

[H.A.S.C. No. 112-134]

**ADDRESSING THE IRANIAN NUCLEAR
CHALLENGE: UNDERSTANDING THE
MILITARY OPTIONS**

COMMITTEE ON ARMED SERVICES
HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

ONE HUNDRED TWELFTH CONGRESS

SECOND SESSION

HEARING HELD
JUNE 20, 2012



U.S. GOVERNMENT PRINTING OFFICE

75-143

WASHINGTON : 2012

HOUSE COMMITTEE ON ARMED SERVICES

ONE HUNDRED TWELFTH CONGRESS

HOWARD P. "BUCK" McKEON, California, *Chairman*

ROSCOE G. BARTLETT, Maryland	ADAM SMITH, Washington
MAC THORNBERRY, Texas	SILVESTRE REYES, Texas
WALTER B. JONES, North Carolina	LORETTA SANCHEZ, California
W. TODD AKIN, Missouri	MIKE MCINTYRE, North Carolina
J. RANDY FORBES, Virginia	ROBERT A. BRADY, Pennsylvania
JEFF MILLER, Florida	ROBERT ANDREWS, New Jersey
JOE WILSON, South Carolina	SUSAN A. DAVIS, California
FRANK A. LoBIONDO, New Jersey	JAMES R. LANGEVIN, Rhode Island
MICHAEL TURNER, Ohio	RICK LARSEN, Washington
JOHN KLINE, Minnesota	JIM COOPER, Tennessee
MIKE ROGERS, Alabama	MADELEINE Z. BORDALLO, Guam
TRENT FRANKS, Arizona	JOE COURTNEY, Connecticut
BILL SHUSTER, Pennsylvania	DAVE LOEBSACK, Iowa
K. MICHAEL CONAWAY, Texas	NIKI TSONGAS, Massachusetts
DOUG LAMBORN, Colorado	CHELLIE PINGREE, Maine
ROB WITTMAN, Virginia	LARRY KISSELL, North Carolina
DUNCAN HUNTER, California	MARTIN HEINRICH, New Mexico
JOHN C. FLEMING, M.D., Louisiana	BILL OWENS, New York
MIKE COFFMAN, Colorado	JOHN R. GARAMENDI, California
TOM ROONEY, Florida	MARK S. CRITZ, Pennsylvania
TODD RUSSELL PLATTS, Pennsylvania	TIM RYAN, Ohio
SCOTT RIGELL, Virginia	C.A. DUTCH RUPPERSBERGER, Maryland
CHRIS GIBSON, New York	HANK JOHNSON, Georgia
VICKY HARTZLER, Missouri	BETTY SUTTON, Ohio
JOE HECK, Nevada	COLLEEN HANABUSA, Hawaii
BOBBY SCHILLING, Illinois	KATHLEEN C. HOCHUL, New York
JON RUNYAN, New Jersey	JACKIE SPEIER, California
AUSTIN SCOTT, Georgia	
TIM GRIFFIN, Arkansas	
STEVEN PALAZZO, Mississippi	
ALLEN B. WEST, Florida	
MARTHA ROBY, Alabama	
MO BROOKS, Alabama	
TODD YOUNG, Indiana	

ROBERT L. SIMMONS II, *Staff Director*
ALEX GALLO, *Professional Staff Member*
MICHAEL CASEY, *Professional Staff Member*
LAUREN HAUHN, *Research Assistant*

CONTENTS

CHRONOLOGICAL LIST OF HEARINGS

2012

	Page
HEARING:	
Wednesday, June 20, 2012, Addressing the Iranian Nuclear Challenge: Understanding the Military Options	1
APPENDIX:	
Wednesday, June 20, 2012	43

WEDNESDAY, JUNE 20, 2012

ADDRESSING THE IRANIAN NUCLEAR CHALLENGE: UNDERSTANDING THE MILITARY OPTIONS

STATEMENTS PRESENTED BY MEMBERS OF CONGRESS

McKeon, Hon. Howard P. "Buck," a Representative from California, Chairman, Committee on Armed Services	1
Smith, Hon. Adam, a Representative from Washington, Ranking Member, Committee on Armed Services	2

WITNESSES

Albright, David, President, Institute for Science and International Security	9
Rademaker, Stephen, Task Force Member, National Security Project, Bipartisan Policy Center	5
Robb, Charles, Task Force Co-Chair, National Security Project, Bipartisan Policy Center	3

APPENDIX

PREPARED STATEMENTS:

Albright, David	71
McKeon, Hon. Howard P. "Buck"	47
Rademaker, Stephen	61
Robb, Charles	49

DOCUMENTS SUBMITTED FOR THE RECORD:

[There were no Documents submitted.]

WITNESS RESPONSES TO QUESTIONS ASKED DURING THE HEARING:

Mr. Brooks	85
Mr. Forbes	85
Mr. Turner	85

QUESTIONS SUBMITTED BY MEMBERS POST HEARING:

Mr. Franks	90
Ms. Hanabusa	93
Mr. Kissell	92
Mr. Langevin	89
Mrs. Roby	93
Ms. Speier	95

ADDRESSING THE IRANIAN NUCLEAR CHALLENGE: UNDERSTANDING THE MILITARY OPTIONS

HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES,
COMMITTEE ON ARMED SERVICES,
Washington, DC, Wednesday, June 20, 2012.

The committee met, pursuant to call, at 10:01 a.m. in room 2118, Rayburn House Office Building, Hon. Howard P. “Buck” McKeon (chairman of the committee) presiding.

OPENING STATEMENT OF HON. HOWARD P. “BUCK” MCKEON, A REPRESENTATIVE FROM CALIFORNIA, CHAIRMAN, COM- MITTEE ON ARMED SERVICES

The CHAIRMAN. The committee will come to order.

Good morning, ladies and gentlemen. The House Armed Services Committee meets today to receive testimony from experts on the nuclear challenge from Iran.

The expert panel includes former Senator Charles Robb, a task force co-chair of the National Security Project with the Bipartisan Policy Center; Mr. Steven Rademaker, a task force member of the National Security Project with the Bipartisan Policy Center; and Mr. David Albright, the President of the Institute for Science and International Security.

Gentlemen, thank you all for being here today.

The Iranian nuclear program is among the most complex foreign policy and national security challenges that the United States faces today. Intensive diplomatic and economic steps focused on Iran’s nuclear program have been undertaken over the last decade to dissuade Iran from pursuing a military nuclear program. Unfortunately, it does not appear that these efforts have succeeded in convincing the Iranians to abandon its military nuclear ambitions.

The United States’ stated policy remains that Iran should not process a nuclear weapon, as reflected by President Obama’s recent comments in which he stated, “I think both the Iranian and Israeli governments recognize that when the United States says it is unacceptable for Iran to have a nuclear weapon, we mean what we say.” Moreover, President Obama has explicitly declared that his Administration would use force—a “military component”—as a last resort to prevent Tehran from acquiring a bomb. However, this message has not always been consistent across administrations, and, unfortunately, it is not clear that the Iranian regime is deterred by such statements.

I personally agree that all elements of national power should be brought to bear to prevent Iran from obtaining a nuclear weapon. I certainly recognize that no military operation is without risk, but given the fact that the President has stated that military options

may have to be utilized to thwart Iran from obtaining a nuclear weapon, it is the committee's responsibility to ensure that the military option is credible. Moreover, any consideration of a U.S. military response to Iran's nuclear developments requires rigorous and thoughtful evaluation, which is why we are holding this hearing today.

If diplomacy and economic sanctions fail to stop Iran from obtaining a nuclear weapon capability, then a military option may be the only recourse. Therefore, it is critical to rigorously study and understand all facets of any military option, including how it supports our vital national security interests, its potential for effectiveness, its risks, Iran's potential responses, the implications for the region.

Likewise, effective military capability in the region could be a useful deterrent and improve regional stability, negating the need for a military strike.

Gentlemen, thank you for appearing before the committee today, and I look forward to your testimony and insights into the nuclear challenge from Iran.

Mr. Smith.

[The prepared statement of Mr. McKeon can be found in the Appendix on page 47.]

STATEMENT OF HON. ADAM SMITH, A REPRESENTATIVE FROM WASHINGTON, RANKING MEMBER, COMMITTEE ON ARMED SERVICES

Mr. SMITH. I thank you, Mr. Chairman. And I think your opening remarks set the stage very well.

And I do look forward to the testimony. This is a very thorny and difficult problem. We need all the expert advice we can get. So we are very happy to have you gentlemen here today, and, as I said, we look forward to your testimony.

It is not an easy problem, because we all recognize the fact we do not want Iran to have a nuclear weapon. I think there is bipartisan agreement on that. Certainly, the President has stated his policy very strongly, and so have the national security leaders in the Republican Party that containment is not an option. We can't say it is okay if Iran gets a nuclear weapon and then we will figure out how to deal with it. It is our policy to stop them from getting a nuclear weapon and to put all options on the table, including the option of military action if that is necessary, to achieve our policy of stopping Iran from getting a nuclear weapon.

The difficulty, of course, is that the military option is costly and risky, and there is not even a guarantee that it would necessarily stop Iran from developing the nuclear weapon. It is worth noting that even the very much celebrated military option that Israel used against Iraq in the early 1980s ultimately did not stop Iraq, as we discovered when we went in in 1991. They were much further along toward a nuclear weapon than we had even realized.

So the risks of the military option are very real, not to mention the potential for destabilizing the region in a full-scale war that I don't think any of us want and certainly no one in the region wants, which is why it is so critical that we be as aggressive as possible on the sanctions side to put maximum pressure on Iran to

force them to the negotiating table and force them to not take this step.

I think it is also, however, worth noting that Iran has not yet said, "We are building a nuclear weapon." And all of the expert testimony we have received has said they have not stepped across that line. In fact, I am always mindful of the fact that—and I could be off a little bit here, but I think it was 7 years ago when I first heard that Iran would have a nuclear weapon within 6 months. They didn't, and they don't.

And it is a very complicated decision for Iran to figure out whether or not to step across that line. Our job is to make sure that they understand clearly the maximum cost that they will pay if they do step across that line, both in terms of sanctions and in terms of saying that the military option remains on the table.

But given all the risks associated with the military option, it is my opinion that right now we need to aggressively pursue the sanctions and diplomacy option and should not lightly walk away from that option. Because the consequences of walking away from that option are either, A, Iran gets a nuclear weapon or, B, we face the possibility of a war that none of us want.

It is not an easy problem to solve. I don't think we are going to solve it this morning. But I do look forward to the testimony because it is something that every Member of this committee needs to get a very strong understanding of. These are critical, critical policy decisions going forward.

I thank you, Mr. Chairman, and I yield back.

The CHAIRMAN. Thank you.

Senator Robb, we will hear from you first, then Mr. Rademaker, then Mr. Albright, please.

Senator.

**STATEMENT OF CHARLES ROBB, TASK FORCE CO-CHAIR,
NATIONAL SECURITY PROJECT, BIPARTISAN POLICY CENTER**

Mr. ROBB. Thank you, Mr. Chairman and Mr. Smith and Members of the committee.

I would have to observe from your opening statements that I don't think this is going to be a particularly contentious hearing. And we appreciate very much the fact that, in crafting your legislation, you have borrowed or at least used some of the phraseology and certainly some of the intent and explanation that we had included in some of our reports.

I am here, as is Steve Rademaker, representing the Bipartisan Policy Center. This was formed in 2007 by four former majority leaders over on the other side of the Hill: Howard Baker and Bob Dole on the Republican side and George Mitchell and Tom Daschle on the Democratic side. And it has been working to find ways to promote evidence-based, politically viable solutions to some of the most pressing policy challenges that face our country. And, certainly, this particular challenge is as serious as anything we are facing today.

I have had the privilege of co-chairing the Iran Nuclear Task Force for the last 4 years. Initially, the co-chair on the other side was Dan Coats when he was a former Senator. When he opted to

return to the Senate, General Chuck Wald has been the co-chairman since that period of time.

But the Bipartisan Policy Center always works in a bipartisan way so that members of both sides of the aisle are represented and tries to work in ways that advance the causes rather than gets bogged down in what sometimes would be described as the political crossfire. But we don't attempt to run away from the tough issues it faces.

Our first task force, as a matter of fact, 4 years ago included two members, Dennis Ross and Ash Carter, who were subsequently asked by President-elect Obama to come into his Administration. But we have had bipartisan representation on the committee at all times. Our current committee has four former Democratic Members of Congress. It has three retired four-star generals and admirals, and specific policy experts, like Steve Rademaker on my left, who will be testifying momentarily, and others who constitute a group of people who are experienced and understand the challenges.

There is, as you said and as Mr. Smith said, there is widespread agreement that preventing Iran nuclear weapons capability is our most urgent national security challenge, but there is less agreement on how best to meet that challenge. Despite sanctions, Stuxnet, and now Flame, Iran continues to enrich uranium faster and to higher levels than ever before. A peaceful, viable, negotiated solution has always been, in our judgment, in the United States' best interest. But the dual approach of diplomacy and sanctions simply have not proved to be enough. We need the third track, and that is credible and visible preparations for a military option. An additional leverage is the only way to enable a peaceful and negotiated credible settlement, in the view of this particular task force.

History shows us that the best chance for inducing Iran concessions is when it is in a dire and military threat. The Iran-Iraq war is one example. More recently, Iran suspended its nuclear program in 2003 after Saddam Hussein was toppled. It is the credible threat of force when pursued together with diplomacy and sanctions that proves the best hope for peace, in the judgment of this particular task force.

The three components of a military threat are: first, an information and messaging strategy, sending strong public signals about American resolve and visible preparation for potential conflict. Congress can certainly help the U.S. public in a serious and frank discussion of the risk of a nuclear-capable Iran by holding hearings on this subject, just as you are doing today, and we applaud the committee for holding this hearing.

Second, economic preparations. The U.S. has to work to mitigate the economic impact of a strike on Iran's nuclear capability, which would undoubtedly halt Iran's oil exports, at least temporarily. And the DOE [Department of Energy] needs to conduct a study to determine a realistic rate of release for the Strategic Petroleum Reserve.

The third element is credible military readiness activities, like augmenting the Fifth Fleet's capacity by procuring and deploying force-protection munitions to defend U.S. naval forces against potential Iranian retaliation; by prepositioning military supplies across the region, including strategic bombers, bunker-buster munitions and fuel; by exploring strategic partnerships with countries

on Iran's northern perimeter, such as Azerbaijan; by conducting broad military exercises with the regional allies—some of these things have been done, are being done; by strengthening the U.S. Air Force capabilities for an effective strike, including expediting production and deployment of the Massive Ordnance Penetrator; by augmenting Israeli offensive and defensive capabilities, including the sale to Israel of three KC-135 aerial refueling tankers and 200 GBU-31 bunker-busting munitions needed and whatever missile defense systems are needed.

We are not urging Israel to take unilateral military action against Iran's nuclear facilities, but we need to make their capability to do so stronger so that Iran will take that threat more seriously.

Mr. Chairman, we are not advocating another war in this region. We would like to see this perilous situation resolved peacefully. We applaud the President for offering an open hand to a closed fist in his very first few minutes as President, but diplomacy simply hasn't done the job. Iran has refused to negotiate in good faith, while it continues to ignore U.N. [United Nations] resolutions, threatens to wipe out our strongest ally in the region off the face of this earth, and keeps those centrifuges spinning.

Our Nation's credibility is at stake. Two successive administrations have said that a nuclear-weapons-capable Iran is unacceptable and that all elements of our Nation's power will be employed to keep it from happening. Merely talking about red lines and keeping everything on the table, however, is not by itself enough. We have to have the resolve to act if necessary, or our ability to protect our allies, much less our own interests in the region and around the world, will be dramatically reduced and will simply kill the NPT [Nuclear Non-Proliferation Treaty]. It will cause nations like Saudi Arabia, Egypt, Turkey, and other regional partners to feel compelled to initiate their own nuclear programs, and we will end up with two nuclear states, without a neutral intermediary, facing what could be Armageddon.

That may be a slightly overdramatic summary of what we see as the problem, but there is bipartisan agreement on the challenge that we face. And we very much appreciate the fact that this committee has invited us to come and share some thoughts and to respond to whatever questions you and the other Members of the committee may have.

With that, Mr. Chairman, I will turn it over to Steve Rademaker to take up some of the technical questions.

[The prepared statement of Mr. Robb can be found in the Appendix on page 49.]

The CHAIRMAN. Thank you.

Mr. Rademaker.

STATEMENT OF STEPHEN RADEMAKER, TASK FORCE MEMBER, NATIONAL SECURITY PROJECT, BIPARTISAN POLICY CENTER

Mr. RADEMAKER. Thank you, Mr. Chairman, and thank you, Mr. Smith, for the opportunity to testify before you today on this very important subject.

It has been my privilege for over 4 years now to serve with Senator Robb and some other very distinguished individuals on the Bipartisan Policy Center's Task Force on Iran. And I am, again, grateful for the opportunity to be able to present some of our findings and recommendations to you today.

We issued our first report in September of 2008, and, at that time, we concluded that "a nuclear-weapons-capable Iran is strategically untenable." And that was carefully negotiated language within our task force, as Senator Robb knows. And we also recommended a triple-track strategy for addressing that threat. And as Senator Robb indicated, those three tracks are diplomacy, sanctions, and the credible threat that, should the first two tracks fail to solve the problem, military force could be used.

The consistent view of our task force over the last 4 years as we have issued successive reports on this issue has been that, of the three tracks that we recommend, the third one, the threat that force would be used if the other tracks fail, is the most under-developed of the three tracks. And by that, I think I would stress that it is pretty evident that the United States is interested in a diplomatic solution. Our negotiators have been in Moscow this week seeking to achieve a negotiated settlement to this problem. So I don't think the Iranians doubt that there is a willingness on the part of the United States to engage in diplomacy on this.

Likewise, sanctions. Both the Obama administration and the U.S. Congress have been actively seeking to tighten U.S. sanctions on Iran. And in that regard, I do want to say as a former congressional staffer, I think the role of the United States Congress in tightening U.S. sanctions has been absolutely critical. And I know there is additional sanctions legislation pending, but I think it is something that has been and will continue to be essential to bringing the kind of pressure to bear on Iran that will be needed to bring about a solution to this problem.

But, again, we feel that the third element is, at this point, under-developed. And by that, I think what we mean is that we don't think that Iran is sufficiently persuaded that military force really is in prospect should they fail to come to an acceptable solution, an acceptable agreement to the problem. And our most recent report, issued in February, outlines some measures that we think would be necessary to make that threat more credible to the Iranians. And, in our judgment, should we succeed in doing that, the likelihood of a successful diplomatic solution would increase.

Senator Robb has outlined what some of those steps might be, and I am not going to belabor them again, except to echo him in saying that the role of this committee has been very helpful on that. The provisions you included in the National Defense Authorization Act that are consistent with some of the recommendations we made in February I think are very important and very timely, and I hope that the Senate will agree to them when you ultimately reach conference on that bill.

Now, the real focus of my testimony is to be not so much on the steps that the U.S. might take to increase the credibility of the third track but, rather, to focus on the nature of the Iranian threat. And there I need to make a point at the outset that for Iran, as for any country that seeks nuclear weapons, the biggest challenge

is obtaining the fissile material necessary to produce a weapon. And that is typically either enriched uranium or plutonium. And that is why Iran's uranium-enrichment program is so critically important, because that is the pathway that they have developed that would enable them to produce the fissile material that they would need for a weapon.

And so, ever since that program was discovered in 2002, it has been the focus of international efforts to get them to end their uranium-enrichment program. And I note in that regard that since 2006 their continued operation of that program has been illegal under international law, because beginning in 2006, the U.N. Security Council began adopting binding resolutions demanding that—legally binding resolutions demanding that Iran suspend uranium enrichment. And, at this point, a total of six such resolutions have been adopted by the U.N. Security Council. Iran has simply ignored all those resolutions. But the upshot is that what Iran is doing today is a violation of international law.

At the Bipartisan Policy Center, we have monitored the progress of Iran's enrichment program because that is a good measure of the degree to which they are succeeding in achieving the nuclear weapons capability that we said is untenable in our first report. And we are very much assisted in trying to monitor that program by the work of the International Atomic Energy Agency because they issue quarterly reports on the progress of Iran's enrichment program.

The most recent IAEA [International Atomic Energy Agency] report came out on May 25th of this year, and in some ways it is the most troubling of any of the reports we have seen in recent years. It indicated that, as of May, Iran had produced 3,345 kilograms of uranium enriched to 3.5 percent. That is 10 times as much enriched uranium as they had at the time we issued our first report in 2008. And with further enrichment, we calculate that that is enough 3.5-percent enriched uranium to produce at least two nuclear weapons. I believe David Albright's organization estimates that is actually enough for five nuclear weapons. But it is a substantial amount of enriched uranium that they have accumulated at this point.

The rate at which they are producing enriched uranium, according to the last report, is the highest rate ever. It was 158 kilograms per month, which is 37 percent higher than they had achieved in any previous reporting period. And it is three times the rate of production prior to the Stuxnet virus, which many people have suggested somehow crippled their program. But today they are enriching uranium three times faster than they were able to enrich it prior to Stuxnet. So Stuxnet may have set them back but not by very much, at least not sufficiently.

They are operating more centrifuges today than ever, although the increase in the number of centrifuges in the last reporting period was very modest. And, as a result, that 37 percent increase in the production rate wasn't because they had deployed additional centrifuges. It is because they are managing to operate their existing centrifuges more efficiently, which is, in some ways, even more troubling than deploying additional centrifuges.

They are also enriching to a higher level, the 20-percent level, which gets them closing to bomb-grade enriched uranium. And

their production rate of that was 25 percent higher during the last reporting period, 25 percent higher than in any previous reporting period. Taken together with what they are doing in uranium enrichment, they are now able to produce at least one bomb's worth of enriched material every year, enough 3.5-percent enriched uranium to ultimately produce a weapon with it with further enrichment.

Also troubling, in the last report, the IAEA revealed that they had discovered uranium particles enriched to the level of 27 percent, which is a higher level than Iran has declared that it is prepared to enrich to. The meaning of that is not readily apparent, but it certainly underscores that Iran has the ability to enrich to much higher levels than 20 percent.

And you may have noted yesterday, their negotiator in Iran insisted that they have an inalienable right under international law to enrich to whatever level they want to. And they have demonstrated that they are prepared to go—or, at least, they can go above 20 percent.

As a result of all of the progress that has been measured by the IAEA, it is clear that Iran could produce a nuclear weapon very quickly should it wish to do so. The Bipartisan Policy Center has engaged an expert in this area named Gregory Jones, and he has undertaken a number of calculations for us. He calculates that with their existing stockpile of enriched material, they could, if they were bound and determined to do it, produce enough fissile material for a nuclear weapon within 35 to 106 days. From a decision to go forward, it would take them 35 to 106 days to actually have the fissile material for a weapon. I think David Albright's organization calculates a slightly different number. They estimate 4 months, I believe, or 120 days—a slight difference there but not a profound difference, I would argue.

Also, according to Gregory Jones' calculation, this more highly enriched uranium, this 20-percent enriched uranium, by the end of this year they are predicted to have enough of that that, with further enrichment of just that 20-percent material, they could have a weapon within 8 days, should they wish to go full speed in that direction. Again, David Albright's organization comes up with a slightly different number for that. I think your number is 30 days, but—minimum of 30 days to produce a weapon. Not today, but probably by the end of the year.

Anyway, we don't throw these numbers out because we predict that Iran is going to do these things. In fact, there are a lot of reasons why it wouldn't make much sense for Iran to proceed in that manner. But it does provide a measurement of their progress and how far they have come in the direction of achieving the nuclear weapons capability that we have contended for 4 years now would be strategically untenable.

And I think, with that, I will end my testimony and entertain questions after the testimony of Mr. Albright.

[The prepared statement of Mr. Rademaker can be found in the Appendix on page 61.]

The CHAIRMAN. Thank you.
Mr. Albright.

**STATEMENT OF DAVID ALBRIGHT, PRESIDENT, INSTITUTE
FOR SCIENCE AND INTERNATIONAL SECURITY**

Mr. ALBRIGHT. Thank you, Mr. Chairman and Mr. Smith, for giving me the opportunity to testified today.

I agree with my colleagues——

The CHAIRMAN. Is your mike on?

Mr. ALBRIGHT. Is it on? Is it better now?

The CHAIRMAN. Yes.

Mr. ALBRIGHT. I think it was on; I wasn't close enough.

I agree with my colleagues and with you that one of the greatest national security challenges facing the United States is Iran's nuclear effort. We really don't know if they are going to decide to build a nuclear weapon, but the indications are at least that they are on a trajectory to do so. I personally believe that they are being deterred now from moving forward. They would be much further along now if there hadn't been this deterrence and also a great deal of actions that have slowed down their program.

Now, does that mean that we can find a negotiated solution that provides assurance that Iran will not build nuclear weapons? And, like many, I am not sure about that. I do have hopes. And I think that is the correct course of action, is to pursue negotiations.

As was pointed out, President Obama has stated that the U.S. will prevent Iran from getting nuclear weapons. And that policy means that if Iran moves to build nuclear weapons, the United States will act to stop it from succeeding. I think that is fairly clear. And I also believe that he means it when he says that military options are on the table, and I would judge that he probably would use them. And so I view his threat of military actions as genuine.

Now, as the point has been made, though, there has been little discussion of the implementation or implications of this U.S. policy. And, clearly, military strikes are risky, potentially very costly, could start a war that we don't want. And there is also no easy military way to end Iran's nuclear program. Surgical strikes, I would argue, will simply not work, at least by themselves. A sustained widespread bombing attack can likely stop an Iranian breakout to build nuclear weapons. And that is really dependent on the current status and nature of Iran's nuclear program today and as we would envision it would be in the next year or so.

But how will Iran respond? As I said, will we enter a lengthy war? And what do we do the day after military strikes or even a campaign? And, certainly, I am no expert on the first two, judging whether Iran will launch a war or trying to figure out exactly their response. But I would like to make one statement about the last question, that if military strikes do occur, despite all attempts to avoid them, and it follows an Iranian breakout, there is a real necessity to try to figure out a way or a strategy that would impose conditions on Iran to ensure that it does not try to build nuclear weapons in the future, that we can't just bomb and walk away. And so I think that is an extreme challenge but an absolutely necessary one to consider and start putting into place long before we think of actually carrying out any kind of military strike, if that is the way it develops.

Now, one question I was asked to look at is, will the President know if Iran moves to build nuclear weapons in the immediate future? And I would say that it is extremely important to know if Iran can, in a sense, sneak out, where we don't have any idea that they have built nuclear weapons. And I think our assessments would say, not in the near future. And I would put the timeframe as this year and next that the President will likely know. And, again, it is because of the current status of Iran's nuclear program.

Moreover, the U.S. will have enough time for a range of responses. Although, as time progresses, these response times will likely start to shrink absent either a negotiated reduction in Iranian nuclear capabilities or other actions that precipitate a slowdown in Iran's nuclear programs. And that could be caused by themselves.

And a key consideration in evaluating U.S. policy is the timeline for Iran to acquire nuclear weapons following the decision to do so. And Steve has talked about these various timelines, and I would like to just go through some of ours. He actually did capture most of them, but I would like to just expand on them a little bit.

Right now, we think that Iran would need about a year, give a couple of months, to actually build a crude nuclear explosive, and longer if it needed to put one on a missile. It could be significantly longer than a year. But as Steve pointed out, the long pole in the tent of an Iranian effort is Iran's lack of sufficient weapon-grade uranium. We assess that they don't have any in sufficient quantity for a bomb and that that remains their priority if they were to break out.

Now, there is a question, is one weapon enough? And in discussing breakout, many argue that they wouldn't even try until they had enough, or a pathway, and I would say a pathway in order to get several nuclear weapons. And one component is low-enriched uranium, but there are other components to that pathway also that Iran needs to put in place. And an ideal pathway for them is a secret centrifuge plant, fully operational, outfitted with advanced centrifuges able to produce weapon-grade uranium at a far faster rate than they are today. And I will mention that, at the end, they are not there yet, and we don't think they will be for at least a year, if not longer.

So Iran is limited in its ability to break out. And, as Steve pointed out, it would depend on the stock of LEU [low-enriched uranium] to speed up its, you know, what is often called the dash to the bomb. Because we don't think they have a secret centrifuge plant, they are going to have to use their existing centrifuge plants to carry out a breakout. And today, if Iran decided to build a nuclear weapon, decided to dash to weapon-grade uranium, we think would it take Iran at least 4 months in order to have sufficient weapon-grade uranium for a nuclear explosive device.

Our calculations are done by a University of Virginia faculty member of the engineering department who used to head the U.S. centrifuge program, or at least the theoretical division, I am sorry, of the centrifuge program, and has decades of experience doing these calculations. And one of the things that he emphasizes—his name is Houston Wood. But one of the things he emphasizes is that there is a lot of problems in making weapon-grade uranium.

A lot of inefficiencies develop as you try to do that that slow you down. And that is one of the reasons why we are at 4 months. I think Greg Jones is at a lower rate, although his upper bound is in response, I think, to our prodding on this issue, and we appreciate that.

But, nonetheless, it is a challenging chore, and the theoretical calculations suggest a longer period of time necessary. And that is setting aside the inherent problems in these types of Iranian centrifuges. They call it the IR-1. It actually dates back to a Dutch centrifuge built in the 1970s that was stolen by a Pakistani and then eventually delivered to Iran. And that centrifuge lost out in the competition inside this enrichment program in Europe to a German design. And the reason it lost out is it breaks a lot.

And that has been one of the persistent problems with the Iranian centrifuge program, is unexpected stoppage of centrifuges and breakage, excessive breakage, of the centrifuges. And if you are rushing to make weapon-grade uranium, your supplies of, let's say, 20 percent are just enough, you may not end up with enough weapon-grade uranium once you start turning on those centrifuges to make the weapon-grade uranium.

There are a lot of problems. And I can go into more detail about that, but it is one of the reasons we think Iran will not break out soon but is concentrating on developing advanced centrifuges which are based on the German design that beat out this Dutch design. And that Iran is trying in its own way, modifying it to try to develop that.

Now, Steve mentioned the 20 percent and that is what we are all watching because again, the closer you get, the faster you can get to weapon-grade uranium. And so we are watching that. We agree with their estimates, end of this year, early next year, they could have enough of this—it is near 20 percent, we call it for a nuclear weapon in the sense that if further enriched they would have enough weapon-grade uranium.

However, in our calculations—again, these are based on Houston Wood's calculations—we see that they are going to need a longer time. And if they want to do a rapid breakout, down to a month, let's say—and this, again, is in theory; we view it as a minimal—they are going to have to use the Natanz fuel-enrichment plant to do that. Fordow will not do it fast enough. And we are not even sure how many centrifuges will be at Fordow at that time. It may not be fully outfitted. And so you may be talking months and months to break out at Fordow at the start of next year.

Now, at Natanz, they can do it much quicker because they have many, many more centrifuges there. But Natanz remains very vulnerable to military strikes, and this breakout will be detected. It may not be the first day or the first week, but certainly by the second week, third week, either IAEA monitoring or U.S. intelligence will likely detect this kind of breakout and be able to respond. So I think even as the response times come down, there is still time to respond promptly. But I will grant that detection of a breakout becomes more difficult and the preparation for response needs to be accelerated.

Now, one of the issues we are wrestling with is if Iran can build a secret centrifuge plant and develop the advanced centrifuges.

Right now, Iran is having trouble with its advanced centrifuges. One of the benefits of sanctions has been forcing them to face material shortages of raw materials. They have been forced to make design changes in the centrifuge design. In the case of one that they have been trying to develop, it looks like the centrifuge may not work because their design change may be flawed. They are having a hard time getting certain raw materials that allow them to build large numbers of these modified advanced centrifuges.

And so we can't predict when they will succeed, but, again, the program is moving much slower than I think we expected, and we expect delays to continue. But, nonetheless, at some point they will succeed. And I think in our own estimations, the end of next year becomes a much bigger problem in order to predict—or let me say this, detect and respond to an Iranian breakout.

In our own assessments, we feel pretty confident that the next year the President will clearly detect a breakout. Breakout times will be sufficiently long to allow a response. And what that would do, we think, is will deter Iran from even trying, because they understand that the United States military response could actually stop their ability to build nuclear weapons.

Now, we certainly would recommend that whatever efforts can be done to improve our detection capabilities, either through the IAEA insisting on better safeguards at the enrichment plants—in a sense, they are there more often, so they can detect a diversion more quickly, I think is very desirable. U.S. intelligence capability certainly should be—and you would obviously do this—supported to improve detection times. And so I think there is a range of those kinds of things that need to be done.

Now, the twin goals should be preventing Iran from getting nuclear weapons while avoiding military actions. And I believe this can be done, but more needs to be done to ensure that both goals are accomplished. And I would agree with my colleagues that, ironically, to prevent war, Iran must believe in its heart that the U.S. will strike if it moves to build nuclear weapons. And I think in doing that, the United States can deter Iran from even trying. But, nonetheless, this puts U.S. policy on a knife's edge.

So thank you very much.

[The prepared statement of Mr. Albright can be found in the Appendix on page 71.]

The CHAIRMAN. Thank you.

Senator Robb and Mr. Rademaker, enhancing the credibility of the military option, such as prepositioning military assets and supplies in the regions, as you advocate in your BPC [Bipartisan Policy Center] report, in concert with vigorous diplomacy and crippling economic sanctions should be a key component of the overall strategy to prevent Iran from obtaining a nuclear weapon capability.

Representative Conaway, a Member of the committee here, introduced a bill, H.R. 4485, that reflects many of the BPC's recommendations. Much of the bill was incorporated as part of this year's Defense Authorization Act, which we have passed through the House. We are waiting for the Senate to take their action.

Do you support these legislative actions? And are there other specific legislative actions that the U.S. Congress should be taking to enhance the credibility of the military option?

Mr. ROBB. Mr. Chairman, we support those aspects—

The CHAIRMAN. Is your mike on?

Mr. ROBB. It is not. Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

Mr. Chairman, we support those aspects of the defense authorization bill that incorporate the recommendations that have been made by the Bipartisan Policy Center. We would not, since we have not taken up some of the other provisions of the defense authorization bill, would not comment on those.

But we, number one, support and appreciate the fact that this committee has taken the recommendations that were contained in this, which is our most recent publication—I brought two of the other publications with me. I couldn't find the third in that list of publications. But while there have been tweaks and variations that have been discovered with additional intelligence, with additional technical understanding of the issues, the reports have really been consistent.

And so, to the extent that the language that you have included adopts language which is either very similar to or at least supports the same approach, we are very much in support of that provision of the defense authorization bill that you have crafted.

The CHAIRMAN. Thank you.

Mr. RADEMAKER. Yes, if I could add to that, we were very much gratified to see Mr. Conaway's bill and the decision of this committee to incorporate much of that bill into your Defense Authorization Act.

In response to your question of whether there is more that Congress could do, the answer is, yes, there is more that Congress could do.

One of our other recommendations related to strengthening the credibility of the Israeli military threat against Iran, as well as the U.S. military threat—and I am pleased to say that those recommendations have also been picked up in legislation that has already passed the House of Representatives. That was a bill, H.R. 4133, that was cosponsored by Mr. Cantor, the majority leader, and Mr. Hoyer, the Democratic whip. It was called the United States-Israel Enhanced Security Cooperation Act of 2012. And among other things, it called on the United States to provide Israel with additional aerial refueling tankers, missile defense capabilities, and specialized munitions such as bunker busters. And, again, that was one of our recommendations in our most recent report.

So, hopefully—that bill is now before the Senate, or corresponding legislation is before the Senate. And, last week, the Senate Foreign Relations Committee unanimously voted it out of committee. So I think there is a good chance that this is one bill that will actually reach the President's desk.

The CHAIRMAN. Good.

Some have suggested that Congress should pass an Authorization for the Use of Military Force to prevent Iran from obtaining a nuclear weapon, thereby sending a signal that Congress supports all options at the President's disposal. Others might say that this legislative action is premature and too provocative.

In your view, under what circumstances would an authorization for the use of military force be appropriate?

Mr. ROBB. Well, Mr. Chairman, to the extent that any bill passed by Congress supports the President's ability to carry out whatever military actions that he and the Defense Department, in consultation with Congress, hopefully, in all areas, believes is necessary, we would support.

If the bill were to actually require a specific either declaration of—would provide a specific declaration of war or would require a time specific for action to be taken without some leeway for discretion and the evaluation of the circumstances, we would not suggest—or at least on the basis of my own judgment, I think it would be unwise to attempt to tie the President's hands. But to the extent that you demonstrated that Congress is fully supportive of his using all of the powers that are available to him to carry out the mandate that has been put before the international community, and for a failure to respond on the part of Iran, we would support that—or I would support that. Again, this specific question does not come to the full Bipartisan Policy Center or to the task force, so I am speaking only for myself. But I would be supportive of anything that gives evidence of support.

Because, at this point, the credibility of the United States is the most important factor that is being questioned. There is no question, I don't think, in the minds of the Iranian Government or the international community that the United States has the capability to inflict serious damage. No one is suggesting that they can wipe out the program all together, but they can certainly inflict serious damage which would slow it down and would cause very significant actions and reactions to occur.

But the question is whether or not the United States would, in fact, initiate such action. And that is one of the reasons that we have placed so much emphasis, from the very beginning, on credible, visible preparation to indicate not only an ability but a willingness.

And if we fail to follow through with respect to our credibility in this area, any attempt we might make to resolve other questions in this area or around the world, all of our treaty obligations, all of our understandings with allies on both ends of this particular question would immediately be subject to intense scrutiny and doubt, which would, in our judgment, cause the governments involved to believe that they had no choice because of the uncertainty as to whether or not the United States would actually fulfill the threat that is implicit, certainly, in everything that has been said, particularly about nothing is taken from the table or there are red lines and whatever.

But if there is assurance on the part of those who depend on this guarantee that we will, in fact, follow through, I think the likelihood that you will see proliferation extend to other areas goes down, the likelihood that Iran will actually challenge to this point goes down, and the likelihood for a peaceful resolution goes up.

So sometimes the best preparation combined with the demonstrated willingness to follow through is sufficient to keep a conflict, a kinetic exchange of some sort from occurring in the first place. And it certainly would be our hope. We are not advocating war. We are advocating a peaceful resolution to the question. But the only way you can be credible is to indicate that you are not

simply talking about some of these consequences but that you are prepared and willing to follow through.

Mr. ALBRIGHT. Yeah, I would like to take a different point of view. I think it is premature.

And I mentioned that this policy that is developing is a knife's edge. And I think one of the ways you can fall off is that it starts to look like the United States will attack Iran, or at least that Iran will perceive that. And what it will do, I would predict, is start to build—or make a decision of how it is going to secretly build nuclear weapons.

And, again, Iran is very patient. It may not do it this year; it may not even do it next year. But you may be faced with an adversary that is going to get nuclear weapons before you can attack, or the United States can attack, and it assumes it is going to happen. And so you create an inevitability about an Iranian nuclear weapon that is not in our interest.

And I think the other part of it is, I think, frankly, looking back, it was a mistake for Congress to give the authorization to President Bush about the Iraq war so early in the debate, that Congress lost its valuable oversight on a critical question that, I think we would all agree, has been a very difficult process. And so I think Congress should not give away anything that has to do with having oversight over this process.

Now, I would also agree with Senator Robb that, because of the nature of the policy President Obama is sculpting, it is very hard to predict when a war would happen or a military strike would happen, because it depends fundamentally on Iranian actions, in the sense that he said he would “prevent” Iran. That means that Iran has to make a step to get nuclear weapons and then there is a reaction. So I think the President needs quite a bit of leeway on this, but with extensive oversight by Congress.

The CHAIRMAN. It just seems to me that if Iran's sole interest was just to develop nuclear capability for a power plant or some other such source, they would not have to bury under a mountain their facilities to avoid the possibility of an attack. It just—it stretches, I think, credibility on their part.

And while I am not advocating that we move forward on a resolution of this nature, it seems that it would be good to show that we are acting as one, that we do support the President. Because this should not be politicized in any way, and it should be something that we do in a bipartisan way. And people understand that the House is under Republican leadership while the President is a Democrat, and we should not be separating the parties.

And, like I say, I am not at any point advocating; I am just trying to get your impressions on this. So thank you. Thank you very much.

Mr. Smith.

Mr. SMITH. I thank you, Mr. Chairman.

A couple quick comments on that and then one or two questions.

I think Mr. Albright does point out, it is a delicate balance to strike. I mean, if Iran thinks we are coming at them no matter what, then they better be as strong as possible, and you have to strike that balance.

I also think that what is really interesting about this situation is, I don't think Iran has decided yet. I think the chairman is right. I mean, certainly there is a big part of them that is thinking, "We better be in a position to get a nuclear weapon," and that is why all the cautious steps have been taken, the underground bunkers and all that. But I think all the evidence we have seen is they have not decided at this point to step over that line.

And, you know, regardless of what they are developing it for, you know, they have cause to be concerned that we might attack them anyway. So I guess, I don't think that the fact that they buried it that deep means that they are 100 percent decided they are building a nuclear weapon. That is all I would say about that.

The two questions I have, one for Mr. Rademaker. You had commented when we were talking about how quickly Iran could get there if they decided to basically make the dash for the finish line, and we went through all of the different numbers on that, but then you said something interesting. You said, it doesn't make much sense for Iran to proceed in that manner. It doesn't make sense for them to actually take the steps that would get us on that 60-day or 105-day or 4 months or 8 days after that.

Why do you say that? Why do you say that doesn't make much sense for them to proceed in that manner?

Mr. RADEMAKER. Thank you, Mr. Smith.

First, let me comment about, sort of, this larger question of secret facilities and underground facilities. I think the first point we have to bear in mind is Iran has a long history of proceeding with secret underground facilities. The Natanz facility was originally a secret facility that was revealed against their wishes in 2002. The Fordow facility, which is a much more—and Natanz is an underground, secure bunker, but it is probably at risk to bunker-buster munitions. Subsequently, they constructed a much more secure, more deeply buried underground facility at Fordow. And, again, that was a secret facility which was revealed contrary to their wishes.

And so the notion that—I am responding here to Mr. Albright—but the notion that they might respond to the threat of U.S. military force by building secret underground facilities, you know, I think there is reason to think, based on past behavior, that they are already planning to do that and may already have started doing it.

Mr. SMITH. I don't think that was Mr. Albright's larger point, but—

Mr. RADEMAKER. Well, I think the point was that—well, one of his points was, we don't think—I think he was saying we don't think they have a secret facility because we don't know of any secret facilities. And I guess I would point out that is something of a tautology because, of course, if we knew about it, it wouldn't be a secret facility. And given their track record, I think there is a considerable risk that—

Mr. SMITH. I have a question on that, actually, but if we could get back for the moment to the question—

Mr. RADEMAKER. Okay. The—but I would—and this goes to the first part of your question. You say you don't think they have made a decision to go forward or not. I think it depends on what it is

we are talking about. If we mean, or if you mean you don't think they have made a decision to actually produce a nuclear weapon, I think——

Mr. SMITH. Well——

Mr. RADEMAKER [continuing]. I think that is true. It is unclear whether they have made that decision. But I think——

Mr. SMITH. That is my only point.

Mr. RADEMAKER. Well, but at the Bipartisan Policy Center, we have always been focused at least as much on the question of nuclear weapons capability. And there I think it is crystal-clear, given the construction of these very expensive underground facilities——

Mr. SMITH. Oh, yes. They want to——

Mr. RADEMAKER [continuing]. That they made a decision a long time ago to create a nuclear weapons capability. They want us and the rest of the countries in their region to be profoundly fearful that they either have a weapon or are extremely close to having one. And, therefore, they want to be treated as a nuclear weapons state. I mean, that is the point of achieving nuclear weapons capability: to create ambiguity about whether and when they will actually produce a weapon, and thereby be treated as——

Mr. SMITH. Up to a point.

Mr. RADEMAKER [continuing]. Because of that doubt, to be treated as if they had one.

Mr. SMITH. If I may, up to a point. But they also don't want to put themselves in a position where they are treated like a pariah state for no particular gain; that they wind up being under the threat of, you know, massive sanctions or potentially military action.

But, again, if we could meander back to my question——

Mr. RADEMAKER. Okay. On that, I think they have actually put themselves in the position of being treated as a pariah——

Mr. SMITH. Right.

Mr. RADEMAKER [continuing]. State. And they continually make the decision to stay in that position rather than——

Mr. SMITH. At the moment, yes.

Mr. RADEMAKER [continuing]. Satisfy the Security Council.

Mr. SMITH. My question is, you said that you didn't think it would make sense for Iran to walk down that step to get to that 4-month point at this stage.

Mr. RADEMAKER. Yeah. On that——

Mr. SMITH. Why?

Mr. RADEMAKER. On that, my reasons are pretty much the ones that were articulated by Mr. Albright. These are theoretical calculations about what they could do, but why would any country want to make a mad dash to have one nuclear weapon? Most countries that produce a nuclear weapon—take North Korea—at some point they want to demonstrate to the world that they have it——

Mr. SMITH. Right. Exactly.

Mr. RADEMAKER [continuing]. And the way you demonstrate it is by testing.

Mr. SMITH. You blow it up and you——

Mr. RADEMAKER. So, to make a mad dash to produce one weapon that then people will say doesn't actually work, and to show that it works, they will want to test it——

Mr. SMITH. Right.

Mr. RADEMAKER [continuing]. You know, they haven't really done very much.

Mr. SMITH. So walking down that particular math problem, how long would it take—because, theoretically, I mean, if you want to declare yourself as a nuclear power, you are going to need more than one. You are probably going to need more than two. You are going to need to demonstrate one and then say we have a stockpile of, I don't know, four, five, something like that.

How long would it take for them to get to the point where—to that point. And then I guess the second piece of that question is, how much would we know about how far they are walking down this road?

I mean, and that gets us to the secret issue. I mean, the big issue—and then to sort of bounce back to this—is, will we know when they have stepped over a line and they are trying to build a bomb? And I have heard testimony in a variety of different forums that we are pretty confident that we would. Nothing is 100 percent, but that the effort that it would take to spin up the plutonium to get to 90 percent or whatever it is that you need to get to the weapons-grade, we are pretty confident that we would know.

What is your take on that? And then work back from that to, sort of, the math of how long it would take them to get to a reasonable point.

Mr. RADEMAKER. We have thrown a lot of numbers out. For your question, perhaps the most important number is one we haven't dwelt on up to this point, and that is the amount of low-enriched uranium that they currently have. How many bombs could they produce from that low-enriched uranium if they wished to do so? And David Albright's calculations on that are that they today have five bombs' worth.

Mr. SMITH. You mentioned that, two to five.

Mr. RADEMAKER. And our calculations are actually more conservative, based on different methodology. But—and then the further point is that, at current production rates, they are producing more than a bomb's worth of low-enriched uranium every year, so—

Mr. SMITH. Right.

Mr. RADEMAKER. And the rate of production is increasing. It increased 37 percent in the last 3 months, as compared to the previous 3 months. So, you know, all of the numbers we have thrown out, had we been here 6 months ago or a year ago, would have been less troubling.

Mr. SMITH. So, reasonably—

Mr. RADEMAKER. And I would predict that if we are going to be here 6 months or a year from now, they will be more troubling still.

Mr. SMITH. Right. So, reasonably, they are not that far away from being in a position to make a mad dash to five or six, is a fair thing to say.

So if they were to make that mad dash, again, the real question is, would we know? And how much—well, I guess the other question is, how much longer would it take them to make five to six than it would to make one?

Mr. RADEMAKER. Well, this is why the question of a secret facility becomes so important, because our ability to detect it of course

depends on there not being a secret facility at which they are doing this. And, you know, I think the main reason that experts will come to you and say we are pretty confident they don't have a secret facility is that the last two times that they tried to build a secret facility—

Mr. SMITH. We knew.

Mr. RADEMAKER [continuing]. They got caught.

Mr. SMITH. Yeah.

Mr. RADEMAKER. And so we surmise from that that they are not very good at keeping that secret and we will catch them if they do it again. I hope that is true.

Mr. SMITH. Yeah. It is also worth pointing out—and then I will close on this; I want to throw it to other people—it is worth pointing out, we actually knew that they had those secret facilities before, quite a bit before, we told everyone that we knew, without getting into it. So, you know, there is some confidence that we can, in fact, figure it out. But it is a very thorny policy problem.

I am sorry, I am taking too much time. I will yield back.

The CHAIRMAN. Thank you.

Mr. Wilson.

Mr. WILSON. Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

And thank you for being here today.

And for Senator Robb, a question that I have: What do you believe is the current pace of Iran's nuclear weapons program? Do you believe that the Iranians have decided to build a nuclear weapon? Are the Iranians building a breakout capability to allow for the option to build a weapon in the future? When might the Iranians actually possess a nuclear weapon? Could the Iranians accelerate their efforts? And if so, to what degree?

Mr. ROBB. I think that a large part of the series of questions that you just asked have just been discussed at some length by the two technical experts here.

We don't know in absolute terms how fast it is producing. And each of our reports have indicated that there were—the estimates, both in terms of technical capability, speed of production, and our understanding of the amount of HEU [highly-enriched uranium] or other material, was not certain. But, as Mr. Rademaker just indicated, we believe and hope that we will have enough information so that we would recognize it in a relatively short period of time. And because we have discovered previous efforts to construct underground facilities and they have been discovered, we don't think that they can go on for an unlimited period of time with a very significant increase in production.

But it all ultimately boils down to how much HEU they are able to refine so that they could make a weapon or weapons. And that is probably never going to be knowable in an absolute sense unless we do it through some technical means that we obviously wouldn't be discussing. So we are going to have to be prepared for the worst case.

One of the elements of this equation that has not been dwelt upon this morning to any extent is, what does the Israeli Government think about the situation, how might they react, and is their calculation as to how much time, how much fissile material, how close to breakout they might be the same as ours? And the ulti-

mate question, even, is whether they would share their estimate and/or their decision to intervene. They have made it clear that they see this as an existential threat and take that very seriously.

And much of our effort has been designed to try to make it possible to show the folks, the leadership in Tehran that both the United States and Israel, if they believe they reach whatever point represents in their judgment the crossing of a red line, that they have the capability, more so on the Israeli side and will more so on the U.S. side.

I don't know if I covered all of your questions, but—

Mr. WILSON. Well, you did. And I appreciate, actually, you raising Israel's estimation and, indeed, the threat to their existence. So thank you for raising that.

Mr. Rademaker, a question: Apart from the ability to conduct a military strike to delay or end Iran's nuclear weapons program, what other benefits result from enhancing the credibility of the military option? For example, do we know how Iran would view increased military readiness? Would it enhance our diplomatic efforts? How would our regional allies respond?

Mr. RADEMAKER. Those are very interesting questions.

The first point I would make is that our recommendations, the Bipartisan Policy Center recommendations, are not a call to war with Iran. We are not calling for a military strike. We are calling for credible indications that force is in prospect.

You know, President Obama and President Bush before him both used this term, that "all options are on the table." And by that, they mean to imply that the threat of military force is also on the table. Our concern is that we don't think the Iranians actually believe that. And for every time that President Obama has said, "All options are on the table," there has been a statement by some other senior Cabinet official or some other official of the United States Government suggesting that the military option really isn't a very serious option for the United States. And we worry, our task force worries that Iranians actually pay more attention to those signs of equivocation than they do to the mouthing of these words, that all options are on the table. So our call has been to make that statement by both President Obama and President Bush more credible.

And we believe that if it becomes more credible, if the Iranians believe that continued pursuit by them of a nuclear weapon, continued defiance by them of the legally binding demands of the U.N. Security Council will ultimately lead to the use of force against them unless they come to a diplomatic resolution of the crisis, that that will increase the likelihood that we will actually achieve a peaceful, diplomatic resolution, which is what I think all of us believe would be the best solution to this problem.

Mr. WILSON. Thank you very much.

The CHAIRMAN. Thank you.

Mr. Kissell.

Mr. KISSELL. Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

Thank you, gentlemen, for being here today.

I am going to throw a question out, and whoever wants to respond. We have talked about the Iranians and what they may do. I am curious as to what your opinion is of who "they" are. We know President Ahmadinejad, we know what he talks, but what is the

true power base in Iran? Where would these decisions that we are talking about need to be made? And how much chance is there that these kind of things we are talking about can influence that power base?

Mr. ROBB. Well, even though most of the attention is focused on either the—and I am suddenly forgetting his title—in any event, Ahmadinejad, it is the Revolutionary Guard that holds the power. And they are stationed at Qom and will ultimately dictate what takes place.

The public face is on—what am I thinking?—comity. Ahmadinejad has no real power, and of course he is going to be going out of office before too long in any event. But he has always been the most outspoken and has had the most provocative language, but he doesn't really have the power.

But there is a general consensus that whatever power structure might evolve after that is still going to want to find a way to become credible as a member of the nuclear club, so to speak. And it doesn't necessarily mean that they have actually built or even formally tested. As long as the international community believes that they have the ability within some short period of time to achieve breakout, they will probably get almost as much as they would get from actually testing or certainly from launching a nuclear warhead.

At this point, it is a matter for—the real struggle in the eyes of most of the leadership in Tehran and Qom and elsewhere is to become a member of this club and use the influence that that would gain. They look at what happens to those other powers in the general vicinity that have achieved nuclear status and believe that they can achieve that, as well. It is—

Mr. KISSELL. But, ultimately, how consolidated is that decision-making base? Is it just there in the Revolutionary Guard within just a very few people? How consolidated or how broad is that base of decisionmaking?

Mr. ALBRIGHT. Could I add to this?

Mr. KISSELL. Yes.

Mr. ALBRIGHT. I mean, ultimately, the supreme leader decides, and he is very tough to deal with.

Mr. KISSELL. Yes.

Mr. ALBRIGHT. But I would answer it a little differently. Because, again, I don't see a consolidated base in Iran on building nuclear weapons, making the decision to do so. I see a consolidated—or, a near consensus that they want the capability to do it.

But I think they can be effective. And I think if you look at what happened in 2003, the U.S. intelligence community says the nuclear weaponization program was shut down. The International Atomic Energy Agency, in its November 2011 report, said there was an abrupt halt to a great deal of nuclear weaponization activities. There was a suspension in their enrichment program. That was due to pressure. They understood that, and they stopped to avoid worse consequences.

I would argue that Fordow—and, again, this is an assessment based on our collection of evidence—that Fordow was probably being designed to make weapon-grade uranium. We can't prove it. The information that supports that is mainly right now from two

sources; one is some past behavior of Iranian entities that were creating a parallel military nuclear program in the 1990's, and then what the IAEA inspectors observed when they went into that plant soon after they were allowed to do. But the detection of that plant stopped them cold. They rapidly—they removed piping from one whole hall——

Mr. KISSELL. And I am going to interrupt you just one second. My time is running out.

Mr. ALBRIGHT. Okay, sorry.

Mr. KISSELL. I guess the point I want to make is, the folks that we are targeting and trying to get them to make a decision to back away from this, how flexible, how much can we influence them? You know, who are those folks, and just, you know, how much can we influence them?

Mr. ALBRIGHT. Well, I think we can. There are two things——

Mr. KISSELL. And my time is out. You answered my question. Thank you.

Mr. ALBRIGHT. There are two parts to that. One is, can you effect them to make concessions in negotiations? That is a very tough problem. The other is——

The CHAIRMAN. The gentleman's time has expired.

Mr. ALBRIGHT. Oh, does that mean I should be quiet? I am sorry. I am not used to some of these rules.

The CHAIRMAN. Mr. Forbes.

Mr. FORBES. Mr. Chairman, first of all, I want to thank you for holding this hearing. I think it is a crucial hearing for us to have. And thank you for your leadership on that.

And to each of you three gentlemen, I have enormous respect, and I just appreciate you sharing your ideas with us today. I am going to direct my question to Senator Robb because he was my Governor and my Senator, but I would love to have any of your responses there.

Senator, you have stated in your testimony that you believe that Iran's pursuit of nuclear weapons is the most urgent national security threat facing the United States. I don't disagree with that at all. And then also you talked about the need for us to have evidence-based issues. It is not enough just to talk about it; we have to show we have the resolve to do something. And then another line that I thought was very important was when you said, "It is only the credible threat of force combined with sanctions that affords any realistic hope of an acceptable diplomatic resolution."

And here is my question. As we realize that—and I think all of us would concur with those statements, and I think the three of you on the panel would do that—what kind of conflict do we have in sending that message of a credible threat of force when Iran is watching us with these huge defense cuts that we are doing, \$487 billion and then sequestration looming out there, which certainly sends a message to the world that we may not have that kind of credible force.

We then look at another statement that you made which talked about beefing up the Fifth Fleet in the Persian Gulf and the Gulf of Oman. How does that conflict with the new strategy of this pivot to the Asia-Pacific area? We can't have it, kind of, both ways.

The third thing you talked about, and I agree with you 100 percent, prepositioning military supplies. And yet we are moving our prepositioned stocks back out of the Pacific and the Asia area.

And then you talked about the need to strengthen the Air Force capabilities to require an effective strike. But General Breedlove has testified that the Air Force now is on the ragged edge, and, with these cuts, we are not going to get any better.

So I would love to have the assessment from the three of you on if you think they have any impact on our credible force.

And then if you have time, also, we see yet today another leak out of the White House of stuff we are doing in Iran. How detrimental is that in what we are doing?

Senator, I would love to have your thoughts on those.

Mr. ROBB. Well, first of all, leaks of sensitive intelligence information don't help the United States in any way, shape, or form. And we ought to do everything within our power—again, I am not excepting the necessary attribution in terms of who leaked or how, but leaks of sensitive information about capabilities, about plans, about other activities that might be under consideration ought to be avoided at all cost. I will just leave it at that.

The other question about our capability being eroded by the defense cuts and the sequestration and whatever, there is no question that those present enormous challenges to our United States military forces in each of the areas that you have outlined. And that is one of the reasons why it is especially important right now that we not appear to relax our apparent guard or our apparent willingness to follow through with that particular, I will use the word "threat" in the event of an action which is simply unacceptable.

And, incidentally, we argued 4 years ago, in beginning this, between "untenable" and "unacceptable." We had 1 whole day of discussing which word to use. And we used "untenable" because we didn't want to imply a red line at that point in the process that would require the United States to either take military action or lose credibility.

But both administrations—and that was done before the last election, so we didn't know which administration was going to be following up on this action—but both administrations have used the word "unacceptable," and senior representatives of those services.

So when you use that word, as far as I am concerned your credibility is now at stake. And it is that much more important that we use our commitments wisely. We may have to—and we make some reference in the paper—divert some current military assets to strengthen our ability to respond in this particular area, but that is not an attractive option by—

Mr. FORBES. My time is up, but thank you. And we would love to have any response that you have for the record so that we could use that. It would be wonderful. And thank you so much.

Mr. Chairman, thank you for your patience.

[The information referred to can be found in the Appendix on page 85.]

The CHAIRMAN. Thank you.

Ms. Hanabusa.

Ms. HANABUSA. Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

Mr. Albright, do you believe with the statement of the Bipartisan Policy Center that we are calling for a triple-track strategy? And if you do, what is your opinion of the credible preparedness of the military option, which Mr. Rademaker says has fallen short?

Mr. ALBRIGHT. I haven't studied it in detail. I mean, you are outlining three ways forward that I think most who are worried about Iran's nuclear program would agree with. I mean——

The CHAIRMAN. Mr. Albright, could you please talk into the microphone?

Mr. ALBRIGHT. Oh, okay.

The CHAIRMAN. Thank you.

Mr. ALBRIGHT. I think that there is—I have broad agreement with the three areas. I mean, where I think there may be a problem is overemphasizing the military. I will repeat what I said earlier, that you run a real risk that Iran thinks that we intend to attack them regardless, and that that can have some very negative consequences.

Ms. HANABUSA. Would I be correct in assuming that your analysis is that if we do what Mr. Rademaker is saying is that we have fallen short and we begin to enhance that, that your belief is that Iran would then interpret it as an offensive action and then do this breakout? More probability?

Mr. ALBRIGHT. Or pursue a secret route.

Ms. HANABUSA. And you feel that that would be almost the unintended consequence of what is being proposed.

Mr. ALBRIGHT. Yes.

Ms. HANABUSA. Now, Mr. Rademaker or Senator Robb, I see and what your position is is that we have fallen short in terms of the military option.

And I think, Senator, in your written testimony you have spoken to building the Fifth Fleet. And I am just—I am trying to understand, when you want to enhance the Fifth Fleet, what does that exactly look like?

Mr. ROBB. Well, with the exception of specifying what munitions that we ought to sell to Israel to shore up their capability, we have not tried to specify how many warships, how many aircraft, how many whatever the case may be in this particular case. The objective of the Bipartisan Policy Center is not to create an entire punch list for the Government to check off. We think that ought to come from the military commanders in the area, in consultation with the civilian leadership.

What we are suggesting is that these are areas that can and ought to be shored up so that we make more credible and give greater emphasis to our willingness to follow through in the event that Iran does not take our threat—again I use that word—seriously.

Ms. HANABUSA. I understand that, Senator. And I guess what I hear is that—and what I read was that it is sort of a joint effort. In other words, if we are not, the United States is not willing to provide whatever enhancement or security that Israel may need, that we then have an obligation—or if we want to prevent this buildup, we then should then focus on our own presence, in terms of the building up of the Fifth Fleet.

But I still assume that to make the analysis that we have fallen short or it is somehow inadequate, there must be some measurement in your mind that we are not reaching. And I am just trying to get an understanding of what that level is that leads to the conclusion by Mr. Rademaker in his testimony that we have fallen short.

How have we fallen short? I mean, without getting into that we need another carrier or we need whatever or we need to give Israel X, Y, and Z, why do you think conclude that we have fallen short?

Mr. RADEMAKER. Let me make a threshold point here, which is—and some of the others witnesses have referred to this. The last time that Iran perceived a credible threat that military force was going to be used against them, they suspended uranium enrichment. That was right after the Iraq war in 2003. And not coincidentally, Libya did the same thing. Qadhafi gave up his nuclear weapons program at the same time.

Because in that initial 6- to, you know, 12-month period after the U.S. went into Iraq, the threat to—you know, President Bush had given his “axis of evil” speech. The perception in Tehran, we believe, was that what had just been done to Iraq might happen to them, and they were genuinely worried about it. And one of the things they did was they suspended uranium enrichment and engaged in a fairly serious, fairly intensive diplomatic process with the Europeans.

And, of course, we all know what happened next. The Iraq war headed south, and the U.S. became bogged down and——

Ms. HANABUSA. I am out of time. Could you put that in writing, what you were going to finish with that statement all the way through to the—Mr. Chair, if that is okay—with the final assessment of how we have fallen short?

Mr. RADEMAKER. I think I can finish in one sentence.

Once they stopped believing that there was a serious risk that the U.S. would conduct military activities against them because of the way this was playing out in Iraq, they ended their suspension of enrichment and have never returned to it and have persisted with their nuclear program ever since.

Ms. HANABUSA. Thank you, Mr. Chair.

The CHAIRMAN. Thank you.

Mr. Turner.

Mr. TURNER. Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

I want to thank our panelists for their dedication and commitment to trying to provide some overall description and understanding on a bipartisan basis on what really is an important issue.

I want to underscore, though, that I am very concerned about how the tenor of the hearing and the message of the hearing has gone if someone had only been watching this hearing. So I want to sort of backtrack and reverse a little bit on what our topic has been.

Because there have been a lot of statements that we have had, both from Members and on the panelists, of things like, you know, “Well, we think they will stop, it doesn’t make much sense for them to proceed”—a lot of statements that I think would lead one to be-

lieve that we don't really have to do anything and we are not going to be facing a nuclear Iran.

So I want to backtrack a bit on this whole issue because of two things: One, I think it would be incredibly naive for anybody to believe that we need to do nothing—and I don't believe our panelists believe that—to avoid a nuclear Iran.

I recall, and I am certain you all do, the discussions during North Korea's pursuit for nuclear weapons, that it wasn't just enrichment, it was nuclear weapons, and their pursuit currently for ICBM [intercontinental ballistic missile] technology that, as you know, our Secretary—former Secretary Gates said is an absolute threat to the mainland of the United States. And I recall the people who said North Korea would never go as far as to have nuclear weapons capability, they would never have a test, they would never have a weapon, that they were starving their people, that the outcry of the international community would have such a great effect that North Korea would not be a nuclear weapons state. Today they are.

So those statements, that thought process of “surely, a nation wouldn't, because the price is just too great” has been proven, with the most recent pursuit by North Korea, as not to be sufficient to deter someone from doing that.

Military action, as you have just mentioned, Mr. Rademaker—and I know that Mr. Albright mentioned that the National Intelligence Assessment of 2003 indicated a belief—again, it was just a belief—that the nuclear weapon that was suspended by Iran in 2003 was, as you were just describing, Mr. Rademaker, a basis of the action that Iraq had been invaded and they had a military sitting next to them and that the threat of credible force caused them to suspend.

But the reason why I wanted to back up, besides just the issue of North Korea, is to put in context as to why we really care. Iran is not Canada. Iran is a terrorist-supporting nation, regime, both through Hamas and Hezbollah. They have made aggressive statements against Israel and the United States. They have continued to make threatening statements or gestures with respect to the Straits of Hormuz, which would have significant world impact if they were to take any action there.

So the issues that we are talking about here are very serious and not ones which we should just say that we have a belief that it would not make much sense for them to proceed. Because I would venture to say, and I think everybody in this room would individually agree, no one, not one person in this room can ever say what another nation thinks or is going to do. We can only do an assessment of what we have studied and, from that, what we can ascertain.

But I think the purpose of this hearing is the to-do list for avoiding that, right? I mean, it is not for us to just conclude, we don't have to worry about this. It is, what do we need to do?

And I was very pleased with the *Washington Post* editorial today. The *Washington Post* editorial says an impasse with Iran—which is why this is so important we are doing it; it is even the lead editorial. And it says—it concludes with, “Israel may press for military action,” but it goes on to say—it concludes, “If that option is

to be resisted, there must be a credible and robust alternative.” And that is that issue of the to-do list. What do we have to do to make certain that they are deterred so that they don’t have to just merely be impacted by military action?

Now, back to this issue of what they are doing. We can’t say what they are thinking. We can only say what they are doing in order to ascertain this to-do list. I am the chairman of Strategic Forces, and I know that—and I know the panelists know that Iran is pursuing vigorously missile technology.

In the missile technology that they are pursuing, certainly it would lend itself to a belief that there are capabilities that they are seeking of ICBM. If they were to seek ICBM capability, wouldn’t be that be an indication that they are seeking a nuclear weapons program? Because you can’t have an ICBM that is just conventional for their program.

Could you just talk for a moment about what we see them actually doing, not what we believe that they are doing, and how that goes directly to the imperative action that we take on our to-do list?

Mr. ALBRIGHT. Let me say something.

I mean, I think they are trying to develop nuclear weapons. I mean, I see them on a trajectory to get nuclear weapons——

Mr. ALBRIGHT. Thank you.

The CHAIRMAN. The gentleman’s time has expired.

Mr. ALBRIGHT. But let me—oh, I am sorry.

The CHAIRMAN. What I would like you to do is put it for the record, please. Because there really isn’t—he used his whole time.

Mr. TURNER. Thank you. I think the answer we got, though, was pretty important, is that you do believe that they are seeking nuclear weapons. And so, if we could get the answers for the record——

Mr. ALBRIGHT. On a trajectory.

Mr. TURNER [continuing]. That would be really helpful.

[The information referred to can be found in the Appendix on page 85.]

The CHAIRMAN. Thank you.

Mr. Johnson.

Mr. JOHNSON. Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

I want to thank you gentlemen for being here today.

I understand that the organization is bipartisan, no question about that. It is bipartisan in terms of the politicians who founded it and those who speak for it, that is true. And whenever you have politics—and whenever you have politicians, you have politics. And I love politics. I am a politician myself. But I understand how it works.

I am really skeptical about the timing of this report. It seems that it could have some effect in the upcoming political races around the country. And, you know, it really appears to me to have parallels with the run-up toward the invasion of Iraq, which, by the way, was they say now based on faulty intelligence, the decision to go in, based on faulty intelligence.

What I am wondering is whether or not—or, really, what I am wondering is, what level of intelligence was used in coming to your conclusions in this report?

Either Mr. Robb or Mr. Rademaker.

Mr. ROBB. Well, let me first of all say that I had a little something to do with examining the intelligence that led to the invasion in Iraq. Judge Silberman and I co-chaired the WMD [weapons of mass destruction] commission that explored the intelligence community in detail.

This report, however, is not based on any classified information. It is based solely on open-source information, matters that have been reported, and, more importantly, on the expertise of the people who make up the various task forces. In this particular case, we have people who are very knowledgeable.

Certainly, you have politicians in addition to many other subject-matter experts and others who have something to contribute in a significant way. But to suggest that this was done for an election or whatever, I am showing you, three out of the four reports that preceded the last Presidential election, they have continued throughout. We have updated some of the information as it has become available.

Mr. JOHNSON. Well, now, I am not accusing the——

Mr. ROBB. I just wanted to assure——

Mr. JOHNSON [continuing]. Organization of playing politics. I did not mean to do that, and I am sorry if I——

Mr. ROBB. No, I just wanted to make sure that there wasn't any perception——

Mr. JOHNSON. Uh-huh.

Mr. ROBB [continuing]. On the part of anyone. But I accept your——

Mr. JOHNSON. But, you know, I mean—and I came into this with healthy skepticism because I do not want to see us proceed along a drumming—a tightening, you know, a louder drumming toward war. And I know that one of the things that you all talk about is the fact that, you know, diplomacy is not working and so, therefore, we need to start rattling the sword, the sabres, and we need to start showing more military preparation. And we already have substantial military assets that have been ratcheted up and are in place in the region, ready to strike if need be.

These things are kind of—so when we start saying that diplomacy has failed—and, really, the Moscow talks right now are not—they have not failed. They are still discussing things. But it seems like you all are ratcheting up the pressure to force the President to make a move that even he with his military advisors and superior intelligence assets do not think is important right now.

And this comes after the President has imposed sanctions that are unprecedented against Iran. Is that true?

Mr. ROBB. We give the President full credit for what he has done, for his negotiations, for his diplomacy, for his increase in sanctions.

What we are saying is, the bottom line is this hasn't yet proven to be enough. While these discussions and negotiations have taken place, there has been no evidence that Iran is prepared to make any kind of good-faith effort to resolve this question. But they have continued to keep the centrifuges running. They have continued to increase their ability——

Mr. JOHNSON. Do they have a right to produce nuclear energy?

The CHAIRMAN. The gentleman's time has expired.

Mr. Brooks.

Mr. BROOKS. This would be a question for the entire panel. Could you please provide some more specifics about America's military capability that need to be enhanced and the benefit of increasing the United States Fifth Fleet presence in the region in order to address the Iranian problem?

Mr. ROBB. I am sorry, I am just consulting because the question was so fast that I couldn't pick it all up. But if the question is, do we believe that additional steps need to be taken in the course of this ongoing negotiation, the answer would be yes.

Mr. BROOKS. No, no, I am talking about America's military capability. I will reread the question, and I will go slower.

Could you provide some more specifics about America's military capabilities that need to be enhanced and the benefit of increasing the United States Fifth Fleet's presence in the region?

Mr. RADEMAKER. Congressman, one of the contributions of the Bipartisan Policy Center to this debate was the publication of a paper that I think addresses that very question. So perhaps what we should do is submit that paper for the record, because it goes through in a more detailed fashion, outlining some of those steps.

Mr. BROOKS. If you would do that, that would be appreciated.

[The information referred to can be found in the Appendix on page 86.]

Mr. BROOKS. And do any of you have a judgment as to how sequestration, which currently is scheduled to take effect on January 1st of 2013, will affect the needed military capabilities to address the Iranian issue, if we get to that point?

Mr. ROBB. Well, I think we have indicated that it will make it much more difficult. There is no question about that. And——

Mr. BROOKS. Is there some way you can quantify what you mean when you say "much more difficult"?

Mr. ROBB. Well, we have attempted to do that in the papers that we have discussed, although because sequestration was not an issue earlier on, it is not addressed in a straightforward way. But there is no question that you can't cut down significantly in all of the elements of force that are necessary to carry out our responsibilities in this area and elsewhere around the world without severe strain.

When you start talking about taking 80,000 troops in the Army and the Marine Corps, or taking the level down by that much, you are making a significant reduction in your capability and your ability to rotate, et cetera. To the extent that you cancel weapons systems or reduce the number of individual weapons that you buy or other units that you buy, you are clearly putting additional stress.

Almost everything that Congress does, that the President does has to do with tradeoffs and choices. And what we are doing is pointing out that we can't let those kinds of challenges completely undermine our ability to thwart what could be a far more disastrous consequence if Iran were to achieve the nuclear weapons capability which they seek and we are unable to provide credible evidence of our ability to follow up on what we say we are going to do.

So, sure, it is a tremendous challenge that we face. But we can't, simply because we have a significant possibility of serious reduc-

tions in many areas, abandon the need for eternal vigilance in this area.

Mr. BROOKS. Let me make a statement, then I would like your reaction to it. If you agree with it, that is fine. If you disagree with it, that is fine. But you have greater insight than I do, so it would be beneficial for the record to have your reaction.

If sequestration takes effect, that is going to adversely affect our military. We have had some judgments in the neighborhood of 700,000 fewer uniformed personnel, DOD [Department of Defense], civilian support workers, private-sector and military support personnel.

Right now our military capability has a twofold positive in this issue. One is it creates a credible deterrent. We have the military capability in the eyes of the Iranians, so they have to consider that. Second, if the Iranians actually get to the point of developing nuclear weapons and it is in the United States' interest to stop that development, we have the capability to succeed in stopping Iranian acquisition of nuclear weapons.

However, if sequestration goes into effect, then we have decreased our capability and decreased our deterrence and, in fact, have actually increased the probability that Iran will be able to acquire nuclear weapons and use them as they wish. What is your reaction to that?

The CHAIRMAN. The gentleman's time has expired. If you could please answer that for the record.

[The information referred to can be found in the Appendix on page 85.]

Mr. RADEMAKER. I think we agree.

The CHAIRMAN. Mrs. Davis.

Mr. ALBRIGHT. Maybe not completely.

Mrs. DAVIS. Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

And thank you, gentlemen, for being here on a serious topic.

I appreciate the fact that my colleague is asking the question, but I think we have to put that in a context—this isn't the place to necessarily do that—in terms of how we face the challenges that we see, whether it is in the military or whether it is in other aspects of our economy and, certainly, of the services that our people anticipate and know that exist here in this country.

I wanted to go back to the discussion of the Fifth Fleet and whether or not we would need to preposition additional resources from CENTCOM [Central Command] in that area. I think I was hearing that you thought that would be a good thing. And that raises the question of whether or not you feel that we have sufficient resources to surge forces in the area if we needed them, or you felt that we needed to bring those resources into the area today or, you know, down the line and take them away from other areas where I think that the Pentagon has decided those resources really need to be.

Are you suggesting a prepositioning, or are you suggesting at some point that might be something that we need to look at?

Mr. ROBB. I think most of that question was answered in response to a previous question, but what we are trying to do is to illuminate some of the things that the United States can do to increase its ability and credibility to respond if necessary. And there

are always going to be some tradeoffs. We are not trying to proscribe that you put two more DDGs [guided missile destroyers], X number of whatever in a particular area. We are saying, these are things you can do to make the argument that we are making more credible.

And the credibility, if it doesn't have evidence of capability, is not going to be increased.

Mrs. DAVIS. Uh-huh. Are you suggesting, though, that that would be an additional deterrence? Does Iran really need more from us that would suggest that we need to have more deterrence?

Mr. ROBB. With all due respect, what we are trying to say is that we need to be credible in our ability to use kinetic force, if necessary, to thwart the Iranian quest to achieve nuclear weapons capability. And that is really what it amounts to.

And we are not suggesting that there are not very difficult choices that are going to have to be made with respect to weapons systems, weapons, et cetera, manpower, whatever the case may be, but that we need to focus on creating an understanding in the eyes particularly of the Iranians, but also the Israelis, the rest of the neighbors, and the international community, that if we say we are serious, we are, in fact, serious and that we are not reducing our capability at the same time that we are suggesting that we are serious.

Mrs. DAVIS. Uh-huh. But you are acknowledging there is tremendous capability in the region today.

Mr. ROBB. Oh, yes, there is no question about the fact that—there is no nation on Earth that has the kind of capability that we have in all regions of the world.

Mrs. DAVIS. Thank you. I just wanted to clarify that because—

Mr. ROBB. Okay.

Mrs. DAVIS [continuing]. It came across a little differently. Thank you. I appreciate that.

I think we also know that there are possibilities of Iran having biological weapons. There are ways in which they leverage proxy groups. Your focus today, I appreciate that, is on the nuclear, but I wondered if you wanted to comment on that, and Mr. Albright as well, if you wanted to say anything regarding those issues and how important that is for us to have that understanding as well.

Mr. RADEMAKER. Maybe I will just make one comment quickly and then turn it over to David.

The question was asked earlier about the potential of an Iranian ICBM threat and what could we confer from that. And I don't think any of us have access to current intelligence on what exactly Iran is doing in the missile area except we know that they consistently sought missiles with increasingly greater ranges.

But the question was, if they are seeking an ICBM, what can we confer about their nuclear weapons or other WMD intentions? And I think the answer to that is, it would make no sense for Iran to pursue an ICBM unless they intended to mount either a nuclear weapon or a biological weapon, potentially a chemical weapon, but a weapon of mass destruction, because the accuracy of their ICBMs would be such that a conventional warhead would make no sense on that kind of weapons systems for them.

The CHAIRMAN. The gentlelady's time has expired.

Mrs. Roby.

Mrs. ROBY. Thank you so much, Mr. Chairman.

And thank you all for your testimony. This has been really important today and, obviously, very timely for all of us. And so we appreciate your time today.

Of course, it has already been mentioned that Iran announced yesterday its plan to build a nuclear-powered submarine. And so my question would be, based on your information, does it have the ability to build the atomic sub? And if so, what would be the significance both as an offensive platform as well as its ability to disrupt the maritime traffic in the Strait of Hormuz?

So, you know, is this—or the alternative being, is this plan simply just refining—to justify refining uranium to higher levels?

And all of you or any one of you can respond.

Mr. ALBRIGHT. I don't think they can build a nuclear-powered submarine. I mean, Brazil has been trying since the 1980s to do it. So I think it is more posturing on their part to send their own types of messages. They are struggling to build a reactor on land. To try to put one in a submarine is a much more challenging feat.

Now, one thing—they may be trying to signal to higher enrichment levels, but there is no need for higher enrichment levels in a nuclear-powered submarine. I mean, the United States uses 90-, 97-, 98-percent enriched uranium in its. The French use low-enriched uranium. The Brazilians, if they ever build one, are going to be using low-enriched uranium.

So one thing that certainly needs to be said is that a nuclear-powered submarine provides no justification for producing highly enriched uranium.

Mr. RADEMAKER. I would simply add to that, though, it provides no necessary justification, but I do worry, personally, that Iran for a long time has been seeking pretexts to enrich to higher levels. I believe their enrichment to 20 percent is based fundamentally on a pretext that they have a medical research reactor that requires it, and they are producing vastly more 20-percent enriched uranium than that reactor will ever require. And I think that is the proof that they are proceeding on the basis of a pretext.

I think there is every reason to think that, just as we sit among ourselves and ask how can we pressure the Iranians, let's do more in the area of sanctions, let's do more on the military option, in Tehran they are doing the same thing. They are saying, okay, how do we pressure the—their strategy isn't, okay, how do we hunker down and withstand American sanctions? Their strategy is, what can we do to pressure them back?

Mrs. ROBY. Right.

Mr. RADEMAKER. Enriching to 20 percent I think has proven to be a very effective way for them to pressure us back. If they can come up with a peaceful, that is to say non-weapons, rationale for enriching to even higher levels than 20 percent, that will turn the pressure up on us to even greater levels.

So the fact that American nuclear submarines use highly enriched uranium as their fuel potentially would be all the justification they would need if they ostensibly were embarked on a nuclear submarine program; to say, well, they need the same type of fuel

that the Americans have, and therefore that is why they are now enriching to 90 percent.

Now, of course, 90-percent enriched uranium also is weapons-grade and could potentially have a non-peaceful use. But if they are searching for justifications to do this in order to pressure us, I worry that this—

Mrs. ROBY. That would be a good one.

Mr. RADEMAKER [continuing]. Nuclear submarine—because I agree with David. Realistically, they are decades away from being able to do that. If they announced they have already begun producing the fuel for it, to me, that is a very troubling sign.

Mr. ALBRIGHT. Yeah. And just to emphasize, I mean, I think people, when we were engaged in these debates, said they would never move to make 20-percent enriched uranium. It just isn't conceivable.

Mrs. ROBY. Right.

Mr. ALBRIGHT. And so they did. So I think it is a very big concern that they will try to find a way to make highly enriched uranium.

And so I think the—but it raises one of the more troubling scenarios or pathways to the bomb which really no one has an answer to. Thank God it is slow-moving, but it really is what we call at ISIS [Institute for Science and International Security] in our reports “cheating in plain sight,” where they will just move to—they won't even bother to break out. They will just move to find a justification to make highly enriched uranium—

Mrs. ROBY. Right.

Mr. ALBRIGHT [continuing]. First maybe, whatever, 30 percent, 50 percent, and then just try to work their way up the ladder. And it is one of the more perplexing problems to deal with.

Mrs. ROBY. Very quickly, does Iran have the ability to strike the United States on our own soil? And if so, how?

Mr. ALBRIGHT. Well, through terrorist means.

Mrs. ROBY. Well, sure.

Mr. ALBRIGHT. I don't think they have a means to attack us. Certainly, even if they developed a nuclear explosive device, they would be a long way from being able to attack us with that.

Mr. RADEMAKER. Delivery would be the problem with a nuclear weapon. But, you know, through terrorist groups or loaded on a ship.

Mrs. ROBY. Sure.

Mr. RADEMAKER. But attacking us with a missile, I don't think that is within their capability currently.

Mr. ROBB. I think it is generally agreed that there is very little likelihood that they would attempt to launch from their own soil or in a way that could be directly attributed to them any kind of a weapon of mass destruction to the United States.

Mrs. ROBY. And that goes to whether they have the will to do it. And my time has expired. Thank you so much.

The CHAIRMAN. The gentlelady's time has expired.

Ms. Speier.

Ms. SPEIER. Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

And thank you, gentlemen, for your presentations here today and for your leadership.

I am one of those that would like to get an assessment on the limited strike efforts.

Mr. Rademaker, in reading through your report, I find it difficult to believe that a surgical strike alone would somehow be sufficient to prevent Iran from continuing its nuclear enrichment efforts. Do you think a surgical strike is sufficient?

Mr. RADEMAKER. The military option is not a particularly satisfying option. It affords no permanent solution to the problem, and I think that is what your question gets at. It would buy time.

And, you know, I think what President Obama means when he says, "All options are on the table," what he means is, if the only way we can—if diplomacy has failed and nothing else is working and they are about to get a nuclear weapon, then we are going to buy time through a military strike. And I think our recommendation is that that is right, but the problem at the moment is the Iranians don't really believe that that military option is available or seriously contemplated by the United States. And so we are recommending measures to eliminate doubts that the Iranians might have that that is a serious option.

But I think your question gets to the issue of, through military force alone, you know, short of an invasion, an occupation of the country, can we be satisfied that a precise air operation that takes out the Natanz facility, the Fordow facility, that that will solve the Iranian nuclear problem? And of course it won't, because Iran has an uranium-enrichment-based program, and today they manufacture the centrifuges. They have the blueprints, they have the manufacturing capability. So we can destroy all the centrifuges they have, but they can make more, they can stand them up again.

So, I mean, if you game this out, if we end up relying on military force to solve this problem, probably we buy a year or two, but then after that, if the program is back where it was before, then potentially we have to use military force again.

That is why it is not anyone's preferred solution to the problem. The preferred solution is diplomacy that achieves suspension of Iran's enrichment capability, as the U.N. Security Council has demanded. And that is what we all hope to see. Our recommendation is that more be done to strengthen sanctions, more be done to strengthen the credibility of the military option, in hopes that collectively those kinds of measures will increase the prospects for diplomacy to succeed.

Mr. ROBB. If I might just add—

Ms. SPEIER. Yes, go ahead, Senator Robb.

Mr. ROBB. One of the—

Ms. SPEIER. I have very little time, so—

Mr. ROBB. Okay.

One of the objectives here is to continue to increase the sanctions to the point that, at some point, although it is very unlikely to occur through direct negotiations, that whoever is in charge at that particular time in Iran will come to the conclusion that it is in our best interest to suspend an attempt to get a nuclear weapons capability and that the pressure that would—the political pressure inside the country would be so great, or the other consequences that would take place, that they would simply, instead of negotiating, would change their course of action and that the United States could then

slow down, or if they rolled back, then the United States could roll back sanctions.

But until that time occurs, we want to continue to increase the pressure with sanctions to continue to tighten the noose so that they will ultimately conclude that it is in their long-term best interest to adopt a different course of action.

Mr. ALBRIGHT. And let me just add—can I?

Ms. SPEIER. Please, go ahead, Mr. Albright.

Mr. ALBRIGHT. There is no magic strike that is going to solve this problem. But there is also time now to consider, you know, if military options are being thought about, how do they fit into an overall strategy to keep Iran from getting nuclear weapons? And there is going to have to be something the day after, and that is going to be an incredibly important part of this.

There is also time to look further at how do you stop them from getting nuclear weapons through non-military means? And I think the leak in *The Washington Post* today—and, again, I am against all leaks, but one thing it did do is it sent a signal to Iran that, you know, you better worry, we are in all your computers, and we can turn on your cameras and we can turn on the microphones. And it is a signal that says, look, don't even try something secret.

Now, again, that is an exaggerated example, but there is a whole range of things going on—

The CHAIRMAN. The gentlelady's time has expired.

Mr. ALBRIGHT [continuing]. That could be expanded that are non-military, essentially.

Ms. SPEIER. Thank you.

The CHAIRMAN. Mr. Scott.

Mr. SCOTT. Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

And I would just like to make a couple points.

One is, Iran is the second-largest country in the Middle East, if I am not mistaken, size-wise, geographically. And I guess my question is, what is the minimum number of facilities that we would strike if we went in? And how far are those facilities apart? Is that something that can be discussed in this forum?

Mr. ROBB. I was going to say, this is not the proper—

Mr. SCOTT. Okay.

Mr. ROBB [continuing]. Forum for a discussion of targeting.

Mr. SCOTT. Okay. We will leave it at that. But I do think that the geographical size of the country leaves some question.

Mr. ROBB. In a very general sense, that is one of the reasons that we are recommend that additional KC-135s be supplied, so that the—

Mr. SCOTT. Yes, sir.

Mr. ROBB [continuing]. Credibility of the Israeli response to crossing a red line that they have laid down would be taken more seriously. Because you do have very significant distances, and the ability to strike and return without refuelers is very much in question.

Mr. SCOTT. Absolutely. And we as a country cannot expect Israel to take this challenge on by themselves. We have got to stand by them. They are our true ally over there.

I guess I say that to get to this next point. You have the U.S., you have Britain, you have France, you have Germany, and you

have Russia and China all engaging in the talks right now in Moscow, if I am correct. If those countries can't influence Iran, who can have any influence on Iran?

Mr. ALBRIGHT. Well, they have influence on Iran. I mean, Iran would, I think, be much further along on nuclear weapons if that influence hadn't been exerted. And so I think there is a lot going on beyond the negotiations to slow them down and deter them from breaking out. So I think a lot is going on. Now—

Mr. SCOTT. We are not just trying to slow them down, though. We are trying to stop them.

Mr. ALBRIGHT. No, that is right. And that is right, and that is the goal. Or prevent them, I mean, if they do make the break.

But I think the expectation is that more pressure will be applied, that sanctions—from what I understand, the U.S. Congress is masters at developing sanctions on Iran. And I would expect more.

Mr. RADEMAKER. I think, Congressman, my personal belief is that, if all those countries you named made this their highest priority and brought to bear, as President Obama said the United States would do, all elements of their national power to make sure Iran changed course, I think collectively those nations could succeed. The problem is that, even though they are engaged diplomatically, not all of those countries are using all elements of their national power to persuade the Iranians to change course.

I mean, it is wonderful that on July 1st a European Union oil embargo is going to go into effect. But, you know, why is it, you know, the summer of 2012 before that has happened? Because in Europe there has been hesitation up until now to accept the economic costs that come from imposing that oil embargo. Now, thank goodness they have made the decision to move forward with that, but it is awfully late in coming.

At the U.N. Security Council, there is certainly more that could be done against Iran—

Mr. SCOTT. Let me—

Mr. RADEMAKER [continuing]. But Russia and China have used their veto—

Mr. SCOTT [continuing]. Interrupt, if I could, because I am down to a minute and a half. I apologize.

They border seven countries, the Caspian Sea, and the Gulf of Oman. They share the Caspian Sea with Russia. I, quite honestly, think their nuclear threat is much greater to other countries than it is to the United States. And I have no doubt that if they get a weapon, they can get it out of that country and then probably into wherever they want.

But there is a difference in talking and taking action. Would Russia and China, while they are willing to engage in talks, support the United States in an action that actually stopped the construction of a nuclear weapon in Iran?

Mr. ROBB. Well, obviously, if Russia and China were to be in full agreement, this whole discussion would probably be moot. The problem is that there are ongoing relationships with both countries that would be put in jeopardy by their taking a more aggressive stance. And so in the U.N. Security Council, the resolutions that actually get passed tend to be less intimidating toward Iran than the ones that—if you had those two superpowers in sync with the

United States in terms of their understanding of the risks that a nuclear-capable Iran poses to the region and to the international community, we wouldn't probably be having this hearing today.

The CHAIRMAN. The gentleman's time has expired.

Mr. Conaway.

Mr. CONAWAY. Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

Senator Robb, thank you for you and General Wald's continued attention to this issue and the work that you did. We shamelessly used it to introduce legislation to try to augment this effort to make sure that anyone who is even looking at all could see that we are serious about a military option, that we have the resources in place and the training and all of those other kinds of things.

Mr. ROBB. We noticed, and we thank you.

Mr. CONAWAY. Your written testimony added some additional specificity to some of that. And we don't need to go through what it is, but is there something that—you talked about additional surface-to-air missiles, anti-submarines, prepositioning the strategic bombers from Diego Garcia.

Is there something that has happened since your original report that led you to put this additional specificity in your written comments today, or is it more of the same?

Mr. ROBB. Well, you always look to what you have, what assets you have in place and whether or not they appear to be sufficient to fulfill whatever mission they are designed to support.

Mr. CONAWAY. All right. Well, I do think that your work is helping continue to put a time-is-of-the-essence kind of cloak on all of this. Some of the comments on the other side I have disagreed with this morning, in which they seem to take a little more innocent view that this thing can be solved.

All of us hold certain truths or certain ideas that we are willing to die for, willing to absorb just incredible deprivations in order to stick to those convictions. Is the idea of a nuclear power, a nuclear weapon of such a national identity for the Persians in Iran that it is one of those things that, at the end of the day, they are just simply never going to give that up no matter what we do to them?

Mr. ROBB. Well, I don't believe that the position of the international community is that it is an absolutely hopeless cause, if that is what you are—

Mr. CONAWAY. Well, no, we will continue to sanction and we will continue in the military option. We will stop them, ideally, from getting one.

But the idea that they would voluntarily give up this quest and the impact it has on their international standing, you know, at any point in time does anybody realistically think that—I mean, I am pro-life, and I am not giving that up, period, no matter what you do to me. I am a Christian. Jesus Christ is my personal savior. I am not giving that up for anything. That is one of those core beliefs.

Is the core belief that they want a nuclear weapon, is it such a core belief with them that—and, as Rademaker said earlier, we can—I mean, the military option only takes it out for a short period of time—will they ever really give this up? Or is it just in the leadership, and the people themselves are not really that keen on it?

Mr. ALBRIGHT. Yeah, I don't see a united regime on that. I think we have seen constituencies, I mean, more the technical side, that appear to really want nuclear weapons. There are other constituencies that have questions about that. So I don't think they are united on the value of having nuclear weapons. I mean, I think they are only united on the desire to have the capability to do that.

And I think they can—they may make a different decision down the road. Also, there may be personnel changes at the top of the whole hierarchy that could lead to a different decision. There are forces that do—you know, don't just want to be an isolated pariah state. So I think it is very hard to—

Mr. CONAWAY. Well, all that is pretty obvious to us, and it ought to be pretty obvious to them. And most of us operate on the premise that we operate in our own best interests. These folks appear to be going counter to operating in their own best interests, because of the sanctions that have been put in place and are about to be put in place, all those kinds of things, and yet, they are really pretty recalcitrant about making—

Mr. ROBB. But that is the point of continuing to increase the sanctions. At some point, it is at least my personal belief that the powers that be in Tehran will come to the conclusion that it is in their long-term and short-term best interests to adopt a different course of action.

I don't think they are going to—you used the word “voluntarily.” I don't think anyone suggests they are going to voluntarily abandon the quest to be a nuclear-capable nation. They want to be in that club. And that is a pretty widely held view in the various factions that are identifiable inside Iran.

But they are ultimately pragmatists, as most—even the leaders in other countries that appear to be irrational, at some point there is an element of pragmatism that comes in. And it is our hope that at some point that will permeate the thinking and they will arrange—I don't think it will come through a negotiated settlement. I think that they will take some action that causes the international community to say, we have accomplished our goal. We no longer feel as threatened. We are going to have to be eternally vigilant, but we don't have to continue to increase the capability and/or the threat of taking military action.

And if, in fact, they go through with the exercise which has been offered, that they export all of their HEU, et cetera, and give intrusive 24/7 inspections, then the international community, certainly the United States, would be in a position then, and only then, to begin to roll back some of the sanctions and allow Iran to come into the world community as a credible player rather than a pariah state.

Mr. CONAWAY. Well, again, thanks you for your work on this, and I hope you are spot-on right. Thank you.

I yield back.

The CHAIRMAN. Mr. Smith.

Mr. SMITH. I thank you very much for your testimony. I think this discussion has been very helpful.

And I think where Iran is at right now is that, as you said, Mr. Albright, they would like to be nuclear-weapons-capable because of the credibility it gives them. They would also like to not be a pa-

riah state, and I think that is what makes them different from North Korea. I mean, North Korea was a pariah state, has been for a while. They didn't care. There was really nothing we could do to them. They starve 2 million of their people every year. They did that before they had a nuclear weapon, and they keep doing it.

The hope with Iran is, given Iran's, you know, centuries of history and at different times being a relatively prominent player on at least the regional if not the global stage, they don't want to be a pariah state. And right now they are trying to figure out how to have their cake and eat it too. This is what they are trying to figure out.

And what we have to make plain to them is that the cost is going—you will be a pariah state if you don't take a step back. Now, as you have all described very well, that is easier said than done, but I think that is what our policy goal has to be.

And I thank you, Mr. Chairman. I yield back.

The CHAIRMAN. Thank you.

We have had a wide-ranging discussion. And I am thinking of one of the points that Mr. Turner was making, that if somebody tuned in at some point, we would be talking about lots of different actions that we would take against Iran for various things depending on how they are moving along on something that we really don't know. We think we know, we hope we know, but we can never know totally what they are doing.

What I would like to ask, to kind of bring this back to the whole purpose of this hearing, is, what do you believe are the strategic consequences, what would they be for the United States and for our allies if Iran were to achieve a nuclear weapon capability?

Mr. ROBB. Mr. Chairman, we lay out what we believe are the strategic consequences in—really, in each of the papers, but the most recent one, in “Stopping the Clock,” we list a number of activities.

Certainly, you have—the immediate neighborhood is going to feel compelled to take up its own nuclear programs, and so you are going to have a proliferation that would take place in the immediate community. You are going to have a great deal of interruption in terms of the international energy supply, given the fact that so much of the world's petroleum passes through the Strait of Hormuz, et cetera.

You are going to have an instability which will be exacerbated beyond anything we are experiencing right now in terms of the economy. Most of Europe is very much on the edge right now. The United States is attempting to keep from being drawn into that same type of economic collapse that is occurring state by state in the European Union right now.

All of these consequences are going to be enormous and are going to put any chance for a peaceful resolution of the long-term interest of both the United States and the other major powers in that region at risk for a very long period of time. And the cost in individual lives and treasure would be enormous.

It just—it is one of those situations where the status quo, if you can't—or if you have to choose between the near-term costs of depriving Iran of a nuclear capability and the long-term costs of al-

lowing them to have it, it is not a difficult choice. I think that is probably—I probably ought to leave it.

Mr. RADEMAKER. I can think of no positive consequences of Iranian achievement of nuclear weapons capability or Iranian possession of a nuclear weapon.

Senator Robb has pointed to one of the most serious consequences, which would be the unravelling of the nuclear non-proliferation regime as other countries felt threatened by the Iranian nuclear capability and felt they needed to take steps to protect themselves.

Another very important and very dire consequence that I will highlight is the fact that Iran is already the world's most active supporter of international terrorism. And they act in a very unrestrained way already when it comes to promoting international terrorism. I personally believe that one of the attractions to the Iranian regime of having nuclear weapons is that it would increase their ability to proceed recklessly in the promotion of terrorism in their region and internationally.

If you take what happened in 2006 in Lebanon as an example, there was an escalation between Israel and Hezbollah, which is an Iranian-backed terrorist group, in Lebanon. And it escalated. Iran—I am sorry, Israel sent forces into southern Lebanon. Hezbollah started firing increasingly long-range missiles at Israel. Those missiles were provided by Iran. But Iran had to be restrained in the degree of support it provided to Hezbollah because there was always the risk that Israel might ultimately hold Iran accountable and undertake some military action against Iran.

I believe one of the reasons Iran would like nuclear weapons is they believe that if they had such weapons in a scenario like that, Israel would essentially lose that option. They would become fearful of using military force against the sponsor of these terrorist groups. And, as a result, Iran could be much more unrestrained in the level of support that it gave to such groups.

And that is just one particular example, but I think worldwide you would see them feeling that they had a nuclear shield behind which they could hide and behave in an increasingly reckless manner in their support for international terrorism.

Mr. ALBRIGHT. I also view Iran with nuclear weapons as a very grave strategic threat to the United States.

I would distinguish between having a nuclear weapons capability, which I would judge they have now, and we are living with it. So, I mean, we perceive it as particularly a threat if they cross the line and have nuclear weapons. What we have been talking about is if they seek those weapons, then we are going to try to stop them.

Now, I think to be fair, though, I mean, it is—I think we need to start to consider, what if all this doesn't work out well? And I don't want to in any way encourage that as a policy, but I do think we need to start thinking through this. What if Iran does get nuclear weapons, you know, 2 or 3 years from now, and it is in the range of time that we are worried about, is we wake up and there has just been a nuclear test by Iran?

And so I think while the policy should remain on preventing Iran from getting nuclear weapons, I do believe we need to start think-

ing through, what if they do? Because you just heard why that world is going to be so dangerous. But, unfortunately, if they do, we are still going to have to live in it. And we need to think through what are the U.S. responses to that world, while at the same time—again, I want to emphasize—not changing our current policy to prevent Iran from getting there.

The CHAIRMAN. Well, that is an interesting idea. But our policy is based on what the Senator and Mr. Rademaker say. They gave some pretty positive reasons why it would be detrimental to society if they had nuclear weapons. And—

Mr. ALBRIGHT. I agree with that. And I agree with that.

The CHAIRMAN. Fine. Then our policy probably shouldn't change. Our policy is that they do not—that we do everything possible to make sure that they do not get that capability. And that, I think, is the whole purpose of this hearing, is to strengthen that and to make sure that we have the capability to make sure that we don't have to change that policy. Because I think that if we back off from the policy that they do not attain nuclear capability, then the overall threat to the world is something we do not want to even contemplate.

We realize that there are other countries around the world that have nuclear abilities, but none of them have expressed the belligerent nature of Iran as far as supporting terrorism and other things. And in that particular neighborhood, it could be unsettling for the whole world forever.

And I think that this has been a good hearing. I appreciate you being here. I appreciate the work that you are doing on this. And I think that we need to move forward sustaining that policy and do whatever we can to support whoever the President is in making sure that we have the means necessary to make sure that that policy stays in place.

Thank you very much.

And that concludes this hearing.

[Whereupon, at 12:17 p.m., the committee was adjourned.]

A P P E N D I X

JUNE 20, 2012

PREPARED STATEMENTS SUBMITTED FOR THE RECORD

JUNE 20, 2012

Statement of Hon. Howard P. “Buck” McKeon
Chairman, House Committee on Armed Services
Hearing on
Addressing the Iranian Nuclear Challenge:
Understanding the Military Options
June 20, 2012

The House Armed Services Committee meets today to receive testimony from experts on the nuclear challenge from Iran. The expert panel includes former Senator Charles Robb, a task force co-chair of the National Security Project with the Bipartisan Policy Center; Mr. Stephen Rademaker, a task force member of the National Security Project with the Bipartisan Policy Center; and Mr. David Albright, the President of the Institute for Science and International Security. Gentlemen, thank you for joining us today.

The Iranian nuclear program is among the most complex foreign policy and national security challenges that the United States faces today. Intensive diplomatic and economic steps focused on Iran’s nuclear program have been undertaken over the last decade to dissuade Iran from pursuing a military nuclear program. Unfortunately, it does not appear that these efforts have succeeded in convincing the Iranian Government to abandon its military nuclear ambitions.

The United States’ stated policy remains that Iran should not possess a nuclear weapon, as reflected by President Obama’s recent comments in which he stated: “I think both the Iranian and the Israeli governments recognize that when the United States says it is unacceptable for Iran to have a nuclear weapon, we mean what we say.” Moreover, President Obama has explicitly declared that his administration would use force—a “military component”—as a last resort to prevent Tehran from acquiring a bomb. However, this message has not always been consistent—across administrations—and unfortunately it is not clear that the Iranian regime is deterred by such statements.

I personally agree that all elements of national power should be brought to bear to prevent Iran from obtaining a nuclear weapon. I certainly recognize that no military operation is without risk. But given the fact that the President has stated that military option may have to be utilized to thwart Iran from obtaining a nuclear weapon, it is the committee’s responsibility to ensure that the military option is credible.

Moreover, any consideration of U.S. military response to Iran’s nuclear developments requires rigorous and thoughtful evaluation, which is why we are holding this hearing today. If diplomacy and eco-

nomic sanctions fail to stop Iran from obtaining a nuclear weapon capability, then a military option may be the only recourse. Therefore, it is critical to rigorously study and understand all facets of any military option, including how it supports our vital national security interests, its potential for effectiveness, its risks, Iran's potential responses, the implications for the region. Likewise, effective military capability in the region could be a useful deterrent and improve regional stability, negating the need for a military strike.

Gentlemen, thank you for appearing before the committee today. I look forward to your testimony and insights into the nuclear challenge from Iran.

Senator Robb HASC Iran Testimony
June 20, 2012

Introduction

Chairman McKeon, Ranking Member Smith and Members of the House Committee on Armed Services, thank you for inviting me to testify this morning on such an important topic. I am honored to be here with my colleague on the Bipartisan Policy Center Task Force on Iran, Steve Rademaker, and the other distinguished panelists.

Overview

Iran's pursuit of nuclear weapons capability is the most urgent national security threat facing the United States. For the last four years I have served as the co-chair of the Bipartisan Policy Center Task Force on Iran, working to help articulate and advocate a realistic and robust approach to this pressing problem. Our latest report – published February 1, 2012 – lays out a comprehensive strategy that we continue to believe offers the best hope for a peaceful resolution of Iran's nuclear challenge, without sacrificing vital national interests or security.

The report reinforces prior BPC studies calling for a triple-track strategy to prevent a nuclear weapons-capable Iran: the simultaneous pursuit of diplomacy, sanctions, and visible, credible preparations for a military option. This approach is in keeping with the policy articulated by President Obama as a candidate and in his presidency, including his recent statement that preventing a nuclear Iran is “profoundly in the security interests of the United States” and his commitment to “use all elements of American power” to achieve this goal. As the warnings of an Israeli strike rise along with Iran's enriched uranium stockpile, the president has urged Iran to understand that “the window to solving [this] diplomatically is shrinking.”

Indeed, BPC analysis of International Atomic Energy Agency (IAEA) reports indicates Iran has advanced dramatically in its quest: overcoming technical hurdles to almost triple its uranium enrichment rate since 2009, enriching uranium to ever higher levels, testing more effective centrifuge models, beginning operations at a previously undisclosed underground facility, and continuing its weaponization program.

Still, a negotiated agreement involving persistent invasive inspections remains the best possible outcome of this standoff and it behooves us to pursue all diplomatic options. For this reason, President Obama's sincere diplomatic outreach to Tehran has been an important and necessary step. Yet the evidence from past and current talks demonstrates that negotiations and sanctions, however harsh, will not solve the problem alone. Iran's stalling tactics during its most recent rounds of talks with the P5+1 this spring underscore this point. The time has come to dramatically increase the pressure on the Iranian regime. To ensure the best possible conditions for reaching a diplomatic settlement, the United States must exert the utmost pressure on Iran's leadership. This will require demonstrating its resolve to do whatever is necessary, to

**Senator Robb HASC Iran Testimony
June 20, 2012**

include taking military action and supporting Israeli military action, to thwart Iran's nuclear weapons ambitions.

It is precisely the credible threat of military action that can enable peaceful diplomatic solutions. When faced with a deteriorating military balance after eight years of war with Iraq in the 1980s, Ayatollah Khomeini agreed to an armistice even though he likened it to drinking from a poisoned chalice. Fear of military action apparently led Iran to briefly halt its nuclear program after the United States toppled Iraq's Saddam Hussein in 2003. It also led Moammar Qaddafi of Libya to halt his country's nuclear program. Had Qaddafi instead continued program and acquired nuclear weapons, it is unlikely NATO would have intervened in Libya's civil war in 2011 – a lesson not lost on Iran's leaders.

At this late date, it is only the credible threat of force, combined with sanctions, that affords any realistic hope of an acceptable diplomatic resolution. There are three primary components of a credible military threat: an effective information and messaging strategy, economic preparations and credible military readiness activities. Undertaking these steps would boost the credibility of the military option, thereby strengthening the chance for sanctions and diplomacy to succeed in bringing about a peaceful resolution to the standoff over Iran's nuclear program.

Information and Messaging Strategy

In addition to its hard power assets, the sincerity and gravity of America's commitment to thwarting Iran's nuclear ambitions can be bolstered through four actions:

Strengthen declaratory policy. Recent statements by the president have conveyed the Administration's resolve to prevent Iran from acquiring nuclear weapons capability. It is essential that the Administration maintain a clear and consistent message in the coming months and avoid sending contradictory signals, which have previously undermined the clarity of the U.S. position, as well as diminished prospects for a peaceful resolution.

Start a public debate about U.S. policy toward Iran. Policymakers need to engage the American public in a frank discussion about both the risks of a nuclear-capable Iran and what it will take, realistically, to thwart it. The President and his Administration will have to expand its public engagement on the issue, but Congress can play a role as well. Hearings on the dangers posed by a nuclear Iran, the feasibility of a military strike and its ramifications can help inform the public about this important issue and signal American's resolve to Tehran.

Demonstrate further the strength of U.S. alliances. Senior Administration officials should conduct more regular, high profile visits to confer with and support U.S. allies deeply concerned by Iran's nuclear program. High-ranking defense officials, including

**Senator Robb HASC Iran Testimony
June 20, 2012**

the Secretary of Defense, should also oversee military exercises designed to counter Iranian threats to the region. In essence, this is a form of strategic communication designed to reassure our security partners and signal the seriousness of our intentions to Tehran. Senior U.S. officials should take the opportunity to demonstrate U.S. commitments and engage partners concerned by a nuclear-capable Iran by addressing this issue at regional forums such as the International Institute for Strategic Studies (IISS) Regional Security Summits held annually in Bahrain and Singapore.

Publicize certain relevant activities to demonstrate our resolve to prevent Iran from achieving nuclear weapons capability. To the extent possible, military and civilian officials should highlight through actions, statements, remarks and releases of videos and photographs those measures the United States is taking to prepare for a military conflict. These include: advancements in, and deployments of, the U.S. Air Force's Massive Ordnance Penetrator (MOP); efforts to increase floating oil storage in Asia; defense appropriations reprogramming to bolster U.S. military capabilities; and prepositioning of armaments, munitions and personnel in preparation for a military option, should it prove necessary.

Economic Preparations

Military conflict with Iran would risk disrupting oil supply not only from Iran but from the Persian Gulf, leading to higher oil prices and economic dislocation. It will require the United States to take action now that would mitigate the economic costs of any possible military conflict.

Iran is the world's fifth-largest exporter of crude oil and an important supplier to China, India, Japan, South Korea and southeastern Europe. The threat from U.S. sanctions on Iran's Central Bank and from a European Union (E.U.) oil embargo beginning next month have already curtailed Iran's oil exports from roughly two to one-and-a-half million barrels per day in 2012. These would likely temporarily stop altogether if either Israel or the United States attacked Iran's nuclear installations. This cessation could last several weeks, depending upon the duration and impact of the military conflict.

Moreover, Iran could retaliate – and deepen global opposition to a strike – by seeking to damage oil facilities of neighboring countries and/or attempt to close the Strait of Hormuz, through which about 17 million barrels per day transit. This represents 35 percent of seaborne oil exports and about 20 percent of global oil trade. The market is capable of making up for the loss of Iranian oil exports. Global spare production capacity is currently about two to two-and-a-half million barrels per day, virtually all of it in Saudi Arabia. In fact, the threat of sanctions has already convinced Iran's main customers to begin replacing Iranian supplies with imports from other Gulf producers.

Senator Robb HASC Iran Testimony
June 20, 2012

However, if the Strait of Hormuz was closed temporarily, most of the 17 million barrels that flow through there on a daily basis, and any spare capacity that would be brought online, could not reach most of the market (though some could be rerouted). The consequences for oil prices and the U.S. and global economies would be significant. For every annual price increase of oil of \$10 per barrel, the U.S. gross domestic product is estimated to decline about 0.5 percent. Many Western countries have strategic reserves to cushion the blow. The United States has about 700 million barrels in the Strategic Petroleum Reserve (SPR), which equates to about 77 days of imports. The SPR has a stated drawdown capacity of about 4.25 million barrels of oil per day, but there are concerns that the maximum delivery rate might be measurably lower. Therefore, we recommend that:

- The U.S. Department of Energy initiate a study, to be completed within 60 days, to assess the infrastructure constraints that might inhibit the SPR's ability to fulfill the initial 4.25 million barrels per day of stated delivery capacity. The United States and other Western countries have strategic reserves to cushion the blow from any Persian Gulf supply cutoff.

Taking this step would mitigate the economic impact of a disruption of oil supply from Iran and other Persian Gulf oil exporters, calm the market, lower the oil price premium caused by the Iranian crisis, reduce Iran's ability to blackmail the world and signal U.S. resolve to utilize the military option.

Credible Military Readiness Activities

The United States needs to undertake efforts to underscore that, if all else fails, it is prepared and willing to launch an effective strike against Iran's nuclear program. Boosting the visibility and credibility of the military option would send a strong signal to Iran and press the regime to negotiate in good faith. It will also help persuade buyers of Iran's oil, such as China, to support U.S. sanctions to peacefully resolve this crisis or face the possibility of a significant disruption of oil supply from the Persian Gulf.

U.S. military planners are presumed to have prepared an array of options for attacking Iran's nuclear facilities and addressing potential retaliation. In recent months, the military has buttressed its presence in the region, including the deployment of two carrier strike groups and a Mine Countermeasures (MCM) Squadron to the Fifth Fleet. This deployment strengthens U.S. capabilities, if needed, to: launch a sustained sea and air campaign against a range of Iranian nuclear and military targets; protect seaborne shipping; enforce a quarantine of refined petroleum imports to Iran; and repel Iranian retaliation against U.S. interests and allies in the region. It is important to sustain and

**Senator Robb HASC Iran Testimony
June 20, 2012**

augment these efforts. The United States should undertake additional measures to boost the credibility of the military option:

Augment U.S. Fifth Fleet Capacity in the Region. The U.S. Navy regularly maintains one carrier strike group and often a smaller expeditionary strike group in the Fifth Fleet's area of responsibility, which includes the Persian Gulf and Gulf of Oman offshore Iran. This presence should be expanded by procuring and deploying force protection munitions and other systems to reinforce existing U.S. naval capabilities. Iranian naval capabilities focus increasingly on unconventional forces – anti-ship mines and missiles, unmanned aircraft and swarming small fast-attack and patrol craft – and employ asymmetric tactics to threaten tanker traffic, overwhelm enemy vessels and deny access to waters off Iran. Additional surface-to-air missiles, anti-submarine warfare capabilities, ship gun modifications and ammunition, and electronic and cyber warfare support would reinforce the Fifth Fleet's ability to defend against such threats.

Preposition Military Supplies. Ensuring sufficient supplies of aircraft, munitions, fuel and other key materiel for air- and sea-based missions at key forward support locations in the Middle East, Indian Ocean and possibly Central Asia and southeastern Europe would reduce the logistical challenges and buildup phase of any potential military operation. In particular, and with approval from Great Britain, the United States will need to preposition additional strategic bombers at Diego Garcia – including those capable of deploying the MOP – as well as additional aerial refueling tankers and bunker-buster munitions. We also support prepositioning U.S. bunker-buster munitions and aerial refueling tankers in Israel.

Explore "Strategic Partnerships" with Countries on Iran's Northern Perimeter. Currently, U.S. forces and support staff can be positioned to Iran's west, south and east. This posture should be bolstered by enhanced U.S. access to military facilities along the Caspian Basin, north of Iran. Turkey is a NATO ally but has significant disagreements with the United States, and Russia's military influence in Armenia is too deeply embedded for that country to coordinate significantly with U.S. planning. Azerbaijan is much more cooperative with the United States on regional energy and security matters, and Israel and the United States recently increased arms sales and defense cooperation with that country. Baku is a major logistical hub for Operation Enduring Freedom in Afghanistan, and could provide a forward support location for a credible U.S. military option against Iran. Turkmenistan serves as another key node in NATO supply routes for Afghanistan, hosts U.S. Air Force personnel and has facilities to support U.S. logistical operations.

Conduct Broad Military Exercises with Regional Allies. Military exercises enhance the readiness and capabilities of U.S. and allied forces to conduct a range of joint offensive

**Senator Robb HASC Iran Testimony
June 20, 2012**

and defensive operations against Iranian nuclear and military targets. Such exercises, whether undertaken in-theater or elsewhere, should include deployment of U.S. strategic bombers and aerial refueling tankers to forward support locations, and address Iran's growing sea- and land-based anti-access/area-denial (A2/AD) capabilities.

Strengthen Air Force Capabilities Required for an Effective Strike. If all else fails, the U.S. military is capable of launching an effective strike against Iran's nuclear program. Augmenting the capabilities required to do so will send Iran a strong signal of U.S. resolve. Specific measures include:

- Expedite the building and deployment of the MOP bunker buster. The bomb unit is reportedly capable of penetrating 200 feet of reinforced concrete, which is sufficient to neutralize Iran's known underground nuclear sites. The first 20 of the bombs were delivered to the Air Force in late 2011, and can be deployed on B-2 and B-52 strategic bombers. We applaud Congress's approval earlier this year of additional funding to continue developing and improving this weapon.
- Install additional command and control, cyber, electronic and information warfare and intelligence support systems.

Augment Israeli Capabilities to Strike Iranian Nuclear Facilities and Defend Itself from Retaliatory Strikes. For several decades, the United States has supported Israel's security interests through a variety of military and non-military aid. As the threat from Iran and Hezbollah has increased, the United States has taken careful steps to strengthen Israel's military capabilities. Through such efforts, the United States enhances the credibility of the military threat against Iran's nuclear facilities without encouraging or condoning Israeli military action.

As with any military action, an Israeli strike carries risks. There is a possibility that an Israeli strike could fail to sufficiently deter or deny Iran's attempt to reconstitute its nuclear program. Whether successful or not, a strike would be expected to trigger retaliation by Iran and its terrorist proxies (primarily Hezbollah) against Israel, Iranian-inspired terror attacks abroad and a spike in oil prices. However, none of these risks pose as great a threat to U.S. strategic interests as a nuclear weapons-capable Iran.

Strengthening Israel's ability to mount an effective attack on Iran's nuclear facilities would serve the same purpose as boosting U.S. military capability to strike; namely, to pressure Iran to negotiate and persuade buyers of Iranian oil to abide by sanctions. Augmenting Israeli strike capability could also calm Israeli concerns about U.S. commitment to its defense, thus possibly postponing its decision on whether to strike.

Senator Robb HASC Iran Testimony
June 20, 2012

Finally, if Israel did feel compelled to strike, it would serve U.S. interests for that strike to be as successful as possible.

There are two main ways the United States can usefully strengthen Israel's strike capabilities against Iranian nuclear facilities: by transferring aerial refueling tankers, and by transferring advanced bunker busters. Israel already possesses some aerial refueling capacity; however, providing it with three KC-135 refueling planes would increase the range and efficiency of its fighter and bomber aircraft to reach Iranian targets. Similarly, Israel possesses some bunker-buster munitions, including an estimated 100 GBU-28 bunker busters delivered since 2006, which could damage Iran's known underground nuclear sites. Selling Israel 200 GBU-31 bunker busters would increase its capacity to destroy such targets. The GBU-31 bomb unit uses the same BLU-113 penetrator as the GBU-28, and can be deployed on the same aircraft, while utilizing a GPS tailkit for improved precision. This would allow the Israeli Air Force (IAF) to maximize damage to buried targets, allocate extra aircraft to strike packages and retain the capability to launch follow-on sorties if needed. We therefore applaud the House of Representatives for recently passing H.R. 4133, which calls for providing Israel with air refueling tankers and specialized munitions.

In addition to offensive capabilities, the United States has worked closely with Israel to develop and deploy a layered anti-missile defense system to intercept short-, medium- and intermediate-range rockets and missiles fired at Israel. The United States should do what it can to further upgrade Israeli anti-missile defense systems and conduct joint air-defense exercises. Along similar lines, we support the multi-billion dollar arms sales to Kuwait, Qatar, Saudi Arabia and the United Arab Emirates that include anti-missile defense systems.

Bipartisan support exists in Congress for strengthening Israel's ability to defend itself from the Iranian threat. The House of Representatives recently passed H.R. 4133 with the purpose of enhancing Israel's defensive capabilities, including "the military capabilities necessary to deter and defend itself by itself against any threats." The House also introduced bipartisan legislation H.R. 4229, which calls for the "procurement, maintenance, and sustainment of the Iron Dome anti-missile defense system." (H.R. 4133, *The United States-Israel Enhanced Security Cooperation Act of 2012*; H.R. 4229, *Iron Dome Support Act*.)

Conclusion

President Obama and congressional leaders have been clear that the United States will not tolerate a nuclear-capable Iran. Simultaneous pursuit of diplomacy, effective sanctions and credible and visible preparations for a military option would further

**Senator Robb HASC Iran Testimony
June 20, 2012**

demonstrate President Obama's resolve to use "all elements of American power" to thwart Iran's nuclear ambitions and provide the best hope for achieving a peaceful resolution of this accelerating crisis.



BIPARTISAN POLICY CENTER

Charles Robb



Chuck Robb

Chuck Robb represented the state of Virginia during his political career. In 1978 he was elected Lieutenant Governor of Virginia and served until 1982. He served as Governor of Virginia from 1982-1986. In 1988 he was elected to the United States Senate. He was appointed by President George W. Bush as co-chair, Commission on Intelligence Capabilities of the United States Regarding Weapons of Mass Destruction 2004-2005. In 2006 he was appointed to serve on the President's Foreign Intelligence Advisory Board. He also served on the Iraq Study Group.

Publications

Board of Directors

© Copyright 2012 Bipartisan Policy Center. All rights reserved.
1225 I Street, NW Suite 1000 | Washington, DC 20005
bipartisaninfo@bipartisanpolicy.org | 202-204-2400 (main) | 202-637-9220 (fax)

**DISCLOSURE FORM FOR WITNESSES
CONCERNING FEDERAL CONTRACT AND GRANT INFORMATION**

INSTRUCTION TO WITNESSES: Rule 11, clause 2(g)(5), of the Rules of the U.S. House of Representatives for the 112th Congress requires nongovernmental witnesses appearing before House committees to include in their written statements a curriculum vitae and a disclosure of the amount and source of any federal contracts or grants (including subcontracts and subgrants) received during the current and two previous fiscal years either by the witness or by an entity represented by the witness. This form is intended to assist witnesses appearing before the House Armed Services Committee in complying with the House rule.

Witness name: Senator Charles Robb

Capacity in which appearing: (check one)

☐ Individual

☒ Representative

If appearing in a representative capacity, name of the company, association or other entity being represented: Bipartisan Policy Center

FISCAL YEAR 2011

federal grant(s) / contracts	federal agency	dollar value	subject(s) of contract or grant
none			

FISCAL YEAR 2010

federal grant(s) / contracts	federal agency	dollar value	subject(s) of contract or grant
none			

FISCAL YEAR 2009

Federal grant(s) / contracts	federal agency	dollar value	subject(s) of contract or grant
none			

Federal Contract Information: If you or the entity you represent before the Committee on Armed Services has contracts (including subcontracts) with the federal government, please provide the following information:

Number of contracts (including subcontracts) with the federal government:

Current fiscal year (2011): _____;
 Fiscal year 2010: _____;
 Fiscal year 2009: _____.

Federal agencies with which federal contracts are held:

Current fiscal year (2011): _____;
 Fiscal year 2010: _____;
 Fiscal year 2009: _____.

List of subjects of federal contract(s) (for example, ship construction, aircraft parts manufacturing, software design, force structure consultant, architecture & engineering services, etc.):

Current fiscal year (2011): _____;
 Fiscal year 2010: _____;
 Fiscal year 2009: _____.

Aggregate dollar value of federal contracts held:

Current fiscal year (2011): _____;
 Fiscal year 2010: _____;
 Fiscal year 2009: _____.

Federal Grant Information: If you or the entity you represent before the Committee on Armed Services has grants (including subgrants) with the federal government, please provide the following information:

Number of grants (including subgrants) with the federal government:

Current fiscal year (2011): _____;
Fiscal year 2010: _____;
Fiscal year 2009: _____.

Federal agencies with which federal grants are held:

Current fiscal year (2011): _____;
Fiscal year 2010: _____;
Fiscal year 2009: _____.

List of subjects of federal grants(s) (for example, materials research, sociological study, software design, etc.):

Current fiscal year (2011): _____;
Fiscal year 2010: _____;
Fiscal year 2009: _____.

Aggregate dollar value of federal grants held:

Current fiscal year (2011): _____;
Fiscal year 2010: _____;
Fiscal year 2009: _____.

STATEMENT OF STEPHEN G. RADEMAKER
Foreign Policy Project Adviser, Bipartisan Policy Center
Principal, The Podesta Group

“Addressing the Iranian Nuclear Challenge: Understanding the Military Options”

Committee on Armed Services
U.S. House of Representatives
June 20, 2012

Mr. Chairman, Congressman Smith, Members of the Committee, I appreciate the opportunity to appear before you today with Senator Chuck Robb and David Albright to discuss the growing nuclear threat that we today face from Iran.

Bipartisan Policy Center Task Force on Iran

As Senator Robb indicated in his remarks, he and I have served for over four years on a task force of the Bipartisan Policy Center (BPC) focused on the issue of Iran. It is a very distinguished group that is truly bipartisan in its composition. We issued our first report in September of 2008, prior to that year’s presidential election. As a result, we addressed our initial recommendations not to a particular U.S. Administration, but rather to both Senator Obama and Senator McCain, not knowing which of them was going to be our next President. As it turned out, Senator Obama won that election, and he proceeded to lure away two of our original task force members, Dr. Ash Carter and Ambassador Dennis Ross, both of whom have gone on to serve with great distinction in his Administration.

Our first report was entitled “Meeting the Challenge: U.S. Policy Toward Iranian Nuclear Development”.¹ In it we stated that “continued Iranian enrichment of uranium and ineffectively monitored operation of the light water reactor at Bushehr threaten U.S. and global security, regional stability, and the international nonproliferation regime.” Consequently, we concluded that “a nuclear weapons-capable Islamic Republic of Iran is strategically untenable,” and we recommended a triple-track strategy for preventing a nuclear weapons-capable Iran. As explained by Senator Robb, those three tracks are diplomacy, sanctions, and the credible threat that force may be used if the other two tracks fail.

The BPC task force on Iran proceeded to issue three additional reports on Iran: “Meeting the Challenge: Time Is Running Out” in September 2009,² “Meeting the Challenge: When Time Runs Out” in June 2010,³ and “Meeting the Challenge: Stopping the Clock” in February 2012.⁴ As suggested by the titles of the reports, we believe the Iranian nuclear threat has been

¹ <http://bipartisanpolicy.org/library/report/meeting-challenge-us-policy-toward-iranian-nuclear-development>.

² <http://bipartisanpolicy.org/library/report/meeting-challenge-time-running-out>.

³ <http://bipartisanpolicy.org/library/report/meeting-challenge-when-time-runs-out>.

⁴ <http://bipartisanpolicy.org/library/report/meeting-challenge-stopping-clock>.

growing steadily since 2008, and we have continued to recommend a triple-track strategy to prevent a nuclear weapons-capable Iran.

The consistent view of our task force has been that, of the three tracks we recommend, the third one is the most underdeveloped. There is no doubting the openness of the Obama Administration to a diplomatic settlement with Iran. Our negotiators have been in Moscow just this week seeking a diplomatic solution. Likewise, the Obama Administration, with the strong—in fact, I would say essential—help of the U.S. Congress, has also vigorously sought to step up economic sanctions on Iran. But when it comes to credibly demonstrating that, if all else fails, force will be used if necessary to prevent Iran from achieving a nuclear weapons capability, we believe U.S. policy has fallen short. We devoted much of our most recent report, issued in February of this year, to proposing measures to enhance the credibility of the military option. We also issued a paper in March, entitled “Establishing a Credible Threat Against Iran’s Nuclear Program,” spelling out in greater detail some of these measures.⁵

Senator Robb in his testimony has reviewed these recommendations, and I will not belabor them in my testimony, except to reiterate that we applaud the leadership role this Committee has taken in this year’s National Defense Authorization Act in seeking to mandate some of our recommendations. For the same reason, we also applaud the House of Representatives as a whole for the leadership it demonstrated in recently passing H.R. 4133, “The United States-Israel Enhanced Security Cooperation Act of 2012,” which among other things, called on the United States to provide Israel with additional “air refueling tankers, missile defense capabilities, and specialized munitions” such as bunker busters.

Progress of Iran’s Nuclear Program

The focus of my testimony today is on the growing nature of the Iranian threat, which forms the factual premise upon which our recommendations are based. For Iran, as for any nation seeking to develop nuclear weapons, the biggest challenge is obtaining enough fissile material—typically highly enriched uranium, or plutonium—necessary build the bombs they want. With its uranium enrichment program, Iran has the technical capability to produce highly enriched uranium, even if to date it is only known to have used that capability to produce low enriched uranium.

Of course, Iran’s continued operation of its enrichment program is illegal under international law, as the U.N. Security Council has, on six occasions since 2006, adopted binding resolutions demanding that Iran suspend uranium enrichment.⁶ Iran has simply ignored these legally binding directives of the Security Council.

⁵ <http://bipartisanpolicy.org/library/staff-paper/establishing-credible-threat-against-iran%E2%80%99s-nuclear-program>.

⁶ [Resolution 1696](#) (July 31, 2006), [Resolution 1737](#) (December 23, 2006), [Resolution 1747](#) (March 24, 2007), [Resolution 1803](#) (March 3, 2008), [Resolution 1835](#) (September 27, 2008), and [Resolution 1929](#) (June 9, 2010).

By keeping track of the progress of Iran's enrichment program, we can measure Iran's progress toward the achieving the capability to produce nuclear weapons. In tracking Iran's enrichment program, we are fortunate that the International Atomic Energy Agency (IAEA) also monitors this program and issues quarterly reports on it. Over time, these reports provide a very clear picture of the inexorable progress Iran is making. As part of our task force's work, we have carefully reviewed and interpreted the IAEA's reports. The most recent IAEA report, dated May 25, 2012, is in many ways the most troubling report in many years. Key facts which emerge from this report include:

- As of May, Iran had produced 3,345 kg of 3.5% enriched uranium⁷. This is more than ten times as much enriched uranium as Iran had produced at the time of our first report in September 2008. With further enrichment, this would be enough enriched uranium for approximately two nuclear weapons.
- The rate at which 3.5% enriched uranium was being produced between February and May 2012 was the highest ever, 158 kg per month. This is 37% higher than the rate achieved in any previous period, and more than three times the rate of production before the Stuxnet worm disabled some of Iran's centrifuges.
- As of May, Iran was feeding UF₆ into more centrifuges than ever before, 8,818. However, this was only ten more operating centrifuges than were counted during the previous report, meaning that the 37% increase in production was achieved almost entirely by increasing the efficiency of operations, not by deploying additional centrifuges. These facts should put to rest the debate that had been taking place among experts about whether Iran had encountered technical obstacles as a result of Stuxnet or other problems that would constrain Iran's rate of progress. Regrettably, it appears that if Iran was facing such technical obstacles, they have now been overcome.
- Iran's production rate for 20% enriched uranium increased 25% over the previous reporting period. As a result, Iran now has 98.4 kg of uranium enriched to 20%, amounting to almost two-thirds of the 155 kg of this material needed (with further enrichment) for a nuclear bomb. All of this material has been produced over the past two and a half years, since Iran began enriching to 20%.
- At the rate of production that has now been achieved, Iran will be able to produce 2000 kg of 3.5% enriched uranium annually—more than the 1,850 kg needed (with further enrichment) for a nuclear bomb.

⁷ Uranium is enriched in a gaseous form known as uranium hexafluoride (UF₆). The IAEA reports its data in kilograms of UF₆. The BPC has measured Iran's progress in kilograms of solid uranium produced. Consistent with BPC practice, the numbers in this statement are for uranium metal. One kilogram of UF₆ can be processed into approximately .67 kg of uranium metal.

- Similarly, at the rate of 20% production that has now been achieved, Iran will be able to produce 102 kg of 20% enriched uranium annually—two-thirds of the 155 kg needed (with further enrichment) for a nuclear bomb.
- The IAEA revealed that it had detected uranium particles enriched to 27% at the deeply buried Fordow enrichment facility, which it had previously declared to be limited to the production of 20% enriched uranium. Iran reportedly claimed that it had enriched to this higher level by mistake. At best, this finding underscores the ability Iran now has to enrich to substantially higher levels. At worst, it may reflect preparations by Iran to begin producing highly enriched uranium for allegedly peaceful purposes, something that a recent report by David Albright and two of his colleagues at the Institute for Science and International Security warned may be in prospect.⁸

As a result of the progress Iran has achieved, it could, if it so wished, produce a nuclear weapon very quickly. According to Gregory S. Jones, who has served as an expert consultant to the BPC's Iran Task Force, as well as to the Nonproliferation Policy Education Center, Iran's demonstrated enrichment capabilities would permit it to produce a nuclear weapon from its existing stockpile of nuclear material within 35 to 106 days.⁹ Last November, by contrast, the corresponding estimate was 60 to 180 days. Further, once Iran has built a stockpile 155 kg of 20% enriched uranium (the minimum needed for a nuclear weapon), which it can be expected to do by November 2012 at the current rate of enrichment to 20%, this window could close to just eight days.

Of course, there are many reasons why Iran may not rush to produce a nuclear weapon as soon as having one is within reach. But these timelines suggest how close Iran now is to having nuclear weapons if it wants them, and how much progress it is making in being able to have them in very short order.

Significance of the Threat

Our task force reports have spelled out the many reasons why a nuclear weapons-capable Iran is strategically untenable for the United States. Key reasons include:

- Iran is a state sponsor of terrorism, and cannot be trusted not provide nuclear weapons to terrorist groups that it backs, including Hezbollah and Hamas, who may in turn use such weapons against the United States or its allies.

⁸ David Albright, Andrea Stricker, and Christina Walrond, "Déjà vu at Fordow? What are Iran's enrichment plans?," June 4, 2012, <http://isis-online.org/isis-reports/detail/deja-vu-at-fordow-what-are-irans-enrichment-plans/>.

⁹ Gregory S. Jones, "Iran's Rapid Enrichment Progress Moves It Ever Closer to a Nuclear Weapons Capability: Centrifuge Enrichment and the IAEA May 25, 2012 Safeguards Update," June 6, 2012, http://npolicy.org/article_file/Iran_Rapid_Enrichment_Progress.pdf.

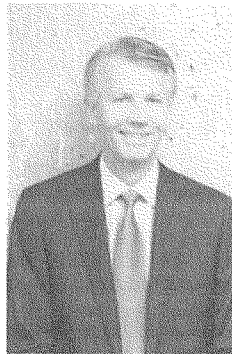
- Israel views possession by Iran of nuclear weapons as an existential threat, and is resolved not accept nuclear weapons in Iran.
- Iran's other neighbors, particularly the Sunni Arab governments of the Persian Gulf region, worry that Iran would use nuclear weapons to intimidate them and establish hegemony over their oil-rich region.
- Even if Iran did not use nuclear weapons, its mere possession of them (or the belief that it possessed them) would embolden Iran to act even more aggressively in its use of terror and conventional military threats than is already the case.
- Traditional deterrence as it was practiced during the Cold War is unlikely to be effective against Iran, and nuclear deterrence between Israel and Iran may prove particularly unstable.
- Other countries in the region that feel threatened by a nuclear armed Iran can be expected to seek to match Iran's nuclear capabilities, giving rise to the risk that the global nuclear nonproliferation regime will unravel as a result the achievement by Iran of a nuclear weapons capability.
- The combination of all these factors means that the global supply of oil—20 percent of which passes through the Strait of Hormuz—would be at considerable risk if Iran comes to possess, or is believed to possess, nuclear weapons. While many observers have commented on the risk to oil supplies and oil prices of military action against Iran, too little attention has been paid to those same risks in the event that Iran succeeds in producing nuclear weapons.

For all these reasons, our task force stands by its conclusion that achievement by Iran of a nuclear weapons capability would be strategically untenable. Accordingly, we urge both Congress and the Administration to uphold President Obama's commitment to "use all elements of American power" to prevent Iran from achieving such a capability.



BIPARTISAN POLICY CENTER

Stephen G. Rademaker



Stephen G. Rademaker is a National Security Project Advisor at the Bipartisan Policy Center. He is currently a Principal at the Podesta Group in Washington, DC. Mr. Rademaker previously held a variety of positions in all three branches of government over a period of more than twenty years.

Most recently, he worked on the staff of Senate Majority Leader Bill Frist, where he served as Policy Director for National Security Affairs and Senior Counsel. In this position he assisted the Majority Leader in managing all aspects of the legislative process relating to foreign policy, defense, intelligence, and homeland security matters, including pertinent authorization and appropriations bills, presidential nominations, and treaties.

In 2002, Mr. Rademaker was confirmed by the Senate as an Assistant Secretary of State, and from then until 2006 he headed at various times three bureaus of the Department of State, including the Bureau of Arms Control and the Bureau of International Security and Nonproliferation. He directed nonproliferation policy toward Iran and North Korea, as well as the Proliferation Security Initiative. He also led semiannual strategic dialogues with Russia, China, India, and Pakistan, and headed U.S. delegations to numerous international conferences, including the 7th Review Conference of the Nuclear Nonproliferation Treaty in 2005.

Immediately prior to joining the Department of State, Mr. Rademaker was Chief Counsel to the Select Committee on Homeland Security of the U.S. House of Representatives, where he was responsible for drafting the legislation that created the Department of Homeland Security.

For most of the previous decade, Mr. Rademaker held positions on the staff of the Committee on International Relations of the House of Representatives, including Deputy Staff Director and Chief Counsel (2001-2002), Chief Counsel (1995-2001), and Minority Chief Counsel (1993-1995). While on the staff of the International Relations Committee, he played a key role in developing the Committee's legislative and oversight agenda. He also advised members of the Committee on such issues as the deployment of U.S. armed forces abroad, NATO enlargement, arms control, nonproliferation, foreign assistance, international law, reorganization of the foreign affairs agencies, and the promotion of democracy and human rights.

From 1992 to 1993, Mr. Rademaker served as General Counsel of the Peace Corps. He returned briefly to the agency in 2000-2001 as the Bush-Cheney Transition's Director of Transition for the Peace Corps.

From 1989 to 1992, Mr. Rademaker held a joint appointment as Associate Counsel to the President in the Office of Counsel to the

President and as Deputy Legal Adviser to the National Security Council. In this position, he provided legal advice to the President and the National Security Advisor on foreign assistance, arms control, war powers, intelligence, export control, counter-narcotics, and international environmental and economic matters.

From 1987 to 1989, Mr. Rademaker served as a Special Assistant to the Assistant Secretary of State for Inter-American Affairs. From 1986 to 1987, he served as Counsel to the Vice Chairman of the U.S. International Trade Commission. In 1986 he was a law clerk for the Honorable James L. Buckley of the U.S. Court of Appeals for the District of Columbia Circuit. From 1984 to 1986, he was an associate at the Washington, D.C. law firm of Covington & Burling.

Mr. Rademaker received three degrees from the University of Virginia: a B.A. With Highest Distinction in 1981, a J.D. in 1984, and an M.A. in Foreign Affairs in 1985. While at the University of Virginia he was made a member of Phi Beta Kappa and the Order of the Coif. He was elected Student Body President for 1980-81.

Mr. Rademaker is married and has four children.

Foreign Policy Project

© Copyright 2012 Bipartisan Policy Center. All rights reserved.
1225 I Street, NW Suite 1000 | Washington, DC 20005
bipartisaninfo@bipartisanpolicy.org | 202-204-2400 (main) | 202-637-9220 (fax)

**DISCLOSURE FORM FOR WITNESSES
CONCERNING FEDERAL CONTRACT AND GRANT INFORMATION**

INSTRUCTION TO WITNESSES: Rule 11, clause 2(g)(5), of the Rules of the U.S. House of Representatives for the 112th Congress requires nongovernmental witnesses appearing before House committees to include in their written statements a curriculum vitae and a disclosure of the amount and source of any federal contracts or grants (including subcontracts and subgrants) received during the current and two previous fiscal years either by the witness or by an entity represented by the witness. This form is intended to assist witnesses appearing before the House Armed Services Committee in complying with the House rule.

Witness name: STEPHEN RADEMAKER

Capacity in which appearing: (check one)

☐ Individual

☒ Representative

If appearing in a representative capacity, name of the company, association or other entity being represented: BIPARTISAN POLICY CENTER

FISCAL YEAR 2011

federal grant(s) / contracts	federal agency	dollar value	subject(s) of contract or grant
NONE			

FISCAL YEAR 2010

federal grant(s) / contracts	federal agency	dollar value	subject(s) of contract or grant
NONE			

FISCAL YEAR 2009

Federal grant(s)/ contracts	federal agency	dollar value	subject(s) of contract or grant
NONE			

Federal Contract Information: If you or the entity you represent before the Committee on Armed Services has contracts (including subcontracts) with the federal government, please provide the following information:

Number of contracts (including subcontracts) with the federal government:

Current fiscal year (2011): _____;
 Fiscal year 2010: _____;
 Fiscal year 2009: _____.

Federal agencies with which federal contracts are held:

Current fiscal year (2011): _____;
 Fiscal year 2010: _____;
 Fiscal year 2009: _____.

List of subjects of federal contract(s) (for example, ship construction, aircraft parts manufacturing, software design, force structure consultant, architecture & engineering services, etc.):

Current fiscal year (2011): _____;
 Fiscal year 2010: _____;
 Fiscal year 2009: _____.

Aggregate dollar value of federal contracts held:

Current fiscal year (2011): _____;
 Fiscal year 2010: _____;
 Fiscal year 2009: _____.

Federal Grant Information: If you or the entity you represent before the Committee on Armed Services has grants (including subgrants) with the federal government, please provide the following information:

Number of grants (including subgrants) with the federal government:

Current fiscal year (2011): _____;
Fiscal year 2010: _____;
Fiscal year 2009: _____.

Federal agencies with which federal grants are held:

Current fiscal year (2011): _____;
Fiscal year 2010: _____;
Fiscal year 2009: _____.

List of subjects of federal grants(s) (for example, materials research, sociological study, software design, etc.):

Current fiscal year (2011): _____;
Fiscal year 2010: _____;
Fiscal year 2009: _____.

Aggregate dollar value of federal grants held:

Current fiscal year (2011): _____;
Fiscal year 2010: _____;
Fiscal year 2009: _____.

Testimony of David Albright
Before the House Committee on Armed Services
Addressing the Iranian Nuclear Challenge:
Understanding the Military Options

June 20, 2012

Military options, on balance, remain uncertain in their ability to end Iran's quest for nuclear weapons or even significantly delay their acquisition, absent sustained bombing of a wide range of military and nuclear targets. It is doubtful that a surgical strike against a few nuclear facilities can succeed in slowing an Iranian effort to obtain an atomic bomb. Military strikes invite retaliation and increase the chance of a regional military confrontation that risks severely damaging U.S. and its allies' interests. As such, military options are rightly viewed as a last resort. Despite their risks they have not been taken off the table by the U.S. government.

Increasing pressure with the aim of seeking negotiated concessions from Iran is the preferred route forward to prevent Iran from getting nuclear weapons. But in parallel to that strategy is the priority of efforts to detect, thwart, and deter Iran's acquisition of nuclear weapons. Iran also needs to understand that if it tries to build nuclear weapons, the United States will stop it by using a wide variety of means that include a U.S. military response, despite the inherent risks of such strikes.

The factors influencing Israel's decision-making about if or when it would attack Iran's nuclear sites can complicate U.S. decision-making. Israel's military capabilities are far less extensive than those of the United States, and Israel worries more about Iran achieving a level of technical nuclear proficiency so robust that the elimination of this program would exceed Israeli military capabilities. As a result, Israel may preventively attack Iran militarily with the aim of pre-empting the emergence of the means for a rapid Iranian breakout. Such an attack could occur before Iran has made a decision to start construction of nuclear weapons.

Reconciling these two approaches to military options remains difficult. The United States should not encourage or aid Israel to attack Iran. The United States should also not expect any prior warning of such an attack, although clearly that would be desired.

In the near term, military options should be avoided; however, Iran should understand that a military strike is highly likely if it tries to acquire nuclear weapons. Iran's fear of military strikes helps to deter it from deciding to build nuclear weapons in the first place.

If military strikes do occur despite all attempts to avoid them, they should be accompanied by a clear, international strategy that would impose a robust inspection regime on Iran that can detect and dismantle any nuclear weapons efforts and provide assurance that such efforts will not occur in the future.

Iran's Shortening Breakout Times Do Not Necessitate Military Options

A central consideration in assessing the threat of Iran building nuclear weapons is the timeline for Iran to acquire them following a decision to do so. Overall, Iran would need about a year to build a crude nuclear explosive device and longer to build a warhead for a ballistic missile. The “long pole in the tent” of such an effort is Iran’s lack of sufficient weapon-grade uranium (WGU). It is assessed as not possessing weapon-grade uranium, and thus its priority would be the production of enough for a nuclear weapon, or more likely several nuclear weapons. Iran is also assessed as not yet having a secret centrifuge plant enriching uranium and it is unlikely to have one until at least the end of 2013.

In that light, Iran may seek to divert its existing stocks of low enriched uranium (LEU), enriching this material further up to weapon-grade as fast as it can. Iran’s goal would be to accumulate enough weapon-grade uranium before it was detected and the United States and other nations responded, likely militarily destroying the facilities doing the enrichment.

As Iran further develops its gas centrifuge capabilities, breakout times are shortening. However, they remain long enough to allow for detection and prevention. A breakout is very risky for Iran and the acquisition of a nuclear explosive would take time. An Iranian breakout would likely be detected before it could obtain enough weapon-grade uranium for a nuclear weapon and long before it could assemble one. During this period, it would be vulnerable to devastating consequences.

The estimated breakout times today and at least through next year are long enough that the United States need not concede Iran the ability to build nuclear weapons in secret, which would in essence be whenever it wants. Iran’s nuclear weapons capabilities are growing, but detection of a breakout is well within U.S. and International Atomic Energy Agency (IAEA) capabilities, as is the ability of the United States and its allies to respond. Nonetheless, despite existing detection capabilities, every effort should be taken to improve them, both through improved IAEA monitoring inside the facilities and U.S. and allied intelligence operations.

ISIS has estimated Iranian breakout times under a variety of circumstances with the aid of an U.S. centrifuge expert with decades of experience in modeling centrifuge operations. These estimates seek a minimum time for Iran to accumulate enough weapon-grade uranium for a nuclear weapon. In practice, breakout times may be even longer than predicted. For example, Iran may know in theory how to enrich to weapon-grade but in practice may encounter difficulties and unexpected inefficiencies. Iran has found enrichment very difficult and far more time consuming than expected. Regardless of the extent of its past or on-going nuclear weaponization activities, Iran has not made a bomb and has not likely mastered the technology to weaponize weapon-grade uranium. That process will likely go slower than expected too. Furthermore, Iran may want to achieve a high level of confidence about its ability to avoid detection prior to producing WGU

before it decided to break out. And it may want to produce more weapon-grade uranium than enough for a single nuclear weapon.

Sometimes military strikes are put forth as a way to conclusively solve the Iranian nuclear issue. But they can have serious negative repercussions for the United States if an attack does not go well. Today, Iran does not yet have a rapid, secret way to breakout and produce weapon-grade uranium and will not for some time. Iran is also deterred from breaking out, and the threat of military action plays an important role in creating that deterrence. Military options are at one end of a spectrum where the other end is diplomacy and sanctions. There are many tools in between, including denial of critical goods for its nuclear program, interdictions, enhanced intelligence surveillance, sabotage, and cyber attacks, which can slow or even stop Iran's nuclear progress. The focus should be to strengthen efforts along that spectrum, while ensuring that Iran perceives U.S. military strikes as credible.

Breakout Estimates in More Detail

Iran is currently assessed as not having decided to build a nuclear weapon but it could build a crude nuclear device in a year.

Although Iran is engaged in nuclear hedging, no evidence has emerged that the regime has decided to build nuclear weapons. Such a decision may be unlikely to occur until Iran is first able to augment its enrichment capability to a point where it would have the ability to make weapon-grade uranium quickly and perhaps secretly. Its efforts to master uranium enrichment have gone slower than it likely expected, and international pressure that delayed its progress has been greater than anticipated.

If Iran wanted to build nuclear weapons today, it could build a nuclear device suitable for underground detonation or crude delivery in 10-12 months. The weapon-grade uranium it requires would be derived from its gas centrifuge program, which is Iran's most advanced nuclear program capable of making nuclear explosive materials.

The IAEA has concluded that Iran has the know-how to build a crude nuclear explosive device that it could detonate underground or deliver by aircraft or ship. It would take Iran longer to build a deliverable warhead for its Shahab 3 or Sajiil 2 ballistic missiles because Iran is believed to require more time to master the construction of a reliable, miniaturized warhead for these missiles.

Iran has several paths to nuclear weapons if it decided to build them.

Given existing constraints, what are Iran's realistic options to get nuclear weapons over the next several years? Iran has essentially two broad sets of options to acquire nuclear weapons from the current period through 2015. The first involves a set of cheating scenarios, where Iran remains a member of the Nuclear Non-Proliferation Treaty (NPT) as long as possible while further developing its nuclear weapons capabilities. Hedging is a critical part of this strategy. The second is that Iran formally withdraws from the NPT

and then dedicates nuclear facilities to making nuclear weapons outside of the non-proliferation regime.

An [ISIS report](#) to the United States Institute of Peace released on March 5, 2012 discusses a range of options that Iran may pursue to obtain nuclear weapons. ISIS identified four main options that Iran may use during the next several years:

- Dash at a Declared Enrichment Site
- Dash at a Covert Enrichment Site
- Cheating in Plain Sight
- A Parallel Program

In all cases, these potential nuclear futures are not inevitable. International actions may delay or prevent them. Iran may decide that the potential costs are too high and choose not to pursue any of them. Despite the existing constraints, however, Iran may also decide that at some point obtaining nuclear weapons is worth the risk.

How quickly could Iran break out today at the Natanz Fuel Enrichment Plant?

The underground Natanz Fuel Enrichment Plant (FEP) is Iran's most significant capability to produce sufficient weapon-grade uranium for a bomb, which, as of the last IAEA safeguards report, contained about 9,000 enriching gas centrifuge machines. Iran is now capable of using the FEP to conduct a dash to the bomb using safeguarded low enriched uranium to produce weapon-grade uranium. It would be expected to use both its existing stock of over six tonnes of 3.5 percent LEU hexafluoride and a stock of about 100 kilograms of near 20 percent LEU hexafluoride.

In order to conduct a dash using LEU at Natanz, Iran would need to visibly violate its commitments under the NPT, including diverting the LEU from IAEA safeguards and likely ejecting IAEA inspectors from the country. Although only minor modifications may be necessary in the Natanz FEP infrastructure before Iran could start to enrich to weapon-grade levels, any dash using the FEP would not proceed quickly. Based on ISIS's most recent calculations, reflecting reduced performance of the centrifuges in the FEP over the last year, but more enriching centrifuges, Iran would need about four months to produce enough weapon-grade uranium for just one bomb.¹ And in undertaking such a risky effort in which its facilities could be destroyed by military strikes, Iran would likely want to be able to produce enough weapon-grade uranium to make several weapons.

¹ This estimate is a shorter breakout time than an earlier one published by ISIS, which was seven months. The reduction in time reflects the 9,000 IR-1 centrifuges now enriching at the FEP, compared to 4,000-6,000 when the first estimate was done. Theoretically, this newer estimate could be somewhat shorter, but on-going performance problems in FEP cascades and limitations imposed by the design of the facility lead to a longer breakout time than theoretically possible. These performance problems have in many cases exceeded those problems factored into this recent breakout estimate, which could result in a longer breakout time or the need for even more LEU feed.

Four months would provide more than enough time for the international community to impose draconian international sanctions against Iran. Despite the FEP's underground location, it is vulnerable to air strikes. Iran would likely fear that one or more countries would conduct military strikes that could effectively destroy this facility, long before it could use its centrifuges there to produce enough weapon-grade uranium for even a single bomb. It goes without saying that Iran takes seriously Israeli threats of military strikes. Iran may pause before inviting them by dashing to weapon-grade uranium at Natanz in blatant violation of the NPT.

What are the timelines and implications of Iran's continued production of near 20 percent low enriched uranium?

As Iran's stock of 19.75 percent enriched uranium increases, the amount of time it needs to produce weapon-grade uranium for nuclear weapons decreases significantly. At current rates of production of 19.75 percent LEU, Iran will have enough of this material by early next year, if further enriched to weapon-grade in a breakout, for a nuclear weapon. If Iran modestly expands its capability to make 19.75 percent LEU consistent with its existing plans, it could have enough for a nuclear weapon by the end of 2012. Production of enough for a second nuclear weapon would take many additional months. For more information about this estimate, see an [ISIS report from June 15, 2012](#).

Because the Fordow enrichment plant is so deeply buried, it raises concerns that Iran will try to break out at this site, believing that it is impervious to military strikes or that breakout can be achieved prior to a military strike. Predicting when or if Iran would break out at Fordow remains difficult, but it would likely want to have sufficient 19.75 percent LEU for more than one nuclear weapon and ensure it could break out rapidly after a decision to do so. However, regardless of an exact timeline, the dedication of this site to the production of 19.75 percent LEU and its extreme fortifications increase the chance of military strikes aimed at preempting the emergence of the means for a more rapid Iranian breakout.

The ability to fully destroy the Fordow site is open to debate, but nonetheless, the United States and Israel have the military capability to shut down operations at the facility for some period of time where the United States would likely be able to keep the facility closed longer. If Iran seeks to break out at Fordow only, once it has enough 19.75 percent LEU, the time to produce enough weapon-grade uranium for a nuclear weapon is estimated to be about 2.5 to 3.5 months. This is a lower bound estimate which assumes that the site is fully outfitted with IR-1 centrifuges which are all working well. Currently less than half this number of centrifuges are enriching uranium, and if this number were operating in a breakout, Iran would need roughly 4.5 to 6.5 months to break out. It is uncertain if the site will be fully outfitted by the time it accumulates enough 19.75 percent LEU hexafluoride for a nuclear weapon. In any case, there is adequate time for both the detection of a breakout and a U.S. response.

Iran could reduce the time it needs to break out using a stock of 19.75 percent LEU by using the relatively large numbers of centrifuges at the Natanz enrichment site to do the

enriching to weapon-grade. Breakout times could be as short as roughly one month, although practical difficulties would likely increase this time. In contrast, as discussed above, if Iran had to rely mainly on its stock of 3.5 percent LEU, breakout times are several months to obtain enough weapon-grade uranium for a nuclear weapon. But even with a relatively short breakout time of one month, the Natanz site is highly vulnerable to military strikes and regularly visited by IAEA inspectors. On balance, Iran is likely deterred from breaking out there.

But Iran's current trajectory at Fordow is increasing the chance of a military confrontation. To reduce the tensions caused by the Fordow site and Iran's increasing stocks of 19.75 percent LEU, a priority in the short term is obtaining an Iranian agreement to stop producing uranium enriched over five percent and freezing the number of centrifuges at the Fordow site to no more than a few hundred. It is in the interest of all concerned to avoid an escalation of the Iranian nuclear crisis by negotiating such an agreement, and then to negotiate agreements which ensure Iran will not build nuclear weapons.

Is Iran building a secret gas centrifuge plant?

The question of whether Iran is building a third enrichment plant in secret has been an open one since former Iranian nuclear chief Ali Akbar Salehi claimed on August 16, 2010 that "studies for the location of 10 other uranium enrichment facilities" had ended, and that "the construction of one of these facilities will begin by the end of the (current Iranian) year (March 2011) or start of the next year." Succeeding nuclear head Fereydoun Abbasi-Davani said in mid-2011 that construction on additional enrichment plants was delayed by two years. Now, one year later, is Iran adding a new centrifuge plant in addition to the Natanz and Fordow centrifuge plants? Or is the plant still deferred for another year? Iran in the past secretly constructed the Natanz centrifuge site, the Kalaye Electric centrifuge research and development plant, and the deeply buried Fordow centrifuge facility.

Since March 2007, Iran has taken the position that it does not have to notify the IAEA if it begins construction of a nuclear facility, but the IAEA says that Iran has a legal obligation to do so under its current safeguards agreement. Iran's provision of information about the construction of any new enrichment sites is pertinent to instilling confidence about the peaceful nature of its nuclear activities and satisfying international concern that it could decide to make weapon-grade uranium in secret.

ISIS has assessed in the U.S. Institute of Peace report that international concern over Iran's ability to breakout in secret should increase in 2013 due to the increased possibility of constructing a hidden centrifuge enrichment site and simultaneously growing stocks of 3.5 and 19.75 percent low enriched uranium that would allow Iran to produce WGU more quickly at a secret site. It remains for Iran to abide by the simple provision of its IAEA safeguards agreements, modified Code 3.1, to provide the IAEA with advance information about its construction of additional enrichment facilities and to explain any current construction of a third enrichment site. In avoiding its responsibility under its

safeguards agreement, Iran risks that any site subsequently discovered being built in secret will be viewed as a threat, increasing the risks of military confrontation. Greater IAEA transparency would help reduce international concern about a hidden, third enrichment site.

How significantly would the deployment of advanced centrifuges affect Iran's breakout times?

Iran may start deployment of advanced centrifuges at the Fordow enrichment plant or possibly at a third enrichment site next year. Its advanced centrifuges, namely the IR-2m and perhaps the IR-4 models, are expected to achieve about 3-4 times the enrichment output of the IR-1 centrifuges. Iran is currently testing both types in production-scale cascades at the Natanz Pilot Fuel Enrichment Plant, but making progress slower than expected. After completing this testing, Iran has indicated it would deploy the advanced centrifuges, although it has not stated where it would deploy them or in what numbers. It may be unsuccessful in deploying the IR-4 centrifuge and face problems in obtaining enough raw materials to build large numbers of IR-2m centrifuges. However, with advanced centrifuges, Iran could increase by several-fold the amount of 19.75 percent LEU it can produce and it could break out with far fewer machines. Thus, the deployment of advanced centrifuges will inevitably lead to increased tensions. The risk of their deployment in a secret enrichment site is a particular cause of concern in 2014 and afterwards, according to the ISIS study for the U.S. Institute of Peace.

David Albright
President and Founder
Institute for Science and International Security

David Albright, a physicist, is founder and President of the non-profit Institute for Science and International Security (ISIS) in Washington, D.C. He directs the project work of ISIS, heads its fundraising efforts, and chairs its board of directors. In addition, he regularly publishes and conducts scientific research. He has written numerous assessments on secret nuclear weapons programs throughout the world.

Albright has published assessments in numerous technical and policy journals, including the *Bulletin of the Atomic Scientists*, *Science*, *Scientific American*, *Science and Global Security*, *Washington Quarterly*, and *Arms Control Today*. Research reports by Albright have been published by the Environmental Policy Institute in Washington, D.C. and Princeton University's Center for Energy and Environmental Studies.

Albright has co-authored four books, including the groundbreaking *World Inventory of Plutonium and Highly Enriched Uranium, 1992*, (SIPRI and Oxford University Press) written in collaboration with Frans Berkhout, of Sussex University, and William Walker, of the University of St. Andrews. A second, greatly-expanded edition entitled *Plutonium and Highly Enriched Uranium 1996: World Inventories, Capabilities and Policies* was published in March 1997. Albright is also a co-editor and contributor to *Challenges of Fissile Material Control* (ISIS Press, 1999) and *Solving the North Korean Nuclear Puzzle* (ISIS Press, 2000), which one leading expert on North Korea called "the definitive unclassified analysis of the North Korean nuclear program."

In 2010, Free Press published his book *Peddling Peril: How the Secret Nuclear Trade Arms America's Enemies*. It was listed by *The Atlantic* as one of the best foreign affairs books of 2010.

During his career, Albright has testified numerous times on nuclear issues before the U.S. Congress. He has spoken to many groups, technical workshops and conferences, briefed government decision-makers, and trained many government officials in non-proliferation policy making. The media frequently cite Albright, and he has appeared often on television and radio. A *National Journal* profile in 2004 called him a "go-to guy for media people seeking independent analysis on Iraq's WMD programs."

Albright has been cited often in the media and appeared frequently on television and radio. He has been cited regularly in the *New York Times*, *Washington Post*, *USA Today*, *Los Angeles Times*, *Newsweek*, *Time*, *Washington Times*, *Boston Globe*, *Chicago Tribune*, *London Sunday Times*, *Guardian*, *Die Zeit*, *Ashi Shimbun*, *Der Spiegel*, *Stern*, and *Times of India* and by Reuters, Associated Press, AFP and Bloomberg wire services. Albright has also appeared many times on CNN, FOX, MSNBC, ABC World News Tonight, NBC Nightly News, CBS Evening News, Newshour with Jim Lehrer, 60 Minutes, Dateline, Nightline and multiple National Public Radio shows.

Albright cooperated actively with the IAEA Action Team from 1992 until 1997, focusing on analyses of Iraqi documents and past procurement activities. In June 1996, he was the first non-governmental inspector of the Iraqi nuclear program. On this inspection mission, Albright questioned members of Iraq's former uranium enrichment programs about their statements in Iraq's draft Full, Final, and Complete Declaration. In the spring of 2003, after the fall of Baghdad, he initiated a successful effort to retrieve the only complete set of classified Iraqi documents, hidden since the 1991 Gulf War, about making gas centrifuges to enrich uranium for nuclear weapons.

From 1990 to 2001, Albright was a member of the Health Advisory Panel appointed by Colorado Governor Roy Romer. The Panel, responsible to the state's Health Department, oversees a historical assessment of the toxicological and radiological doses received by the population near the Rocky Flats nuclear weapons production site. On this panel, Albright oversaw the development of 'source' terms, which describe the type and amount of dangerous materials that left the plant during daily releases, accidents, or large-scale fires.

In 1996, Albright was appointed to the Department of Energy Openness Advisory Panel, which operates under the auspices of the Secretary of Energy Advisory Board. The panel is charged with reviewing the Department's Openness policy, which was started in 1993, with the aim of lifting the veil of Cold War secrecy that has surrounded many of the DOE's activities without jeopardizing national security.

Prior to founding ISIS, he worked as a Senior Staff Scientist at the Federation of American Scientists and as a member of the research staff of Princeton University's Center for Energy and Environmental Studies. In the early 1980s, he taught physics at George Mason University in Virginia. He has served as a consultant or contractor to the Environmental Policy Institute, the Congressional Research Service, the International Task Force on Prevention of Nuclear Terrorism, Los Alamos National Laboratory, and the International Atomic Energy Agency.

He is an American Physical Society (APS) Fellow. He was the 2006 recipient of the APS's Joseph A. Burton Forum Award. He received a 1992 Olive Branch Award for a series of articles he wrote, along with Mark Hibbs, on the Iraqi nuclear weapons program for the *Bulletin of the Atomic Scientists*. He was also a *Bulletin* contributing editor and was a guest editor of special editions of the magazine.

Prior to founding ISIS in 1993, Albright was a Senior Staff Scientist at the Federation of American Scientists and a member of the research staff of Princeton University's Center for Energy and Environmental Studies. In the early 1980s, he taught physics at George Mason University. Albright received a Masters of Science in physics from Indiana University in 1980, a Masters of Science in mathematics from Wright State University in 1977, and a Bachelor of Science from Wright State University in 1975. In addition to the Outstanding Alumni Award, Albright also received an Honorary Doctorate of Humane Letters from Wright State University in 2007.

**DISCLOSURE FORM FOR WITNESSES
CONCERNING FEDERAL CONTRACT AND GRANT INFORMATION**

INSTRUCTION TO WITNESSES: Rule 11, clause 2(g)(5), of the Rules of the U.S. House of Representatives for the 112th Congress requires nongovernmental witnesses appearing before House committees to include in their written statements a curriculum vitae and a disclosure of the amount and source of any federal contracts or grants (including subcontracts and subgrants) received during the current and two previous fiscal years either by the witness or by an entity represented by the witness. This form is intended to assist witnesses appearing before the House Armed Services Committee in complying with the House rule.

Witness name: David Albright

Capacity in which appearing: (check one)

☐ Individual

☒ Representative

If appearing in a representative capacity, name of the company, association or other entity being represented: Institute for Science and International Security

FISCAL YEAR 2011

federal grant(s) / contracts	federal agency	dollar value	subject(s) of contract or grant
grant	U.S. Institute for Peace	\$110,000	Methods to constrain Iran's nuclear program

FISCAL YEAR 2010

federal grant(s) / contracts	federal agency	dollar value	subject(s) of contract or grant
Same grant as above. This single grant was in both fiscal years 2010 and 2011			

FISCAL YEAR 2009

Federal grant(s) / contracts	federal agency	dollar value	subject(s) of contract or grant
none			

Federal Contract Information: If you or the entity you represent before the Committee on Armed Services has contracts (including subcontracts) with the federal government, please provide the following information:

Number of contracts (including subcontracts) with the federal government:

Current fiscal year (2011): 0 _____;
 Fiscal year 2010: 0 _____;
 Fiscal year 2009: 0 _____.

Federal agencies with which federal contracts are held:

Current fiscal year (2011): _____;
 Fiscal year 2010: _____;
 Fiscal year 2009: _____.

List of subjects of federal contract(s) (for example, ship construction, aircraft parts manufacturing, software design, force structure consultant, architecture & engineering services, etc.):

Current fiscal year (2011): _____;
 Fiscal year 2010: _____;
 Fiscal year 2009: _____.

Aggregate dollar value of federal contracts held:

Current fiscal year (2011): _____;
 Fiscal year 2010: _____.

Fiscal year 2009:_____.

Federal Grant Information: If you or the entity you represent before the Committee on Armed Services has grants (including subgrants) with the federal government, please provide the following information:

Number of grants (including subgrants) with the federal government:

Current fiscal year (2011):___1_____;
 Fiscal year 2010:grant was in both 2010 and
 2011_____;
 Fiscal year 2009:_____0_____.

Federal agencies with which federal grants are held:

Current fiscal year (2011):___US Institute of
 Peace_____;
 Fiscal year 2010:_____;
 Fiscal year 2009:_____.

List of subjects of federal grants(s) (for example, materials research, sociological study, software design, etc.):

Current fiscal year (2011):___non-proliferation
 research_____;
 Fiscal year 2010:_____;
 Fiscal year 2009:_____.

Aggregate dollar value of federal grants held:

Current fiscal year (2011):___\$110,000_____;
 Fiscal year 2010:_____;
 Fiscal year 2009:_____.

**WITNESS RESPONSES TO QUESTIONS ASKED DURING
THE HEARING**

JUNE 20, 2012

RESPONSES TO QUESTION SUBMITTED BY MR. FORBES

Mr. ROBB and Mr. RADEMAKER. Regarding your question about the effect of defense cuts on the credibility of the U.S. military option, there's no question sequestration presents enormous challenges to U.S. military forces, and that's one of the reasons it's especially important right now that we not appear to relax our guard or our apparent willingness to follow through with a military option in the event it becomes necessary. The United States has already undermined its credibility when it comes to preventing a nuclear-capable Iran; haphazard defense cuts like the sequester will only exacerbate the perception—in Tehran and among our own allies—that the credibility of U.S. commitments is declining. In reference to your question about potential tradeoffs between augmenting U.S. Fifth Fleet and Air Force capacity on the one hand, and the DOD Strategic Guidance's emphasis on rebalancing toward the Asia-Pacific region on the other, the sequester will affect both by forcing the military to either rely on older existing weapons systems or make do with fewer of the new capabilities the Pentagon deems necessary. That being said, Iran's continued progress toward nuclear weapons capability is the most immediate national security challenge facing the United States. Potential threats to U.S. interests in the Asia-Pacific region are less pressing and/or of lower magnitude; this realignment of U.S. global force posture is a grand strategic shift that will occur over the medium-to-long-term, while Iran's rapid recent advances means time is running out. Dealing with the Iranian threat must take precedence over the serious, but more gradual, changes required to address threats in the Asia-Pacific region. This applies both to augmenting U.S. naval and air capabilities in the Middle East, and to prepositioning supplies in that region (these supplies could be transferred to Asia-Pacific later).

Moreover, many of the measures we recommend in a BPC task force paper to augment U.S. Fifth Fleet and Air Force capacity can be accomplished by reprogramming funds in the FY2011 Omnibus Spending Bill, instead of drawing funds from the military's priorities for FY2012 and FY 2013 spending. In fact, some of these measures—such as strengthening mine countermeasures (MCM) capabilities in the region—are already being undertaken.

Regarding your question about leaks, leaks about capabilities, plans and other activities that might be under consideration ought to be avoided at all costs. They don't help the United States in any way, shape or form. [See page 23.]

Mr. ALBRIGHT. [The information was not available at the time of printing.] [See page 23.]

RESPONSE TO QUESTION SUBMITTED BY MR. TURNER

Mr. ALBRIGHT. [The information was not available at the time of printing.] [See page 27.]

RESPONSES TO QUESTIONS SUBMITTED BY MR. BROOKS

Mr. ROBB. The arbitrary nature of sequestration will hurt the U.S. military's ability to fulfill its missions, including providing a credible deterrent to aggression from a range of threats. However, the United States lacks the key elements of a successful containment strategy for dealing with Iran if and when it gains nuclear-weapons capability: credibility; robust, reliable and coordinated allies; and a deterrable enemy. U.S. credibility is hampered by the lack of certain response—officials from successive Administrations have failed to punish Iranian transgressions of previous redlines, including converting yellowcake into uranium and spinning new centrifuges. Imagining a nuclear-capable Iran presupposes that Tehran has crossed an even more significant line in the sand. Furthermore, Washington has repeatedly downplayed the viability of the U.S. military option. Thus Tehran has little reason to believe the United States would punish aggression by Iran if the latter had the cover of a nuclear capability or weapon.

The United States also lacks reliable allies to help deter a nuclear-capable Iran. With the exception of Israel, U.S. Middle Eastern allies are not strong enough to deter aggression with any certainty. Furthermore, the United States cannot bolster its credibility or compensate for weak allies by creating tripwires to trigger automatic responses to Iranian aggression, especially if U.S. forces pivot away from ground units in the Middle East to naval and air forces in the Asia-Pacific region.

Finally, the messianic leadership of the Islamic Republic may not be ideological to the point of national suicide, but historically it has pursued expansive regional aspirations. These have proven difficult enough to contain even when Iran lacked a nuclear deterrent and its regime was not dominated by hardliners. Moreover, the intentions and motivations of the Iranian regime—especially those individuals in charge of any nuclear weapons—remain opaque to the United States.

Regarding your question about the sequester's effect on a U.S. military option, there's no question that you can't cut down significantly in all of the elements of force that are necessary to carry out our responsibilities in this area and elsewhere around the world without severe strain. Because the current and previous Administrations have used the word "unacceptable" to describe a nuclear Iran, U.S. credibility is now at stake—this implies a red line requiring the United States to either take military action or lose credibility. Sequestration could undermine perceptions of U.S. resolve in addition to cutting forces and spending, and thus damage credibility. [See page 30.]

Mr. RADEMAKER. [The information was not available at the time of printing.] [See page 29.]

QUESTIONS SUBMITTED BY MEMBERS POST HEARING

JUNE 20, 2012

QUESTIONS SUBMITTED BY MR. LANGEVIN

Mr. LANGEVIN. Do you view Iran's recent announcement that they are pursuing development of a nuclear submarine as a complicating factor to international efforts to constrain Iran's highly enriched uranium production?

Mr. ROBB. I would echo Mr. Rademaker's comment that Iran has sought pretexts to enrich uranium to higher levels for a long time, and I don't see how developing a nuclear-powered submarine provides such a justification. Tehran's announcement does point to a larger issue we cover in our report, which is Iran's long history of acting inimically to U.S. interests in the Middle East. In addition to its opposition to the Middle East peace process and support for terrorism and proxy warfare across the region, Iran is actively pursuing naval and ballistic missile capabilities to threaten U.S. forces and allies. Announcing plans to develop a nuclear-powered submarine could perhaps be seen as a longer-term aspect of this military buildup.

Mr. LANGEVIN. Any potential military action would of course not occur in a vacuum, but would greatly affect an extremely complex geopolitical situation in the broader region. How might a strike affect our work with nations such as Russia and China in other areas—for example, the conflict in Syria? Can you walk us through the ramifications of a strike on Iran for our allies in the region—most specifically, Jordan, Turkey, Saudi Arabia, and Iraq?

Mr. ROBB. While Syria is a concern, the BPC Iran Initiative (which I co-chair) has not addressed the potential effects of the military option on such issues.

In reference to your question about the ramifications of a strike on Iran for our regional allies, our BPC Iran Initiative has discussed the potential consequences in our 2010 and 2012 reports on Iran's nuclear program. While it would be difficult to predict accurately the specific outcomes of any strike, Iran could retaliate by attempting to attack Persian Gulf energy installations or fulfill its threat to close the Strait of Hormuz. These actions would imperil Iraq and our GCC allies. Iran's Islamic Revolutionary Guard Corps (IRGC) might also attempt to unleash its proxy forces—most worryingly, Lebanese Hezbollah—against Israel and other U.S. regional allies. There would be the potential for any such conflict to spill over to Jordan, Turkey and elsewhere in the region. This could be aggravated by the instability in Syria, which is Iran's main Arab state ally and Tehran's primary lifeline to Hezbollah.

In the immediate aftermath of a strike, U.S. policymakers would have to make crystal clear that the United States will stand by our regional allies in any conflict with Iran. The Pentagon should augment its military capabilities in the region—particularly air and naval forces—to protect the Strait of Hormuz, reassure allies and prevent or respond to Iranian retaliation. The President would also need to make clear to the world that Iran's actions have been in longstanding violation of United Nations resolutions and the Nuclear Non-Proliferation Treaty (NPT).

Beyond managing a post-strike crisis, Washington would need to work with these allies to strengthen their defenses against possible Iranian and/or proxy counter-attacks. U.S. policymakers should also be prepared to release oil from the Strategic Petroleum Reserve (SPR), work closely with Saudi Arabia to produce more oil and cooperate with regional allies to ensure maximum possible oil exports through the Persian Gulf, Turkey or the Red Sea.

These costs—of a strike and its aftermath—must be weighed against the costs of living with a nuclear-capable Iran. A nuclear-capable Iran would threaten U.S. and regional security and set off a proliferation cascade across the Middle East. Iran and Israel would be locked into an unstable confrontation resembling a perpetual Cuban Missile Crisis. Iran would be in a position to transfer nuclear materials to its terrorist proxies, threaten Israel's existence, embolden radicals, increase its opposition to the Middle East peace process and destabilize moderate Arab regimes. It would also seek to dominate the energy-rich Persian Gulf emirates and OPEC, which would heighten the risk to secure oil supplies. This would have serious negative implications for the U.S. economy: every \$10 rise in annual oil prices equates to a nearly 0.5 percent decline in U.S. GDP.

Mr. LANGEVIN. As you know, additional U.S. sanctions are scheduled to go into place on June 28th, targeted against Iran's central bank, and an EU oil embargo

will begin on July 1st. It is reasonable to assume that these sanctions will compound the difficulties experienced by the Iranian regime. How long, in your view, will it take for these additional sanctions to reach full effect?

Mr. RADEMAKER. The effects of these sanctions are already being felt. European Union consumers of Iranian oil—accounting for roughly one-fifth of Iran's exports in 2011—have already diminished to near-zero as member countries reduced purchases in advance of the E.U. oil embargo beginning July 1. Similarly, Iran's major Asian buyers (China, India, Japan and South Korea, which combined for 70 percent of Iran's exports in 2011) cut imports from Iran to receive sanctions waivers from the United States. These customers will likely increase their purchases over the second half of 2012. Therefore, in terms of their impact on the main source of Tehran's revenue, the high-water mark for U.S. and E.U. sanctions may have already occurred, just as the sanctions officially come into force.

Our Task Force maintains that sanctions against Iran can be a useful tool in pressuring Iran and demonstrating resolve, as long as they are enforced completely and have a near-term deadline. Because they are not fully enforced, and because they are not part of a comprehensive triple-track strategy, these sanctions may lull policymakers into the false belief of progress and thus waste more time as Tehran gets closer its nuclear goal.

QUESTIONS SUBMITTED BY MR. FRANKS

Mr. FRANKS. Statements by the intelligence community seem to indicate that there is a consensus of belief that Iran has not yet decided to make a nuclear bomb. How confident are you in this assessment and do you believe the intelligence community will accurately predict if and when Iran does make that decision?

Mr. ROBB and Mr. RADEMAKER. Assuming it acquires all the necessary components, it may be difficult to discern whether, or when, Iran decides to actually assemble a working nuclear bomb. Our Iran Initiative at BPC maintains that Iran is pursuing—and advancing toward—a nuclear weapons capability. Iran is most likely to amass the components of a nuclear device without assembling them or conducting a test explosion, thus remaining “a screwdriver's turn” away from a weapon, while promoting ambiguity about its true intentions and status. In this way, Tehran can gain the benefits of a de facto nuclear deterrent without incurring legal and political repercussions. It is this eventuality that the United States should be aiming to prevent, as suggested by bipartisan resolutions in the U.S. Senate and House of Representatives.

The difference in language between “developing a nuclear weapon” and achieving “nuclear weapons capability” is significant, so the confusion is potentially dangerous. A country can be considered to have developed a nuclear weapon once it has assembled the three main components of a nuclear weapon and successfully tested it. First, fissile material: either highly enriched uranium (HEU) or plutonium, that can release massive, destructive amounts of energy. Second, the device, or “weapon,” which creates the nuclear explosion by triggering a nuclear chain reaction in the fissile material. Third, a delivery mechanism—bomb, missile, or some unconventional means—that gets the weapon to its target. A nuclear weapons capability is achieved when a country has all the requisite technology and components, but has not yet assembled them or tested a weapon. Iran already possesses delivery mechanisms, both in the form of ballistic missiles capable of carrying nuclear payloads and an extensive network of terrorist organizations that could deliver a nuclear weapon by other, less conventional means. The International Atomic Energy Agency (IAEA), which is tasked with monitoring and reporting Iran's enrichment activities, has expressed serious concerns about Iran's efforts to develop a nuclear explosive device, including Tehran's denial of access to a military base where explosives testing for a nuclear device may have occurred. More important, Iran's progress toward a nuclear weapons capability is more easily verified than weaponization, and it is its enrichment program that is the best indicator of Iran's progress toward nuclear weapons capability. Fissile material production has historically been the most difficult and time-intensive hurdle to developing nuclear weapons. Thus, if Iran begins producing highly enriched uranium, policymakers will have to assume Iran has achieved nuclear weapons capability. Once Iran acquires fissile material, U.S. policymakers, military leaders and strategic planners should assume that Tehran has a nuclear weapons capability, even if it chooses not to test its device. U.S. intelligence agencies have never before predicted any country's initial test of a nuclear weapon. The Soviet Union's nuclear test in 1949, France's test in 1960, China's acquisition of nuclear bombs in 1964, India's tests in 1974 and 1998, and advanced Libyan, Syrian and Iraqi programs each surprised the U.S. intelligence community.

U.S. government agencies still lack a robust capability to detect the development or transfer of nuclear weapons capabilities by Iran. Accordingly, if Iran sought to assemble a nuclear weapon, we would likely only detect it after the weapon was tested, by which time it would be too late. If the administration's intent is to prevent a nuclear Iran, it should draw a red line that is clear, verifiable and preventable before it is too late. The red line should be nuclear weapons capability, not the imperceptible turning of the screwdriver to assemble a weapon.

Mr. FRANKS. What is the current state of Iranian launch vehicle technology and what can we do to eliminate or degrade that technology to ensure it is not used to deliver a nuclear weapon whether by ICBM, or MRBM launched from an offshore ship?

Mr. ROBB and Mr. RADEMAKER. Iran is known to possess the largest deployed arsenal of short- (SRBM) and medium-range (MRBM) ballistic missiles in the Middle East. These vehicles are capable of reaching targets across the Middle East, South Asia and Eastern Europe, including U.S. and allied military installations. I don't think any of us have access to current intelligence on what exactly Iran is doing to develop intermediate- (IRBM) or intercontinental-range (ICBM) ballistic missiles that could strike Western Europe or the U.S. homeland. We only know that they've consistently sought missiles with increasingly greater ranges, as evidenced by their February 2010 test launch of a satellite rocket. They are likely years, if not a decade or more, away from developing booster rockets capable of carrying an ICBM to the U.S. eastern seaboard. Iran is not known to possess any submarine-launched ballistic missile (SLBM) capability; its Russian-made Kilo-class diesel submarines cannot launch such weapons. Its entire ballistic missile arsenal must instead be launched from land-based silos and road-mobile launch systems.

These missiles could be used as delivery vehicles for a nuclear weapon, if Iran develops a nuclear warhead and sufficient fissile material for a bomb. The International Atomic Energy Agency (IAEA) estimates Iran's enriched uranium stockpile is enough to produce two nuclear bombs, with further enrichment. The IAEA also stated it believes Iran has conducted work on an explosive device that could be utilized in a warhead.

To eliminate or degrade Iran's launch vehicle technology, the United States and its international partners have passed U.N. Security Council Resolutions sanctioning Iran's ballistic missile program: 1696 (2006), 1737 (2006), 1747 (2007), 1803 (2008), 1835 (2008) and 1929 (2010). The United States has also deployed, or supported the deployment of, a range of missile defense capabilities to deter or deny Iranian ballistic missile launches against potential U.S. and allied targets. These include: two Aegis-equipped U.S. Navy cruisers in the Persian Gulf; Patriot interceptor batteries in Bahrain, Israel, Kuwait, Qatar, Saudi Arabia and the United Arab Emirates; X-band missile-defense radars in Israel, Qatar and Turkey; and U.S. funding for Israel's Arrow missile defense system. Moreover, in May 2012 the House of Representatives passed H.R. 4133 (The United States-Israel Enhanced Security Cooperation Act of 2012). In addition to echoing our BPC task force paper's strong recommendations on the necessity of bolstering Israel's military option by providing it with aerial refueling tankers and bunker busting munitions, this legislation called on the United States to assist Israel in procuring the Iron Dome missile defense system to intercept rockets and artillery launched by Iranian proxy forces in Lebanon, Gaza and elsewhere.

Ultimately the United States can only eliminate this threat by demonstrating an ironclad resolve to prevent a nuclear-weapons capable Iran, ideally through a peaceful, diplomatic resolution. Such a negotiated solution would include stipulations requiring Iran to make its weaponization activities much more transparent to the international community and answer the questions raised by the IAEA about its work on weapons design. These concerns of the international community have been captured in the U.N. Security Council Resolutions listed above.

Mr. FRANKS. How are we responding, and might we better respond, to China's and India's circumventing economic sanctions by using their own currencies rather than dollars to buy Iranian oil?

Mr. ROBB and Mr. RADEMAKER. We applaud the work of Congress and the Administration to enact tough sanctions against financial institutions transacting with the Central Bank of Iran, the National Iranian Oil Company and the Naftiran Intertrade Company. Since coming into effect at the end of 2011, the threat of such sanctions has forced consumers of Iranian oil exports to avoid sanctions by reducing purchases, using non-convertible currencies and bartering to finance those purchases. This has devalued Iran's currency (rial) and cut into its oil export revenue. However, despite being tough, these sanctions are weakened by loopholes allowing for waivers for countries who significantly reduce their purchases of Iranian oil—even if they don't fully halt imports from Iran. Tehran is hurting financially, but its nuclear pro-

gram has not slowed. This lulls policymakers into the false belief of progress, thus wasting more time as Tehran gets closer to its nuclear goal.

At this point, additional pressure on the Iranian regime to negotiate in good faith can come from U.S. efforts to underscore that, if all else fails, it is prepared and willing to launch an effective strike against Iran's nuclear program. Boosting the visibility and credibility of the military option through an effective information and messaging strategy, economic preparations and military readiness activities would help persuade buyers of Iran's oil, such as China, to support U.S. sanctions more fully as a way to peacefully resolve this crisis or face the possibility of a significant disruption of oil supply from the Persian Gulf. Strengthening Israel's ability to mount an effective attack on Iran's nuclear facilities would serve the same purpose.

Mr. FRANKS. Do the sanction waivers provided by the Administration to a number of countries degrade the impact and effectiveness of the sanctions on Iran? Should those waivers be revoked?

Mr. ROBB and Mr. RADEMAKER. The waivers provided by the Administration degrade the impact of sanctions by allowing the main buyers of Iranian crude—China, India, Japan and South Korea—and others to continue importing oil from Iran, albeit at reduced levels. The threat of U.S. and E.U. sanctions caused Iran's oil exports to contract 15 percent year-on-year in the first half of 2012, but this decrease would likely be even greater if the Administration did not provide waivers to countries that must only pledge to decrease imports from Iran by 20 percent.

While the waivers thus affect the impact of U.S. sanctions, this is separate from the issue of the actual effectiveness of such measures. Our Task Force supports tough sanctions as long as the United States enforces them completely and sets a near-term deadline for them to be effective. Neither the Obama nor Bush Administrations did this. Even if they had, the dual approach of diplomacy and sanctions would not be enough. Creating additional leverage for a peaceful, viable negotiated solution requires the United States to pursue the triple-track approach called for in our BPC Task Force reports: diplomacy, robust sanctions and credible, visible preparations for a military option of last resort.

Mr. FRANKS. Will U.S. national security be seriously undermined if the U.S. accepts a policy of containment of a nuclear Iran?

Mr. ROBB and Mr. RADEMAKER. As we argue in our BPC Task Force reports, we believe that a nuclear-weapons capable Iran cannot be contained. Even if all the necessary elements of a containment strategy were in place—U.S. credibility; robust, reliable and coordinated allies; and a deterrable enemy in Tehran—this could not limit the negative eventualities sparked by an Iranian breakout.

The most worrying consequences of a nuclear weapons-capable Iran would be: a proliferation cascade across the Middle East, which would effectively end the international nonproliferation regime; a sustained spike in global oil prices, which would negatively impact the fragile U.S. economy; an emboldened and more secure sponsor of terrorism, which would put Tehran in a position to transfer nuclear materials to its extremist allies; and an unstable Iran-Israel confrontation resembling a perpetual Cuban Missile Crisis, which would almost certainly draw in the United States.

Mr. FRANKS. How are we responding, and might we better respond, to China's and India's circumventing economic sanctions by using their own currencies rather than dollars to buy Iranian oil?

Mr. ALBRIGHT. [The information was not available at the time of printing.]

QUESTIONS SUBMITTED BY MR. KISSELL

Mr. KISSELL. What is the stance towards Iran's Nuclear endeavors from their regional and bordering nations?

Mr. ROBB and Mr. RADEMAKER. The United States' Arab and Israeli allies very clearly perceive a nuclear Iran as an existential threat, as revealed by the November 2010 WikiLeaks publication of secret U.S. diplomatic cables. In conversation with U.S. officials, leaders from Israel and the United Arab Emirates (U.A.E.) compare the Iranian threat to that posed by Hitler in the 1930s, and warn of a proliferation cascade in the region if Iran gains nuclear capability. Even without a nuclear-capable Iran, Saudi Arabia's King Abdullah and senior Egyptian military and Kuwaiti leaders express fear about growing Iranian influence in Iran and Lebanon and Tehran's ability to stoke sectarian violence across the region.

U.S. allies are thus exhorting the United States to increase pressure on Iran, including through the use of force. Saudi King Abdullah urged the United States to "cut off the head of the snake," while U.A.E. officials call on the United States to communicate red lines to Iran and warn that sanctions will be insufficient. For

years Israeli officials, including Prime Minister Benjamin Netanyahu and Defense Minister Ehud Barak, have publicly stated they will keep all options on the table—including preemptive military action—to prevent or delay Iran’s achievement of nuclear weapons capability.

Mr. KISSELL. What is the stance towards Iran’s Nuclear endeavors from their regional and bordering nations?

Mr. ALBRIGHT. [The information was not available at the time of printing.]

QUESTIONS SUBMITTED BY MS. HANABUSA

Ms. HANABUSA. In your testimony, you say that of the three-prong approach to Iran, our military option is underdeveloped. What is the benchmark being used to judge that? Precisely what would be needed to ensure adequate capability?

Mr. ROBB and Mr. RADEMAKER. The benchmark is sufficient leverage to induce Iranian concessions in its negotiations with the P5+1 that would enable a peaceful and credible negotiated settlement of its nuclear weapons program. History shows that the best chance for inducing Iranian concessions is when its leadership faces a dire military threat. However, since 2010 the United States and its P5+1 negotiating partners have in effect pursued a dual-track approach of diplomacy and sanctions toward Iran. This has been insufficient to compel Tehran to negotiate in good faith, and instead offers the regime an opportunity to drag out negotiations as a delaying tactic to advance its nuclear weapons efforts. Throughout this period, Iran continues to ignore U.N. resolutions, threatens to wipe out our strongest ally in the region, enriches uranium faster than ever and to ever higher levels, tests more effective centrifuge models, undertakes operations at a previously undisclosed underground facility and continues its weaponization activities.

With the exception of specifying what munitions we ought to sell to Israel to shore up their capability, our BPC Task Force has not tried to specify how many specific platforms or weapons the United States would need. We think that ought to come from the military commanders in the area, in consultation with the civilian leadership. With that in mind, our Task Force recently issued a paper laying out a variety of steps U.S. policymakers should undertake to create additional leverage.

Ms. HANABUSA. When you say that without ramping up our forces in the region we should supply Israel with the full support needed to counter an Iranian nuclear threat, what precisely would be needed to meet the full support you address?

Mr. ROBB and Mr. RADEMAKER. There are three principal means by which the United States can usefully strengthen Israel’s strike capabilities against Iranian nuclear facilities: by transferring to it three KC-135 refueling tankers and 200 GBU-31 advanced bunker busters, and by upgrading Israel’s anti-missile defense systems.

The House of Representatives should be commended for passing H.R. 4133 (The United States–Israel Enhanced Security Cooperation Act of 2012). In addition to echoing our task force paper’s strong recommendations on the necessity of bolstering Israel’s military option by providing it with aerial refueling tankers and bunker busting munitions, this legislation called on the United States to assist Israel in procuring the Iron Dome missile defense system to intercept rockets and artillery launched by Iranian proxy forces in Lebanon, Gaza and elsewhere.

Ms. HANABUSA. In your response to a question during the hearing, you said that Iran has not responded to any international requests to stop their nuclear program besides the time when the U.S. invaded Iraq. If this is the case, then you seem to be inferring that military intervention or the imminent threat of military intervention is needed to stop Iran’s nuclear program. Why then in your testimony, do you believe that diplomacy and sanctions could still have an impact in this situation?

Mr. RADEMAKER. The best way to prevent a nuclear Iran is for the United States to lead and demonstrate its resolve to do whatever is necessary, including taking military action. This is why our BPC Task Force endorses the triple-track approach of diplomacy, robust sanctions, and credible, visible preparations for a military option of a last resort. At this late date, it is only the threat of force, combined with sanctions, that affords any realistic hope of an acceptable diplomatic resolution.

QUESTIONS SUBMITTED BY MRS. ROBY

Mrs. ROBY. Given the asymmetric tactics we anticipate Iran will employ in and around the Strait of Hormuz, would you address the specific threat posed by the C-802 Qader sea-skimming missile and our ability to defend against it?

Mr. ROBB. Iran’s acquisition of the C-802 Qader anti-ship cruise missile is emblematic of a larger shift in the country’s naval warfare doctrine, capabilities and

command structure from a surface fleet controlled by the traditional navy toward an unconventional force dominated by the Islamic Revolutionary Guard Corps (IRGC). This new approach utilizes asymmetric capabilities and tactics—large numbers of anti-ship mines, cruise missiles, and swarming high-speed patrol and light attack craft—to threaten shipping, overwhelm enemy vessels and deny access to U.S. naval units operating in the Persian Gulf and Gulf of Aden.

Our BPC Task Force has recommended the United States procure and deploy force protection munitions and other systems to reinforce existing U.S. naval capabilities in the Fifth Fleet's area of responsibility, including surface-to-air missiles, ship gun modifications and ammunition and electronic and cyber warfare support. The Task Force has not tried to specify how many specific platforms or weapons the United States would need. We think that ought to come from the military commanders in the area, in consultation with the civilian leadership.

In the larger picture, such measures are an important part of what must be a broader spectrum of credible military readiness activities. Boosting the visibility and credibility of the military option strengthens the chance for sanctions and diplomacy to succeed in bringing about a peaceful resolution to the standoff over Iran's nuclear program.

Mrs. ROBY. Given the asymmetric tactics we anticipate Iran will employ in and around the Strait of Hormuz, would you address the specific threat posed by the Russian Kilo Class and North Korean Midget Class submarines and our ability to defend against it?

Mr. ROBB. Along with anti-ship mines, cruise missiles and swarming high-speed patrol and light attack craft, Iran's submarine fleet is a key element of its anti-access/area denial strategy to prevent the U.S. Navy from projecting power into the Persian Gulf region.

With this threat in mind, our BPC Task Force has recommended the United States procure and deploy force protection munitions and other systems to reinforce existing U.S. naval capabilities in the Fifth Fleet's area of responsibility, including anti-submarine warfare (ASW) capabilities and electronic and cyber warfare support. The Task Force has not tried to specify how many specific platforms or weapons the United States would need. We think that ought to come from the military commanders in the area, in consultation with the civilian leadership.

In the larger picture, such measures are an important part of what must be a broader spectrum of credible military readiness activities. Boosting the visibility and credibility of the military option strengthens the chance for sanctions and diplomacy to succeed in bringing about a peaceful resolution to the standoff over Iran's nuclear program.

Mrs. ROBY. Is there any credible evidence that Iran could acquire an S300 Air Defense System and if so potentially from who?

Mr. ROBB and Mr. RADEMAKER. There does not appear to be credible evidence Iran could acquire such a system at the current time, especially since the passage of U.N. Security Resolution 1929 (June 2010), which banned the sale of missile systems (among other weapons) to Iran. However, Iran appears to desire strongly the S-300 for its advanced surface-to-air missile capabilities which could potentially deter or deny air strikes on its nuclear program.

Russia produces the S-300 system and has exported it to more than a dozen, primarily former communist bloc countries and their allies. Rumors occasionally surface of S-300 sales from these countries to Iran, most recently from Russia in 2009 and Belarus in 2010. However, there is no evidence of such transfers occurring, or of Iran possessing the S-300 or any comparable system.

While the S-300 would strengthen Iran's ability to defend its nuclear sites against air attack, this should not obscure the fact that Tehran's nuclear program has actually accelerated in recent years without such defenses. Moreover, the regime has long acted inimically to U.S. interests, even as its nuclear program remains vulnerable to an effective surgical strike by the United States.

Mrs. ROBY. How does the Iranian Bavar 373 System compare with the Russian S300 system?

Mr. ROBB and Mr. RADEMAKER. Iran has claimed to develop a domestic replacement for the S-300, which it refers to as Bavar 373. While our Task Force has not analyzed Iran's air-defense capabilities or defense-industrial capacity in depth, Tehran's claims to produce such a system would be in keeping with its well-established intentions to pursue a nuclear weapons capability.

Mrs. ROBY. Is there any credible evidence that Iran could acquire an S300 Air Defense System and if so potentially from who?

Mr. ALBRIGHT. [The information was not available at the time of printing.]

Mrs. ROBY. How does the Iranian Bavar 373 System compare with the Russian S300 system?

Mr. ALBRIGHT. [The information was not available at the time of printing.]

QUESTIONS SUBMITTED BY MS. SPEIER

Ms. SPEIER. Sanctions seem to be bringing Iran back to the negotiating table, and at least somewhat increasing their willingness to grant the IAEA access to Parchin and other facilities. Would a strike make Iran more likely to cooperate with the IAEA?

Mr. ROBB and Mr. RADEMAKER. It is the belief of our BPC Task Force that the dual approach of diplomacy and sanctions simply has not proved to be enough to compel Iran to negotiate in good faith over its nuclear weapons program. While our Task Force does not have a position on whether a military strike would make Iran more likely cooperate with the IAEA, preventing Iran from achieving nuclear weapons capability requires demonstrating resolve to do whatever it takes to achieve that goal. At this late date it is only the threat of force, combined with sanctions and diplomacy, that affords any realistic hope of an acceptable diplomatic solution to Iran's pursuit of nuclear weapons capability.

Ms. SPEIER. Do you believe threats of military action are helping negotiations?

Mr. ALBRIGHT. [The information was not available at the time of printing.]

Ms. SPEIER. What impact would a strike likely have on the international community's ability to access and monitor Iran's capabilities?

Mr. ALBRIGHT. [The information was not available at the time of printing.]

