



EDITOR'S NOTE

Welcome to the second issue of the *Journal of Policy & Strategy* in 2025. This issue is dedicated to the late Dr. John S. Foster Jr., who passed away recently at the age of 102. A national treasure, Dr. Foster (known as “Johnny”) was a brilliant mind, a former head of Lawrence Livermore National Laboratory, and served in the Department of Defense under two presidents and four Secretaries of Defense. Dr. Foster’s work drove the development of every nuclear weapon in the U.S. nuclear arsenal today. He was truly an intellectual giant—contributing uniquely to creating and sustaining the nuclear deterrence tools that have enforced great power peace for the past 80 years.

This issue begins with a Special Feature in our Analysis section by Matthew R. Costlow on *Detering the New Pacing Threats: Opportunistic and Coordinated Aggression*. The analysis considers the risks posed by U.S. adversaries including Russia and China to U.S. and Western security. It draws on lessons learned from the historical examples of the Korean conflict and the Cuban Missile Crisis to highlight a series of recommendations for deterring opportunistic and coordinated aggression in today’s volatile and dangerous international strategic environment.

The Analysis section also contains articles that address contemporary regional and security issues. Christopher Ford offers an assessment of the motivations behind Russia’s nuclear posturing, comparing modern Russian thinking about nuclear weapons to that of the Putin regime’s Soviet predecessors. Stephen Blank discusses the current violence by the Iranian-backed Houthis in Yemen against Red Sea shipping and proposes approaches to restore deterrence and freedom of navigation in the region. And Wannes Verstraete assesses the security implications of the emerging “tripolar nuclear order.”

This issue’s Interviews section features an interview with Thomas Scheber, former Director of Strike Policy and Integration in the Office of the Secretary of Defense, who comments on the importance of modernizing the U.S. nuclear enterprise; the challenges of producing new nuclear warheads; and the need to prioritize implementation of the recommendations in the Strategic Posture Commission’s report.

The Proceedings section highlights panel presentations from two National Institute for Public Policy webinars in February and March 2025. Luke Coffey, Michaela Dodge, Marek Menkiszak, and Martin Kroupa discuss Russia’s full-scale invasion of Ukraine after three years of conflict. Michael Rühle and Robert Joseph consider next steps in homeland missile defense in light of President Trump’s directive for a “Golden Dome” to protect the United States from missile attacks.

The Literature Review section looks at three recent publications: Robert Soofer’s (et al.), *“First we will defend the homeland”: The case for homeland missile defense*; James H. Anderson’s and Daniel R. Green’s (eds.), *Confronting China: US Defense Policy in an Era of Great Power Competition*; and Sergey Radchenko’s, *To Run the World: The Kremlin’s Cold War Bid for Global Power*.

The Documentation section includes congressional testimony from General Anthony Cotton, Commander, United States Strategic Command and General Stephen N. Whiting, Commander, United States Space Command. It also contains remarks by NATO Secretary General Mark Rutte and U.S. Vice President JD Vance. And, there are select excerpts from *International Security and Estonia 2025*, published by the Estonian Foreign Intelligence Service.

Finally, the From the Archive section features two documents: The Executive Summary from a 2015 National Institute report by Thomas K. Scheber and the late John R. Harvey, *Assessment of U.S. Readiness to Design, Develop and Produce Nuclear Warheads: Current Status and Some Remedial Steps*; and the Executive Summary from a 2017 National Institute Report by Keith B. Payne and the late John S. Foster Jr. (et al.), *A New Nuclear Review for a New Age*.

As always, we hope you, the readers, find this issue of the *Journal of Policy & Strategy* informative and useful.

