people. While it has made significant strides, the effort was always going to be an uphill climb. The vast majority of people do not fully understand the critical importance of space operations not just to our national security, but also to our economic security. This communications challenge remains a

heavy lift, but one that will bring significant rewards as Space Force explains the increasing threat posed by near-peer competitors in space such as Russia and China.

Arguably the most significant change to Space Force operations, and the national security space enterprise writ large, is one frequently overlooked by the policy community and the American people. This year the Space Force took a significant step forward to embrace the potential of commercial space launch capabilities.

While Space Force officials and their predecessors in Air Force Space have long recognized the potential value and usefulness of commercial space, there was a hesitancy to lean too far forward in their reliance on commercial launch. This reluctance changed toward the end of 2023. Whereas Elon Musk's SpaceX once had to literally sue the Air Force to break the United Launch Alliance's (ULA) monopoly on national security launch, the Space Force's latest iteration of the National Security Space Launch (NSSL) program is embracing commercial capabilities to a greater degree than ever before.

Phase Three of the NSSL program offers two distinct lanes forward. The first is comprised nominally of more risk-tolerant missions, which will see greater investment in, and reliance on, a diversity of launch providers. Lane two is for heavy-lift launch providers, presently dominated by ULA and SpaceX—the only two companies which have been previously certified to fly these high-end missions.

The new NSSL solicitation opens the door for a potential third heavy-lift vendor, with most analysts expecting Jeff Bezos' Blue Origin to compete for the additional slot with its yet-to-be-flown New Glenn rocket.

The significance of this seemingly innocuous contractual development should not be underestimated. The move reflects Space Force's recognition of the maturation of the commercial space launch sector, and a willingness to lean into some of the risk associated with new providers. The demand for launches is increasing markedly, and for the moment the ability of companies

to provide the necessary supply is keeping pace. Yet current launch supply is being met by a very small number of providers. The Space Force is now wisely hedging its bets, and working to ensure that national security missions are flown even at a time of increased commercial demand.

The chief driver not only of these reforms, but also

The year ahead will see Space Force further define its role and scope of operations, with an overwhelming focus on defending America's preeminent position in space.

of the creation of the Space Force itself, is growing strategic competition from China. That competition has created increased demand both for space launch and in-space capability and capacity. The need for more responsive launch to address emergent security threats—possibly including the need to quickly replace satellites destroyed in a conflict scenario—requires new providers with greater depth in terms of assets and capabilities.

The Space Force's growing appetite for launch comes at a time when commercial and civil demand is likewise taking off, excuse the pun, piling increased demand pressures on a limited, but luckily growing, supplier base.

The year ahead will see the Space Force further define its role and scope of operations as critical components in the Defense Department's overall defense and deterrence mission.

The overwhelming focus will be on defending America's preeminent position in space, and ensuring that China is deterred from acting against Taiwan. Space Force officials have repeatedly noted that their primary time horizon is 2026, when new U.S. space capabilities are scheduled to come online. Those new capabilities are sure to rely in part on commercial space launch, and hopefully alter Beijing's decision-making and risk-taking calculus. □

Russia's Geopolitical Resilience

The widely held view from Western capitals is that Russia is in wholesale geopolitical retreat, yet the reality is far more complicated than the gospel heard in London, Paris, Berlin, or Washington, D.C. Yes, Europe has largely and successfully severed both its financial and energy linkages with Russia, and the ruble's value is down considerably, falling to 100 against the U.S. dollar. Its conventional ground forces have certainly been severely degraded by fighting in Ukraine, and Russian intelligence operations were sharply curtailed when significant numbers of operatives were expelled from Western Europe after the invasion. Moscow also remains diplomatically isolated from Europe and the United States, with little expectation of a resumption of even base level contacts. With Finland's recent accession to NATO, and with Sweden expected to soon follow suit, the Western alliance now sits astride the totality of Russia's northwestern border.

However, expectations that Russia's economy would be brought to heel by sanctions, and therefore Moscow would be forced to abandon its war against Ukraine, have thus far proven unfounded. Despite the severing of economic and business ties with most of Europe, the Russian domestic economy remains strong and surprisingly resilient, and is buoyed by continued oil exports and high government defense spending. After Western nations responded to Moscow's illegal annexation of Crimea in 2014 with widespread sanctions, Moscow began shifting to an "import-substitution" economy. Domestic companies stepped into the gap created by fleeing Western corporations, assuming or outright taking over their operations.

Semiconductor imports have continued to surge through Central Asia and through straw-buyers, largely circumventing Western sanctions. Over the long term technology restrictions will certainly have an impact on Russian manufacturers who will be unable to match the advances of their Western counterparts. Russia's export market both for defense and non-defense goods will even-

Despite the West's best efforts to isolate Moscow, Russia will remain a power of significant global reach and influence for the foreseeable future.

tually suffer. Whichever way the war in Ukraine is ultimately decided, Moscow will also inevitably find the transition of its industries from a war-footing to a post-conflict environment difficult.

Energy sanctions, price caps and export restrictions have also adversely affected Russia's hydrocarbons economy, but here too the picture is complicated. Exports to and through India and China, and continued high prices on the international market, have offset some, if not most, of the Western import restrictions. Moscow's turn to the East and South is also reflected in its diplomatic relations. While the



United States and Western Europe (along with Australia, Japan, and to a lesser degree South Korea) have severed or reduced their diplomatic engagement in an effort to isolate Moscow, the collective “global south” has remained on the sidelines. Moscow’s continued relations with the other “BRICS” (Brazil, Russia, India, China and South Africa) and its use of proxy forces such as the Wagner Group in Africa, ensure that it retains considerable influence beyond Europe. This point is often missed in overly optimistic Western calculations.

Russia’s conventional ground forces have certainly been degraded by two plus years of fighting in Ukraine, but its total military force structure remains relatively strong. The Kremlin never fully committed its tactical air forces to Ukraine, for instance, and its strategic air and rocket forces remain intact. Russia Black Sea fleet has suffered losses and has been pushed back from Crimea, but it remains a threat to both Ukraine and commercial shipping. Meanwhile, Russia’s “blue water” navy remains a global threat, with NATO forces particularly concerned about its submarine fleet in the North Atlantic. Russia also still possesses

As this destroyed Russian tank indicates, the conflict in Ukraine has devolved into a costly war of attrition for both sides, with no end yet in sight.

space-based and offensive cyber capabilities that could strategically threaten both NATO and the United States. It also continues to commission icebreakers for Arctic operations, retaining significant capability in what is expected to become a critical trade route in the years ahead.

Moreover, should the Ukraine war end in a cease fire or negotiated settlement, Russia can be expected to reconstitute its forces in relatively short order. The Kremlin’s 2024 budget suggests that Russia is banking on sustaining the war at least through 2024 by spending some six percent of its GDP on defense, expenditures likely to be at least partially offset by higher global energy prices and thus revenue into Moscow’s coffers.

Despite the West’s best efforts to isolate Moscow, and the initial hopes of many analysts, Russia will remain a power of significant global reach and influence for the foreseeable future. It may be unfashionable to admit this inconvenient truth, but doing so is the first step towards crafting a longer-term plan for containing and countering the persistent threat of a Putin-led Russia. As they say, hope is not a strategy. □

The Race for “Geotech” Supremacy

In response to the economic and technological challenge posed by China and other authoritarian nations, U.S. policymakers have sought to promote U.S. development and manufacture of critical strategic technologies, while also raising export barriers to protect U.S. and allied technology from finding its way into authoritarian hands. Promotion of U.S.

technology and innovation leadership was greatly enhanced in recent years with the passage of the bipartisan CHIPS and Science Act, and the more partisan Inflation Reduction Act.

As part of our long-standing Geotech Project charting the competition among major powers for supremacy in the technologies that will shape the future, the Center for the Study of the Presidency & Congress (CSPC) has closely tracked the implementation of these recent legislative packages. Major questions remain about their overall impact, the long-term

support needed for domestic high-tech industries, and how these measures fit within the broader ecosystem of American innovation in critical technologies and green energy.

While promoting innovation and domestic manufacturing at home, and “nearshoring” and “friendshoring” to reduce reliance on geopolitically unreliable supply chains, U.S. policymakers have also sought to strengthen protections applied to U.S. technology. Efforts are underway to help ensure that U.S. funds are not knowingly or unknowingly financing Chinese technological and military inno-



In a watershed moment, the Biden administration is openly restricting Chinese development in critical technologies such as artificial intelligence and facial recognition.

vation. The U.S. government is thus moving more assertively than at any time in recent memory in the Geotech competition.

The Biden administration's shift to openly restricting and disrupting Chinese development in critical technologies such as artificial intelligence, facial recognition, and advanced telecommunications systems is a potential watershed moment. It reflects the fact that U.S. officials and lawmakers no longer see China's rapid advancement in a host of critical technologies as benign or mutually beneficial, and both countries are now clearly seeking a technological advantage. This recognition has led to a rare bipartisan consensus among U.S. policymakers and lawmakers on the need to strengthen and harmonize export controls, and push forward with outbound investment reviews. Indeed, a White House Executive Order started that review process, and Congressional pressure and proposals have pushed it forward.

Previously Congress tended to consider outbound investment reviews and enhanced export controls as an "either...or" proposition. The focus was on combining technology protections with manufacturing incentives to steer innovation and production away from China, and towards the United States and its allies and overseas partners. However, the recent unveiling of the Huawei Pro Mate 60 phone, which includes a microprocessor more advanced than controls on U.S. and allied technology should have allowed, has shifted opinion in Congress. Lawmakers are now contemplating more stringent controls on U.S. technology and expertise that are being shared with China. Measures to better harmonize export controls and strengthen and institutionalize outbound investment reviews are being considered.

Of course, the devil is in the details. On the one hand, there is considerable unity in views on the importance of these measures, and on the Geotech competition writ large. On the other hand, there are still differences in philosophy regarding the scope and role of the federal government in setting industrial and technology policy. Similarly, some lawmakers are laser focused on the China challenge, while others take a more holistic approach that considers the wider impact of government regulations on U.S. innovation leaders and their business models. There is concern among U.S. and allied technology companies that govern-

ment regulations, protections and subsidies will create second- and third-order effects that hamper innovation. With new export controls and regulations already in place and implementation only beginning, it will take time to fully consider their impact.

Chinese leaders have continued to characterize these actions as U.S. provocations based on unfounded paranoia. Measures to address the risk of China dominating a critical technology sector must thus be well-founded, carefully communicated both to the private sector and allies

Protecting our technological advantages cannot come at the cost of American economic dynamism.

and overseas partners, and designed to give policymakers a wide range of effective tools. As the saying goes, if all you have is a hammer, everything looks like a nail.

Indeed, a lack of flexibility and nuance in the application of economic security tools could significantly harm U.S. industry, and invite retaliation by economic foes and friends alike. Proposed measures will be difficult to implement if the economic pain proves greater than any security benefit. Overly securing or restricting U.S. technology could discourage international cooperation, even in areas where we can work with allies to push back against China's forced standards. If there is a perception that the U.S. response to China's technological advances is driven by populism, protectionism, or politics, rather than grounded in valid security concerns, then we are unlikely to marshal the critical support of our allies.

While U.S. officials and lawmakers may believe they are only hamstringing China with their reviews and restrictions, in reality the price of compliance with these regulations will fall on U.S. companies, and the lost opportunity costs will be reflected in U.S. jobs, investment and competitiveness. Securing our technology advantages cannot come at the cost of American economic and business dynamism. The ultimate goal must be to secure our most sensitive technologies, while also creating an appealing alternative to China's geotech leadership. □

Ninety Seconds to Midnight

The past year has seen the worst tensions among nuclear powers in a generation. After recklessly threatening Western powers with nuclear weapons if they dared intervene in Moscow's illegal war against Ukraine, Russian President Vladimir Putin formally suspended his nation's participation in the New START treaty, the last remaining nuclear arms treaty between Russia and the United States. As President Joe Biden has noted, the prospect of Armageddon has darkened the counsels of the major powers for the first time since the Cuban Missile Crisis.

In a recent report, the Defense Department also warned that China has greatly exceeded past projections of the size of its nuclear arsenal, fielding more than 500 nuclear warheads in a major expansion and on pace to produce more than 1,000 warheads by 2030. During a recent test a U.S. Minuteman III intercontinental ballistic missile also failed after launch, drawing attention to an aging U.S. nuclear arsenal, and calling into question the country's nuclear deterrent.

Current tensions along the U.S.-Russia-China axis have prompted many experts and historians to draw parallels with the Cold War. Unfortunately, these rising tensions come at a time when the carefully constructed Cold War architecture of nuclear arms control and verification treaties, de-confliction agreements and open communications channels is near collapse. As military provocations and brinkmanship increase dramatically, the current era of major power competition starts to bear an alarming resemblance to the darkest early years of the Cold War, when missteps and miscalculations created potentially existential crises like the Berlin Blockade, the Korean War and the Cuban missile crisis, all of which pushed the major nuclear

powers to the brink.

Little wonder that the Bulletin of Atomic Scientists reset its "Doomsday Clock" in 2023 to just 90 seconds to midnight, moving the world closer to "doom's doorstep" than at any time since the clock's inception in 1947.

Rebuilding Strategic Stability

In recent years, the Center for the Study of the Presidency & Congress (CSPC) has convened a group of notable arms control experts and Russia and China hands to recall some of the muscle memory from the construction of a nuclear arms control regime that kept the Cold War from going hot for decades. We also recently brought together key lawmakers and leaders from the Nuclear Threat Initiative (NTI) to discuss these worrying trends, and the path towards greater strategic stability (see page 31).

Arms control experts credit the Biden administration for taking early steps to try and stabilize a roiling geopolitical landscape. Confronted in early 2021 with the imminent sunset of the New START (Strategic Arms Reduction) Treaty – the last treaty limiting the size of the nuclear arsenals of the United States and Russia, which possess 90 percent of

the world's nuclear weapons – Biden and Putin extended the treaty for the maximum of five years. The extension gave U.S. and Russian negotiators critical time and breathing room to begin discussing a host of thorny issues that must be addressed in a follow-on agreement, and in broader strategic stability discussions.

The Biden-Putin Summit in Geneva in

History will not judge kindly national leaders who add a runaway nuclear arms race to a historically volatile geostrategic landscape.



Chinese soldiers sit atop mobile rocket launchers as they drive in a parade to celebrate the 70th Anniversary of the founding of the People's Republic of China.

June 2021 was another positive first step towards lowering the temperature of the rhetoric between the two strategic rivals. While some news accounts were critical of the summit for failing to achieve more substantive “deliverables,” the two leaders agreed to launch a bilateral “Strategic Stability Dialogue” to lay the groundwork for future arms control treaties and confidence-building agreements.

That positive momentum has understandably stalled as a result of Putin’s reckless and illegal invasion of a sovereign Ukraine, but the need for a continued dialogue between the world’s nuclear weapons superpowers has arguably never been greater.

In November 2022, Biden and Chinese President Xi Jinping also met on the sidelines of a G-20 Summit. Though their lengthy discussion yielded no substantive breakthroughs on sensitive issues such as Taiwan, arms control, human rights or trade, Biden rightly stressed the need for more regular strategic stability conversations and more “guardrails” to help Washington and Beijing manage an increasingly adversarial and acrimonious relationship between the world’s status quo and rising superpowers.

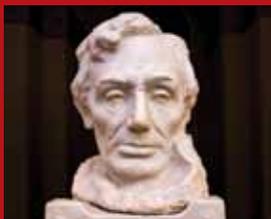
Certainly new guardrails and action are urgently needed to avoid adding a runaway nuclear arms race to an already volatile geopolitical competition. As part of its nucle-

ar weapons modernization, Russia has introduced six new nuclear weapons delivery systems, including a long-range hypersonic glide vehicle. China has also successfully tested its own hypersonic missile, and remains on track to dramatically increase its nuclear weapons arsenal by decade’s end. For its part the United States is also modernizing its nuclear triad of submarine launched ballistic missiles, nuclear-capable aircraft, and intercontinental ballistic missiles (ICBMs).

The world is currently living through a period of great instability as it copes with the aftershocks of the worst global pandemic since 1918, one of the worst economic shocks since the Great Depression, the most dangerous and destructive war in Europe since World War II, and the worst tensions in major power relations since the early days of the Cold War. These crises come at a time when the treaties and multilateral institutions that are the foundation of the international order and strategic stability are visibly weakening, and in danger of collapse. In the past such periods of deep economic distress and geopolitical tensions have given rise to dark political forces, and are ripe for confrontation among nation-states. History will not judge kindly leaders who stood complacent while a runaway nuclear arms race was added to that already volatile mix. □

Section Four

Celebrating Enlightened Leadership & Inspiring Tomorrow's Leaders



VISITORS TO THE NATION'S CAPITAL frequently head first to the Washington Mall to see the monuments tracing the arc of American history. There on the banks of the Tidal Basin is the Thomas Jefferson Memorial honoring the principal author of the Declaration of Independence. The Washington Monument reminds visitors of the example set by our first president and hero of the American Revolutionary War, who after two terms in office shocked the world by voluntarily surrendering power. The Abraham Lincoln Memorial at the end of Memorial Bridge honors the president who ended slavery and preserved the union through a bloody Civil War. The Franklin Roosevelt Memorial recalls the leader who pulled the nation through the Great Depression and guided it to victory over tyranny in World War II. Martin Luther King Jr.'s statue stands atop the metaphorical mountaintop from which he bent the arc of history towards justice with a peaceful civil rights movement that ended officially sanctioned prejudice and bigotry.

As even a casual visit to the Washington Mall will attest, at crucial moments in our history America has been blessed with extraordinary leaders.

At the Center for the Study of the Presidency & Congress (CSPC) we have always viewed as a core mission the recognition and celebration of enlightened leadership, and the development of the next generation of national leaders of character. We do that each year through our Presidential Fellows Program for gifted students interested in public service, and with our annual awards dinner honoring public servants who have shown the traits we believe exemplify our best leaders: strategic vision, civility and a passion for reform and national renewal.

Convening Members of Congress

In a time of historic geopolitical instability and extreme domestic partisanship, the Center for the Study of the Presidency & Congress (CSPC) has leaned into its mission of bringing together political and thought leaders for civil, bipartisan discussions on the weighty national security and foreign policy challenges confronting our nation. In the past year, few such challenges were as pressing as the rise in tensions among nuclear powers.

To discuss the erosion of strategic stability along the U.S.-Russia-China axis, CSPC invited select members of Congress to meet over dinner with the co-chairs of the non-profit Nuclear Threat Initiative, former Senator Sam Nunn, D-Ga., who long headed the Senate Armed Services Committee, and former Energy Secretary Ernest Moniz. In an in-depth, off-the-record discussion with members of the House and Senate, Nunn and Moniz put current tensions in a historical perspective, and drew many parallels with the Cold War.

There was general agreement that Russia's unprovoked war against Ukraine has dangerously scrambled the strategic calculus of nuclear deterrence. Moscow has threatened NATO with doomsday weapons if it dares intervene directly in the conflict, for instance, and many Russian elites have even argued that the Kremlin should consider launching a "first use" nuclear strike to stave off possible defeat.

"Look at this geopolitical moment from the Russian point of view: their nuclear deterrence has failed to limit Western support for Ukraine, they are no longer constrained by the Intermediate Nuclear Forces Treaty or the Open Skies Treaty, and now the Russian elite are publicly advising Putin to use nuclear weapons," said Nunn. "Their rationale is the need to 're-establish' Russia's nuclear deterrence, because in their minds the West's willingness to support Ukraine despite Russian threats means Moscow's nuclear deterrence



At a recent CSPC-hosted dinner, Nuclear Threat Initiative Co-Chair Sam Nunn, D-Ga., former chairman of the Senate Armed Services Committee (SASC), consults with current SASC Chair Senator Jack Reed, D-R.I.

has failed. So what's happened in the last 60 years since the Cuban Crisis makes my head spin. Never before have we had an open debate in a nuclear armed country advocating for the use of nuclear weapons."

Even after the war in Ukraine is over, a Putin-led Russia that remains a pariah in the Euro-Atlantic region could be pushed into the arms of China, which has launched an aggressive expansion of its own nuclear arsenal. If Beijing stays on course to acquire more than one thousand nuclear weapons by decade's end, as the Pentagon has warned, then its rival India is also likely to greatly expand its nuclear arsenal, possibly provoking Pakistan to follow suit in a cascading proliferation of nuclear weapons.

Nunn and Moniz also noted that current theories of nuclear deterrence such as "mutually assured destruction" are largely based on a binary Cold War model focused primarily on the United States and Russia, which together still possess more than 90 percent of the world's nuclear weapons. With Beijing seemingly determined to reach nuclear parity in the decade ahead, strategic equilibrium is in danger of tipping towards a runaway nuclear arms race without the guard rails of arms control agreements. □

Roundtables with Noted Experts

Over the past year the Center for the Study of the Presidency & Congress (CSPC) has continued its series of roundtables and literary salons welcoming leading experts and book authors to discuss the most pressing national security and foreign policy issues of the day. Unsurprisingly, a key discussion theme has been Russia’s continued war against Ukraine, and the likely course that conflict may take in the future.

The year opened with Keir Giles discussing his book “Russia’s War on Everybody: And What It Means for You,” and closed with Maximillian Hess offering unique insights into the financial and trade side of the war with his book “Economic War: Ukraine and the Global Conflict between Russia and the West.” Along the way, CSPC also welcomed Jade McGlynn, author of “Russia’s War” and “Memory Makers”; Ian Garner, author of “Z Generation: Into the Heart of Russia’s Fascist Youth”; and retired Lt. Gen. Ben Hodges, former commander, U.S. Army Europe.

Looking beyond the war against Ukraine, CSPC also

welcomed authors and researchers as part of its “geotechnology” program led by CSPC Vice President Dan Mahaffee. Andrew Small of the German Marshall Fund discussed his book “No Limits: The Inside Story of China’s War with the West,” which examines China’s efforts to develop a friendly alliance system; and Paul Scharre of the Center for a New American Security discussed his book “Four Battlegrounds: Power in the Age of Artificial Intelligence,” which examines the competition for AI supremacy between the United States, Russia, China and other nations. Rory Cormac, author of several books on intelli-



Joshua Huminski, Director of the Mike Rogers Center for Intelligence & Global Affairs (below, bottom right) moderates a Space Policy Panel discussion with U.S. government officials and space experts as part of CSPC’s National Security Space Program.

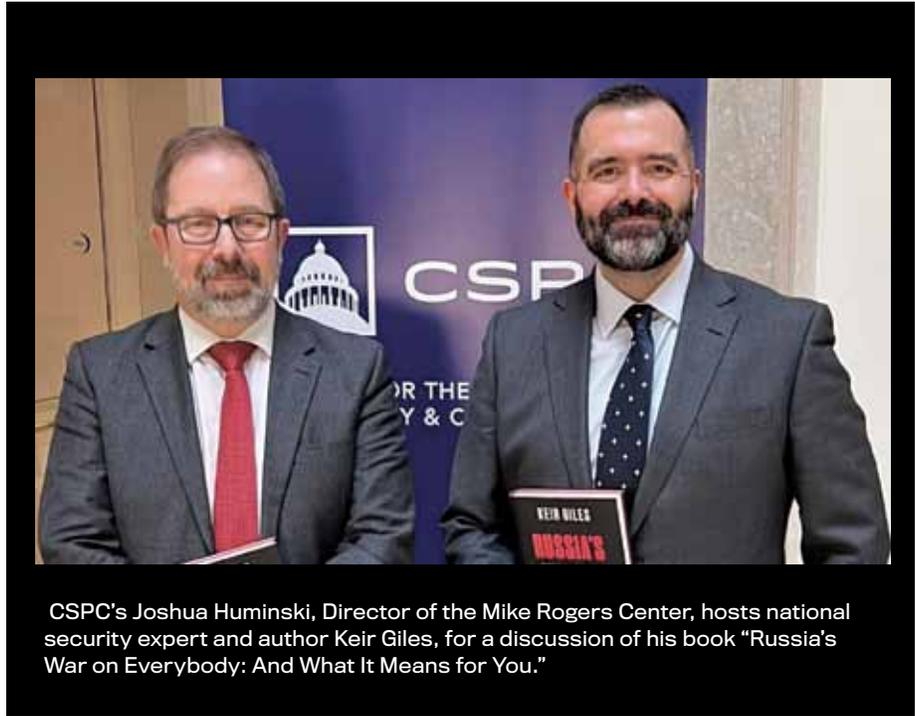
CSPC hosts a Ukraine War Panel discussion (next page) featuring moderators Joshua Huminski, Director of the Mike Rogers Center (top left), and CSPC President Glenn Nye (bottom right).

gence and espionage, reflected on the evolution of the United States – United Kingdom “special relationship” in an era of renewed great power competition.

In keeping with the theme of strategic competition, CSPC hosted conversations with Emma Salisbury, a doctoral researcher at Birkbeck College, University of London, who discussed the challenges of naval acquisition and the U.S. pivot to the Indo-Pacific. CSPC was also honored to host Rear Admiral Tim Woods, the Defence Attaché of the Embassy of the United Kingdom, to discuss his thoughts on the importance of the Indo-Pacific, the U.S.-U.K. “special relationship,” and his previous posting to Kyiv. Michael Vickers, the former Assistant Secretary of Defense for Special Operations and Low-Intensity Conflict, joined CSPC to discuss his impressive career and memoir, “By All Means Available: Memoirs of a Life in Intelligence, Special Operations, and Strategy.”

As part of CSPC’s National Security Space Program, Frank Calvelli, Assistant Secretary of the Air Force for

Space Acquisition and Integration participated in an off-the-record conversation, as did John Plumb, the Assistant Secretary of Defense for Space Policy, and Richard DalBello, Director of the Office of Space Commerce. Lt. Gen. Michael A. Guetlein, Commander of Space Systems Command, also hosted CSPC officials for a unique discussion in Los Angeles, California, in September. □



CSPC’s Joshua Huminski, Director of the Mike Rogers Center, hosts national security expert and author Keir Giles, for a discussion of his book “Russia’s War on Everybody: And What It Means for You.”



UKRAINE POLICY PANEL

Celebrating Bipartisan Leadership & Strategic Vision

A core mission of the Center for the Study of the Presidency & Congress (CSPC) is to recognize and celebrate enlightened leadership. In 2023 we were proud to bestow our *Eisenhower Award* for leadership characterized by strategic vision on Senator Tim Kaine, D-VA., and Rep. Mike Gallagher, R-WI. The *Eisenhower Award* is inspired by the grand strategist General Dwight D. Eisenhower, who successfully led the largest seaborne invasion in history as Supreme Allied Commander during World War II. Later as President of the United States, Eisenhower successfully ended the Korean War and devised the long-term national strategy that balanced the security, diplomatic and economic pillars of American strength, and ultimately led to victory in the Cold War.

At a time of rising major power tensions abroad and division at home, Senator Kaine has shown a commitment to pragmatism, civility and strategic leadership that always puts country ahead of party. His leadership has proven essential in advancing domestic infrastructure investments, climate resilience, defense policy and technological innovation, all while championing human rights across the globe.

After a distinguished career as a Marine Corps intelligence officer, Representative Gallagher has worked with members of both parties to ensure our national security, and he has been a tireless advocate for the men and women in uniform. He led the Cyberspace Solarium Commission, and was named Chairman of the new U.S. House Select Committee on Strategic Competition between the United States and the Communist Party of China.

The strong work ethic, patriotism and strategic vision of both Senator Kaine and Representative Gallagher make them worthy recipients of CSPC's *Eisenhower Award*.



CSPC President Glenn Nye (above) moderates a discussion with Eisenhower Award recipients Senator Tim Kaine, D-Virginia, and Rep. Mike Gallagher, R-Wisconsin.

CSPC Trustee, the Honorable Paula Dobriansky of the Harvard Kennedy School, introduces the awardees at the 2023 annual awards dinner (left).

The U.S. military color guard kicks off the festivities at the awards dinner (right).





CSPC's Joshua Huminski, director of the Mike Rogers Center; CSPC Senior Fellow James Kitfield; and CSPC Vice President and Director of Policy Dan Mahaffee enjoy the view from the roof-top venue at the annual awards dinner (above top).

Eisenhower Award Recipient Sen. Tim Kaine, D-VA., speaks with CSPC Chairman Thomas Pickering and CSPC President Glenn Nye (above middle).

CSPC Trustee Daniel Lubin enjoys a light moment during the annual awards dinner (above).



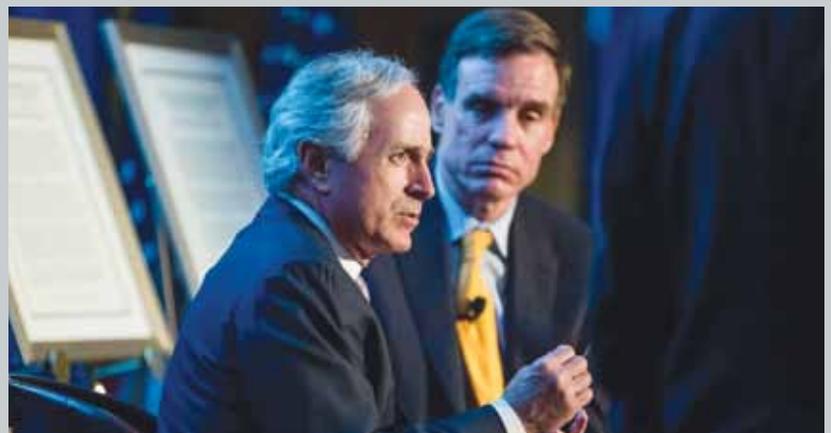
A Roll Call of Enlightened Leaders

Each year the Center for the Study of the Presidency & Congress (CSPC) honors leading public servants of character and integrity with one of our four awards: the *Publius Award* for leadership and bipartisanship in government; the *Eisenhower Award* for leadership in national security affairs; the *Hamilton Award* for economic or fiscal leadership; and the *Thurgood Marshall Award* honoring champions of equality and justice.

Some of CSPC's notable past award winners include: Supreme Court Justices Rush Bader Ginsberg and Sandra Day O'Connor; Senator Susan Collins, R-ME; Senator Joe Manchin, D-WV; Senator Dianne Feinstein, D-CA; Senator Roy Blunt, R-MO; Congressman Steny Hoyer, D-MD; Senator Bob Corker, R-TN; Senator Mark Warner, D-VA; Senator Bill Frist, R-TN; Senator John Breaux, D-LA; Defense Secretaries Leon Panetta, Chuck Hagel and Ash Carter; Chairman of the Joint Chiefs of Staff Admiral Mike Mullen; Chairman of the Federal Reserve Ben Bernanke; and Homeland Security Secretary Tom Ridge. □



The late Congressman and civil rights icon John Lewis posthumously received CSPC's inaugural *Thurgood Marshall Award* (above).



The late Ash Carter, former Defense Secretary, receiving CSPC's *Eisenhower Award* for national security leadership (above).

Senators Bob Corker, R-TN, and Senator Mark Warner, D-VA, accepting CSPC's *Publius Award* for bipartisan leadership.



CSPC President Glenn Nye, Sen. Lisa Murkowski, R-Alaska, and Sen. Angus King, I-Maine (left), at CSPC's 2022 "Publius Awards" presentation.

Adm. Mike Mullen, Chairman of the Joint Chiefs, receiving CSPC's *Eisenhower Award* (below).



After her death in 2020, Supreme Court Justice Ruth Bader Ginsburg posthumously received CSPC's inaugural *Thurgood Marshall Award* (above).

Senators Susan Collins, R-ME, and Joe Manchin, D-WV, receiving CSPC's *Publius Award* for bipartisan leadership (above left).



CSPC Trustee Paula Dobriansky speaks with *Eisenhower Award* recipients Heather Wilson, former Secretary of the Air Force, and Gwynne Shotwell, President and COO of SpaceX (left).

Inspiring America's Future Leaders

We are happy to report another successful year of the Presidential Fellows Program for the 2022-2023 cohort. In March we hosted our five-day Leadership Conference in Washington, D.C. which was a culmination of nearly seven months of independent research and monthly virtual sessions. The Conference focused on building leadership skills, learning about the policy process, and conversing with experts on key issues and challenges facing our country.

Some highlights included discussions about climate change with Farrah Barrios, a Director at the National Security Council; how the internet is changing our political landscape with Aaron Smith, Director of Data Labs at Pew Research Center; and U.S. geostrategic priorities with Fellows alum Tarun Chhabra, Senior Director for Technology and National Security at the National Security Council. Fellows also had the opportunity to personally engage with Senator Tim Kaine and Congressman Mike Gallagher at the annual Awards Dinner.

Connecting with Fellows alumni at the Alumni and Friends reception at the Met Club was another highlight of the Conference. The gathering allowed Fellows to meet and

network with our incredible alumni community.

At CSPC we constantly strive to improve the Presidential Fellows Program to reach more students. Last year, we introduced the At-Large Initiative, for instance, which opened up the program for the very first time to college students from any school in the country. The first class of At-Large Fellows represented Spelman College, Wabash College, St. Louis University, and Bethany College. The initiative allowed a more diverse group of students to enter the program, and we are proud of their accomplishments both in and outside of the Fellowship. After the program's conclusion, one of the At-Large Fellows became a Marshall Scholar.



CSPC Presidential Fellows take time out for a group photograph in front of the Capitol building at the annual awards dinner.



CSPC Presidential Fellows visiting the Pentagon in 2023 and taking a group photo in front of the Defense Department spokesman's lectern.



CSPC President and CEO Glenn Nye moderating a fireside chat with Tarun Chhabra, Senior Director for Technology at the National Security Council.



For the 2023-2024 cohort, we are fortunate to expand the At-Large Fellows to include five students from New York University, Yale University, the University of Pennsylvania, Cornell University, and George Mason University. We are pleased to continue this initiative for the 2023-2024 cohort, and hope to grow and expand the At-Large program in the coming years. This initiative would not be possible without the support of our Advisory Board and our alumni community. We look forward to continuing the mission of preparing civic-minded leaders through our Leadership conference, and allowing CSPC Presidential Fellows to connect with influential figures who encourage their intellectual curiosity and high-level research. □



(Photos above from top) Presidential Fellows take a group photograph with CSPC Eisenhower Award Recipient Rep. Mike Gallagher, R-WI., at the annual awards dinner.

Fellows enjoy the view of the Capitol from the rooftop venue of the annual awards dinner.

Presidential Fellows and Military Academy students speak with Eisenhower Award recipient Rep. Mike Gallagher, R-WI.

CSPC President Glenn Nye (far left) and CSPC Trustee Maury Bradsheer (far right) honor select Fellows for their outstanding contributions to the Presidential Fellows Review.

Convening Congressional Staff

As an essential part of our core mission, the Center for the Study of the Presidency & Congress (CSPC) regularly convenes key stakeholders and decision-makers in Washington, D.C. in order to find and advance innovative solutions to our nation's most pressing challenges. As part of that work, we provide targeted programming for Members of Congress and their staffs that focuses on critical foreign policy and national security issues. In these sessions we welcome participation from both chambers and across party lines, and feature subject-matter experts and practitioners who share insights and advice in an informal, off-the-record setting. Our goal is always to foster a respectful yet candid exchange of ideas that informs the lawmakers, policymakers and senior aides who are entrusted with shaping our nation's national security policies.

Over the past year our Congressional programming focused on great power competition, nuclear threats and economic security. We convened Congressional staff to discuss the deepening nexus between economic and national security policies, examine the challenges presented by economic interdependence with strategic rivals, and explore opportunities for stronger economic integration with allies. A select group of Senators and Representatives also joined us for a discussion with the co-chairmen of the Nuclear Threat Initiative, former Energy Secretary Ernest Moniz and former Senator Sam Nunn, D-Ga., on U.S. nuclear diplomacy with Russia and China in a time of rising geopolitical tensions (see page 31). We also hosted a Member-level event with the Right Honorable James Heappey, Minister of State for the Armed Forces of the United Kingdom, on the evolving United States – United Kingdom relationship in a new era of great power competition. We closed out the year with a conversation with Congressional staff jointly hosted by the Finnish and Swedish Embassies, whose representatives outlined issues relating to their countries' accession into the NATO alliance.

In the coming year we will continue focusing on nuclear



CSPC regularly convenes Congressional staff and subject matter experts to discuss the deepening nexus between economic and national security policies.

issues by examining the threat posed by China's rapid increase in its nuclear weapons arsenal, and explore avenues for constructive nuclear diplomacy. Additionally, we will convene discussions on ways to better cooperate with allies in securing critical mineral supply chains, address mutual concerns in the Arctic region, and implement "de-risking" strategies vis-à-vis China.

In the current era of hyper-partisanship and political division in Washington, D.C., we believe that creating opportunities for candid, bipartisan dialogue on critical issues is more important than ever. Members of Congress and their staffs, regardless of political orientation, fully understand the imperative to reach consensus on critical national security challenges. We at CSPC take pride in providing a platform dedicated to nurturing and fostering that essential, consensus-building dialogue. □

Section Five

Capturing the Lessons of History



THE CENTER FOR THE STUDY of the Presidency and Congress (CSPC) originally grew out of President Dwight D. Eisenhower's expressed wish for an institution dedicated to capturing the historical lessons of governance and applying them creatively to the challenges confronted by the modern presidency and Congress. CSPC's books, publications and reports are a direct outgrowth of that mission and tradition.

In our anthologies of case studies in modern governance, *Triumph and Tragedies of the Modern Presidency*, and *Triumph and Tragedies of the Modern Congress* (Praeger), some of the leading historians, political scientists and journalists in the country examine major milestones in domestic and foreign policy that have made us the country we are today.

In his memoir *The Statesman: Reflections on a Life Guided by Civility, Strategic Leadership and the Lessons of History* (Rowman & Littlefield), the late Ambassador David M. Abshire, former CSPC President and Adviser to U.S. presidents, imparts the lessons learned from a rich career and life spent in public service.

CSPC Senior Fellow and award-winning journalist James Kitfield has written two recent books chronicling the lessons learned in America's longest wars; *In the Company of Heroes: The Inspiring Stories of Medal of Honor Recipients from America's Longest Wars in Afghanistan and Iraq* (Center Street), which tells the personal stories of America's "New Greatest Generation"; and *Twilight Warriors: The Soldiers, Spies and Special Agents Who Are Revolutionizing the American Way of War* (Basic Books).

In his new book *Visual Friendlies, Tally Target (Vol. I): Invasions*, CSPC Senior Fellow and former Air Force Joint Terminal Attack Controller (JTAC) Ethan Brown examines how a new century that began with the September 11, 2001 terrorist attacks brought a new enemy and a new kind of war that relied on airpower at a scale and precision never before seen in combat.

Triumphs & Tragedies in U.S. Governance

The Center for the Study of the Presidency & Congress (CSPC) publishes two anthologies on the subject of presidential and Congressional leadership: *Triumphs & Tragedies of the Modern Presidency*, and *Triumphs and Tragedies of the Modern Congress*. Through case studies we ask some of the top historians, journalists and political scientists in the country to identify the lessons learned from past presidents and Congresses, the better to understand current events. Our writers examine the first one hundred days of every post-World War II president and look at their domestic and foreign policy milestones that laid the foundation for the “American Century.”

These anthologies offer important lessons on leadership, as well as the pitfalls that any administration or Congress would do well to avoid. Historians will long note, for instance, the monumental crises that welcomed President Joe Biden on his first day in the Oval Office: the worst global pandemic in more than a century that has claimed the lives of more than one million Americans; the commensurate economic disruption that is the worst since the Great Depression; and the first violent transfer of presidential power since the Civil War. Add in the worst international tensions in major power relations since the Cold War and extreme partisanship in Washington, D.C., and the headwinds that faced the Biden presidency in its first year were hurricane strength.

And yet the crises and challenges that Biden has confronted are not altogether ahistorical. The same powerful forces that both empowered and constrained his modern predecessors shaped Biden’s first two years in the Oval Office, for

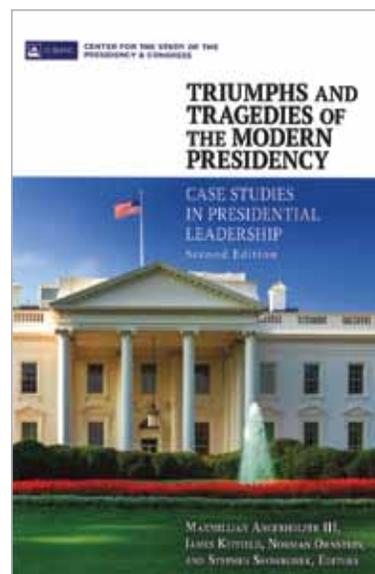
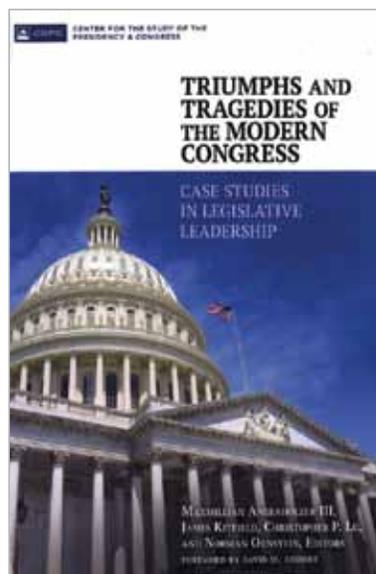
good and ill. In that sense Biden’s triumphs revealed familiar alignments of political actors and motivations, just as his tragedies followed a recognizable script. As Mark Twain reputedly mused, “History doesn’t repeat itself, but it rhymes.”

The administration fell into a common trap, for instance, of trying too hard to reverse the previous administration’s legacy too fast. While its attempt to enact a more humane immigration policy is to be commended, for instance, the Biden administration arguably moved too quickly to roll back its predecessors policies in its critical first months—when election winds are strongest—resulting in a preliminary injunction by a federal court halting Biden’s proposed changes, and an immigration crisis on the southern border with Mexico.

Like FDR, LBJ, Barack Obama, and Donald Trump, Biden’s party initially enjoyed majority control in Congress, though its margins were razor thin in both the House and the Senate. That meant a united Republican opposition was able to use the filibuster requiring a 60 vote majority to thwart major policy initiatives such as voting rights and criminal justice legislation.

However, like LBJ before him, Biden used his decades of experience in the U.S. Congress to notch major legislative achievements. Impressively, he used his good relations with key Members of Congress to sign and pass a bipartisan, \$1 trillion infrastructure bill, enacting a key piece of his

domestic agenda that will funnel billions to states and local governments to upgrade outdated roads, bridges, and transit systems. In achieving legislation to upgrade America’s aging and fraying infrastructure, Biden succeeded where his recent predecessors had failed, making good on his promise to seek bipartisan solutions when possible. □



Sowing Incivility, Reaping the Whirlwind

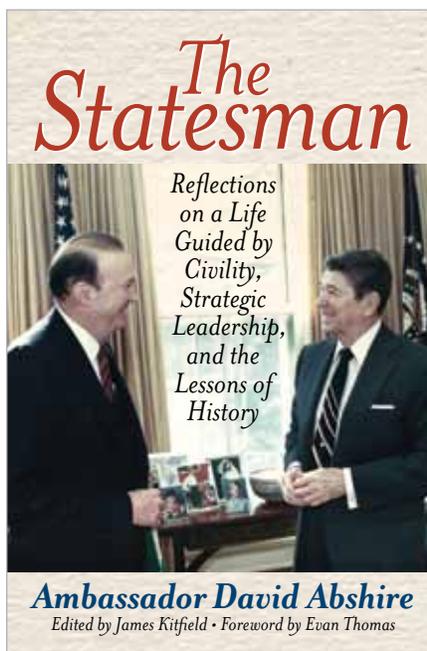
As we enter a contentious presidential election year in 2024, Washington, D.C. is yet again confronting the possibility of a federal government shut-down. This comes after a year of nearly unprecedented Congressional paralysis and gridlock that featured two prolonged battles to choose a House speaker, the launch of an impeachment inquiry of the sitting president, and brinkmanship over a potentially catastrophic debt default. The divisive hyper-partisanship that increasingly defines our political culture has also been accompanied over the past year by some of the crudest political discourse in living memory, and even threats of violence by sitting members of Congress. After the disgraceful sacking of the U.S.

Capitol by a violent mob on January 6, 2021, in what history will record as one of the darkest days in U.S. history, it should be clear to all where this profound lack of civility and decorum could lead.

The Center for the Study of the Presidency & Congress (CSPC) has long viewed it as a core mission to capture the lessons of history to better inform our leaders of the best path forward, however, including by publishing the posthumous memoirs of the late David M. Abshire. Abshire was the former Chairman and President of the Center, co-founder of the Center for Strategic and International Studies, and a U.S. Ambassador to NATO. Among his many government positions, Abshire was notably special counselor to President Ronald Reagan during the Iran-Contra controversy.

In the following excerpt from his memoir “The Statesman: Reflections on a Life Guided by Civility, Strategic Leadership and the Lessons of History” (Rowman & Littlefield), Abshire presciently warned how a marked increase in incivility in our political discourse was threatening the long-term health and security of our democracy.

As I write this at the end of my career, our country has lost its sense of strategic direction and common purpose. Our politics have entered a period of hyper-partisanship and gridlock. Over-



seas we are transitioning from a unipolar world of uncontested American power to a multipolar world where we face challenges to our interests and security from multiple directions. Dangers gather on every front. Put simply, our country is in deep trouble.

We have come to this impasse in large part because of a great deterioration of civility over the past decade and a half. Today, too many in Congress claim to revere the Constitution, and yet they reject the spirit of consensus-building and compromise that created it in the first place. Today, too many politicians seem utterly opposed to any of the compromises required for our Constitutional system of republican federalism to function at all. It must be their way, or no way. That fundamental lack of civility and respect among po-

litical partisans has in turn produced a profound deficit of trust. And just as civility is the springboard for trust, so too is trust the springboard for compromise and cooperation, essential ingredients of democratic governance. Without them our leaders lack the political consensus required to take the country to higher ground. So on top of this deficit of civility and trust, we also confront a leadership deficit.

We as a people are living with the bitter fruits of this dysfunction. We can see it in the political gridlock that led to the downgrading of the United States' credit rating for the first time in history. It's evident in the routine budgetary impasses that diminish the strength of an already stressed U.S. military even as dangers gather, and in domestic infrastructure that was once the envy of the world, now crumbling into disrepair and obsolescence. It's there for all the world to see in a political discourse of embarrassing crudeness and banality. We are in danger of becoming a nation so absorbed by our divisions and bitter internal squabbles that we no longer attempt great deeds, nor dare lead free peoples. □

The late David M. Abshire was formerly the Chairman and President of the Center for the Study of the Presidency & Congress. This essay is excerpted from his memoir, “Statesman: Reflections on a Life Guided by Civility, Strategic Leadership, and the Lessons of History” (Rowman and Littlefield).

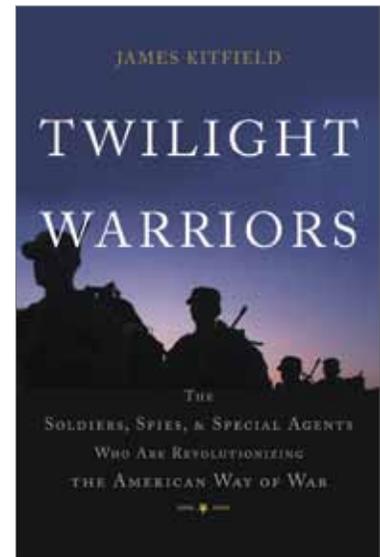
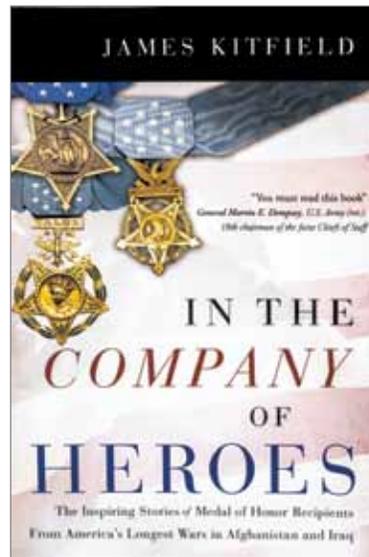
Lessons from America's Longest Wars

The U.S. military's chaotic withdrawal from Afghanistan in 2021 in the face of a resurgent Taliban brought a tragic end to the longest wars in U.S. history. After two decades of fighting terrorist insurgencies in Afghanistan and Iraq, a war-weary American public was ready to close the final chapter on these bloody and largely dispiriting post-9/11 conflicts.

The Center for the Study of the Presidency & Congress (CSPC) views it as a core mission, however, to capture the historical lessons of the United States' major conflicts, the better to inform current and future national security leaders on mistakes to be avoided, as well as on hard-won successes. In two recent books on the post-9/11 conflicts, CSPC Senior Fellow and award-winning national security correspondent James Kitfield set about capturing those historical lessons.

In *Twilight Warriors: The Soldiers, Spies and Special Agents Who Are Revolutionizing the American Way of War* (Basic Books), Kitfield chronicles the fight against a determined and adaptive enemy, drawing on his extensive reporting from the frontlines. Lessons he brings to life with compelling anecdotes include it “takes a network to defeat a network.” Under the pioneering leadership of General Stanley McChrystal, Joint Special Operations Command adapted to the global networks of Al Qaeda and the Islamic State by incubating its own network-centric model of military operations. That model relies on an unprecedented synergy that developed in the war zones between Special Operations Forces, intelligence and law enforcement agencies, and conventional military forces. Many national security experts credit that synergy with keeping the United States free from another catastrophic terrorist attack in the decades since 9/11.

The *Wall Street Journal* lauded *Twilight Warriors* for providing “an enlightening tour of 21st century counterterrorism – its successes and failures, its evolving technologies, and its ever-festering rivalries among national security agencies.” General Dennis Reimer, former Army Chief of Staff, calls it “undoubtedly one of the best books I have ever read – a brilliantly written narrative and real



world adventure that draws the reader in.”

While they collectively represent less than one percent of the population, America's military personnel disproportionately shouldered the burden of our nation's longest wars in Iraq and Afghanistan. Unlike their forebears, they are members of an all-volunteer military that was created after Vietnam with the abolishment of the draft.

With *In the Company of Heroes: The Inspiring Stories of Medal of Honor Recipients from America's Longest Wars in Afghanistan and Iraq* (Center Street Books), Kitfield tells their stories through the eyes of 25 post-9/11 recipients of the Medal of Honor, the nation's highest award for valor. Theirs are stories of never surrendering despite harrowing odds, of facing death and finding the courage and faith not to be cowed, of wearing their scars like badges of honor. There is wisdom and warrior fierceness in these narratives, but also acts of profound tenderness and self-sacrifice.

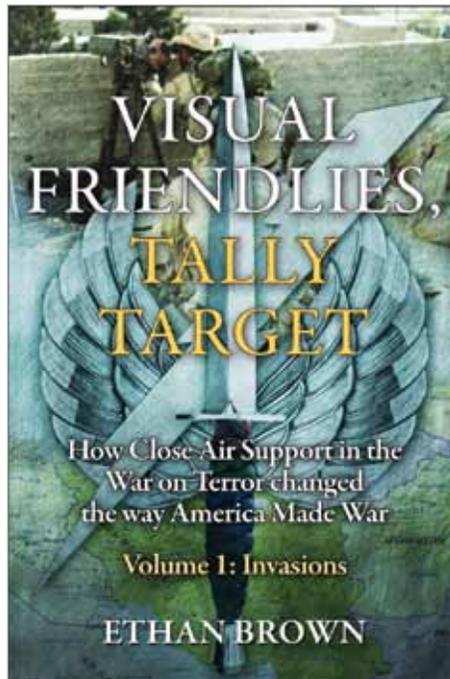
General Martin Dempsey (Army-ret.), the 18th Chairman of the Joint Chiefs of Staff, said of *In the Company of Heroes*, “If you've ever wanted to truly understand bravery, explore the real meaning of sacrifice, or deeply appreciate the cost of our freedoms, then you must read this book.” General David Petraeus, (Army-ret.), former senior commander of U.S. and allied forces in both Afghanistan and Iraq, said “This important book describes brilliantly why those of us privileged to lead our men and women in combat truly consider them ‘America's New Greatest Generation.’” □

Close Air Support in Unconventional Warfare

With a new century and a new enemy came a new kind of war: one of low intensity and civilian-dominated environments, blending austere rural and dense urban locales alike. Into this new kind of war, the American military launched two invasions against terrorist networks and military rivals, and later contended with rising insurgencies while relying to an unprecedented degree on air power—close air support (CAS)—at a scale and precision never before seen in combat.

So does CSPC Senior Fellow Ethan Brown introduce his new book, “Visual Friendlies, Tally Target” (Volume One). As a former Air Force Joint Terminal Attack Controller (JTAC) attached primarily to Special Forces units, Brown writes with authority. Certainly Close Air Support has been publicly misunderstood and misrepresented in modern history. Mistakes were made—like the airstrike which nearly killed Hamid Karzai in December 2001, or the Kunduz hospital incident in 2015—for which the forward air controller community held itself accountable. Yet the reality is that no entity in the entire defense enterprise carried a heavier burden or had more influence on the battlefield.

The ability to direct the precise application of the most devastating and overwhelming firepower in human history rested at the fingertips of a select group of men whom the rest of the military simply came to know as “JTACs.” These men were entrusted to fight and win a war which ultimately failed due to unclear strategy, wavering policy, and a failure to commit to a sustainable, achievable outcome. Regardless of the fog of ambiguity in the “Global War on Terror,” however, forward air controllers were there for every key moment of the war, from its opening



shots to the fateful withdrawal from Afghanistan in August of 2021.

Brown notes that “Global War on Terror” was essentially the “CAS war.” Forward Air Controllers were on the front lines from the very first moments of the war, directing airstrikes against enemies in their safe havens, safeguarding friendly forces and civilians alike, and achieving unprecedented success with limited resources. From the true stories of the first Special Forces teams sent into Afghanistan, to the secret raids in Iraq ahead of the April 2003 invasion, and previously unreported missions in the aftermath of both invasions, to the rise of counterinsurgency and nation-building, “Visual Friendlies, Tally Target (Vol. I

Invasions)” recounts the saga of the most pivotal military capability of America’s longest war.

This first volume of the trilogy captures the heroic accounts of the first Tactical Air Control Party (TACPs) specialists in the Afghanistan and Iraq invasions, and examines how Close Air Support fundamentally reshaped the American war machine in the first five years of the post-9/11 wars in Afghanistan and Iraq, the longest in U.S. history.

Indisputably, every key moment of the Post 9/11-wars where coalition forces conducted operations against the enemy meant that Forward Air Controllers were involved—either alongside their Joint force partners, or nearby providing unparalleled overwatch—innovating and adapting to a war which policy makers and strategic leaders failed to understand. This select tribe of specialists continued to adapt to unclear strategic goals, relentless repeat deployments, and the endless demands of their constant presence “down-range.” In the final analysis, Close Air Support and the men who controlled it became the most influential weapon of the Global War on Terror. □

The Presidential Fellows Review

A part of CSPC's Presidential Fellows Program, each Fellow writes a research paper examining a specific aspect of the presidency and Congress. Topics touch on a wide variety of issues including foreign policy, political reform, Congressional oversight, and the economy. Most Fellows also work with a mentor—usually an alum of the program—who helps them in their writing process. At the end of the program, Fellows can be published in *The Fellows Review*, an annual journal highlighting the most outstanding papers written by each Fellows cohort.

This year, the *Review* published 22 Fellows papers. We are proud of all the Fellows published in this year's *Review*.

Part 1: The Presidency

Adrian Ali-Caccamo, Georgetown University
The Presidency and The Ku Klux Klan: A Study of American Presidential Responses to White Supremacist Domestic Terrorism

George Dalianis, Harvard College
Presidential Signing Statements: Defining the Executive's Institutional Boundaries

Layne Friedman, University of Chicago
Presidential Rhetoric In Response To White Supremacist Terrorism: A Study of Style and Emotional Stewardship

Matthew Trout, Westminster College
The President's "Loaded Weapon": Using Justice Jackson's Framework to Address Statutory Ambiguity in the National Emergencies Act

Part 2: The Congress

Eleanor Deas, United States Naval Academy
Presidential War Powers and the Congressional Response during the 21st Century

Cooper Smith, Wabash College
Negotiating the Constitutional Balance: How the Reconstruction Congress Expanded and Contracted Judicial Power

Taylor L. Winters, United States Coast Guard Academy
The Study of Congressional and Presidential Policy Responses in the Maritime Calamities of the Santa Barbara, Exxon Valdez, and Deepwater Horizon Oil Spill

Part 3: Foreign Policy & National Security

Honoré Brewer, Saint Louis University
Examining the Fentanyl Epidemic: The Feasibility of Longstanding Collaborative Efforts with the People's Republic of China



Eric Jackson, University of Toronto
The Influence of U.S. Foreign Policy Rhetoric on the Limitation and Proliferation of Domestic Terrorism

Joaquin Jacome Barsallo, Universidad Santa María La Antigua
The Importance of Strong U.S.–Panama Relations in the Face of the Growing Presence of the People's Republic of China in the Country

Emily Morgan, Sewanee: The University of the South
A New Marshall Plan: How will the United States Help Rebuild Ukraine

Yana Sadeghi, University of Toronto
Nuclear "Friendly"? American Nuclear Sharing Practices and Alliance Formation

Kaylen Shetler, Angelo State University
Defining Weapons of Mass Destruction in a New Age of Cyberwarfare

Margaret Williams, United States Military Academy
Cryptocurrency and Conflict: Digital Assets as a Threat to National Security

Part 4: Domestic Policy

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Covid-19 Hate Crimes: Repair through Racial Reconciliation

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Jack Miklaucic, Emory University
Going Beyond Carbon: Mitigating Nitrogen Pollution from Agriculture in the U.S.

Javier Octavio Ospital Greslebin, ESADE
The Political Sustainability of the Child Tax Credit

Aditya Prathap, Stanford University
Tale of Two Americas: An Analysis of the Rise of Empirical Polarization

Dylan Stage, University of Minnesota
Worth the Investment? Analyzing the Effect of EB-5 Visa Investors on U.S. Regional Economic Growth

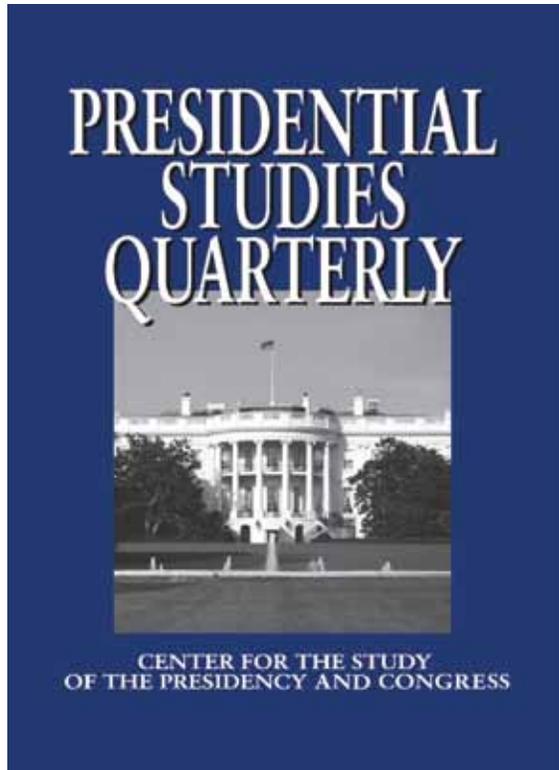
Part 5: Campaigns & Elections

Hope Ledford, George Washington University
A Little Goes a Long Way: How Small-Dollar Donations Empower Candidates of Color and Propel Congressional Representation in a Post-Citizens United Era

Odette Overton, Princeton University (SPIA)
Invisible Power: The Untapped Universe of Voters of Color □

Presidential Studies Quarterly

Presidential Studies Quarterly (PSQ) is the only scholarly journal that focuses entirely on the most powerful political figure in the world—the President of the United States. An indispensable resource for understanding the U.S. president, the online-only “Presidential Studies Quarterly” (PSQ) offers articles, features, review essays, and book reviews covering all aspects of the office. Containing award-winning articles, PSQ is published by Wiley-Blackwell and edited by the distinguished Presidential scholar Dr. George C. Edwards III. Wiley-Blackwell Publishing issues the journal four times annually in March, June, September, and December.



Timely Research

“Presidential Studies Quarterly” not only highlights the latest scholarly research and thinking about the Presidency, but it also discusses topics that are of current interest in the field in features such as “The Polls,” “The Law,” “The Contemporary Presidency,” and “Source Material.”

Blind Reviewed Articles

PSQ evaluates submitted research through a “double blind” peer review process which ensures that readers receive only the highest-quality, objective scholarship that is free from partisan editing or selection. The editorial board members include some of the most renowned scholars and professionals in the discipline:

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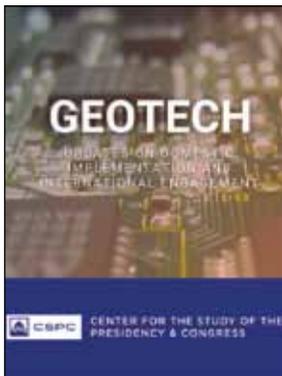
The Historical Presidency

Richard J. Ellis, Willamette University □

Finding New Solutions to Major National Challenges

The Center for the Study of the Presidency & Congress (CSPC) has a tradition of encouraging “out of the box” thinking, and working to bridge divides between government policymakers and lawmakers on the one side, and leaders in the private sector and academia on the other. In each of our projects we convene stake holders and influential thought leaders and engage them in respectful dialogue that seeks to leverage emerging technologies and find novel solutions to the complex challenges facing the nation.

The Race for “Geotech” Supremacy



The geotech competition is no longer a theoretical construct. Following the legislative measures put into place in 2023, the United States is embarking upon a course of industrial policy designed to kick-start domestic semiconductor production and push for leadership in the development and deployment of

green technology. All of this comes with the backdrop of a competition between the United States and its allies and Communist China.

Fostering U.S.-Japan Technological Cooperation



As the global competition for technology and innovation leadership intensifies, the geopolitical, economic, and technological importance of the U.S.-Japan alliance becomes increasingly apparent. In both countries, there has been a realization among policymakers and lawmakers of

the scope of the challenge posed by the economic, technological, and military policies of the Communist Party of China (CCP).

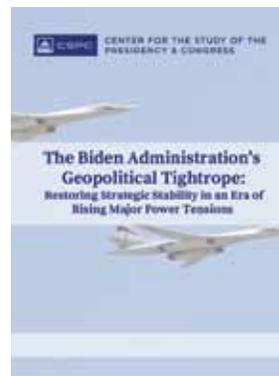
Winning the Space Race



U.S. space superiority is being challenged to a degree not seen since the height of the Cold War. China and Russia, among others, are developing and fielding significant counter-space capabilities and rapidly expanding their own space capabilities. To outpace these potential adversaries the United States must leverage a

revolution in commercial space launch and radically rethink the way it approaches national security space.

Containing a Nuclear Arms Race



With tensions rising along the U.S.-China-Russia axis, and a nuclear arms race underway that includes deployment of novel technologies such as hypersonic missiles and Artificial Intelligence, the White House and Congress must make rebuilding a foundation for strategic stability a top priority. Achieving such a bi-

partisan consensus in this hyper-partisan moment will undoubtedly prove difficult, and absolutely imperative. □

All reports available at www.thepresidency.org.

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