MR. PETER HUESSY: I want to welcome you all here to the 30th year, which I have been hosting these seminars. We changed this year to a new organization, the Air Force Association, as well as the Reserve Officers Association of the United States, and the National Defense Industrial Association. I also want to introduce you to Ellen Dobrowski, who is with the Air Force Association, who is helping me host these events; as well as Sarah Piggott, who you met up front, who has not replaced Elma because Elma is irreplaceable, but nonetheless she will be taking – and please the system this year is different. Please, if you register online so we know you’re coming, and then we’ll confirm your registration.

A couple of changes. General Chambers is speaking on the 24th of May. But please make note, he is going to be speaking at the Reserve Officers Association across the Capitol, to make our Senate folks happy. They only have to walk across the street.

General Kehler on July 12th will also be speaking at the Reserve Officers Association. We’re going to be hosting it there. And Jim Miller is going to be the 13th of June.

So with those changes, Bob Kadlec is moving from May 8. He is going to re-do his event. And next week, as you know, we have the White House, Gary Samore, who’s going to be speaking about the recent summit, as well as issues having to do with Iran.

I also wanted to thank our embassy people that are here from a number of our friends and allies in the world. I want to also acknowledge our friends here from the United States military. And our sponsors that are here today, I want to thank you all for your support.

I also would encourage any of you who would like to sponsor these events, please to talk to me about that. We are currently planning to do another series on the side on proliferation and NNSA and stockpile stewardship programs, with the help of our Nuclear Monitor Exchange people. And that we’re going to be letting you know about.

Our speaker today is the assistant minority whip of the United States Senate, Senator Jon Kyl. He is finishing his third term as a senator of the United States Senate. He also was a House member.

He is considered by many to be leading spokesman on strategic nuclear and missile defense issues in the United States Senate, particularly on his side of the aisle but also for many of us who look at these issues. He is, unfortunately, retiring but there is life after the Senate. And we are going to look forward to hearing from him and seeing him as well.
But Senator, just on behalf of our ROA and NDIA and AFA, you’re been a fixture in these seminars for many years. I have been honored to have your presence here and hearing your thoughts. And I want to thank you from the bottom of my heart and from our sponsors and our guests here for taking the time out of your day to come and speak to us today about a critically important issue. Would you all give a very warm welcome to Senator Jon Kyl?

(Applause).

SEN. JON KYL (R-AZ): Thank you very much. Actually, I guess it’s okay for me to come over here since I served for a while in the House of Representatives. I don’t have to go to the Reserve Officers Association.

(Laughter).

I am privileged, frankly, to be the lead-off speaker this year, your 30th year. And I was thinking, I’m not sure which is older, our nuclear weapons or this series.

(Laughter).

But both deserve a pat on the back for aging – hopefully -- aging well. You asked me to set the agenda for this year by providing an assessment of the pledges that the president made to modernize our nuclear deterrent and our missile defense capabilities, pledges that were contained in the 2010 Nuclear Posture Review, and consequently made to secure Senate support for the new START Treaty in December of 2010. And I will do that.

Because the assignment requires a great deal of material to be presented, I hope you’ll forgive me for reading remarks this morning rather than missing something by speaking off-the-cuff. And I’m afraid to say that with respect to both the modernization and missile defense – particularly missile defense of the homeland against long-range ballistic missiles – the gap between what was promised and what will be delivered continues to grow. There are security and political implications which I’m prepared to discuss briefly, but I’m sure will be the task of future speakers in this series to help us understand the strategic consequences of the decisions that have been made and will likely be made in the future to reduce funding of our nuclear weapons complex and arsenal, and nuclear delivery systems and our national missile defense system.

First let’s talk about the pledge contained in the so-called 1251 study. In November of 2012, which is a month before the new START vote, the president pledged to invest more than $85 billion over the next 10 years to modernize our nuclear weapons complex. This figure included a $4.1 billion increase over the first five years because the administration agreed that the original plan was inadequate.

That was the entire disagreement that we were having. And eventually, Dr. Miller and others, flew out to Arizona to brief me and in effect say, you were right. We do need more than $4 billion more and we’re prepared to make that commitment.
And then that commitment was presented to the Senate in a variety of ways. Specific funding levels were prescribed for each of the next 10 years. Specific dates were established in a revised 1251 report; and then the 2010 NPR for nuclear weapon life extension programs and construction of critical infrastructure projects such as CMRR, the plutonium handling facility, and the UPF or the uranium handling facility. Funding, which was to be $120 billion over 10 years, was also provided to maintain and modernize the nuclear triad, though the exact amounts for the next generation bomber and air-launched cruise missile and ICBM were all to be determined in the future.

As then-Secretary Gates told the U.S. Senate during consideration of new START, and I’m quoting, “This modernization program was very carefully worked out between ourselves and the department of Energy; and frankly, where we came out on that played a fairly significant role in the willingness of the Senate to ratify the New START Treaty.” And that was an understatement.

The reality is the fiscal 2012 request by the appropriators by some $400 million, mostly due to the Budget Control Act. The fiscal 2013 request is $372 million short of the 1251 number for ’13. And now, as a result, we’re going to be about $730 million short in just the first two years of this 10-year program.

NNSA says the funding figures for the next five years are just placeholders until they figure out what plan they’re going to do. But these numbers, combined with the cuts in fiscal ’12 and ’13, suggest a reduction over that period of time of about $4.4 billion, which was almost exactly the amount that the administration agreed needed to be added back into the plan. So essentially, we’re right back where we started from. The only difference is that new START was approved.

Let’s talk first about life extension program delays: a two year delay for the B-61, the first production unit now in 2019. A three year delay in completing W-76 deliveries to the U.S. Navy, 2018 to 2021. And a three year slide in the first production unit for the combined W-78/88 warhead in 2023. That, in other words, is to start, and it’s more than a decade away even to start the production.

Last November, testifying before HASC on the implications of the $400 to $500 million reduction that was at that time planned by the appropriators, General Kehler and Dr. Jim Miller said that they were, and I’m quoting here, “very concerned” about the impact on life extension programs, that there will be “cascading effects.” Referring to these same cuts, Secretary Panetta said, quote, “It is tremendously short-sighted if they reduce funds that are absolutely essential for modernization.”

This year, General Kehler and others remain “concerned.” But they have testified that the LEP slowdowns are, as they termed it, “a manageable risk,” at least with respect to the fiscal 2013 request. “It’s what happens after 2013, which of course is unknown at this time, that concerns me,” and I’m quoting General Kehler there.

On February 16, 2012, Admiral Jonathan Greenert, chief of naval operations testified to HASC, that the Navy’s concern with the National Nuclear Security Administration’s plans to slow production schedule of the W-76 nuclear warhead life extension program, stating, and I’m quoting here, “We are
concerned beyond the fiscal year 2013 submission by NNSA with regard to the warhead upgrade. When we look at fiscal 2014 and up, we are concerned,” end of quote

It appears that DOD was presented with a fait accompli by the Office of Management and Budget. It’s trying to make the best of a bad situation by stretching out the deliveries of these warhead life extensions. But when do you cross the line between manageable risk and peril?

In fact, each year we’re told that we’re at the end of the line. What happens if President Obama is re-elected and is no longer answerable for another election to the American people? What’s likely to happen to these programs at that time?

Let’s move on to CMRR and pit production. The 2010 NPR required operation of CMRR in 2021. We’re now told by Dr. Cook at NNSA, that it will be delayed until 2028. At the earliest, that’s a seven year delay, not the five years that Tom D’Agostino originally said.

CMRR is required to provide the handling and storage space and provide the analytical capabilities to expand nuclear pit production from the current 11 per year -- that’s the most that they can do at Los Alamos -- to the requirement of 50 to 80 pits per year. Now, NNSA proposes an alternative strategy, since CMRR won’t be online. Andrew Weber, the assistant secretary of defense for nuclear, chemical and biological defense programs, told SASC on March 28, and I’m quoting here, “The revised NNSA plutonium strategy will give us some near-term capacity, we hope up to 20 to 30 pits per year within the next five years, and that’s very important, it’s for the life extension program for the W-77 and W-88 common ICBM/SLBM warhead,” end of quote.

Note the use of the phrase, “we hope.” The reality is that DOD and NNSA and the labs don’t know whether it’s possible to increase production to 30 pits per year. They don’t know how much it would cost to do so. They don’t know whether the difference between the 30 and the 50 to 80, which is the current requirement, could be made up by reusing pits from dismantled weapons.

They don’t know the answers to any of these questions,. And they don’t know how long it will take them to find out the answers. And they don’t know what the cost to find out the answers will be. That’s our alternative strategy.

It may well turn out that it is not feasible technically, or if it is, that the cost may end up costing close to what we had in the budget for moving forward with CMRR. That’s about $300 million in fiscal year ’13, about $1.8 billion over five years. So it could be that we are going to end up without a facility, with less production capacity at potentially the same cost, and that’s if it works.

We do know that the requirement for CMRR remains. It remains valid both in DOD and NNSA. In fact, a recent GAO assessment suggests even greater need in the future for facilities such as CMRR in order to handle activities related to homeland defense and nonproliferation, such as nuclear forensics, in addition to what we’ve been talking about. So while the necessity for CMRR is not going to go away, the costs now will certainly rise and it’s going to take much longer to get online.
In explaining the Nuclear Weapon Council’s support for the deferral of CMRR, administration witnesses told Congress they had to make some hard choices this year due to budget realities, usually stated in the context of the Budget Control Act, or the lack of commitment on the part of Congress for funding in fiscal year 2012. And because they, in effect, believed that they had to make these changes, they chose to favor the critical life extension program over the facilities. That’s hard to argue with as a choice, but I still wonder why the choice was accepted so readily, as opposed to fighting hard for what the commitment was prior to the time that New START was passed – fighting for the additional $372 million for the fiscal ’13 budget, which could have covered CMRR.

Was this decision foisted on them by OMB or by the White House? I don’t know. I know what they attribute it to, and I know the concerns that they expressed, but to me it represents a violation of the commitment that was made to me and to my colleagues.

General Kehler remained apprehensive in his recent appearance before SASC. Here’s what he said, “The plan to upgrade what we call CMRR, the chemical and metallurgical building that allows us to process plutonium, is not in place. That has been slipped fairly far to the right, five to seven years, depending on which of the documents you look at. I’m concerned about that. I’m concerned about our ability to provide for the deployed stockpile, and that is my number one concern here,” end of quote.

Let’s go from warheads to delivery systems. The triad. Delays to the modernization of the triad have been obscured somewhat by announcements that appear to be positive decisions, at least for now, to maintain the three legs of the triad, and proceed with the development of the new heavy bomber and a long-range standoff missile, which would be the replacement for the nuclear air-launched cruise missile. But all of this, I think, bears watching.

First, I’ll talk about the Ohio-class nuclear ballistic submarine replacement. The FY ’13 request includes a two year delay, with the initial submarine available in – where’s the drumroll – 2031. Now that’s 19 years from now.

We fought and won World War II in less than five years, but we can’t build a submarine in less than 19. Think about it. What’s wrong with us?

And, of course, there are consequences. Because of this delay we’ve got to dip below the 12 missile submarines needed to maintain sea deployments. According to written testimony by Assistant Secretary of the Navy Sean Stackley, “The delay results in a temporary reduction to 10 available SSBNs in the 2030s.”

Obviously we need to better understand the operational implications of this delay, and others. But I assume the Navy plans to alter deployment schedules or change warhead loadings per boat in order to meet their nuclear deterrence requirements. What happens if there are further delays to the new submarines and the current aging boats must be retired? How will this impact our at-sea deterrence force? Is this a risk worth the delay caused by the cut in funding?
Look at the long-range standoff missile. The contact award on this follow-on to the air-launched cruise missile development program has been delayed by two years, until 2015. And this is, quote, “to accommodate higher priorities in a constrained budget,” end of quote, according to the Air Force.

There’s approximately 1,000 ALCMs facing critical service life extensions. It’s unclear whether this two year delay for the LRSO would pose a problem for equipping the aging B-52 bombers or the next generation bomber. But the longer we delay in starting it, the more likely it becomes the existing ALCM will have to be retired before its replacement is available.

It’s troubling that the Defense Department has yet to determine which nuclear warhead will be fielded on the LRSO. The original plans were to conduct a major LEP on the W-80, but this was suspended when DOD thought it could get the RRW. Do you remember that? Well we now await completion of the analysis of alternatives sometime this fall. Yet another example of where the president’s nuclear modernization pledge is being undone for lack of funding.

Go to the next generation bomber. After three years of study, the administration finally appears ready to move forward with the development of a new heavy bomber, which according to the secretary of the Air Force will strengthen both conventional and nuclear deterrence well into the future. That’s good news, if true.

But questions still remain about whether the new bomber will be nuclear certified at the outset; and if not, what this means for the availability of the bomber leg of the nuclear triad. As the secretary of the Air Force recently stated in testimony to Congress, “Advanced air defenses increasingly threaten the survivability of current bombers,” end of quote. The timing of deployment for a nuclear certified bomber therefore becomes increasingly important and should not be put off for cost reasons, as some members of Congress suggest.

For example, HASC ranking member Adam Smith told reporters on March 1 that it might be worth thinking about whether the next bomber must be nuclear-capable. He said, “I haven’t made that decision yet. It’s a tight budget environment.”

The decision to develop a new heavy bomber was likely made not because of its nuclear mission, but because it’s deemed essential for the president’s new military strategy. That does beg the question why the bomber is being counted as part of the nuclear modernization budget as a result.

Well, turn to the follow-on ICBM. We actually may know more about Russian and Chinese ICBM modernization efforts than our own. According to recent testimony by Assistant Secretary of Defense for Global Strategic Affairs, Madeleine Creedon, and I quote her here, “Russia is working to modernize delivery systems, including a mobile variant of the Topol intercontinental ballistic missile. We know that China has a broad range of missile development programs, including an effort to replace some liquid fueled systems with more advanced solid fueled systems,” end of quote.

Yet when it comes to U.S. ICBMS, she says only that the U.S. intends to sustain the Minuteman III until 2030, and that, quote, “The Air Force will begin an analysis of alternatives in 2013 examining
options and required capabilities for a follow-on system,” end of quote. I’ll leave it to you to decide whether that reflects a true commitment to a follow-on system.

So here’s the summary for our nuclear modernization: manageable risk with an uncertain future; a future that doesn’t look particularly bright given the cuts in fiscal year ’13; a gap that will continue to widen; an alternative path for plutonium handling based on uncertain technology and cost; all based on a continued assumption the Congress won’t support full funding; and of course which casts doubt on the prospect for future reductions and the elimination of our nuclear hedge and for the CTBT.

Let me turn now to the commitment or lack thereof with regard to homeland missile defense. While it may be administration policy to defend the homeland against limited long-range ballistic missile attack, the commitment has been extraordinarily weak, in my opinion, from the outset; for all of the discussion has been with respect to defending allies. And the actions suggest that there’s a reason for that.

The first ground-based midcourse defense budget for fiscal year 2010 represented a 35 percent reduction from 2009. And even by its own new baseline, five year funding for GMD declined by some $1 billion, between the president’s fiscal ’11 and fiscal ’12 five year budget proposals. Deployments were cut back from 44 GBIs in the U.S. to 30, and the 10 slated for Poland, of course, were cancelled.

The production line for GBI was initially scheduled to close after the 44th missile. And only after strenuous pressure from Congress, has that number recently risen to 57, which is still short of what is needed for testing and emergency deployment. The initial DOD budget documents “reflected a decision to curtail additional GMD development,” that’s a quotation, and stop construction at missile field number two at Fort Greeley, Alaska. The only effort to significantly improve GBI, the multiple kill vehicle, or the MKV program, was abandoned.

Well, what are the assumptions? The assumptions underlying these decisions are spelled out in the 2010 Ballistic Missile Review; namely, that the U.S. is currently protected against the threat of limited ICBM attack with 30 existing GBIs, that it can hedge against future uncertainties with “other options,” if the threat assessment changes, and that it’s necessary to refocus homeland missile defense efforts against more urgent regional threats. Now what if some of these assumptions prove to be false?

Let’s take the first one, that we’re currently protected with 30 GBIs. While there’s little doubt that the U.S. today can be defended against a very limited number of threats, the reliability of the current GMD system should be better than it is. The past two GBI intercept failures may suggest that not enough attention, perhaps enough funding, has been paid to the GMD system. We should be testing GBIs at least once a year, and both types of kill vehicles should be tested each year. This, again, requires funding and a stronger commitment to improve the GMD system than we seen over the past few years.

Is 30 GBIs the right number? Remember, the last administration believed 44 in the United States and 10 in Europe were the minimum needed. The number of deployed GBIs will depend on the reliability of the system and the nature of the threat. And the threat depends not only on the number of
missiles that can be launched against the U.S., but whether those missiles contain countermeasures and how effective they might be.

The threat, obviously, continues to evolve. Shortly before his departure from office, Secretary Gates in his remarks at the Shangri-la Dialogue in Singapore said, quote, “With the continued development of long-range missiles and potentially a road mobile intercontinental ballistic missile, and their continued development of nuclear weapons, North Korea is in the process of becoming a direct threat to the United States,” end of quote. And of course the point is that we can’t know for sure whether the current GMD system is sufficient to pace the threat, which is why we need to improve the numbers of GBIs and ensure the kill vehicles that sit atop the GBIs are in fact able to be deal with more sophisticated missile threats.

How about the second assumption, that we can augment existing homeland protection with a new interceptor? They have in mind, of course, the SM-3 Block 2B that might be available early next decade. The logic of the 2B is sound. Deploy a less expensive missile forward to intercept missiles in their early stages of flight, thus providing an additional layer of protection for the homeland.

The problem, of course, is threefold. One, the Russians don’t like it, which could mean that the president has no intention of moving forward with the program. Perhaps this is the subject of his open mic event with President Medvedev last month. We simply don’t know how committed the president is to this particular element of our national defense, which the Russians obviously don’t like.

Second, the congressional appropriators appear very wary of funding the 2B missile until the 2A version is proven, which means that at a minimum the 2B will be delayed. And finally, and perhaps most important, the 2B is, as we know, just a concept. It’s not a proven missile at this point. And we don’t know for sure whether it can in fact reach the speeds necessary for early intercept or that it can be deployed aboard Navy vessels, which would of course limit its value.

All of this suggests that defense of the homeland cannot depend just on the 2B, that we have to improve the existing proven GMD technology as well. A useful approach might be to explore a new kill vehicle for the 2B missile that could also be adaptable to the next generation GBI. Because the 2B kill vehicle must be made smaller than the current one to fit into the smaller SM-3 missile, there is an opportunity to put multiple kill vehicles on the GBI, thus significantly improving its system. And I’m happy to work with the Armed Services Committee and others to see to it that MDA explores this, the feasibility at least, of this approach, which could mean a real serious upgrade to GBI.

A final assumption here, that the urgency of the short-and medium-range threat necessitates that we focus attention from GMD to regional missile defense. There’s little doubt that the short, medium, and intermediate range ballistic missile threats are something that the regional combatant commanders must contend with. And therefore, we must continue to increase our capabilities there.

Today, we’ve got about 80 SM-2 Block 1A missiles for 22 Aegis ships. By 2020, MDA hopes to field approximately 380 on 37 Aegis ships, and about 50 THAAD missiles on nine THAAD fire units. While
these forces will play a critical role in a potential regional conflict, we have to weigh their importance in a greater role against the strategic value of the GMD system for the protection of the homeland.

As General Jacoby, commander of NorthCom, recently testified, and I quote, “We must not allow regional actors, such as North Korea, to hold U.S. policy hostage by making our citizens vulnerable to a nuclear ICBM attack,” end of quote. So defense of the homeland must be, in my opinion, our first and most enduring priority. Where decisions must be made with respect to the allocation of missile defense funding, in my view the balance should favor homeland defense, and this is not the case today. According to MDA, it plans to spend approximately $20 billion in the fiscal year ’12 to ’16 timeframe on regional missile defense, compared with just $4 (billion) for homeland defense.

So here’s some concluding thoughts with regard to missile defense. The neglect of the GMD system may or may not be intentional, but the result is the same, a steady decline in the reliability of the system until one day we come to the conclusion that it costs too much to maintain that system given its limited usefulness. This may sound farfetched and unduly alarmist, but recall that the nation’s first national missile defense system, Safeguard, began initial operation in April of 1975, only to be deactivated in October of that year when a majority in Congress viewed it easily overwhelmed by Soviet strategic warheads and therefore not worth the cost of maintaining it. By the way, Russia continued to maintain and improve its missile defense site around Moscow, you might recall.

But could something like that happen today? Just look at what the administration has decided to do with the SBX, the sea-based X-band radar. It has been in the news recently.

It intends to transition SBX to a, quote, “limited test support status.” It could be recalled to operational status if and when needed, though the administration has not yet told us how long it might take to do that. The justification for the action is to save $500 million over five years.

The administration now says it can get by without SBX. But in June of 2009 General Cartwright, then commander of StratCom, told the SASC, and I quote, “The addition of the sea-based X-Band radar took some of the stress of the mid-course. It allowed us to tell whether we actually hit the missile or not,” end of quote.

So what’s next? Perhaps shut down a missile field in Alaska or Vandenberg Air Force Base to save more money? An administration committed to the defense of the homeland would never make such a decision. Indeed, SBX last week was moved into position in preparation for that North Korea missile launch that was so much in the news, which by the way, is simply another indication of why we need it.

Well here are some final thoughts on both subjects. I’ve outlined the current gap between what was promised to obtain support for new START versus what has actually been produced. It’s unlikely we’ll be able to close that gap in the near future. Our best hope is to limit its rate of increase. Although I will tell you that we are working very hard right now, both on the House and Senate side, to try to find ways to come up with the funds that would enable us to close that gap and not see a shortfall in this year.
One wonders why the arms controllers and disarmament advocates within the administration didn’t push harder for full funding. In my mind, they should appreciate that it would make it much more difficult, if not impossible, to get Senate and House support for further reductions, quite likely would put CTBT out of reach, and obviously I will do everything I can to defeat CTBT. But their actions seem to me to undercut any argument that one could make at this point for CTBT.

The bottom line is, I think it’s forums such as this that will have to continue to put pressure not just on future administrations and on this administration, but on Congress in order to abide by the commitments that were made last year and that are necessary for our national defense. I guess the bottom line is this, that we have only ourselves to blame when the administration has someone to blame. In the Congress, we have to provide the funding, or at least an avenue for obtaining the funding, that is hard for the administration to deny. Because it’s my opinion that they will use any excuse possible to avoid the funding that they promised in the first place. And the ramifications of that are very serious to our national security.

Thank you very much for your attention to all of this detail. I hope that you will – I know many of you are committed to join in the effort to do everything that we can this year to come up with the funding to close the gap, push the administration to make the decisions necessary on a timely basis so that in these future sessions – in the next 30 years, Peter, we have more optimistic things to talk about.

Maybe I’ll close with this. I’m an optimist, as you know. And a friend described the difference between being a pessimist and an optimist, which probably captures it pretty well. You know the difference. A pessimist says things are so bad they can’t get any worse. And the optimist says, sure they can.

(Laughter).

Well let’s make sure they don’t.

(Applause).

If I didn’t go too long here, I’d be happy to take your comments or questions.

MS. MYRA MCCARDELL: There have been some news reports that the White House is looking at the next tranche of reductions in our nuclear arsenal. Could you comment on what you think the size of the (cut ?) may do to that decision and whether or not you think that if they see opposition in this kind of particular – bilateral opposition – that they might take a unilateral action to reduce?

SEN. KYL: You know, it’s a great question. And for those back of the room, the administration is reportedly look – well, it’s clear from news reports that the administration has asked the Defense Department to evaluate the possibility of reducing our nuclear warhead numbers down dramatically from what they are now, potentially even down to a number approximating 300. And Myra asks, what we can do about that given the fact that this is an administration decision, to some extent?
And I think it’s clear that this is part and parcel of the president’s goal of zero nuclear, reducing our nuclear forces down to dramatically lower levels than they are right now. It is what animated his position in the START Treaty. Everyone understands that we reduced our warheads, or will be reducing warheads, under START. The Russians actually are building up to the new START numbers. So this was not a situation where in parity both countries reduced their warheads.

I think that that is going to make it more difficult for the president to achieve this goal because I don’t think the Russians want any part of it. They have new military doctrine which relies on nuclear weapons. Now a lot of these are tactical, and we mustn’t forget the difference here. There’s very little difference between a strategic and tactical missile. It’s essentially how it’s delivered.

But we’ve totally ignored the tactical weapons of the Soviets. Nonetheless, they don’t want any more reductions either on the tactical or strategic side. And so if the president is talking about a bilateral discussion with the Soviets, I’m not sure it’s going to do him any good.

He would clearly have to give up something very important for the Soviets to even consider such discussions. And what would that be? Missile defense, of course. And I think that that would prompt a very strong reaction from the American people as well as the representatives in Congress.

If the president decided to simply do this unilaterally, to get a second Nobel Peace Prize or whatever would be in order as a result of that, I think there would be enormous pushback from the Senate and the House. I think it would stall efforts – it probably would make impossible the CTBT. It probably would stall efforts to dismantle some of our inventory that would be called for under START.

The Armed Services Committee would probably draw the line and say we’re not going to allow funding for that sort of thing, and the appropriators might even refuse to provide the funding. We’re looking for some good leadership from the House Armed Services Committee again this year in that regard. They had good language last year.

So it’s not something – although the president may have the power to do it unilaterally, the ways that the Congress can pushback, and that I think the American people would pushback, are pretty significant. So I’m not sure where he’s going with it, but the scary thing to me is that it is very clear that this is driven by ideology, not threats on the ground, that we are adjusting our analysis of threats in order to justify, to provide a rationale for, a reduction in the number of weapons needed to provide the kind of deterrent that we had in the past. And I hope that the Defense department is pushing back against that, although obviously they are required to provide some alternatives to him. And the scary thing is, he can take those alternatives and the American people have very little information on which to evaluate the decision he’s making because, by definition, our SIOP – or what used to be called the SIOP – is one of the most highly classified things that we have.

MR. BAKER SPRING: Baker Spring with the Heritage Foundation, with a direct follow-on to that. If I try to follow this in terms of the logic train that I’d like you to comment on, which is that these steps, walking back from the commitments under new START with regard to nuclear modernization, and the reductions in funding, can be used to essentially lower the bar on our military requirements for our
weapons, particularly the targeting requirements. Is that how you see the administration essentially operating on this, or is there some other logic that you see to it? And also, if it is about reducing targeting standards, do you think (there’s a strategic advantage to push back on it?)?

SEN. KYL: Baker, thank you, and this goes to the last point that I was trying to make. For better or for worse, the military follows orders. And you’ve seen in the kind of hedging and the kind of responses that both NNSA and military people have given to both the House and Senate in response to questions about this, is that we will manage in the short-term, though we have concerns.

And it seems that that’s always the response. And they always say, but this is it, there can be no more. And then next year there is more and they continue to say we can manage, but we have concerns.

I’ve been told, and I don’t think this is classified, we’re out of work-arounds. We’re done with that. We are now to the point where it is a zero-sum game, at least with regard to the nuclear warheads.

And I don’t know – I think that all of these things are working together. That is to say: the president’s desire to get to nuclear zero; his desire to therefore reduce as much as he can, our nuclear weapon capability, today; the funding constraints that are imposed by Congress but helped in the shaping by the administration. The administration is part of the budgeting process here. The OMB has an influence on where the numbers come out, a big influence. And so you can’t just blame the Congress.

Although, let me say this. It’s easy for the administration when under the Budget Control Act the Congress sets a defense number – or sets an overall number -- and doesn’t block off defense. It’s easy for them to say, we didn’t do it, you did. The problem is they seem all too ready to jump on that excuse. And that’s why I asked in these remarks why instead of just meekly saying I guess Congress didn’t want us to spend it, didn’t they stand up and fight against it?

I mean, I had these conversations with the vice president and with other administration officials. I said, you all know that we’re going into a very tough budget environment. Well we can’t control the House of Representatives, they said.

I said, I know that. I can’t either. But you could sure as heck fight for what you think you’re committed to here, instead of just meekly giving in. But they’re all too ready to do that, of course.

I guess what I’m asking is we have to avoid giving them excuses, if at all possible. We need to find ways to block off the necessary defense spending. In this regard, I applaud the efforts of Paul Ryan, for example. I think his budget is an effort to do that.

And this is an important point that perhaps I should have mentioned earlier. We’ve got the problem of sequestration, which will have a direct bearing on what I’m talking about here. We can avoid sequestration this year by finding $109 billion to offset the portion of the $1.2 trillion over 10
years that Congress must save. The amount this year is $109 billion. That’s half defense, half non-defense.

The money is there. It’s just a matter of the political will to reduce spending in various programs, not defense programs, so that we can avoid the sequester. And there’s legislation both by the chairman of the House Armed Services Committee, by John McCain and myself and another group in the Senate. And the Ryan budget calls for a reconciliation process by, I think it’s six different committees, to come back at the end of next week with their recommendations for well of $109 billion.

And the good news is that we can find that money and it doesn’t have to include tax increases. But the bad news is that everybody just assumes that it would be so horrendous if we didn’t, it’s just going to automatically happen. And it’s hard work to make it happen.

And secondly, the first couple of years are relatively (easy ?) in terms of low-lying fruit, but beyond that it gets hard. That’s why the so-called super committee couldn’t get it done. It’s hard when you’ve got two different points of view, one of which doesn’t particularly care for defense in the first place and desperately wants to raise taxes.

The other side, which very much cares for defense, doesn’t want to raise taxes. It’s hard to come to an agreement to get $1.2 trillion in savings over 10 years. And it ought to be easier one year at a time, but it’s still very, very hard.

So as we look at all of these challenges, and we look at the appropriations process which is ongoing right now, it moves forward this week in at least one of the subcommittees, we also have to figure out how to get this sequestration problem resolved this year because the planning for the Defense Department should have started by now. It probably has secretly, but they’re talking about starting it this summer in any event.

So I don’t know whether it’s all a big plan, but certainly the pieces fit together well for somebody who is not that interested in national defense to begin with, has never supported missile defense. I mean, the president made it clear back when he first ran for office that he was not a supporter of missile defense, his words. And he clearly wants to get to nuclear zero.

So it shouldn’t really be a big surprise to all of us that these things are coming to pass. Elections have consequences. I’m not here to make a political speech, but you can just see the direction where things are obviously going to be headed depending upon how the election comes out next November.

And thanks again for all the work you guys are doing. I think one last point or question. I think I preached a little bit too much. Peter?

MR. HUESSY: Senator, would you address this issue that comes up from Mr. Schultz, Mr. Nunn, Mr. Perry and Mr. Kissinger about the extent to which Russia and the United States show what they call a commitment to arms control in the strategic nuclear area will have beneficial impacts proliferation, particularly with respect to Iran and North Korea? I’ve tried to figure out, starting out all the way back with the SALT process, is there a connection between arms control that has been successful and
proliferation? And for the life of me, I just can’t find one. And yet, that seems to be one of the major assumptions behind pursuing further reductions in strategic weapons, as opposed to concentrating on counter-proliferation and non-proliferation, as well as the tactical nuclear issue, which is really a serious one, which no president has ever had an agreement with the Russians on any tactical nuclear system except for if you call the INF Treaty. So I’m wondering if you could address that issue?

SEN. KYL: Well, there’s too much to be said about that in the remaining time here. Suffice it to say while we talk about non-proliferation I can’t see that anything this administration has done has advanced that goal. And in fact, I think that in many respects we’re worse off with regard to the non-proliferation question.

To the point about whether or not our actions or the Russian actions produce a result because of our good intentions and our moral position and our actions to forego testing, for example, we haven’t been testing since 1991. And that sure has made a big difference, hasn’t it? I don’t think anybody that intended to test has stopped testing. And the argument that somehow if we simply stop our nuclear testing or reduce the number of warheads, that that’s going to cause others in the world to pull back, is belied by every bit of evidence that I think exists.

It goes back to a simple realization. There are countries in the world, there are to put it colloquially good guys and bad guys. And countries will do things that they believe are in their national interest. And they’re not simply going to adhere to some Western civilization view of liberal moral values that the United States posits in the world to modify their behavior if they have other goals in mind.

And so to think that there is any evidence to support the notion that if we just get rid of all our stuff others will or will forego it, is ludicrous. And think of the danger that that puts us in. Drawing down the number of our warheads creates a much more unstable and therefore dangerous world.

And without getting into all the arguments about getting down to the Chinese level and breakout and all of that, the evidence is this. After hundreds of millions of people were killed up to 1945 when the nuclear weapon was devised and used, the nuclear powers have not had war with each other since. And so you have to wonder whether you necessarily have a less dangerous world with nuclear weapons or not.

And I go back to what I think is an absolute truism. We throw it around as a trite phrase, but think about it. It is full of meaning. And that’s Reagan’s very simple, peace through strength. Strength is the very best way for us to maintain peace and stability and security and freedom in the world, and we should never, ever forget that.

(Applause).

MR. HUESSY: Please make sure you let Sarah know if you’re coming next week to hear Gary Samore. He’s going to solve the Iranian nuclear program for us.

(Laughter).
We’ve set the bar high. Thank you all for coming this year. And my sponsors, thank you. And thank you, again, Senator, as always.