

Weekly ICBM EAR Report



Image: Illustration of the Sentinel next-generation ICBM. Credit: Northrop Grumman - Space News

Prepared by Peter Huessy

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ICBM EAR Week of October 5th, 2026

Prepared by Peter Huessy, President of Geostrategic Analysis, Senior Fellow, National Institute for Deterrence Studies, Senior Fellow at the Gold Institute for International Strategy, and Weekly Nuclear Deterrent Guest, The John Batchelor Show

Summary

Upcoming Events are highlighted/registration links; archival material on missile defense from General Scowcroft (1987) and Chairman Mike Rogers (2014); Two new essays from the EAR on the connection between international order & US nuclear and domestic policy. Recommendations from General Flynn. New RCD Essay on the Lessons of Berlin and Cuba: Weekly quotes and commentary as well as international, administration and congressional developments of importance.

Events of the Week

National Institute for Deterrence Studies (NIDS)

Visit NIDS to Register: <https://thinkdeterrence.com/events/>

Transcript of Dr. Mathew Kroenig's Remarks at the October 2, 2026 NIDS nuclear deterrence seminar:



Deterring_Two_Nuclear_Peers_Matthew_Kr

USAF Maj Gen (Ret) Garrett Harencak, October 16th, 2026 will speak on nuclear civic education. NIDS seminars.

October 30th will feature a NIDS nuclear deterrent seminar with three top US Navy admirals discussing the US sea-based nuclear deterrent. Email geostrategicanalysis@verizon.net for more information.

The Future of Undersea Deterrence

Vice Adm. Robert M. "Rob" Gaucher, Director, Sub. Programs

Vice Adm. Douglas L. Williams, Director SSP

Vice Adm. Richard E "Rick" Seif, Commander, Submarine Forces

Friday, October 30, 10:00-11:00 EDT

Virtual Event

A promotional poster for a virtual seminar. It features a blue header with the Peter Huessy logo on the left, the date and time 'OCTOBER 30 10:00 AM ET' in the center, and three portraits of Navy admirals on the right. The main title 'THE FUTURE OF THE UNDERSEA DETERRENT ENTERPRISE' is in large blue letters. Below it, it says 'VIRTUAL SEMINAR' and 'www.thinkdeterrence.com'. At the bottom, the logo for the 'National Institute for Deterrence Studies' with the tagline 'THINK DETERRENCE' is displayed.

PETER HUESSY

**OCTOBER 30
10:00 AM ET**

**THE FUTURE OF
THE UNDERSEA
DETERRENT
ENTERPRISE**

VIRTUAL SEMINAR
www.thinkdeterrence.com

**National Institute
for Deterrence Studies**
THINK DETERRENCE

Gold Institute for International Strategy

October 16 Huessy will discuss at a Gold Institute for International Strategy Pacific Security Conference aspects of ROK energy policy and the building of a second Trans Alaskan pipeline. 10-4pm By invite only. Email geostrategicanalysis@verizon.net for more information.

The Gold Institute will also host a DC energy conference on October 27 on practical energy objectives for the next two years. Huessy will discuss the Paris and Kyoto carbon free energy objectives and the energy future.

Documentary

The NFN Productions docuseries "The Watch: America's Nuclear Mission," which follows the men and women carrying out America's nuclear deterrence mission, is set for a limited Imax engagement starting Oct. 22, *Variety* can exclusively reveal. The screenings are scheduled at the California Science Center Imax Theater on Oct. 22, the AMC San Antonio Rivercenter on Nov. 1, the Lockheed Martin Imax Theater at the National Air and Space Museum on Nov. 2 and the Southampton Playhouse for a special Veterans Day presentation on Nov. 11

Essay of the Week

Kennedy, MAD and the Lessons of Berlin and Cuba

https://www.realcleardefense.com/articles/2026/10/02/president_kennedy_mad_and_the_lessons_of_berlin_and_cuba_1209421.html

From the Archives

Missile Defense from 1987 and 2014, from the archives. Remarks of BG Brent Scowcroft to the Huessy Congressional Breakfast Seminar Series, November 25, 1987:

"SDI solves the stability question by making an attack futile. SDI also is helped by arms control in that arms control could reduce the number of offensive forces with which SDI must deal with. With SDI, the structure and type of forces that the U.S. has is less important. If SDI is the key to future deterrence, then one would propose an arms control deal (6000 warheads and 1600 SNDVs), exactly the 50% cut which is on the table."

From the Archives #2: Representative Mike Rogers (R-AL), June 11, 2014:

A sobering reminder to all the members of the committee that we understood this year was sequestration returns in FY '16, which is going to be even tougher than what we did this year. We can disagree as to why this is so, but it is. My belief is backed up by the judgment of scores of representatives of our allied countries that I've talked with that American leadership under this administration retreated willingly and knowingly. *The Obama Doctrine's built on a sea of unsure and changing policies and rhetorical straw-men has left our allies asking the same fear-driven question, where is America? China is filling the vacuum in the South China Sea.* They have seen that our so-called pivot is little more than messaging. Russia continues to station a large army on the Ukrainian border and illegally occupies Crimea, all the while using energy as a weapon and staging provocative nuclear exercises. And the question is asked over and over again, where is America? It is with these nearly unprecedented financial and geopolitical challenges that the members of the House Armed Services Committee drafted the FY '15 NDAA. Missile defense is a key capability against the rising threats. At the same time, since the president's first budget request, long before sequester, *this administration has been slashing our missile defense budget. For example, billions were cut out of the missile defense technology development program and test programs. The*

administration didn't test the CE-1 interceptor, the mainstay of our GMD program, for five years and then terminated in the GMD modernization program known as Multiple Kill Vehicle. The administration cancelled the Airborne Laser program and the Kinetic Energy Interceptor, leaving the United States with no boost phase missile defense programs, at precisely the time there is rising concern about countermeasures on enemy ballistic missiles. The administration cancelled the Bush administration third homeland defense site in Poland, and they're using the SM-3 2B missile, leaving a gap in the defense of the United States while Iran is testing its long-range missiles under the guise of a space program."

A Special Tribute

[The Beautiful Blessing of Shoshana Bryen](#), the Director at the Jewish Policy Center who passed away recently after a long struggle with cancer. She was a dear friend over many decades and often gifted is with her gentle wisdom at our deterrent seminar series discussing the Middle East, Israel and Iran. She was most informed and brilliant.

Media Commentary from the ICBM EAR

Is there a Nuclear "arms race?"

CNN says it's a good idea for the US to keep its eyes wide open on nuclear matters, and there we agree. But CNN is mistaken: there is no arms race in which the US is running. The US has not added a single nuke warhead to its arsenal since the 2010 New START agreement went away and we are largely where we were circa 2010. We have added no theater weapons or uploaded any of our SLBM or ICBM missiles. And we keep our bombers off of alert so as former Strategic Command head USAF General Robert Kehler explains the US is operating a DYAD not a TRIAD. The only arms race is being run by China and Russia and NK. As for the US, America is not in the locker room let alone put its running shoes on. There are two runners—China and Russia.

CNN also says the US has a 5000 warhead arsenal. These weapons are not all available for deployment. We could build up to around 3100 deployed warheads at a maximum. Over 1000 warheads are being dismantled, are not now useable. Other stockpiled warheads couldn't be added to our arsenal even if we wanted too as there are limits to what can be deployed. The USAF has hundreds of nuclear capable cruise missiles although the 60 nuclear armed bombers could carry 16-20 each for a hypothetical 1200 but the missiles are not available. Unlike the US, the Russian and Chinese forces are DUAL use, which could markedly upload their nuclear arsenals. If China and Russia are the only countries building up how is that a race? To where? The US is building a force agreed to in 2010 some 16 years ago.

Quotes and Commentary of the Week

Secretary of the Air Force Troy E. Meink: "It's more than construction... we're moving fast to build B-21s! The Department of the Air Force & @northropgrumman have broken ground in Palmdale, CA on over 1M sq ft of new facilities that will be the final assembly line at Air Force Plant 42."

The National Nuclear Security Administration: "Construction is advancing at the Savannah River Site (@SRSNews) on the High-Fidelity Training & Operations Center (HFTOC)! This key facility will prepare the specialized workforce essential to future plutonium pit production operations and strengthening our nuclear deterrence mission."

Vice President JD Vance: Iran must make a "meaningful" reduction in its uranium-enrichment capacity both as a condition for ending the war with the United States and to demonstrate that it is not seeking to build a nuclear weapon.

Senator Fischer, (R-NE), a senior member of the Senate Armed Services Committee: At University of Nebraska event outlined her efforts to strengthen America's homeland defense, modernize the nuclear triad and missile defense systems, and protect important segments of the electromagnetic spectrum used by the U.S. military.

NNSA: This milestone advances the first new U.S. warhead and reentry system design in nearly 40 years to support our sea-based nuclear deterrence mission.

Senator Deb Fischer: "As we look ahead, there are clear opportunities for the University of Nebraska to strengthen ties with STRATCOM — from collaborating on NC3 to advancing research on the electromagnetic spectrum to meet specific operational requirements."

SASC Member and Subcommittee Chair Deb Fischer: "Strong partnerships with STRATCOM allow the university to align its research to real mission needs — identifying where its expertise can advance deterrence, homeland defense and the capabilities our nation relies on."

International Strategic Developments

Kremlin [on Tuesday] warns Lithuania that its move to lift a nuclear arms ban risks further escalation.

The Indo-Pacific's next deterrence problem may be a shortage not of military capability but of coordination. As Australia, Japan and South Korea acquire long-range strike, missile defense and other strategic conventional capabilities, they are increasingly becoming mixed up in US nuclear signaling. Yet the US alliance network lacks mechanisms for coordinating how use of allies' capabilities is interpreted and communicated during a crisis.

Vladimir Putin's new ramped-up threats to target the European democracies with his arsenal of nuclear super-bombs could foreshadow an armed attack by Russian troops on a NATO nation, says a leading expert on the Kremlin's leadership, intelligence operations and military.

NYT Looks Back: The early weeks of 2022 were filled with a lot of debate about whether Russia would really invade Ukraine. Few doubted that an invasion was a possibility. Some 160,000 Russian troops had been moved to areas near the border of Ukraine. It was no secret that President Vladimir Putin believed Ukraine to be an artificial country with an illegitimate government.

Nature of War: The war in Ukraine has ushered in a "new era of spectrum warfare," with Moscow and Kyiv using increasingly sophisticated electronic-warfare systems to disrupt drones, missiles and communications while the Pentagon works to expand its own EW capabilities

China militia boat spotted for first time off Taiwan's east coast, patrol finds.

China's military and coast guard presence in South China Sea waters claimed by the Philippines nearly doubled last month.

The French Defense Ministry: test fired its new M51.3 nuclear-capable ballistic missile from a submarine.

Administration Strategic Developments

The USAF tested its new HACM hypersonic cruise missile. The U.S. and Australia are partners on the Hypersonic Attack Cruise Missile, which has finally reached flight testing after major delays.

Savannah River Site recently received early delivery of the first gloveboxes that will help train and prepare the skilled workforce needed to support the @NNSANews vital plutonium pit production mission.

The National Nuclear Security Administration: "The W93 warhead and Mk7 reentry body have entered the Engineering and Manufacturing Development phase in partnership with @USNavy Strategic Systems Programs.

(US-China Arms Cooperation? From CNN): The Trump administration has discussed beginning reciprocal nuclear site visits with China and plans to continue pushing for that possibility during in-person meetings in the

coming months, according to sources familiar with the matter. The discussions, which have been informal and preliminary, come amid mounting US concerns about China's rapidly growing nuclear weapons program and after the last remaining arms control agreement between the US and Russia expired last year. The effort to establish a trilateral agreement began in Trump's first term, but no tangible progress has been made and formal talks on a new accord have not begun, with China and Russia largely ignoring substantive US outreach efforts. The idea of reciprocal visits was initially raised by the Chinese while meeting US officials this year, one source said, giving some indication that the communist nation may be open to pursuing confidence building measures that could pave the way for a grander agreement. Visits to the US Department of Energy national labs and to China's equivalent facilities were discussed, and the US would be open to discussing visits to nuclear testing sites. The nuclear discussions between the US and Chinese officials at the working level so far this year have largely occurred on the sidelines of gatherings by the five permanent members of the United Nations Security Council.

The concept of allowing nuclear site visits could move the needle on the US efforts to engage China on issues related to strategic stability and potentially serve as a building block for a trilateral agreement, but China remains adamant that they will not engage on discussions that could limit their nuclear buildup. **The US currently has a much bigger nuclear arsenal with about 5,000 total nuclear warheads** while China has about 600, but it is expanding its nuclear weapons infrastructure and has been projected to produce hundreds more warheads over the next decade. Paul Dean, who previously served as an acting assistant secretary of state overseeing US arms control efforts, says the administration needs to approach any Chinese nuclear negotiations with its "eyes wide open," but said that reciprocal visits would be "an extremely valuable confidence-building measure" that could lay the informational and diplomatic foundation for additional work to reduce nuclear risk between the two countries. "This is a very dangerous time, and there are very few guardrails in place on the US-China nuclear relationship," said Dean, now a vice president at the Nuclear Threat Initiative nonprofit.

President Donald Trump expressed support for trilateral arms control negotiations between the US, Russia and China when he met Chinese leader Xi Jinping last month, but they didn't discuss the possibility of site visits during their talks, a US official said. Xi did not leave the door open to discussing a trilateral agreement, pointing to the US and Russian nuclear arsenals being larger than China's – a point that Chinese officials have routinely used to shield themselves from any discussions that could lead to limiting their nuclear stockpile before they are on par with the US, the official added. Still, the topic of nuclear arms control has long been a focus for Trump, who is expected to meet with Xi twice later this year. By the time, the two leaders meet again it is expected that further lower-level discussions on possible nuclear site visits will have taken place, the sources said. Visiting nuclear sites for on-site inspections have historically been used as a vital verification tool by the International Atomic Energy Agency to be sure that nations are abiding by their commitments to using the facilities for peaceful purposes.

Skepticism about China's motives

Experts and former US officials who spoke with CNN were encouraged by the talks but were not confident that they will immediately lead to concrete progress on a breakthrough agreement. "It has to be taken seriously. It could be a great start," said a former US official who has engaged China in track two discussions related to strategic stability in recent years. Still, skeptics noted that the Chinese may have floated the idea in an effort to create a positive atmosphere or to appear serious on the topic of nuclear arsenals, said former US officials and experts who questioned the authenticity of such an offer. "In advance of a big summit if the Chinese can put good feelers out there, they will do that," said another former US official who focused on nuclear issues. "It makes them seem more magnanimous as the two sides are engaging."

Why we've entered a new nuclear age

The Chinese may have a "maligned motivation" they said. About a year ago Trump said that the US would resume nuclear testing on an "equal basis" with China and Russia, but there has been no known US nuclear testing since that pronouncement. The administration earlier this year accused China of carrying out a secret nuclear test in 2020 using a technique known as "decoupling" designed to evade detection by firing the explosion in an empty cavern to minimize seismic shaking. The National Nuclear Security Administration's nonproliferation directorate conducted a 16-ton underground non-nuclear explosion last week at the Nevada National Security Site that was the second in a years-long series of experiments designed to mimic the alleged Chinese test, according to an agency spokesperson. The decoupled test explosion offered NNSA and other entities a chance to validate the effectiveness of new methods and equipment for detecting such stealthy tests. "You cannot evade American innovation," NNSA Administrator Brandon Williams said in a news release announcing the test.

The Trump administration is also working on a proposal that would enable assure verification that low-yield nuclear testing is not happening at nuclear sites and could share that with the P5 group later this year, a US official said. It is unclear what kind of technical equipment could be part of that proposal. Gerald Brown, who studies China's military at the Council on Foreign Relations nonprofit, said he is "not particularly optimistic" but that the reciprocal visit scheme, if enacted, is "a potential glimmer of hope" for reducing nuclear risk between the

US and China. Brown, a former State Department intel analyst, said that China's ongoing nuclear buildup "is deeply linked with political goals, namely its aggressive ambitions regarding Taiwan." China historically has viewed nuclear talks as "tool to gain political concessions" on Taiwan, he argued, rather than as a genuine policy goal. "You won't know what's on the table until you engage in a thoughtful, rigorous way to see if this is something in our interest — and it might be," said Dean. Dean, whose nonprofit has engaged with Chinese entities in nonofficial diplomatic discussions in recent months, said he sees mutual "interest and acknowledgement that the risks are real." He pointed at the 1962 Cuban Missile Crisis, which sparked some of the first US-Soviet risk reduction measures like a 24-hour phone hotline, as a historical warning. "We don't need to wait for a crisis to start reducing nuclear risks," Dean argued. "And the risks are very real right now."

Congressional Strategic Developments

Top senators are questioning the effectiveness and cost of President Trump's Golden Dome missile defense effort as lawmakers and defense analysts held a Sept. 29 Senate Armed Services subcommittee hearing on Golden Dome's technology and capabilities. Sen. Angus King (I-Maine) said given various cost estimates it appeared that nationwide missile coverage was "not in the cards" and wondered "who is protected and who isn't?"

Guest Commentary

Guest Commentary on Strategy from Michael Flynn (US Army General Retired).

The main reason I offer this short missive below is because in government versus our military, there is a tendency not to consider strategy when it comes to the application of physical force to achieve political ends. We tend to just execute without a clearly defined set of political outcomes. This occurs regardless of which political party is in control of our government. It is well worth considering this definition as a means to an end, especially with the current global environment that America faces.

Without that "fingertip feel" of the operational environment, America faces an uncertain outcome in many of our current global engagements.

So, what exactly is Strategy? Strategy is a system of makeshifts, improvisations, or ad hoc adjustments. It is more than a science; it is the application of science to practical affairs; it is carrying through an originally conceived plan under a constantly shifting set of circumstances. It is the ability to adjust with foresight and resource awareness given a rapidly changing environment. Strategy is also the application of common sense in the work of leading to feasible, acceptable, and suitable outcomes. Strategy's teachings hardly go beyond the first requirement of common sense (something I personally value in leaders); in fact, its value lies entirely in the concrete application of common sense. It is a matter of understanding correctly at every moment a constantly changing situation and then doing the simplest and most natural thing with energy and determination.

This is what makes war an art, an art that is served by many sciences. Like every art, war cannot be learned rationally, but only by experience. In war, as in art, there can be no set standards nor can a code of set rules take the place of brains. When a leader or nation lacks strategy, subordinate organizations can quickly slip into reactive chaos. Without a clear long-term destination, work turns into a series of random fire drills.

What Happens Without a Strategy?

Without covering the details I'll describe categories of actions that affect the application of proper strategy:

1. Constantly Shifting Priorities.
2. Appearance of a Fire-Drill Culture.
3. Burnout and Turnover (i.e., Exhaustion).
4. Decision Bottlenecks (in other words, an upward flow of decision making because no one knows what the leader wants to achieve).
5. Tactical Tunnel Vision (not seeing the forest through the trees).

So what?

Leaders must reflect on the stated goals and objectives and intended end state (and do so constantly). A flexible and creative mind is required at the most senior levels simply due to the changing nature of warfare. This is one of the highest priorities of leaders engaged in warfare (political leaders and otherwise). Like it or not, America faces serious adversaries and many uncertainties and we must constantly adjust our nation's security strategy based on the circumstances of the ever changing global security environment. Given the speed of information, advancements in technologies, and innovative applications of both the art and science of warfare, our leaders must be highly adaptive and creative, because adversaries now and in the future certainly will be. And never, ever forget, the enemy has a vote and they will exercise it, constantly.

ICBM EAR Essays

A Review of the World in Brief—Two Essays from the ICBM EAR

Preface:

The international nuclear order is in peril, largely due to erosion of the global political order. Relations among the major powers are increasingly adversarial, international norms are increasingly contested, the US leadership role is increasingly uncertain, and alignments and political preferences are reforming around new expectations. Opponents of the existing order, led by Moscow and Beijing, seek a world with much-diminished US influence and built on values different from the post-World War II liberal international order. They do not seek sovereignty for their neighbors; they seek deference from them. They seek the freedom to change borders by force. The diplomacy of collective security has largely collapsed under the pressures of major power rivalry, as Russia and China seek to use the United Nations system to obstruct American influence and redistribute power in their favor. In Vladimir Putin's infamous words from 2014, he seeks "new rules or no rules."

The US Nuclear Deterrent Umbrella

by Peter Huessy

The Commander of the US Strategic Command, Adm. Rich Correll, recently described the strategic environment as more complex than at any point in his lifetime. He explained that future military capabilities must account for five major threat vectors: cyber, counter-space, the contested electromagnetic spectrum, novel missile systems and the supply chain. As the Admiral well knows, being the military commander of our nuclear deterrent, these vectors come at us within the context of an overarching nuclear weapons environment that gathers less attention than it should and is more dangerous than is appreciated.

The current legacy US nuclear deterrent is being modernized as it is 40-70 years old. However, important assessments have warned that while critically necessary the program of record is not adequate to fully protect our future security. The current strategic balance could become even more dangerous than it is today unless, for example, the conclusions of the 2023 Strategic Posture Commission are taken seriously. The SPC confirmed that nuclear weapons play a key and central role in the current geostrategic environment in which we find ourselves. But the Commission also concluded the 2010 and 2022 nuclear posture reviews assumed a relative benign future environment, that the US and its allies could significantly lessen the role of nuclear deterrence in our security, highlight cooperative work with Russia and China, and work to prevent the further spread of nuclear weapons, particularly to terror groups.

Well as Yankee great Yogi Berra once quipped, making predictions is difficult, especially about the future. Professor Mathew Kroenig notes most of those 2010 and 2022 assumptions have tuned out to be universally wrong. And a key lesson? Whatever we assume, the design of our future nuclear deterrent force should be flexible so as to handle significant shifts in the environment. Making this job exceedingly difficult is not just that we now face two near peer nuclear armed adversaries, even enemies, but these nations are not normal under any reasonable assessment, making deterrent policy an even greater challenge.

Years ago, one of America's arms negotiator, Ambassador Max Kampelman, explained that while sitting across the table from the Soviets, he often asked himself what kind of government is it that places its political foes in psychiatric hospitals where they conveniently fall out of first story hospital windows to their death?

Today, the US is facing not one but four highly abnormal nations, what might be termed the “crazy brothers mayhem.” All four either (1) have the largest nuclear force in the world (Russia), (2) are building up to near peer levels (China), (3) are seeking more nuclear weapons than any regional nuclear power (North Korea) or continue to surreptitiously seek a nuclear force with which to carry out terror attacks (Iran).

To these four, nuclear weapons are indispensable instruments of security policy, not as a deterrent to war but in service of war objectives. Russia conducts hybrid war against all of NATO while China has declared “unrestricted warfare” against the West, with Iran and North Korea as their agents. Russia wants to eliminate NATO and get the US out of Europe. Apparently, Mr. Putin has adopted Catherine the Great’s strategy of securing Russia’s borders by forever expanding them, and in this case, take over Ukraine, the largest nation in Europe. On the other end of the world, China seeks to take over Taiwan and the first Pacific island chain, as part of an objective to be the hegemon of the Indo-Pacific with its projected \$65 trillion GDP and 5 billion people.

In summary, the nuclear deterrent umbrella under which America now stands, offered to the free world as a protection, is also coupled with protecting an internal America that seeks to preserve its own economic and political liberty. Externally, America is under attack. The vector threats understood by Admiral Correll are real and they threaten America overseas. We cannot wall ourselves off from the free world any more than the free world can wall itself off from the United States. Security and liberty here at home is indubitably connected to the security and liberty overseas. Getting things right overseas is a primary task of American leaders.

And key to that remains a nuclear deterrent second to none and robust going into the future.

Peter Huessy is President of GeoStrategic Analysis.

The World Order and Home Policy Choices*

By Peter Huessy

*Will be posted by RCD on October 16, 2026

What security policy should the US adopt along with its allies to meet the challenge of two-peer nuclear armed adversaries allied with nuclear armed terrorist agents such as Pakistan and North Korea and potentially Iran? It is not as simple as continuing or going back to what is often referred to as the rules based international order put into place after WWII. Whatever international security policy we adopt, it has to be consistent with our domestic policies as we cannot adopt one policy for our status in the world and a secondary and contradictory domestic policy here at home.

In short, the world order has to get set right—led by America-- while the same domestic struggle within the US must get right—both consistent with our founding. That means the US must reject the twin utopian false gods of a global intifada and a socialist paradise—here and abroad-- now being paraded as smart options in political campaigns from Michigan, New York, Florida and California and by our enemies overseas.

Now that world “order” often referenced still has major weaknesses despite the end of the first Cold War and the break-up of the USSR. It has until recently kept European NATO weak and unprepared. It funded a UN that spends much of its time condemning Israel and funding kleptocracies in the poor south. It also pursued ruinous trade policies that hollowed out US manufacturing. It pursued a non-existent Middle East “peace process” that was a framework for conducting a global intifada especially against Israel and the United States. And the old “containment” strategy didn’t break down the USSR as it was long ago jettisoned. From 1969, the US withdrew and then abandoned Vietnam, pursued a “détente” strategy with the USSR that in the subsequent decade lost more than a dozen nations to communist tyranny, and culminated in the 1979 Islamist takeover of Iran and Soviet invasion of Afghanistan.

The US markedly switched security policy direction under President Reagan. Within the framework of “peace through strength” the US and especially its allies in Britain, the Vatican and Germany, conducted a successful economic war against Moscow, with the USSR signing itself out of existence on December 25th, 1991. But even with the end of the USSR, the US and Europe subsequently went on what (Retired) Maj General Garrett Harencak called a “holiday from history” where we assumed the conflict between liberty and freedom on the one hand and totalitarianism on the other was permanently over.

Reagan “Peace Through Strength” was forgotten. Many assumed the lamb, dragon, and bear could indeed vote democratically to decide in this coming new utopia what to cook without the lamb ending up as dinner. Most deadly were the cooperative four-fold “international brothers mayhem” squad characterized by: (1) the revelation and rise of Chinese hegemonic objectives; (2) the growing jihadist ambitions of Islam; (3) a border hyper warfare expansion of the Russians and the (4) “Missiles & Nuke ‘R US” showroom in North Korea.

Over time, as these threats elevated, US and Europe cut defense spending, underfunded nuclear deterrence, declared Russian aggression against Ukraine not of concern, and continued the transfer of US technology, jobs and wealth to China. The US even shut down discussion of violent Islam and sanitized the US government of any idea that weaponized Islam was a threat. The government apologized to Middle Eastern leaders for American meddling, pushed for “daylight” between the U.S. and Israel, and offered an “open hand” to the mullahs of Iran. And hastily withdrew from Afghanistan abandoning our friends again.

In the USA, some domestic political elements of the country regularly host pro-terrorist rallies and welcome a global intifada. Jew-hatred is a pervasive political pollutant, Israel is routinely condemned, and the Democratic Party now too often listens to Islamist and Communist crazies. Domestic political elements in America are acting as helpful—however unwittingly—stooges for our foreign enemies.

On top of a global war on fossil fuels, open borders are being recommended, where American workers have to compete with workers everywhere, while trying to afford living with a heavy handed regulatory government trying to shut down extractive industries such as mining, logging, and ranching.

However, a sharp push-back to such policies emerged first in 2017 and then again in 2025. Iran’s nuclear and expansionist goals were challenged and markedly diminished. China’s unrestricted warfare against the US and the West was blunted, and with US leadership, our own hemisphere has moved markedly toward free enterprise, sound regulated migration and now over a dozen consecutive elections in which conservative, US aligned and freedom seeking ideas have been chosen.

And investment is flowing back to America, expansive space exploration is being pursued, and Mr. Kudlow’s joyful animal spirits are being unleashed, while the United States ranks as the premier energy producer in the world. New foreign investment in the US is building both a massive fuel refinery and steel plant, both the first of their kind in half a century.

Yet the pressure remains for the US not to pursue these sound policies. There are advocates of going back to business as usual. For example, it took the US 84 months for the US State Department to decide whether to issue a permit for the XL Keystone Pipeline to cross the Canadian border . Annually, it would bring 850,000 barrels of Alberta oil south. Despite the early 2027 executive order giving it the green light, the pipeline has not yet moved forward.

Similarly, there was strong initial opposition to the Alaskan pipeline, with an initial squeaker Senate vote of approval 51-50. But the pipeline was built 1974-77, cost \$8 billion, and brought \$700 billion (\$1.2 trillion in today’s prices) in crude oil to the lower 48 states and Asian markets as well, a return on investment of 100-150/1. With near zero environmental impact.

The proposed new Alaskan natural gas pipeline that the Republic of Korea has pledged to seriously consider would run 700 miles, would cost \$50 billion, be built by a Korean steel company, while bringing 3.5 billion cubic feet of natural gas a day, or \$9 billion annually to the US or the Western Pacific or over a lifetime an estimated \$270 billion.

Whether immigration, regulatory policy or energy, the policies the US pursues at home will also either strengthen or weaken the US overseas.

An energy policy of high prices, limited fuel choice, and scarcity is where Europe is going, while cheap, widely available technologies and plentiful supply is the current US alternative that eliminates many vulnerabilities.

The mayor of Chicago says gun violence will not be stopped until poverty is cured. That is why there are advocates of closing down the prisons or the police. They see communities as victims of not crime but poverty and criminal activity as inevitable unless poverty is curtailed. Not dissimilar to the excuse—there is not a Palestinian state from the “river to the sea” and thus such a grievance justifies the massacre of Israelis by Hamas. But high crime stops investment which curtails jobs which strengthens poverty.

As for open border advocates, some believe bad US colonial or imperial foreign policy justifies US “sanctuary” communities accepting (even encouraging) unrestrained migrant flows, including drug and trafficking that comes with it, under the assumption the overseas poverty (we supposedly caused) makes such migration inevitable.

America's foreign enemies are happy that US energy policy might make investment less attractive, that immigration policy would make our country less productive, with ineffective poverty programs substituting for sound crime prevention making us less safe. The resulting weak America would be incapable of protecting its own interests at home but also overseas. And thus, any security policy overseas to be effective has to make sure US domestic policy is on sound footing as well. Failed overseas socialism and jihad will still fail to sustain freedom--- even if brought to America.

About the ICBM EAR

Peter Huessy's ICBM EAR Report was originally prepared for the USAF in 1981 to help inform US nuclear deterrent policy professionals at the height of the Cold War. Eventually it was provided only to key elements of the Nuclear related Aerospace Industry. The objective: help build an informed political community on nuclear deterrent issues, especially the deployment of the US nuclear deterrent, especially the MX (Peacekeeper) missile. The report covered developments in the nuclear arena on a weekly basis, including developments in Congress, key events, threat assessments, remarks of top US officials, international activity key to US security interests, nuclear budget and program element issues, and arms control and proliferation matters as well.

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Prepared by Peter Huessy

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