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Transcript

**REASSURANCE: WHAT SHOULD
ALLIES EXPECT?**

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JAMES MILLER

Welcome, everyone, to this panel on Reassurance and What Allies Should Expect. I'm Jim Miller. By way of introduction, I'm currently at the Applied Physics Lab at Johns Hopkins University and doing work also at the Belfer Center. Until early 2014, I was Under Secretary of Defense for Policy. I'll moderate the discussion today leaving at least thirty minutes of our time for questions from the audience.

We are very, very fortunate to be joined today by three incredibly talented panellists. Their biographies are in the Conference Program. I'm talking about you three, yes. Their biographies are in the Conference Program but let me just say, very briefly, Kori Schake, Research Fellow at the Hoover Institution at Stanford and author of a terrific blog on foreign policy that I expect many people in the room read. I'm not going to say at this point that I always agree with everything in it but a terrific blog. Brad Glosserman, Executive Director of the Pacific Forum CSIS in Honolulu who recently completed a study with Carl Baker on the future of US alliances in Asia and Catherine Kelleher, College Park University... I'm sorry, College Park Professor at the University of Maryland's School of Public Policy.

CATHERINE KELLEHER

I refuse to be the entire talent.

JAMES MILLER

Also a Senior Fellow at Brown's Watson Institute for International Studies.

KORI SCHAKE

And my teacher.

JAMES MILLER

And a teacher of Kori Schake and of many in the National Security establishment.

BRAD GLOSSERMAN: She lectured for me when I was in [unclear].

KORI SCHAKE

We are all Catherine's [overtalking].

JAMES MILLER

That's excellent. I'd like to briefly take the prerogative of the Chair and make just a few comments for context and then we'll get into a round of questions that I'll ask our panellists and then we'll turn to you.

Very broadly, US extended deterrence including the US nuclear umbrella has been in place – as you all know – for many decades in Europe and in Asia. The reassurance of US allies has been the twin of our extended deterrence policy – not an identical twin but much more than just a sibling resemblance. For more than half a century, and for the bulk of the period since the end of World War II, extended deterrence and reassurance has been based on two pillars – our conventional capabilities and our nuclear capabilities. We've had sustained and substantial US

forward presence in Europe and in Asia as well as long range US conventional and nuclear strike capabilities and the ability to reinforce in crisis.

Now we face a new reality. I just want to outline briefly what some of those are and we'll be asking our panellists to address them. First, bellicose North Korea that's pursuing an ability to be able to strike its neighbours and the United States with nuclear-tipped missiles. Second, staying in Asia for the moment, the rise in China that's assertively pressing claims in the East China Sea and South China Sea and deploying advanced anti-access area denial capabilities even as it modernises its nuclear arsenal. Third, a revanchist Russia under Putin that's annexed Crimea and continued its infiltration and intimidation of Ukraine even as it engages in nuclear sabre rattling. If we consider the Middle East in terms of assurance, as we should, then we also have an assertive Iran that causes our partners in the region to look to US leadership and assurance even as we seek a nuclear deal that serves our mutual interests.

We've seen some significant adjustments recently including, from NATO, the addition of missile defense as part of the strategic concept which occurred in 2010 at the Lisbon Summit. We've seen NATO talking increasingly about cyber as a concern, although how that's to be dealt with is a TBD, as it would prefer it under Article 5 now however, as we look at North Korea and its cyber attack on Sony Entertainment - just one example of the types of broader threats, along with little green men and so forth that we need to think about as we think about extended deterrence.

With that brief background, we turn first to Brad. I'm going to do this, the first round of questions, alphabetically by first name and by last name. Brad, given China's continued assertiveness in the East China Sea, South China Sea and, more particularly, perhaps, North Korea's continued nuclear activities in bellicosity, what is your assessment of the current state of US assurance and what, if anything, should the US be doing to strengthen assurance of our allies in the region?

BRAD GLOSSERMAN

A piece of cake. First of all, thanks to Carnegie for having me and us and thank you all for joining us this afternoon.

The state of deterrence, I think, isn't bad and I would take issue with some of the questions, I think, that were asked earlier this morning about that in the sense we're preventing major war and so deterrence, by and large, is working. The question then becomes to what we're designing deterrence for, particularly in East Asia. The lower level gray zone, red zone provocations, whatever the euphemism of the day is, we're having a little more difficulty and we need to be thinking more creatively about that, but I think we're on the way.

I would start by noting that we're talking about assurance for allies. Mind you, we're talking primarily about Northeast Asia. The Philippines are being dragged into some of this by virtue of Chinese behaviour in the South China Sea but the ties are, by and large, separate from this. The Australians, I think, are out of the... or dealing with it on the big 35,000ft strategic level. So essentially, we're talking about Japan and South Korea and if you dig into their particular views on each of these you need to differentiate between them, but since I'm just offering introductory remarks I'm doing a gloss and you can ask the questions that dig a little bit deeper into this.

My sense, first of all, is what is it that the allies can expect in terms of reassurance and they're getting, I think, a good measure. They're getting the high level statements. They're getting the presidential declarations - you're seeing it written into the 2009 statement with President Lee and President Obama. You're having President Obama in Japan making statements that explicitly endorse the extended deterrent in ways that, I think, respond directly to allies in Asia.

You have similar statements by top level officials so you've got that. Beneath that you have ongoing policy dialogues, EDPC – Extended Deterrence Policy Committee – with the South Koreans. The extended deterrence dialogue with the Japanese, you've got that. I think the professionals here - whether it's the top level or the bottom level - the working levels in all three of the governments get it. They understand the issues, they understand the concerns of the partners, so I think that they're capable of having the conversations and capable of conveying, if you will, responding to the issues and the concerns that the allies are raising. I think that's working.

On the operational level we're seeing the training that's moving forward. We're stepping up the work with the Japanese and the South Koreans. We're also seeing, I think, in response, for example, to demands, like Ambassador Ho-young this morning, the news today that there's a deployment of new army, artillery batteries that they're sending out, so we're seeing a stepping up of the presence. It's visible and I think there's a sense that, again, in the United States we understand that that's what the allies are looking for.

We get the fact that there's a demand for more. I think that what we really should be expecting, and what our allies need to be expecting, is a demand for the United States for them to do more and I think that they're getting it and, by and large, the alliances are modernising in ways that demonstrate a responsiveness on both sides, a receptiveness to the needs.

Finally, I think, we're seeing in the context that we're balancing and setting aside the debates about the legitimacy, the viability, the meaning of the rebalance, that you've got the leaning forward with political, economic dimensions of engagement in ways, I think, that reassure and provide a deeper strategic connection between the three countries.

Now, I don't want to go on too long but the question now is what they're not going to get, where there's going to be a frustration here. Number one, there's a demand for detail in deterrence discussions that they're not going to get and I think there's a problem, and it's probably your fault, because they look at the European discussions and they don't understand how the allies talk and they don't understand what the nature of that deterrence dialogue is about. I think they want a level of detail that we're not prepared to give them.

Second, I think, they're not going to get forward to deploy nuclear weapons which is a fairly regular conversation piece that comes up and they're looking for that. They're not going... I think they would like to see a strategic doctrine, perhaps of the type of an East Asia Strategy Review – I don't believe they're going to get that level of detail. I think they should but I don't think administrations, for a variety of reasons, are going to do it, neither this one or the next one, whoever is in the White House.

I don't think they're going to get the clarity with China that they want to see as, again, I think Ambassador Ho-young commented this morning about concerns in the way the United States will strike deals and, by the way, I disagree quite strongly with his statement the US will sell its allies out for accommodation with Beijing – that will not happen, I have more faith in the administrations - and certainly ambiguity and the complexity to that relationship will remain.

There will, I think, most importantly, continue to be a dysfunctional political system in this city such that it will...

KIRO SCHAKE

There's a safe bet.

BRAD GLOSSERMAN

I'm real good at the obvious. I think there will continue to be dysfunction in ways that deprive our allies and our partners around the world the clarity that they probably expect, and the certainty, because all this boils down to – as everybody knows – it's the certainty that our partners have that in the time of a crisis, the United States will act in certain ways. I just don't think they're going to get that.

JAMES MILLER

I tell you what – I'm going to ask you to stop there and we're going to pick up on several of those going forward. I expect that some questions from the audience will also pull on some of those themes and we will come back to the so-called Pogo problem, we've met the enemy and he is us, in our domestic policies for sure.

Catherine, let me ask you an analogous question vis-à-vis NATO and Russia. Administration's taken some steps to deploy additional forces, has proposed a billion dollars worth of additional activities and so forth, but today as you look at Russia's activities, what's your sense of the degree of assurance of our allies, and we want to differentiate between some of those and Europe. What's your sense of what more we might be considering?

CATHERINE KELLEHER

I think the major question, really, is one that takes us back to everybody's favourite argument – how does one define deterrence? Perhaps in this case you'll forgive me if I define deterrence as existential, a key element of which is to pay attention, that, shall we say, was lacking over all, let's say, the last twelve years or so, maybe it's even fourteen, that all the issues had been solved in Europe - all of the issues had been solved in Europe – about 1991, 1992, 1993, therefore one didn't have to pay attention.

JAMES MILLER

You're suggesting that history did not end with...?

CATHERINE KELLEHER

I really believe it didn't and I even have some track marks on my back to prove it. But it is a question that I think needs to be taken quite seriously because our assumption that those 47 or is it 48 treaties of mutual assurance, most of which have to do with NATO and near NATO countries really need something, primarily needs attention, and attention translated into capability, into commitment, into regular exercising, into long discussions in the middle of the night with the five members of the parliament who want to know what's going to happen and care about what's going to happen. I think we got out of the habit. It was easy to do. It's much nicer to be an optimist than a pessimist as any of you who've tried this out at dinner parties know. It really is a question how much attention are we willing to pay. It's never going to be the amount that either side of the equation within NATO prefers. It's going to be what is the minimum requirement.

I think vis-à-vis Russia we have a similar problem but that one was more wilful. It was easier for lots of purposes to pretend not to notice and so the kinds of tests that we had for our Russian policy, let's say even in the 90s, even continued in the 90s, simply weren't applied and so while we were getting signals, we just... well, it wasn't as if the hotline was ringing but we weren't paying as much attention or not taking it seriously. I think, if nothing else, the last...

JAMES MILLER:

You're thinking of Georgia and...?

CATHERINE KELLEHER

Not even that. I see it starting in, I would say, 2004, 2005, when Mr Putin found it possible to tell us in no uncertain terms how he felt and we just didn't make much of it. We responded somewhat but not with changes in our own behaviour or the kinds of programs that we were urging others to. There are those, still, both in Europe and elsewhere, who wilfully don't want to notice it now and we're having our difficulty with them. But I would say the change that I've seen, at least in the last eighteen months and particularly since the, shall we say, late unpleasantness in Ukraine of rather awful dimensions really has, I think, brought a lot of people to say we'd better watch.

But I would say, and this is perhaps on the optimistic side even though I maligned it slightly, I think that we too often are focusing in twentieth - or is it in nineteenth century terms - on the particular balances that we need to strike both in the future but towards which we've really made a number of improvements, although it's not my field so forgive me if I err in the specifics. But I want to point you to look at the way in which cooperation, particularly in the economic and financial field since 9/11 has really changed - is it possible 500%? Ask any German who has to go visit his money in Switzerland these days for tax purposes what's happened. He's being monitor at \$500 and above now in a way he wasn't. Ask anybody who's tried to send money in an international channel, of which there are a lot that are a lot narrower than they used to be, how much attention is being paid to the way money moves around the world and who gets investment advantage and who doesn't. Ask people how, in fact, we track through any number of intelligence channels cooperatively now in a way that we never thought to do. I think that has become much more of an interesting channel about some of the models we may well think about for the future which aren't as dependent on forays across the Central Plain or necessarily even nice Navy fights in the Balts.

I think the big question remains and this, for those of you who haven't, perhaps, kept up with the newest maritime strategy that Admiral Greenert rolled out a couple of weeks ago, we really have now, at least in that document, as the second largest input to Navy strategy and, by argument, translated over to National strategy is the idea of international cooperation and a different definition of burden sharing that isn't just a question of numbers.

JAMES MILLER

Thank you. Kori, it sounds like you may want to comment on that very issue so let me ask you a very broad question. My next round will be more specific to each of you. As you look across not just the Asia Pacific, not just Europe but including the Middle East, what's your sense of the state of extended deterrence, of assurance, of our allies and partners' confidence in us? If you'd like to suggest some things that we could do and note any that you think have a high probability of getting congressional support.

KORI SCHAKE

Sure. I think that the state of extended deterrence, the state of Allied confidence is shaky and it's shaky for a couple of near-term reasons - the red line on Syria; the fact that we said we couldn't live with the nuclear arms in North Korea but it turns out we can; the fact that we are...

JAMES MILLER

I'll come back to that one because... I'm sorry, go right ahead. We'll come back to that one.

KORI SCHAKE

The fact that we say we can't live with the nuclear arms in Iran but we probably can. I think allies are nervous but I would follow that up by saying that allies are always nervous. Extended deterrence is extraordinarily difficult to credibly undertake. As Catherine wrote in the most magnificent book on the subject ever, Germany and the Politics of Nuclear Weapons, it's always hard, even with societies that have tight, binding agreements to each other, that have a lot of political and cultural similarity, allies are always nervous and it's a function of them relying on us. I guess I would also add that we're not that reliable, right? It's not a new phenomenon although I do think the President, over Syria and some other things ought to have thought about the knock-on effects that Koreans and Japanese and others would be nervous about but America. The United States, we're not newly unreliable, we actually haven't ever been all that reliable and so allies are right to be nervous. It's hard to do this well. We haven't done it particularly well, either historically or now, but at the end of the day allies don't have that many better options and we're not a terrible ally, we just have to be trapped into doing the right thing and that's not news, right? That's who we are.

BRAD GLOSSERMAN

An indispensable, unreliable nation.

KORI SCHAKE

Well said, Brad.

JAMES MILLER

You've put me in an awkward position because as moderator I do want to be moderate but I just would say that I have a different perception. I think being an alliance is challenging for many, many reasons and over decades the United States has carried a greater burden in that regard in terms of the percent of GDP and the economic burden that's associated with that. I think that we see that shifting somewhat more with respect to South Korea, even some with respect to Japan over the years and less with respect to Europe than we would like to see. But to me, as we look at multiple potential contingencies and, indeed, operations going back to important, albeit somewhat symbolic support from the text [] of 9/11, our operations together in Afghanistan, notwithstanding the outcome so far in Libya, our operations together with many of our allies there, I think that there are good grounds to see the United States as a reliable ally and I think it takes some time for us to get through our domestic process. Just a different view.

Maybe I'll just jump to a little bit of a question about domestic politics and see if we can combine budgetary as well as Iran into the same question just to make it interesting. The pretext will reinforce your comment, in a sense. With the United States unable to reach agreement between the Congress and administration with respect to budget levels, this is sequestration and the arguments around the edges of that, with the recent letter from 47 senators to the Iranian leadership suggesting and, I quote, anything not approved by Congress as a mere executive agreement the next president could revoke such an executive agreement with the stroke of a pen and future Congresses could modify the terms of the agreement at any time. This is a letter that would seem to reinforce the message, or the conclusion, that you had reached. First, I'm going to ask you to elaborate on the basis of your concerns or your observations, should our allies be concerned that because of US domestic politics, budget and policy both, that we are

going to be a less reliable allied partner than in the past? It sounds like your view is a longer term one than that but can our allies trust what the administration agrees to, whether this or a subsequent administration if our domestic politics doesn't get into a better place? We'll go first to you and then Catherine and Brad.

KORI SCHAKE

Let me start with the issue of is America newly unreliable because of our domestic politics. We're always unreliable because of our domestic politics, right? President McKinley couldn't get an agreement with the British through the Congress because Irish Americans opposed British policy in Ireland. It was a good treaty, everyone thought it was a good treaty, but American domestic politics are always a major factor in our foreign commitments and they should be. This is who we are as a political culture.

My first rule of strategy is you ought never to have a strategy that requires you to be different than you are and an American strategy that relies on, for example, the President being able to circumvent Congressional concerns about a treaty on Iranian nuclear program, that's bad strategy because Congress is always going to expect to have a role and they're probably going to be wildly, extravagantly irresponsible in how they go about it. That's not news. This is who we are as a political culture.

It was bad strategy for the President to try and circumvent Congress and, as for the Congressional letter, the letter of the 47, substantively I think it's fine. The problem is its addressee. It should have been written to the White House that you cannot expect the American people to support this as a continuing obligation unless Congress has a say in it. The problem wasn't in the substance of the letter. The problem was the addressee. It shouldn't have been sent to the Iranians. I think it undercut the President and the endgame of the negotiations and it makes it likely that the President will actually now string out the negotiation time and blame it on Republicans in Congress and he will have some basis for doing it. I actually think stringing the negotiations out is a bad outcome so I wish they had written the letter to the White House rather than to the Iranian leadership.

On the budget, the reason I was sniggering when Catherine was making the point about the Navy strategy is that the United States is newly interested in burden sharing because we actually want other people to pay for what we're doing. The United States government borrows \$0.31 of every dollar it spends. That's why we're suddenly interested in burden sharing because we are trying to make the pieces fit together and the budget hawks, in my judgement, are going to win the argument over the authoriser. I see Amy Wilfert there and she's the smartest person on this so I would stand to be corrected by her but it seems to me the authorisers are going to lose this argument to the appropriators again and again and again until we actually have a political leadership in the White House and in Congress that will make a deal on entitlements that will stop panelising discretionary spending for the structural impediment of entitlement spending.

JAMES MILLER

Catherine.

CATHERINE KELLEHER

I would like to take the opposite side but while agreeing with the history argument, we have always been unreliable. I think we can go down the list primarily because of domestic politics. If you worry about the 77 I really worry about what Harvard's doing in its Constitutional Law classes these days. But the question of the Bricker Amendment, for those of you old enough to

remember it, which prevented or at least... it's Ohio, isn't it, Senator Bricker from Ohio who in 1950-something put in an amendment against that rabid adventurer Dwight David Eisenhower that he not be allowed to do any more executive agreements without the approval of guess whom, the Senate, and it all turned out rather badly. It made a big noise; it was regularly reintroduced for a while. I think around 1961 or 1962 it faded from popular memory. It had something, maybe, to do with the 1960 election. But it's been around and the whole idea has been around.

I agree, too, in terms of the addressee at which point they could have expected the President to turn around and say, so you do something. In other words, the alternative is what's missing and I think that's a measure of our stalemate. It is only at positions of stalemate that you really have to worry.

The reason that I have to say that our allies do know we're unreliable and have done so and they use this wonderful wonder weapon called diplomacy and have done so, I point, again, an historical analogy – remember that the British, before World War II was formally declared, sent two delegations, one to send out the British message to engage us and get us all upset about what Herr Hitler was doing but the second one was to counteract Lindbergh and the domestics who said, don't do it, don't do it, don't do it. In other words, they've understood the impact, they're just waiting for somebody to arise of this frozen tundra we've been examining through stalemates of the last four years who's going to emerge who actually makes the deals and carries the deal out. May I point to the unfortunate but still verifiable pattern in the Bush administration when all of a sudden diplomats began to make their journey towards Vice President Cheney's office first before they went to visit the NSC? You can figure out, it doesn't take a great deal of rocket science knowledge to figure out who's in charge of the deals if there are deals. But it's the problem, and for our allies the thing I think they worry about most, is we'll get ourselves into this situation and not figure out how to get out of it so that nobody makes the deals, everybody sits there relatively paralysed, holding on to whatever piece of partisan truth they think will win them the next election where they can sit, again, with this partisan truth clutched to their chest. I think that's the problem that we don't want to recognise, I think none of us want to recognise.

Do you expect that we're not going to be able to make this kind of agreement? I am pretty sure I can identify four or five treaties during the 90s or maybe slopping a little bit into the 21st Century to say that an executive agreement was a way in which various presidents relieved people of the necessity to hold onto their partisan truth. In other words, they didn't have to take responsibility. They didn't have to break with party discipline. The President took care of it and he, on his broad shoulders, carried the responsibility vis-à-vis the electorate and the party leaders. We'll see, but it is domestic politics.

JAMES MILLER

Brad, I'm going to turn to you. I'd like to put a sharper point on this.

BRAD GLOSSERMAN

I've forgotten what the questions were.

KORI SCHAKE

Yes, sorry.

JAMES MILLER

Well, the sharper point on this, and I'll come back to Catherine and Kori on this as well. Do you believe that if North Korea attacks South Korea, that the United States will not only defend its forces – it's our own forces there - but we'll be fully in that fight? Then I'll ask the same question about should there be an attack by Russia on one of our NATO allies? Do you believe that the United States will live up to its treaty commitments?

BRAD GLOSSERMAN

I do.

JAMES MILLER

Let me just...

BRAD GLOSSERMAN

I'm amazed you're asking that question. Yes. Yes.

JAMES MILLER

I'm just responding to what I...

BRAD GLOSSERMAN

No, I...

JAMES MILLER

I want to see if... Work back from...

BRAD GLOSSERMAN

Absolutely we will respond. I think the North Koreans know it. We'll turn North Korea into a parking lot. I think the South Koreans know it and the Japanese know it. If I may cover a couple of things, I promise to be fast, one, alliance support in Japan and South Korea is at very high levels now, historically high, it's seventy, eighty percent. The publics know it. I think if you talk to the people that are working the alliances in both countries, people in foreign and defense ministries, they get it. We're having meaningful discussions in track 1, track 1.5, my organisation - we're talking to the people that are making the decisions and we're bringing them to the table and we're having very honest candid discussions. We're addressing the issues. We get their concerns and they know it and while there will always be differences of opinion, there will always be political problems, the fact is the United States' national interest differs from its allies at certain points and we understand that. I think we get where the gaps occur and how to minimise them and I think we are conveying in these conversations the fact that where we differ, we still understand where national interests lie and we still understand what the other side wants of us when we go far enough.

I'll give you one example, to go to your funding question, one person in this room has raised in our previous discussions, I think, a fair question, which is his concern about the United States going forward is going to be the funding of our nuclear infrastructure. That's what he's worried about over time. I think it's a pretty reasonable thing to be concerned about and so the fact that I think we hear that message and the decision makers hear that message is a form of

reassurance and, in fact, our allies have told us we are reassured by the fact that you're willing to have this dialogue and hear us out in this manner.

Real quickly, on the burden sharing question, I think there's an interesting irony here which is our allies see burden sharing in some ways as a form of abandonment whereas for us, in fact, burden sharing is really a way of consolidating and reinforcing the alliances. It's not us getting away. It's our allies proving they're better partners and in doing that we get closer and I think it makes more fully. The other piece of that, which is really interesting is, as much as we in my organisation, my belief, and I think people – likeminded folks – believe that what we want to do is move away from the reliance on the extended nuclear deterrent while keeping it but move to larger extended deterrents and embrace that in both political and conventional ways. At the same time, many of our allies still see, as I think we've heard, the nuclear piece is critical to them so that disconnect is something that's ironic and, frankly, quite troubling.

JAMES MILLER

Catherine, let me ask you, because one could interpret your comments and Kori's comments in a range of ways and I want to ask directly. Do you have any doubt that the United States would be fully in if Russia were to tackle a NATO ally or if North Korea were to attack South Korea or Japan?

CATHERINE KELLEHER

I personally think that's not even a question.

JAMES MILLER

Okay. I just want to...

CATHERINE KELLEHER

But this raises another question in its wake which is...

JAMES MILLER

Turning the tables on this.

CATHERINE KELLEHER

Yes. What are you going to believe about the relationship with those people, and there are a fair number of them, to whom we have promised ally-like status. We did it for the best of reasons and then we forgot about it with, perhaps, the exception of the effort to take Georgia and Ukraine into NATO in 2007 and 2008 when we discovered we were the only ones who saw that as a near-term future. We got a measly worded commitment out of the alliance at the time that they were on the path to MAP, namely the preparation for membership, but they were definitely not promised membership nor, I would argue, if it came to a question, even before Mr Putin's misadventure in Crimea and Ukraine, that we would find, I would say, even the majority of allies ready to offer that kind of commitment to Ukraine. Should they? That's another whole panel.

The question is is it true that we need, now, to think much more seriously and much more in terms of the requirements that this kind of commitment imposes on how we spend our money. It is, therefore, and this is something that Admiral Greenert's position in the maritime strategy document raises very explicitly, yes, we're asking for everybody's help but it means that we have to spend money in different ways than we might otherwise do.

JAMES MILLER

That's worthy of a, as you suggested, separate panel on accommodation of strengthening alliances and partnerships, building partner capacity and the US role in the world. I will enjoy observing that panel you're on it.

Kori, because you came down pretty hard on our domestic politics and on that level, on what's being referred to as the Pogo problem – we've met the enemy and he is us – I agree. At the same time, I see our core commitments for our alliances I see as being reliable and that we would be in the fight in the event of an emerging crisis and/or conflict. Do you?

KORI SCHAKE

Yes, in the two examples you gave I think the examples are yes, and yes, partly because you have alliance treaty commitments in which both the Congress and the executive branch have bound our country, and those are sacred bonds, but also because in the two cases you mentioned there are military alliances and structures and deployed forces and a seventy year history of routine military interaction that would make it very difficult for us to back out of doing it, which is fantastic, right? That's the glue that binds the alliance. That's the reason that when Korea was attacked in 1949/1950 it precipitated the building of the NATO and a greater military command because being so far away and because of who we are as a political culture, our allies that we had made commitments to actually wanted some glue for the extended deterrent and they've a right to do so.

If I may just really quickly reinforce Catherine's very good point about the gray area. It has been American strategy since the end of the Cold War to try and give middle ground that wasn't quite an alliance commitment but was more than nothing. I think that actually leaves both us and the countries in that gray space in very dangerous ground once those markers get called in, once those bets get challenged, and we ought to be thinking in a very serious way and having quiet alliance conversations with governments about what we are willing to do and what we are not willing to do so that they don't make a set of choices that put them at greater danger while relying on us in gray areas.

JIM MILLER

Those are great comments from all of our panellists. I'm going to turn the audience loose here in a moment. I guess I'd just make this simple comment that we've gained advantage and our partners have gained advantage from these relationships as well and the fact that these are not formal alliances puts a different set of expectations on each side and clarity is, obviously, important in that regard.

Let's go ahead and open this up to questions from the audience. We have a couple of microphones and what I'd like to ask is go ahead and you're going to want to stand up and go to one of the microphones and then when you do ask your question start with your name, your affiliation and then an actual question.

BRAD GLOSSERMAN

Directed to?

JIM MILLER

And if you have a specific target for your question you can stipulate that. Please go ahead.

PETER SHARFMAN

I'm Peter Sharfman from the MITRE Corporation. How would you react to the proposition that given the uncertainties of US domestic politics and the uncertainties of the world, great specificity and commitment is really dumb, that the alliance is the Churchillian version, the US can be relied on to do the right thing only after exhausting all the alternatives, and that fundamentally the alliances are about agreement on parallelism of core interest and preparations to defend those core interests and that trying to specify the details in advance is just going to lead to bad outcomes?

JIM MILLER

So I'm going to let each of the panellists answer that and just note that in talking about the combination of commitment and clarity, that we're going to do so. Let's start with Kori.

KORI SCHAKE

Yes, so I think that leaving ourselves lots of room actually sends a very worrisome signal to allies because the clarity of the commitment is what they want from us and the signal we send if we're unwilling to give it, as Brad said about what our Asian allies are looking for, is a much greater specificity from us. I think if you're not specific, allies fear you're going to back out, we leave ourselves the space to back out and we send a terrible set of messages to potential aggressors against our allies and our interests, so I'm in favour of clarity.

JAMES MILLER

Brad? Catherine?

CATHERINE KELLEHER

I'm not as in favour of clarity because I see that things change and I even think, maybe, responding to events that happen. But I think what one should recognise and here, maybe, we are comparing NATO with everything else and that's precisely what the Asian countries would like is we have a structure of continual conversation about these commitments and, in fact, we talk whatever the news view may be, we are in constant contact with the European allies because we've developed mechanisms, formal, informal channels of various kinds in which contingencies get talked about. We have the annual review which looks at how many nickels you have in your pocket and tells you when you're one short in terms of capabilities. We have ways of signalling within NATO that are not public. All of this means that while our commitment status within NATO is backed up by this wealth of years of experience and informal behaviour, it probably isn't suitable for most of the other allies that we're talking about. One of the problems, for example, that's often pointed to in terms of crisis control in the Pacific is those mechanisms don't work, even when we try to impose them on relationships. It's nice if you answer your hotline, for example, but it is a question that is dependent upon the maturity of the alliance and the degree to which one has this kind of base of experience and, maybe, even trust that builds up over time.

JAMES MILLER

Thank you. As I've said, I think we've made a clear commitment to our treaty allies, in particular, in that that would be honoured. In the back, if we could.

CHRISTINE LEAH

I'm Christine Leah from Yale University. Similar question – It strikes me from just a military and logistical perspective that conventional extended deterrence and nuclear extended deterrence are a lot harder to do in the Asia Pacific than it ever was to do in a European land context. It's a lot harder to move stuff around given the geography and just the vast distances. Going to what Brad said, doesn't it then make even more sense to engage your Asian allies in that level of detail in terms of targeting and planning if you expect extended deterrence to endure? Just as a quick example, that was the major reason Australia tried very hard to get nuclear weapons until the early 70s because the Americans weren't giving them any information, not even vague, doctrinal information and they said, well, the Americans are not telling us anything, we're going to get our own nuclear deterrent. A very quick question – to what extent should extended deterrence as a security architecture be multilateral versus bilateral if it's to endure in the next twenty or thirty years?

JAMES MILLER

Brad, you talked about the EDPC and EDD earlier and said the mechanisms through which we're sharing more information with both the Republic of Korea and with Japan, we have a combined command in, obviously, South Korea and we've made a decision to defer any separation that was previously under consideration. Could I ask you to speak to that first part of the question, in particular, and whether we are lacking clarity with respect to the commitment and the nature of how we would meet it on the Peninsula and, more broadly, in Northeast Asia?

BRAD GLOSSERMAN

In broad terms, I think the commitment's fairly clear in the sense that we understand what the major forms of aggression would be and what the responses would be. My sense and, again, I've never been in these conversations but my understanding is that there isn't a great deal of targeting discussion among allies and it goes to that level of detail, and it's a misunderstanding, I think, among Asian allies of what the actual NATO conversations are about. I say this with some trepidation given some folks I know in the audience. There's also a problem, of course, that the folks we speak to don't have, in some cases, the bench to assimilate. There are some very, very smart people but it's not a very deep bench in either Seoul or Tokyo, frankly, to deal with a lot of these conversations. That said, I think that, clearly, we need to be having more discussions and I think we're on the right track in these committees but the level of detail that I think would be very satisfying to a very small, very, very micro-sized subset are not the conversations even that we would be having regardless. As for a larger question of multilateral issues, multilateral deterrent, that's a very long and different discussion, Christine, and you know better about the nature of multilateral architecture in East Asia and we can talk about that over drinks one night.

JAMES MILLER

Okay, I'm going to turn to the next question but I just want to note very briefly that the last time that I was in Seoul as a government official I had a conversation with a room full of South Koreans and it may not have been a deep bench but each one of them was deeply knowledgeable and to the extent to which as I was talking one of them Googled whether my reference to Tom Schelling was accurate and whether it was from *The Strategy of Conflict* or *Arms and Influence*. So it may be an American perspective but, certainly, the individual side I interacted with had that in those countries.

Let's go back to the front, please.

BRAD HARRIS

Thanks. Brad Harris, Friends Committee on National Legislation. A few months ago Representatives Rogers and Turner wrote a letter to the administration saying that the administration should forward deploy B61 tactical nuclear weapons to the Baltic States and Poland and these are two Chairmen of subcommittees that deal with nuclear weapons in the House of Representatives. If the Chairman write this into this year's National Defense Authorization Act I wonder if you could talk about that effect it would have on our allies and comment on that. Also, Representative Franks has tried in the past to get a similar measure past with regards to South Korea and if that re-emerges, what are the consequences?

JAMES MILLER

Catherine, I'll turn to you first, particularly with respect to the Baltics and Poland.

CATHEINE KELLEHER

I think, first of all, remember the basic fact that the weapons are ours and any allied input on decision-making is purely advisory and it stays that way, so in some sense, it is our decision. But think of the political cost of bringing that decision forward without having consulted with all of the other allies and given the state of division within, certainly, NATO at this point about the utility of that action, you could imagine enormous effort having to be put into soothing over the divisions that would become even more solid on this issue.

I think we've handled the TNW relationship relatively skilfully. I would only, however, and this brings in Christine's question as well, remember that for a while this was as much about the allies controlling us as it was about us defending the allies and this may be one of the channels that's ripe for reform and revisiting, namely we used it, we held it out and as, certainly in the 60s and 70s, an incentive to improve our relationships. In some ways, now, it's much more of a cooptation game and that's the question as to whether it needs to remain that way.

I hope not to be too cryptic. This is not an easy discussion to have in public but it is one that needs to happen.

JAMES MILLER

Kori, you want to come in?

KORI SCHAKE

Yes, so I am not in favour of forward deploying tactical nuclear weapons to the Baltic States in the current crisis with the Russians for two reasons, the first is that I think it sends the wrong signal that we might believe we needed them to defeat Russian aggression in Europe and I believe we would not. The superiority of not just American conventional forces but I can think of eight or nine NATO allies that could defeat the Russians all by themselves, not engaging in an allied context, so I think we don't want to send the message that we actually think we need this kind of reinforcement because we could handily defeat the Russians. The second thing is that I believe the United States is the largest beneficiary of the taboo against nuclear weapons use, precisely because we are the country that has the greatest likelihood of winning our wars with our conventional forces and so I think we ought, actually, to be reinforcing that taboo against nuclear weapons use simply because it's in our interest to do so. I think forward deploying nuclear weapons in a crisis with Russians undercuts that.

JAMES MILLER

Brad, do you want to comment briefly on the Northeast Asia situation?

BRAD GLOSSERMAN

Sure. Well, actually, I think the first piece of it's important too because you can rest assured that if there was a call for redeployment in the Baltics you will have folks in South Korea – and this is only a South Korean issue, the Japanese won't take it up, they're banned – who would then say if you can do it in Europe, why won't you send them forward to our country as well. Again, with all due respect to Ambassador Ho-young this morning, he is an outlier on that particular position and most of the conversations with South Koreans are that they want tactical moves. I think, exactly as Kori puts it, it's a wrong signal to send, not only for the fact we don't need it but as we're trying to denuclearise the Peninsula, it doesn't make a great deal of sense to reintroduce nuclear weapons.

JAMES MILLER

Thank you. In the back. We're going to roll together three questions at this point, okay?

JEAN [UNCLEAR]

Hi, I'm Jean [Unclear] at the [Unclear] Center. The panellists noted that contemporary US alliances have a number of features that should make them quite credible to US allies, especially routine military consultation, explicit treaty commitments, integrated military commands, but we know that during the Cold War US commitments to Europe were routinely questioned by NATO allies notwithstanding the presence of all of these institutionalised commitment mechanisms and, in large part, the persistent fears of what they called strategic decoupling was a result of the advent of the vulnerability of the US homeland to Soviet nuclear attacks starting in 57 and onward. Today, obviously, take the example of North Korea, there is not that kind of vulnerability but I wonder whether the optimistic assessment of allies' confidence in the US extended nuclear deterrent guarantee would persist if the North Koreans, or when the North Koreans develop the capability of striking the US homeland with nuclear weapons? I would be interested in hearing the panellists' comments on that.

JAMES MILLER

Okay, thank you. Before we answer that question let's go to the front for additional questions.

TIMOTHY STAFFORD

Hi there. Timothy Stafford from the Royal United Services Institute in London. My question is about whether the panel sees US reassurance policy in a single global term or whether it's a series of interactive regional postures? This picks up on the point that Brad was just making which is if US military budgets are going to keep falling and falling and falling, how long is it going to be before you go and visit South Korea and officials say, actually, we don't want you to get any more involved in NATO and Ukraine and the Baltic, we want you to be focused over here and that the regional policies start being competitive rather than single parts of a uniform global posture?

JAMES MILLER

Thank you. We're going to add one more to this round from the back.

UNIDENTIFIED

Middlebury Institute of International Studies but still in Monterey, California and I'm going to ask a question that runs slightly contrary to my younger peers Christine and Jean. In many ways security guarantees from extended nuclear deterrents and the reassurance they're supposed to provide are a kind of Gordian knot of the non-proliferation world because on the one hand, those of us in the field have this view that non-proliferation, arms control and, potentially, even nuclear disarmament all go together and as we create this web of agreements and reduce nuclear weapons and, hopefully, eventually fulfil Article 6 commitments, that prevents the further spread of nuclear weapons. On the other hand there's a completely contradictory school of thought to that that says that, actually, extended nuclear deterrence is the best non-proliferation tool there is and people sometimes draw the inference from that that therefore we really shouldn't engage in arms control anymore and should let the world know that, for sure, disarmament is never going to happen. Several years ago I directed a project to try to examine how security assurances actually work as a non-proliferation tool and when they are and are not effective and I've been very struck by the comments by the diplomats at the panel this morning and the three panellists today that, hopefully, the project I did was right. Assurances make sense to allies and convince them that they don't, themselves, need nuclear weapons when they work in a larger context, so it's not just that you have signed a piece of paper that creates a defense treaty or that you have a certain number of nuclear weapons or that they're deployed in a particular place but, rather, the relationship as a whole is good, there's defense cooperation, there's consultation, the relationship is one where the ally believes that they're important to you. My question is notwithstanding Catherine's well-taken comments about not being too optimistic, should we get back to the point where nuclear arms control is back on the table, and I have no prediction about when that will be, but at, hopefully, some point in the future we will, again, revisit the issue of nuclear arms reductions. Is it your belief that we could – the United States and Russia – do further nuclear arms reductions without undermining the reassurance that allies feel?

JAMES MILLER

Three good questions. I'm going to start with Jean's question and go to Brad first on that. The question was about strategic decoupling referencing Europeans' prior concern regarding that during the Cold War and asked if North Korea attains the capability to threaten the United States with nuclear weapons, whether or not there would be similar fears with respect to decoupling of the US from Northeast Asia.

BRAD GLOSSERMAN

There already are some fears like that. We have conversations that suggest that there is concern among our allies. I think they're wrong. I don't see why the North Korean arsenal should be any concern given the size, given its potential capabilities and given the retaliatory capabilities on the US side. It's an ongoing discussion and it's their insecurities and I understand them but North Korea doesn't scare me.

JAMES MILLER

I would throw their actual missile defense capabilities into that mix as well.

BRAD GLOSSERMAN

As well. Do you want me to take the other – keep going – because I can do it quickly?

JAMES MILLER

Go ahead with observations from the other two as well.

BRAD GLOSSERMAN

Yes. First, in regard to the reassurance question that Tim asked. I think, maybe, what we're talking about is tailored reassurance, Tim, with starting to think about it and I think, clearly, regions are increasingly linked. Those are the discussions that we're now having. Clearly, the events in one region, however, are having impacts on others and the irony, of course, is that while some of our Asian allies are worried about our failure to respond in Ukraine or to honour the red line in Syria, the counter question is you want us fighting in Syria and fighting in Ukraine or would you really rather have us focused on Asia? It's a no-win situation here. Maybe the trick is what we need to have is competitive bidding among allies for American attention. That's the trick.

BRAD GLOSSERMAN

Yes, I'll start with that. That would be my bumper sticker.

CATHERINE KELLEHER

Could I...?

JAMES MILLER

Catherine, go ahead.

CATHERINE KELLEHER

I want you to do a simple test, Tim. Next time you're talking to someone ask them how they measure their importance to the United States and you'll find out that most people don't think they're as important as they should be and they use the New York Times and wear their most important national story of the year ranks – is it page five or does it get mentioned in the small Items column on Sunday when they're looking for fillers? It really is a question of which no country or region that I know of is ever satisfied with the amount of attention they get and no matter how hard we work, but that is perceptual. But there is also a realistic basis and we're about to find out yet another test, namely is it going to be the case, let's say, whoever is President after the elections in 2016 that Europe will still be disadvantaged? We had for, I believe it was six years, one Navy ship in the Mediterranean. Does that sound like a major commitment to you?

KORI SCHAKE

A pretty good ship.

JAMES MILLER

Yes.

CATHERINE KELLEHER

It's really a question of how do you measure it and it's not just words. It does have to do with how much attention is paid in many different areas and, as I said, I think what we've achieved in

the economic and financial areas, to repeat my earlier point, is really remarkable. We now have a global system of financial management, if you like, which most people always thought would never happen.

JAMES MILLER

If we think in terms of credibility and capability for reassurance as we do with respect to deterrence... I'm going to turn to you in a second, Kori, on this and any of these issues you'd like to address. I think my view would be that the credibility of something that is global in today's global information market, really, and that the capability, as you implied by your comment, can be moved around the globe, but at a point in time when we're fighting two insurgencies and very active in Asia Pacific and Middle East and a reduction in the Mediterranean may have made some sense, it's a different context today. Kori, I ask you to pick up on any of the points you'd like but include the question of whether we should be pursuing arms control with Russia.

KORI SCHAKE

Yes. I'm in favour of it as a general rule because I am nervous about this Russia and I'm nervous about this Russia's nuclear forces. A day after their threatening Denmark, it seems to me that it is worth a fair amount of effort to get the Russian nuclear arsenal as small as we can possibly get it because I'm worried about their choices. I'd be willing to trade some aspects of American nuclear forces in order to get those restraints. It seems to me the more worried we are about Russia, the more interested we ought to be in arms control with the Russians. That said, the dynamic changes as the American force gets small enough that we have to worry about not just the P5 powers having arsenals of the size of ours, perhaps, but Pakistan having a major nuclear arsenal and what a smaller US arsenal might do to others. I agree with the point that somebody made about extended deterrence being a non-proliferation tool. My sense is that's probably true. You probably would have a nuclear South Korea, you probably would have a nuclear Japan, you probably would have a lot of nuclear countries in Europe if you didn't have the credibility of an American guarantee. But as our strategic arsenal gets smaller I think we need to think in a very serious way, not just about bilateral arms control but about combinations of countries that might become American enemies and what their forces look like and might look like into the future. So I wouldn't let arms control with Russia be the entire universe of what we're worried about, either about the arsenals we want to control or about the challenges to our strategic forces.

BRAD GLOSSERMAN

Just to link the second and third question, you won't get the Chinese into arms control discussions unless we've got the Russians back in. They've made that abundantly clear in our conversations so, at least, that way in one place you've got that linkage.

JAMES MILLER

Great, thank you. I'll make an observation. My judgment is there's room for one more significant round of reductions between the United States and Russia before other powers need to be directly involved in that and, for me, I don't know of any allies engaging in strategic arms control negotiations with each other so your point on concerns about Russia is well taken and the verification regime that new start brings in is incredibly valuable to us.

We have two more questions, I believe. Let's go to the front first and then we'll go to the - sorry about that - lucky last question in the back, the bonus question.

MILES POMPER

Hi. Miles Pomper, again, from the Middlebury Institute of International Studies in Monterey. This is for Catherine and Kori. I wanted to get your sense about whether the recent NATO decisions in Wales, do you think those are sufficient to provide reassurance to the NATO allies or does more need to be done? You've already talked about the forward deployed issues but in other means, nuclear or war conventional, to provide the reassurance after the Russian actions recently.

JAMES MILLER

Okay, Miles, thank you. And in the back.

UNIDENTIFIED

So very specific questions – I probably should have gone before Miles because mine is very hyper specific. This is about the Bush administration's policy towards the Baltic States. The Baltic States joined NATO in 2004 and, let's say, the European security situation changed in 2008 when the Russians had Georgia, essentially. So one question I would pose to you is do you think the Baltic States were ever sufficiently reassured between 2004 and 2008, that's one question, and second is do you think there was any way to square the circle where if the US came to the Balts and said we want you to have specific conversations with the Russians on the security issue and the Balts would say, well, no, that's only going to split the alliance because the Russians are going to make an example of us. Do you think that there was any way to deal with that dynamic that's going to persist in the alliance even if we have some sort of repertoire with the Russians?

JAMES MILLER

Okay, Kori do you want to lead off?

KORI SCHAKE

Sure. Yes, I think the Baltic States were reassured between 2004 and 2008 and what reassured them was NATO membership, right? The parliaments of all of the NATO countries putting their hands over their hearts and saying an attack on one of us is an attack on all of us. The NATO-Russia agreements that there... what were the Three No's? That there's no... anyway, that we weren't going to deploy forces in the countries of new NATO members because the Russians hadn't given us a reason to. I actually the thing we should be doing to reassure Europeans, that we are not doing, is begin a conversation about whether the Three No's, the NATO-Russia agreement ought still to be honoured by us given that it is manifestly not being honoured by the Russians.

JAMES MILLER

Catherine, on that point first and then we'll bring Brad in.

CATHERINE KELLEHER

Yes. I really don't think they were ever sufficiently reassured, to start on that one, and I'm not sure, Miles, to your question that Wales goes anywhere near the requirement that the Balts have. They have a different history. It's a different problem. They were republics. Remember, we were among the very small handful that never recognised their incorporation into the Soviet Union and that makes a difference. Moreover, every Russian who talks about it in public says

we're not the equivalent of Estonia or Lithuania or Latvia, whichever one of the Baltics they want to ping that month. We don't want to be treated in the NATO-Russia Council on the same level as one of those pipsqueaks. It's a very sore point. I think we can only do the kind of reassurance for them that Wales mentions and waves at but then doesn't provide any mechanism to do it which is to incorporate their defense in a much more specific and definite way. Not that we haven't planned, but we haven't yet done much more than basic level exercises and we didn't, in part, because they needed a lot of help on a whole set of other issues beyond simple exercises. But we have to begin to take this all much more seriously than we have in the past. I think in some ways the Scandinavians have gone the farthest to demonstrate to the Balts real reassurance, namely, particularly Carl Bildt and his government, I think to a lesser extent the Norwegians. The Danes are of two minds about this. But certainly, the Poles as well, I realise they're not Scandinavian but they have gone out of their way, both in terms of equipment and training and real exchanges of experience and listening and putting together the basics of a reassurance strategy that we have not, and we're happy for them to do it and we thought it was a great idea that, at least, in this area you saw some real initiatives being taken. I think we, again, didn't pay the attention we should have because that was sufficient at one level. Now, a very much deeper level is needed. When you're 20km from the nearest Russian base, you understand it's a different situation. Wales is a failure, so far, in my opinion. They've done nothing to implement most of the important things because they couldn't agree and the \$64 question is can they agree tomorrow, really, on implementing even the spirit of Wales.

JAMES MILLER

I would take a less harsh view. We're running out of time.

CATHERINE KELLEHER

I realise that.

JAMES MILLER

I'm sure you're not surprised by that. But I would just observe that. As you think about the Baltics and you think about NATO planning and preparation beyond the four deployments we've done heel to toe to date which don't go to permanent deployments but are a first cousin of that, that NATO has got to be prepared, at least, for what it's seeing and what it's seeing is little green men and infiltration. It's seeing...

CATHERINE KELLEHER

And millions of the same little green men in several places.

JAMES MILLER

And annexation and intimidation and nuclear sabre rattling and cyber attacks and that, in addition to the old idea of the old Fold the Gaps, if you will, is what NATO needs, in my judgment, to be focused very heavily on and that is going to involve development of new capabilities, new doctrine and really picking up our game in each of those areas. I agree, there's a lot to be done. I have seen some progress and, I guess, my expectations are that if NATO can begin to make progress that should be applauded and encouraged and pushed and so have a somewhat more positive assessment.

I'm afraid that, however, we're out of time and so let me start by thanking the people here and then thank the panellists for a great presentation.