



HILLSDALE COLLEGE

PURSuing TRUTH · DEFENDING LIBERTY SINCE 1844

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

Dec. 2, 2025

CONTACT:

Emily Stack Davis

517-803-3745s

PR@hillsdale.edu

Follow [@HillsdalePR](https://twitter.com/HillsdalePR).

Hillsdale College Center for Military History and Strategy Hosts Lecture on Great Power Diplomacy

Historian and former Assistant Secretary of State for Europe and Eurasian Affairs Wess Mitchell spoke on 'Great Power Diplomacy: Past and Present.'

HILLSDALE, Mich. — Hillsdale College's Center for Military History and Strategy hosted historian and former Assistant Secretary of State for Europe and Eurasian Affairs Wess Mitchell on Oct. 21 for a lecture titled "Great Power Diplomacy: Past and Present." Mitchell discussed how great powers have successfully used diplomacy throughout Western history and what lessons America can learn from them.

"At CMHS we're not only interested in military history in the sense that you can learn from studying the history of war. We're also interested in strategy," said Paul Rahe, professor of history and director of the Center for Military History and Strategy. "Strategy looks upon war as an instrument, but not as the only instrument. There is intelligence, there is economics, and the fourth element of this is diplomacy. Wess Mitchell is both a historian and a diplomat, and it was an honor to host him for this important lecture."

Mitchell described how great powers throughout Western history have used diplomacy to avoid wars they weren't in a position to win.

"Excellence in diplomacy is a vital prerequisite to success and endurance for any great power," Mitchell said. "These skills atrophied after the end of the Cold War as the United States came to rely on military power and economic sanctions as the main tools of our foreign policy. But now we are entering a much more dangerous age in which great powers compete for the things that they have competed for from the beginning of time: territory, resources, influence, and prestige."

And in this setting, the United States will need to rediscover the lost art of diplomacy and excel in its uses as a discipline of high strategy.”

Mitchell said that under the Trump administration, diplomacy has shifted from progressive social causes detached from the national interest back to its main function of placing constraints on hostile power.

“We are witnessing the reinvigoration of diplomacy in U.S. foreign policy,” Mitchell said. “The administration has undertaken more big diplomatic initiatives in the past nine months than we have seen in U.S. foreign policy in possibly all of the prior post-Cold War era combined. The breakthrough in Gaza, efforts to end the war in Ukraine, the ongoing reform of American alliances, and efforts to renegotiate the trade relationship with China show that Americans are capable of wielding diplomacy as an instrument of strategic statecraft in the style of Nixon and Teddy Roosevelt.”

The event began with cocktails, hors d’oeuvres, and dinner, and ended with a book signing and hospitality.

A. Wess Mitchell is an author, American strategist, historian, and former diplomat. In 2017, President Donald J. Trump appointed Mitchell to become the assistant secretary of state for European and Eurasian affairs, a position Mitchell held until 2019. Mitchell co-founded The Marathon Initiative, a grand strategy think tank, and the Center for European Policy Analysis, a nonprofit, nonpartisan, public policy institution focused on strengthening the transatlantic alliance. He has authored several books, including “The Godfather Doctrine,” “The Unquiet Frontier,” “The Grand Strategy of the Habsburg Monarchy,” and “Great Power Diplomacy.”

For a recording of the lecture, click [here](#). For photos from the lecture, click [here](#). For photos of Hillsdale College, click [here](#). For a high-resolution copy of the Hillsdale College clocktower logo, click [here](#).

About the Center for Military History and Strategy

The Center for Military History and Strategy (CMHS) studies warfare from all times and places to better our comprehension and military readiness. Its focus lies in academic research that joins military history with insights from strategic thinkers throughout history. By providing an education in the study of war and strategy, the CMHS strives to prepare scholars, officers, and policymakers to preserve those “inestimable blessings” of liberty in a world that continues to ignore the lessons of the past. For more information, visit warhistory.hillsdale.edu.

About Hillsdale College

Hillsdale College is an independent, nonsectarian, Christian liberal arts college located in southern Michigan. Founded in 1844, the College has built a national reputation through its classical liberal arts core curriculum and its principled refusal to accept federal or state taxpayer subsidies, even indirectly in the form of student grants or loans. It also conducts an outreach

effort promoting civil and religious liberty, including a free monthly speech digest, Imprimis, with a circulation of more than 7.1 million. For more information, visit hillsdale.edu.

###