MR. PETER HUESSY: Let me welcome you to one in another series of seminars that the Reserve Officers Association of America, the Air Force Association and the National Defense Industrial Association sponsor every year. We have two additional seminars that we are working on with John Harvey and with Jim Miller, and we’ll let you know when they occur.

We do have one event we are doing next week on the 18th. It is a panel on the future of the Army and military technology. It is a 10 o’clock panel that goes until noon, and then Peter Singer of the Brookings Institute, who is the masterful wizard on military technology, will be our luncheon speaker. It’s at the ROA building across from the U.S. Senate, again on the 18th at 10 in the morning. And please, if you would like to attend, let either Sarah or I know, because the people sponsoring it are JINSA and ROA and myself.

I also want to thank our embassy people who are here from Denmark, Albania and Russia, and also welcome Ambassador Brooks. And I also wanted to welcome my dear friend, Professor Willie Curtis, from Annapolis. And I would like to give a round of applause to our wonderful midshipmen who are here visiting us from Annapolis.

(Applause).

I promised you earlier in the year to do a seminar on long-range prompt conventional global strike. And Tom Scheber of the National Institute for Public Policy, was involved in putting this study together. I didn’t have enough copies. I put it on a number of your tables. But it is a study which I assume you can get from the National Institute, that just came out, on long-range prompt strike.

And Tom, as you know, is a former Department of Defense official, and now is with the National Institute for Public Policy, which is run by our dear friend Dr. Keith Payne. And he’s going to talk to you about where we are on this subject, where we’re going, and what the issues are. So without any further ado, would you please welcome Tom Scheber?

(Applause).

MR. TOM SCHEBER: Peter, thank you. It’s great to see some long-time friends, people that I know that are very familiar with this subject, other people that are probably only basically conversant with conventional prompt global strike. It’s great also to see Professor Curtis’ class from the Naval Academy. I guess they’ve gotten over their celebration from defeating Air Force last week, 28-21, not
that I’m biased. But it’s the first leg in taking back the commander-in-chief trophy for the Naval Academy, and we welcome you all here.

Today I want to talk about prompt global strike. It’s a study and a report that was written by Dr. Mark Schneider, who is here; and Kurt Guthe, in our organization who is here also; and David Trachtenberg, who spoke to your group earlier this year. We thought it was worth taking a look at prompt global strike because it’s about a decade since this concept has been rolled out and quite a few things have changed. And today I’ll talk specifically to those things that have changed.

First of all, the general concept of doing more with conventional ordnance, as opposed to nuclear, has been a goal of both Republican and Democratic administrations for decades. Technology has been the limitation, not to mention money. And technology has progressed in this regard. Money because it’s a very expensive option, will always be a concern.

[Next slide, Kurt.] For those not familiar with prompt global strike, let me just quickly lay out the background for why both Democratic and Republican administrations have endorsed some kind of concept regarding this. It’s because of the perceived need to strike time sensitive targets, to get ordnance on target quickly, to be able to take as much time as possible to deliberate on the need for a strike, and to address high-value targets.

Regarding high value targets – clearly the urgency of getting a weapon and a concept of this type was increased after 9/11. 9/11 put a lot of people to work on concepts that had been languishing for a while. Examples: terrorist leaders that might have WMD that they’re about to disperse, perhaps use; ships ready to leave port that would be harder to find once at-sea; anti-access capabilities; these are all examples of notional targets that might be the object of prompt global strike.

The problem, of course, is with conventional forces. There is the potential we might not have forces in range. The forces in range might be the wrong capabilities. They might not have the right effects, and they might be vulnerable to defenses. And currently the weapons that are prompt, that can get there quickly, that are very long-range, are nuclear forces: ICBMs and submarine-launched ballistic missiles that have both disadvantages of use and which presidents in many cases would seek options other than using nuclear except in the most dire of circumstances.

[Next slide, Kurt.] Since the concept of prompt global strike was initiated in the 2001 NPR and a specific concept, that of conventional Trident, was put forward in 2003, quite a variety of things have changed. And these are the four issues that I want to address today. Not only is there a whole new leadership team in the White House, there also is a new leadership team in many areas of Congress -- between the elections of 2008 and 2010. And there may very well be a new leadership team in January of next year.

There have been advances in prompt global strike technology. As I mentioned, in 2003 the first option that was rolled out, which would have been deployed in 2010, was that of conventional Trident. Right now, we’re still evaluating technology for a variety of other options. I’ll talk to those in detail.
There’s a new arms control regime that has tremendous implications for prompt global strike. And we have new insights into what the Russians see and how they might act that we didn’t have even a few years ago. And today I’d like to briefly address each of these four categories.

First I want to talk about the Obama administration’s Nuclear Posture Review of 2010. The Bush administration articulated in detail how prompt global strike would meet and support the objectives of its Nuclear Posture Review of assuring allies, deterring adversaries, dissuading competition, and then defending and defeating. When I looked at the Nuclear Posture Review from the Obama administration in 2010, these were the five objectives listed at the front of the NPR. And I looked at those and I went through each of them. There’s a case to be made that conventional prompt global strike can support each and every one of those in different ways.

For example, preventing nuclear proliferation and nuclear terrorism: prompt global strike would make a limited nuclear capability of an adversary less valuable because it would provide us non-nuclear retaliatory or preventative options. Reducing the role of U.S. nuclear weapons in U.S. security was a primary objective of the current administration. And restating – I’m not going to go into it in detail -- but restating the negative security assurance that our nuclear capabilities would not be used to deter or respond to conventional or biological threats of an adversary in good standing with the nuclear Non-Proliferation Treaty, was a new policy of the initiative. Prompt global strike would help support that policy.

On maintaining strategic deterrence and stability, prompt global strike would be deployed in small numbers – and initially the previous administration talked about deploying at most 24. This administration hasn’t put forward a number, but they’ve talked about small numbers consistent with that proposed by the Bush Administration. Those numbers are not a threat to Russia and China, so there’s not a concern about stability with those countries. But for regional conflicts, prompt global strike could be used to de-escalate a regional conflict.

As far as reassuring allies and partners, allies have looked to the U.S. to see what actions we are taking – because there are many high level statements that we will rely more on advanced conventional instead of nuclear. And our allies look around and say, okay, what are you going to rely on? What specifically have you deployed? Conventional prompt global strike, if deployed, gives the administration something to point to of value.

And, finally, what seems like an odd goal for conventional prompt global strike, is the ability to help sustain our nuclear arsenal. CPGS would help support the ability to help produce new rocket motors, boosters, precision guidance systems and hypersonic technologies also supports many of the same industries as the nuclear industry.

[Next slide.] I want to just mention briefly I’m going to do a broad brush approach because we have a variety of experts in the room, including Dr. Hannah, formerly from the Navy Strategic Program Office, and others who know these programs in detail. There’s a wide variety of weapons concepts that could be deployed by both land-based and sea-based concepts, concepts based in the U.S., those deployed outside the U.S.
Of the sea-based concepts, of course the first concept that was rolled out and proposed was conventional Trident, which would be deployed on ballistic missile submarines. We also have new concepts that are now being evaluated to be put on guided missile submarines, and Virginia-class attack submarines, and even concepts on surface ships. I’m not going to talk today about any concepts that might be air delivered or space-based. They seem outside the realm of what’s near-term right now and might be feasible. And I’m going to go forward and provide an example of a weapons concept in each of five categories because I want to be able to use those concepts to talk about the arms control regime and how it has changed the landscape for CPGS.

[Let’s go to the next slide.] Whenever you look at a prompt global strike concept, there are three characteristics that should be clearly addressed. It’s a difficult subject to follow because when people write about CPGS, they often tend to blur all these characteristics together. But primarily the three most important characteristics are the basing mode: land-based or sea-based; and are the prompt global strike assets co-located with our strategic nuclear forces or are they geographically distant? That will be important. We’ll come back to that in a little bit.

The second characteristic is, what’s the first stage launch booster? When it fires and the overhead satellites of Russia pick it up and evaluate it, is it an existing land- or sea-based ballistic missile that they recognize? Is it a booster with stages from retired missiles that they also recognize? Is it new? And, of course, what range will that booster and subsequent boosters provide for the weapon?

And then the third characteristic is the payload delivery vehicle, the front end that actually guides the conventional ordnance to target. Is it a primarily ballistic front end? Does it follow a ballistic trajectory for more than half of its path; or, is it non-ballistic and hypersonic? These three characteristics, plus the range, determine the applicability of arms control limits and provide observable differences from our nuclear-armed ICBMs and SLBMs.

Let me go to the next slide.] And without getting too much into the details, this is an example of a weapons concept for each of the five categories that I mentioned: two land-based, a conventional strike missile which would be based in the U.S. An Advanced Hypersonic Weapon, a concept which would be based outside the U.S.

And three that are based at sea, conventional Trident, which was proposed in 2003, to be based on ballistic missile submarines. Another is a missile that I refer to as Sea Strike. And let me just mention, this is not the Navy’s term for such a missile. Sea Strike is a generic concept that the Navy coined some years ago that I’ve just used to be able to refer quickly to a missile based on guided missile submarines and Virginia-class submarines.

And something called ArcLight that DARPA has worked on for a while and no longer appears to be active, which is compatible with the Vertical Launch System, and has limited range. For each of these CPGS concepts, the launch boosters are listed. Most of these are new designs, or some designs which might be modified booster from a retired strategic delivery system.
Of the concepts listed here, the conventional Trident is the only concept which uses a front-end which is ballistic or near ballistic. Near ballistic means that the front-end would fly primarily a ballistic trajectory. And I’ll show a diagram of that later. And then we’ll be able to maneuver just a little bit at the end to take out any error, or small amounts of error, in the front-end and provide near-precision accuracy for the weapon. Most of the payloads are non-ballistic and are hyper-sonic.

If you read any of the administration’s reports on prompt global strike, you’ll see that the program of record would fund the conventional strike missile. That missile would be land-based in the U.S. The first stage of the booster would be some design which would be taken from retired Peacekeeper boosters, perhaps even a new type of booster. They’ve talked about perhaps building an entirely new booster for the missile, and the payload is the hypersonic technology vehicle which is being evaluated under the Falcon program.

An alternative front-end for the Conventional Strike Missile is the payload delivery vehicle for the Advanced Hypersonic Weapon that the Army is developing and has successfully test flown down in Huntsville. All the rest of the concepts that I show, are notional concepts which have either been identified by a study by the National Academy of Sciences or have been proposed by the Department of Defense at some time. But it’s important for you to know that the only concept right now that’s being pursued by the administration is the conventional strike missile, with two alternative front-ends in development.

[Let me go to the next slide.] I want to begin to get into something called nuclear ambiguity, what the other guys can see when we launch a conventional strike missile? The issue came up in 2003, and in subsequent years, was the worry that the Russians would launch a nuclear strike in retaliation as soon as they see something light up in the U.S. We’ll get into that in detail.

But what’s important is that for most of these CPGS concepts there are observable differences, if they are observed, from our legacy nuclear systems. And they are in four categories of potentially observable differences, and I’ll fill in this chart in a second. The four categories are differences in the basing and firing location, which would be picked up by overhead launch detection satellites.

The launch signature, the booster, how intense is it? How long does the first stage burn? What is the spectral signature of the booster? Each of these the Russians watch carefully, evaluate, and can identify quickly the type of missile launched. And so those two characteristics (launch location and missile type) are observable from satellites.

[Next slide, please.] Next, the second two characteristics: the mid-course path and the terminal path. These can be observed by long-range radars, over the horizon radars that the Russians have to be able to evaluate the kind of trajectory that it flies. Ballistic trajectories are pretty well identifiable. There’s only a small deviation that the delivery vehicles of ICBMs and SLBMs are able to make as they release their warheads. Shown on this slide is a typical Minuteman III trajectory out to a range of about 5,000 nautical miles.
The trajectory shown below is a trajectory that a conventional strike missile with the hypersonic technology vehicle on it would fly. It’s very different. The apogee, the highest altitude, is only about one-eighth to one-tenth of that of a ballistic trajectory for an ICBM – easily picked up and discriminated by long-range radars. And even in the terminal phase, the trajectory is quite different.

[Next slide.] If I put abbreviations into the discrimination chart for each of the concepts that we have discussed, you will see my evaluation of observable differences that are either low, medium or high across each of those four categories – you see quite a trend. For the conventional Trident missiles, CTM is listed there, really there is a very low and really no discernible difference on the basing and firing location, the launch signature or the mid-course path. And there is some discernible difference in the terminal flight characteristics.

Now even with that very low distinguishing profile, the National Academy concluded that nuclear ambiguity, while an important concern, was entirely manageable. So the National Academy, with that kind of a profile on distinguish ability, indicated that deployment in small numbers, the issue of a mistaken nuclear strike or nuclear ambiguity, would not be a concern and would be manageable. As you see the other options that I have characterized in the chart are clearly distinguishable across all four categories.

Let me just turn quickly to arms control, because we have an entirely new arms control regime with New START, as opposed to the one we had with the START Treaty. When we look at conventional prompt global strike, there are two arms control treaties that we need to consider: the Inter-MEDIATE Nuclear Forces Treaty; and New START. Just briefly, I’m not going to go into these in detail.

The INF Treaty bans ground-launched cruise missiles and ballistic missiles, and there are definitions of each, for a specific range of weapons. There is a specific definition of what a ballistic missile is – a missile that has a ballistic trajectory over most of its flight path. The definitions are very important. If the front-end of a weapon does not meet that definition, then it’s not covered by the INF Treaty.

New START has a variety of limits, shown here, and has the same definitions for ballistic and cruise missiles as the INF Treaty, an important characteristic that we’ll come to. And as you’ll see in the next chart, of the prompt global strike options examined for this study, only conventional Trident would be treaty limited, which means it would be counted, but not prohibited by New START. The administration has said if any CPGS concept deployed is treaty limited, they would only deploy small numbers of them. Jim Miller, testifying on the New START Treaty, made that statement, and made it clear that for any prompt global strike weapons system that was not ballistic – the U.S. negotiators for New START had made it clear to their Russian counterparts that those weapons would not be counted under the New START Treaty.

This is very important because there’s something called the Biden Condition. I know that my Russian colleagues that I’ve talked to question the U.S. interpretation of how a CPGS weapon would be addressed. But the formal U.S. interpretation is the interpretation for which New START was ratified by the U.S. The Biden Condition is a condition, an agreement, a general agreement between the executive
department and the legislative department listing the conditions and the understandings under which a treaty is ratified. This understanding cannot be changed by the executive branch without the approving legislative branch being involved.

Also, I won’t go into this in detail, but in the old START Treaty many kinds of weapons were prohibited; for example, air-launched ballistic missiles. I just want to use that as an example, also surface ship-launched ballistic missiles with ranges over 600 kilometers were prohibited. New START makes a variety of concepts possible that were not possible under the START Treaty.

[Next slide.] This summary of arms control constraints looks complicated, but it’s actually really simple. For the five prompt global strike options that I have listed here, the INF Treaty is not applicable for most of those options. The only one for which it might be applicable would be the Advanced Hypersonic Weapons system that I’ve shown.

And if the AHW is not in the category of weapons with a range of 500 to 5,500 kilometers, then it’s not applicable to INF. Or even if it is, if it’s not ballistic, then it’s not applicable. So in most cases, we can eliminate the INF Treaty as a constraint on CPGS. But, it’s important to know that those conditions exist.

Similarly, for the New START Treaty, if any of the weapons do not meet the definition of a ballistic missile, and therefore are not an intercontinental ballistic missile or a submarine-launched ballistic missile, the New START Treaty does not count them and does not restrict them. The only option for which New START might apply, and would apply if deployed, is the conventional Trident modification, which would count toward the launcher limits, deployed and non-deployed, and the deployed warheads.

[Next slide.] Let me just briefly talk about the issue of nuclear ambiguity and prompt global strike. For the National Academy of Sciences’ 2008 study, they looked at conventional Trident and a variety of other weapon options and concluded the risk of prompt global strike being misinterpreted could be mitigated and managed, even for conventional Trident.

There’s a variety of new CPGS options that are now available. When I talked to the members of the National Academy panel that issued that report, there were two topics that they didn’t address. They didn’t look at what the Russians could see, what is their early warning and attack assessment capability; and how they might respond— what can we discern from how they behaved in the past? Those are two topics that I want to briefly touch on quickly.

[Next slide.] There’s a paucity of unclassified information that you can read these days on the Russian early warning and attack assessment capabilities. If you have interest in it, there’s a section in this report – done by Dr. Schneider – and it’s the only recent summary of Russian early warning and attack assessment capabilities that I’m aware of today. We’ve looked at what the Soviets produced during the Soviet era, very large extensive radars and defenses: 11 Hen House radars, nine large phased-array radars, as well as the giant Pill Box radar around Moscow. They never had a fully complete system. They were always working to build big expensive systems.
In the ’90s, the first post-Soviet decade, many of the capabilities that for early warning and attack assessments were now were in newly independent countries. The Latvians had a large phased-array radar. They weren’t real happy with their Russian counterparts. They tore theirs down. Others, like the Ukrainians, said you can use ours, but there’s a fee. And so, they leased their radar to Russia.

The ’90s were really a time when the Russians initiated rebuilding. We now know a lot more because the Russian writings are very prolific on this subject. You just have to dig through them and try to understand the translations and make sense out of them. The report reflects that work.

The rebuilding of early warning capabilities was started during the Yeltsin era, with new electro-optical satellites and more modern, more efficient radars. The radars that they’re now producing are quicker and cheaper to build, use about one-eighth of the personnel and one-seventieth of the power, and are being put together in a very comprehensive integrated early warning and defensive system. There’s very little coverage in the U.S. press over this capability, but a very substantial system is being constructed.

[Next slide, please.] The Russian capability is comprehensive. I have a few points shown on the slide that are from a talk given by the deputy commander of the Russian space troops, Lieutenant General Lobov, about a year ago. He explained in detail, and we’ve got the full quote in the report, that Russian capabilities can detect missile launches from the U.S., China, Iran and other countries. The Russian system covers all axes and SSBN combat areas, determines the flight parameters and calculates impact points, and provides the information to Russian leaders. So the observable capabilities for prompt global strike, for the characteristics I pointed out, would likely be observable and discernible to Russian leaders.

[Next slide, please.] Just quickly, and I won’t dwell on it so we can get to Q&A, but nuclear ambiguity is not only an issue of what can the Russians see, but how might they behave? Would they be prone to launch a nuclear strike in response to the launch of one, two or three conventional prompt global strike weapons from the U.S.?

We looked at all of the information that’s available from some of the false alarms that have occurred in the relationship between the U.S. and the Soviets, and the U.S. and Russia. And there are two that really stand out and give us a little bit of insight and help us discern at least that the Russians aren’t ready to just push the button at a moment’s notice.

For example, in 1983 there was a false alarm from a Russian early warning satellite. It was in the middle of the night. There was a lieutenant colonel, his name was Stanislav Petrov, on guard duty in his command bunker outside Moscow. He saw the indications from their overhead satellite that first one ICBM from the U.S. had been launched, then two, then three and eventually five. Stanislav says he was shocked at first, but what he did was wait to see if he had secondary indications – look for other indications that he could put together for confirmation, before he notified anybody in the middle of the night in Moscow.
When there were no secondary indications, he discerned that it was a false alarm. And it was a false alarm. The sun shining off a cloud in a particular way that reflected into the satellite triggered this false alarm.

Later, when Petrov was interviewed, he said, “Nobody starts a nuclear war with five missiles.” In fact, Soviet leaders since then have echoed the same concern. Nobody starts a nuclear war with a couple of missiles. So concern about prompt global strike, when you talk to them off the record, is fairly consistent.

There was a similar event in 1995, in the post-Soviet era, when a Norwegian weather sounding rocket was launched, and the Russians didn’t know that it was going to occur. And it was launched on an azimuth that was the azimuth that they would expect U.S. submarine-launched ballistic missiles to be launched on, headed for Moscow. Essentially, their emergency communications system was activated, but it was activated so they could communicate, as opposed to prepare for a nuclear attack.

I know we have a Russian colleague in the room here today, but my experience in talking with my Russian colleagues, is that they understand precisely the importance of these kinds of weapons. Russian formal objections are typically a means of impeding U.S. prompt global strike acquisition and slowing us down.

[Last slide, Kurt.] Let me just summarize by saying that we started this study because we thought that a lot of thinking on CPGS was sort of stuck in the initial discussion about prompt global strike as it was initiated about 10 years ago. There’s new leadership, both in the White House and on the Hill. And there may be further changes in the near future. The rationale for prompt global strike remains valid. The weapon concept for CPGS fills both objectives of the Bush administration Nuclear Posture Review, and the Obama administration Nuclear Posture Review – a very unusual overlap of policy goals.

More technical options are available now than were when the concept was first proposed in 2003. We discussed five. With the New START Treaty, there are fewer arms control restrictions on conventional prompt global strike.

And I believe there’s more insight now on the issue of nuclear ambiguity, which should tell us that there is less of a concern on this issue. It’s still a serious issue. We still need to treat it seriously. But we believe it is more manageable now because of some of the insights that we have.

Peter, let me open it up for questions for a few minutes, and I’ll ask my colleagues Mark Schneider and Kurt Guthe to respond also –

(Applause).

MR. LINTON BROOKS: Tom, I really liked your discussion of nuclear ambiguity, which as you know I think is one of the big red herrings. But there’s another aspect that you didn’t mention, and I wonder why? Since almost all uses for prompt global strike would not be at the Russians, there’s the obvious notify in advance. You have to notify far enough in advance so it can get through their system,
but not so far that they can tip-off the target, if the target happens to be a client. And that’s probably an hour.

And, once again, we’re all victims of the particular Russian we’ve talked to, but a Russian general, lieutenant, thought that would work just fine – speaking not for his government. So I’m interested in why that didn’t figure into your analysis, because it seems to me to be one final belt-and-suspenders to the things you said?

MR. SCHEBER: No, we limited what we wrote about in this report to fairly new information. I think the National Academy report – the 2008 National Academy study – addressed that issue in some depth. If you want to read something that is a good history of conventional prompt global strike, Amy Wolfe’s paper from the Congressional Research Service on the history, funding, all the details, is a very good place to start.

But the issue of how we might address the issue and communicate with the Russians, we did not cover. We thought it was adequately addressed in DOD reports and the National Academy study. And personally I think there are pros and cons to the concept that if the Russians are going to be skeptical of what we tell them, that they’ll likely find reasons to question what we say at the time that we launch a missile, especially if it’s a non-ballistic concept like hypersonic technology vehicle, which can be launched on one azimuth and then can veer off and cover targets of 1,000 miles either side.

It provides benefits in not overflying certain countries. It provides downsides in that you really don’t know where it’s going to land until late in the trajectory. So that’s why I didn’t cover it today, Linton.

MR. BILL SWEETMAN: Bill Sweetman with Aviation Week. You talked about the possible obstacles in arms control and so on, but what about the other side, the downside of prompt global strike? This is a weapon that has certain capabilities, but not very broad capabilities.

It’s not going to address very large targets. It’s going to be launched on pretty specific redlines. How do you define those redlines of use and at the same time the requirements and the technology so that we’re not producing expensive weapons of limited use?

MR. SCHEBER: That’s a great question, Bill. If Amy Wolfe was here she would ask a question just like that. And one of the things I think we’d have to look at is what is gained by telling the world that we had this kind of weapon. We would hope to produce some kind of deterrent or dissuasive capability, first of all, that would likely convince adversaries that some of their weapons concepts with WMD, were of less value, and they would not build them or use them.

Now first of all, it’s sort of like our nuclear forces today. There’s one argument that says in the last half century we’ve never fired a single one of these weapons, so what a waste of money, hundreds of billions of dollars. Well, the other measure is they’ve been used every day for deterrence and have restrained the capabilities of the Soviet Union, and right now Russia, and China. And in that case,
they’re invaluable because of the damage that was not done. Of course, we could never prove what might have occurred, but that did not occur.

So one benefit is that we hope that the high cost of these weapons would have some deterrence or dissuasive effect on adversaries. The other is that these would be, I think as you pointed out, these would be weapons that would need presidential approval to be fired. They would have very – the administration, the president, the secretary of Defense and his national security adviser – would have to have very clear red lines for which the weapons would be used.

We have had high-leverage weapons, nuclear weapons that we have today, that meet that criteria. So it’s a very serious topic. I don’t have a ready answer for you. And I think every administration, we come up with different answers on “red lines” for use in this regard.

MR.: Is there a nuclear ambiguity concern with China as well, or is it just Russia?

MR. SCHEBER: At the present time, there is not a nuclear ambiguity concern with China. They can’t see our launches. However, I would expect that the U.S. would be transparent, would let the Chinese know what we have. And by the way, the Chinese aren’t worried about nuclear ambiguity with us.

There are some recent papers available. You all may have read them, where the Chinese discuss their conventional armed ballistic missiles. They have a strange doctrine in which they base them together with nuclear-armed missiles. And at least in the papers they have put forward, hoping that we will read them, they tell us that the thinking behind it is therefore if we try to pre-empt and take out their conventional capability, we’ll also destroy their nuclear capability in the attempt, and therefore they would be motivated to launch their nuclear weapons.

Anyway, it’s a strange doctrine. But the Chinese have a much different way of approaching the issue of ambiguity and they mix their conventional and nuclear capabilities on the same types of missiles and at the same location. As you saw, I think the U.S. has a wider variety of options that fit our policy goals.

MR. HUESSY: Tom, could you address what you think the concerns are within NATO over this, if any; and how that is also reflected in concerns on Capitol Hill?

MR. SCHEBER: You know, I think it’s really tough to address the concerns of NATO because NATO is now 28 countries, including the U.S. If you read the declaration that came out of the Chicago Summit in NATO this spring, it doesn’t say a whole lot; that’s what you get when you have 28 countries trying to agree on something. There are countries that I expect would be delighted to be the host of a prompt global strike system, countries like Poland, perhaps some of the Baltic countries.

There are other countries, like Germany or the Netherlands, that don’t want to do anything that might be seen as provoking Russia at the current time. So I think there’s a real mix of views. And offshore options, sea-based options, seem to be highly valuable in the NATO context in providing advanced conventional capabilities.
There’s a real question as to how much this is understood in Congress. There’s a lot of new leaders. A lot of the thinking was based on the last debates that were held on conventional Trident years ago. And so I think there’s time for a regeneration of thinking on these issues and to look at some of the new material, some of which we presented today.

MS.: Tom, as the number of Trident submarines has declined, and we’re not quite sure yet how many Ohio-class follow-ons, 10 to 12, it would probably if they were conventional D-5, it would be a mixed load. You’d have nuclear and conventional on the same submarine. Do you think that makes it a more complicated story in terms of nuclear ambiguity? Or, do you think the same issues apply to the mixed load subs?

MR. SCHEBER: I think that gets to the question that Peter just asked. I think if one or two missiles are launched -- I still think the National Academy had a good common sense conclusion that the Russians aren’t going to start a nuclear war because they see one or two missiles launched, even if they think it’s coming from an SSBN patrol area. But as Barry Hanna from Strategic Systems remembers, going up to Capitol Hill and explaining to people how the computers and the launch control systems on ballistic missile submarines, the checks and balances that would be put in place would make it impossible to shoot a nuclear missile when you intended to shoot a conventional missile.

I’ve sat through those briefings. I’ve seen the diagrams. It’s a very convincing case. But in the end, you have a senator or a congressman say, I don’t know. It’s something I’ve seen that people wouldn’t say on the record, but when you get them aside they say, in the pit of my stomach I worry about that. And I think that played a large role in conventional Trident not being fielded, even though you won’t see a lot in the record on that issue.

MR. BROOKS: Just so we’re all playing with the same set of facts, however, we’ve been doing that for 50 years. The Navy takes submarines, pulls them off patrol, takes a small number of missiles with dummy warheads, send them back out and test fires them. Now, there is advance notification. I take that point. But this is not simply a question of arguing what would happen.

There is an awful lot of data that that system works. I mean, General Welch, who is not always the biggest cheerleader for your and my former home, has pointed out that it’s just nuts to believe that somehow something we’ve been doing actually for close to 60 years will become a problem in the future. That has not proven a persuasive argument, politically.

MR. SCHEBER: Well, Linton, thank you for making that point and clarifying that. It’s always helpful to have Captain Brooks in the room, and his experience from his submarine career.

MR. HUESSY: Tom, thank you very much. That was very well done and I appreciate it.

MR. SCHEBER: Thank you, Peter.

(Applause).
MR. HUESSY: Just let me remind you, if you would like to attend the 18th of October event, we are going to be doing a series of events on new military and emerging technology and each of the services. The reason we’re going to do this is, in the Reagan administration when we peaked spending in 1985, one question came up. Don’t throw away something that you may want in the future simply because you’re cutting budgets.

So we preserved a lot of things in RDT&E that eventually became weapons systems that were fielded in the ‘90s and in the last decade. And that’s why we want to take a look at this for each of the services. And this is the first part of that, which deals with the Army.

So those of you who would like to attend, as I said, it’s a panel in the morning from 10 a.m. to 12, and then we’re having a lunch over at the ROA building across the street. And I will notify you when John Harvey and Jim Miller – when we figure out a date for their address – probably sometime in early December, if there’s any time, given what’s going on.

I also want to urge any of you who would like to be sponsors of this series in 2013, I am now designing the course, the series, for next year. And with respect to the Trident conference, the triad conference that we had, we will be posting all the transcripts on the AFA web site and the ROA web site. It is still on YouTube if you want to go to the URL and see the videos.

And we are going to do a triad conference in Minot at the Air Force base next spring as part of a tour of the base. And we’re also going to invite some of our dear friends from the submarine community to come. And then we promise we will go to their home in Kings Bay or Bangor and do a similar conference as well as a general triad conference back here in Washington, D.C. next September as well.

So with that, if you would please let me know what your plans are for next year. I want to thank all of you for your support. I also want to thank Professor Curtis for coming all the way here for breakfast, and the wonderful midshipmen that are here today.

I want to thank you all for being here. Let me know if you want to attend any of these conferences. And again, Tom, thank you very much for an extraordinarily well done paper.

Professor Curtis: Willie?

MR. WILLIAM CURTIS: Peter, are you going to put out an email list that you send out on the Minot conference?

MR. HUESSY: Yes, we will be doing that when we have put that together. So anyway, thank you all for coming here today. And again, Tom, thank you very much.

(Applause).