

**CARNEGIE INTERNATIONAL NONPROLIFERATION  
CONFERENCE**

**NUCLEAR CRISIS POINTS:  
IRAN, NORTH KOREA, SYRIA AND  
PAKISTAN**

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CARLA ROBBINS: Good afternoon. I'm Carla Robbins. I'm the deputy editorial page editor at The New York Times, which is a small newspaper based in New York. And welcome to our afternoon's panel.

Particularly after this morning, which had such a great discussion, but it was definitely big thoughts. And while we have some big thoughts this afternoon, as well, I'm sure, I like to think of this as sort of the "Access Hollywood" approach. We're going to get some great gossip from this group, as well, about the really scary people out there: the people who are already there, and the people who want to be – the wannabes.

So I, being a journalist – which means that, by definition, I'm more interested in gossip than I am in high concept – I'm hoping that we're both going to get some really interesting insights into these programs: the Iranian program; the Syrian program; North Korean and Pakistan.

Some analysis of what's going on right now, with some great prescriptions for how to deal with these problems, because they certainly are some of the most frightening and greatest challenges for the nonproliferation regime.

So, with that said, our format is, each of our speakers is going to give us a short presentation on their areas of expertise. I'm going to ask some questions, because that's what I do for a living. And then we're going to throw it open to the audience.

So we are going to start with – you all have the bios, so I'm going to just do a very quick version of the bios. We're going to start with Sandy Spector, who directs the Washington, D.C., office of the Monterey Institute's James Martin Center for Nonproliferation Studies. Sandy has had a variety of positions, both in government and out, as well as being one of the founders, I think, of this program, itself. So he knows of what he speaks.

Eli Levite, who is here, is a nonresident senior associate at the Carnegie Endowment, and earlier he was the principal deputy director general for policy at the Israeli Atomic Energy Commission, and a variety of other positions in the Israeli government – as well as a long history at lots of really cool think tanks.

And then to my left here is Shuja Nawaz, who is the director of the South Asia Center at the Atlantic Council of the United States. And his latest book is "Crossed Swords: Pakistan, its Army and the Wars Within."

So thank you, gentlemen, so much for this – and, Sandy, we'll start with you.

LEONARD SPECTOR: Thank you, Carla. I want to hit roughly six major points apropos of Syria, and a couple on Iran. And since I have a very limited time available, this may seem a little bit like speed dating for policy wonks. But let me try to at least to identify what I think we need to focus on in the Syria case.

First of all, we need to think about what, exactly, we have observed in Syria, and try to understand what they were up to. Second, we need to look back to when the Syrians may have made the decision to build this reactor – as I'll describe, apparently between 1997 and 2001 – in order to understand what might have motivated them. In addition, the diplomatic environment

since the Israeli attack in September 2007 has been very unusual – and that continues currently, and I think we want to look at that.

Fourth, there are some obvious questions as to whether Syria might restart its program. Fifth, we need to consider the implications for the IAEA and the NPT system. And, finally, what about the implications for the Bush Doctrine, and the concept of preventive war? So, as I say, I'll go quickly – and I'm sure we can fill in some of the blanks during the questions-and-answers.

First of all, from my point of view, there really isn't too much doubt, based on the information provided by the CIA, and some of the confirming information obtained by the IAEA, that this was, indeed, a nuclear-weapon program that Syria was embarked on. The style of the reactor; the secrecy with which it was built with North Korean assistance; the efforts to disguise it; the presence, we are now hearing, of some type of uranium at the site – all of this, I believe, drives you in this direction. This appears to have been a plutonium-production reactor, modeled on the North Korean facility at Yongbyon, and it's hard to imagine why a state would go to the effort of building such a reactor unless, indeed, it had as its goal the development of nuclear weapons.

The CIA has said it has only "low confidence" that this is the case, however, because of the absence of a fuel-fabrication facility that – so far, at least – we haven't found in Syria – and also the absence of a reprocessing plant for pulling the plutonium out of the spent fuel created in the reactor. But I think, you know, there may be explanations for this.

The presence of uranium at the site, that was said to have been processed, would seem to indicate that, in some fashion, the Syrians had worked around the fuel question – either getting it from North Korea or through a clandestine facility. And on reprocessing, we know that the North Koreans, themselves, as I understand it, built the reprocessing plant at Yongbyon after the reactor came online. So the sequence here does not necessarily indicate – does not really push you away from the view, that this was, in fact, a nuclear-weapon program.

Why did they go for it, and when did they go for it? The CIA stated that first discussions between North Korea and Syria occurred in 1997, and that reactor construction began in 2001. Just to remember – Hafaz al Assad died in the summer of 2000, and his son, Bashar, took over. So if one goes back to this period, this was an epoch in which Syria had lost its principal patron, the former Soviet Union, and in which access to armaments, conventional arms, was curtailed because of that. The key political support that it had been receiving from the Soviets was not present, and so the entire role of Syria in the Middle East was diminished, in part, because of this.

There was also increasing fear of possible encirclement because of growing Israeli capabilities and the increasing presence of the United States in the region. These are some of a larger external factors, including an Israeli-Turkey entente, cemented by two military agreements, that are coalescing during this period that appear to have driven Syria to attempt to build a nuclear capability.

And there also seems to have been the personal vision of Hafaz al Assad, and how he was hoping to see Syria emerge in this period as a leader in the Middle East and also achieve some kind of equivalency with Israel, all of which seems to have reinforced other factors contributing to the decision to go nuclear.

But I think the critical factor – because these other elements were around for a number of years -- the critical factor seems to have been the availability of extensive North Korean assistance – assistance that could help Syria from “soup to nuts,” providing the entire spectrum of what they would need for a nuclear capability. I think, without that, there simply could not have been a program.

In this regard, it’s instructive to go back to a statement made by the Pentagon, in 2001, in its review of proliferation challenges – called “Proliferation: Threat and Response.” 2001, remember is the year that construction began on the reactor. In this report, the Defense Department said, explicitly: “Syria is not pursuing the development of nuclear weapons. ... Syria currently lacks the infrastructure and trained personnel to establish a nuclear-weapons program.” So, I think, when you keep that in the back of your mind, the importance of the North Korean assistance really looms very large.

I think a lot of us have been surprised about the diplomatic environment that unfolded after the Israeli attack. As we remember, there was complete silence – by Israel, by Syria and by the United States – a real, very intensive news blackout. I think each state had an interest in keeping the lid on these matters: Syria, to avoid condemnation for violating international rules; Israel, perhaps to avoid condemnation for the attack, itself, condemnation akin to what it had suffered after attacking the Osirak reactor back in 1981. And I think the U.S. was very pleased to keep this out of the newspapers, because it was trying to continue to engage North Korea in the six-party process – and, also, to see if it could bring Syria into the Middle East peace process.

It’s not precisely clear why the CIA decided to reveal the information that we have about this case in April of 2008, but it appears to have been connected with the six-party talks – and to the kabuki that was performed by our negotiators. You’ll recall this was where we declared what it was that concerned us about North Korea’s proliferation assistance to other countries, specifically Syria – while the North Koreans remained silent. We then deemed this silence to be acquiescence in the accuracy of our allegation – a de facto acknowledgement that North Korea had done this – permitting us to declare that they were fulfilling their disclosure obligations under the six-party talks and permitting the six-party process to move forward.

A separate issue at the moment is: Now that the IAEA is reporting that there was uranium at the site, why aren’t the United States or others pressing for special inspections? I think there are a variety of reasons. One may be that we’re awaiting more evidence – but it doesn’t look like too much more is coming from the level of inspections that are being allowed. Or, we and the international community may have “enforcement fatigue.” Or, this restraint in not seeking special inspections may be part of a larger effort – which, I think, really is the fundamental issue – of trying to woo Syria away from Iran, and bring it more into the family of nations.

So that we have to have a dialogue with Syria – which, I think, we see already beginning – but to drive this hard at the IAEA, and maybe up to the Security Council, would make such a dialog very difficult to pursue. And we also always have the opportunity to push for special inspections at a later stage, if Syria decides not to play ball. We also, of course, want to facilitate the Israeli-Syria peace process, if the Israelis are game, and pushing Syria on the nuclear front will hinder this initiative, as well.

And, finally, I think, one other reason for not pressing this absolutely as aggressively as in some of the other cases is that, with the Israeli attack, the actual urgency – the danger that might have been posed by the evolution of a Syrian nuclear-weapon capability – is no longer before us.

Let me just hit the other couple of points very quickly. Will Syria restart? I don't think so – mostly because of the absence of a North Korea to provide the kind of assistance that was available previously. And I think that's accompanied by the roll-up of the A.Q. Khan network and North Korea's having been caught in the act and pledged not to engage in this behavior again.

Now, Khan was released temporarily from house arrest, and a lot of the other members of the network are still on the street. Even if they have been prosecuted, they have served their time and are out again – so it's conceivable that there might be a resurgence in the illicit international nuclear marketplace. But I think, for the moment, the Syrian program is really quite dead, and not likely to be restarted.

As for implications for the NPT and IAEA, Syria is the fourth failure to detect a clandestine program in recent decades: Iraq in the 1980s; Iran in the 1980s and into the '90s; Libya in the early 2000s; and, of course, then, Syria. These were failures of detection by the NPT/IAEA system. And we can talk about this, in the sense that we know there are limits on what the IAEA can do – but, certainly, this is a very unhappy development. And it would appear that even the post-Iraq War safeguards improvements – the additional protocol – might not necessarily have helped us in the Syrian case.

So we have a lot to think about in this particular instance. I would add that the fact that the U.N. Security Council process was not working, as far as Iran was concerned or with regard to North Korea, undoubtedly was a factor that Israel considered in deciding to attack Syria. This is a reminder, for all of us, of the consequences of this inability to enforce IAEA inspections – including through the Security Council.

On preventive war, I'll just say that, obviously, this was a very pure case of the Bush Doctrine, in the sense of a state that suffered an attack that was far away from having nuclear weapons – and, therefore, was not presenting an imminent threat, the accepted international justification – for a state to act preemptively through anticipatory self-defense.

But the fact that the international community has responded so cautiously to this event suggests that there may be an increased tolerance for these kinds of actions in very, very specific circumstances, involving a clandestine facility that appears to be oriented toward the production of nuclear weapons. I don't think we want to read too much into this as a legal precedent, but it is certainly one of the residua of the event, itself.

Let me just now turn to Iran, very briefly, again. I think the strategy that a lot of us have been recommending has been an intensification of sanctions – perhaps by cutting a deal with Russia, in which they will support us more actively on Iran, if we are more accommodating on some of the issues of concern to Moscow. This would be complemented by a readiness to negotiate with Iran, which goes beyond what the Bush administration was prepared to do. And I think we're seeing parts of this strategy actually unfold, almost week-by-week. Whether it will be successful or not, none of us can say – but, certainly, the process is beginning.

One dimension that I have been arguing for is that, in some fashion, we communicate to Iran – and this will be my final point – certain red lines – which, if crossed, would change the complexion of our engagement. Or, to put it somewhat differently, we would advise them that if they crossed these lines, they would be treading on issues of great-national security importance to the United States, and that a response appropriate to this graver situation would be forthcoming. So I don't want to be specific – or I don't think the U.S. should be – and I would have proposed this be communicated quite privately.

In fact, the administration may be adopting this last component, but communicating this point implicitly rather than explicitly. The statements that were made publicly by Director of National Intelligence Dennis Blair in testimony recently – when he gave reasons why we do not need to be quite as urgently concerned about Iran as we might be – were red lines in reverse. He was saying: “No high-enriched uranium has been produced,” which would have been one of my red lines. He has said it as: “That's a good thing – we acknowledge it.” And, it gives us time to have negotiations. But the reverse point was implicit: If there were to be production of high-enriched uranium, that would take us into a very different area.

I think there were other statements – about how long it might take for the actual fabrication of an Iranian bomb and how long it might take them to mount a nuclear warhead on a missile – all of which indicated more time was available for negotiations, and that the behavior of Iran was not in the most threatening range, but in a less-dangerous zone. He also stated Iran was not working on nuclear weapons, themselves, the same position the intelligence community took in late 2007.

So, in effect, Blair was saying: “We're not seeing the dangerous activities now and that's good.” But there was an implication in brackets to the effect that “If we were to see such activities, that would be a very, very big change, with potentially serious consequences for Iran.”

So I believe that's the multi-prong strategy we're seeing unfold. And, of course, as I said, whether we're going to see results is still very much up in the air.

ROBBINS: Thank you. Eli.

ARIEL LEVITE: Two quick comments to the points made by Sandy – one with respect to the puzzle over other facilities. I remind ourselves that the IAEA has suggested that there are other facilities in Syria it wanted to visit, and it's been repeatedly rebuffed. They may be part of that mystery.

And the second thing: I would frame the dilemma on the special inspections, on the issue with respect to special inspections, as follows: One wonders how come the director general of the IAEA hasn't asked for special inspections? Not why he had to be pushed to do it, and so on – rather, if he feels that there is a lack of confidence, as the case it is with respect to the kind of answers that Syria has been giving to the questions.

But I've been assigned the role of talking about the DPRK. Let me – (laughter) – let me say a couple of words about the DPRK. In essence, you would see how everything links together at the end of the day. I think whereas Iran constitutes the greatest, the graver threat to the NPT regime from within, I think the DPRK, if we accept that it actually stepped out of the NPT, presents, at least practically, the most, the greatest challenge from without.

And I think it does so in a manner that transcends just the specific context of the East Asian geography or region, but something that has much more profound implications for the Middle East and beyond. And I'll try to explain why I think that is the case – and I think why it, together with Iran, they both present the most acute challenge, and without addressing both we can't see the nuclear nonproliferation regime actually holding out.

I think that the point to consider here is that the DPRK presents essentially four different type of threats in the nuclear domain, and let me explain what they are. One is an unchecked nuclear-weapons program. They don't even try to conceal that that's what they're up to – and their program, for the moment, is not subject to any meaningful constraints in terms of its growth and development. So that's one – the most obvious.

The second is a regional irritant. And for those of you who are listening to other panels in this conference, Ambassador Yukio Sato will explain to you why Japan is no longer content with a kind of nuclear umbrella that it enjoys from the United States – and thinks that this ought to be bolstered, given the alarming developments in the region. So it's a regional irritant.

The third, which I would submit is the most serious – at least for now – is that the DPRK has become a unique and abundant source of nuclear-weapons technology, nuclear materials and long-range ballistic-missiles technology. And, in that respect, I think it's second to none in terms of its role in the international community, and its relevance as such a supplier pertains both to its own region, as well as beyond that region.

Moreover, what the DPRK is putting on the market is not confined just to their own technology, and so on. But, as we have come to appreciate, they're also a transshipment point; they engage in barter. So what happens is that they're able to offer things that go beyond what they're able to develop themselves.

And, fourthly – and, I think, in terms of the longer-term implications – perhaps the gravest threat is the DPRK has been offering itself explicitly as a role model: a role model of defiance; a role model of brinkmanship; and, worst of all, a role model of defiance and brinkmanship with impunity and leverage. And that model has considerable sway in Iran and elsewhere.

I think, against this background, it is rather striking that the U.S. diplomacy, bilaterally as well as through the agreed framework – and, more recently, through the Six-Party Talks – and, even more broadly, through the Proliferation Support initiative, and so on – has been remarkably ineffective in dealing with the challenge presented by the DPRK – in terms of either the role model, or in terms of the export of the technology.

For almost 20 years this has been going unabated. The DPRK maintains that it's subject to no obligations whatsoever, in terms of the export of its own technology – and, in fact, feels quite confident that it serves it well on anything from leverage in the negotiations, all the way to an important source of revenue and technology – and even a way of keeping its program afloat. So the link between what is happening on the export dimension. and what is happening on the import dimension is, in fact, a very profound one – so much so that, I think, the sustainability of the domestic program is heavily dependent on the engagement in the export dimension.

I think the DPRK case has at least three features in common with other pressing contemporary proliferation challenges. One – it threatens to bring down the regime as a whole, as well as undermine the prospects for nuclear disarmament. It sort of dashes out the hopes for nuclear disarmament. Second, I think it highlights, for all to see, the limitations of the traditional nonproliferation and arms-control means as we have come to appreciate them. And the third – and, perhaps, the most interesting – it shows that no single player – not even a powerful one, on the nature of the United States – is able to influence the course of events by itself. And so it's not just the issue of employing an unprecedented combination of carrots and sticks, but the need to actually develop a very broad coalition to do so.

And one could argue that in that respect, that what we are seeing in the proliferation world, in general – and with respect to the North Koreans – and, for that matter, with respect to Iran – or we will be talking later about Pakistan – is, actually, the same phenomenon that we are actually seeing with respect to global warming. Or with respect to the economic meltdown. That we actually need unprecedented coalitions. We need those coalitions to include all of the new players – the important new players, as well as the traditional players. China and Russia play an important role in all of these – but, then, you also need other members of this coalition.

So I think we need to revisit the premises of the policy toward the DPRK. And I think the most urgent thing is to stop the hemorrhage from the North Korean nuclear program – that, as I pointed out, is, at the moment, not only subject to no constraints on the domestic side of the business, but also subject to no constraints on the export side.

And, in fact, one could look at the missile test that had taken place over the weekend and realizing that it sees in it one way of showing to its prospective customers that its undeterrable. That if it promises to carry out tests, it goes ahead and does that – on the nuclear side, as well as on the missile side. And that it can, therefore, be counted on to deliver its own share of – in terms of providing the technology at the end of the day.

And it shows that, you know, everyone can be complaining, and protesting and deterring, and so on – and North Korea, nevertheless, presses ahead. And, in fact, may have to do so in order to please its customers – who, at the end of the day, are funding its own development.

As a result, what I suggest to you is that we need to challenge the premise that has underlied the U.S., as well as the Six-Party talks – engagement process with the DPRK. I advocate at the moment to put as the first order of business an effort to stop the domestic program and reverse it – roll it back – I think is doomed for failure. That's the area where the North Koreans are the least willingness to move along. That's the area where verification is the most difficult to move along. That's where the linkages with the South Koreans tend to complicate the equation, as far as the North Koreans are concerned, and so on.

I think both in terms of the amount of damage that the North Korean can do – the greater damage they can do is in the external dimension, and not on the domestic side of the program. But, even more importantly, if you go along with my proposition that the export dimension is the absolute make or break for the sustainability of the North Korean programs, I think the first order of business is to cap the export dimension of the program.

This would not require the kind of verification that is required in order to check on their domestic activity. This would stifle the transfer of funds, which is absolutely significant to sustain a program. And, I think, if this were to succeed, would actually buy us some hope of going one step further in terms of eliminating the program down the road.

So I suggest a reorientation of priorities. Let me just say that, in the past – in those flirting moments in which the export potential was actually put on the table – the North Koreans said it was up for sale. You just have to buy them off. Thank you.

ROBBINS: (Chuckles.) You got a price? Is it bigger than the TARP? Or – (chuckles). Shuja, thank you.

SHUJA NAWAZ: Thank you, Carla. I am honored to be here. And in the interest of truth in advertising, I should admit that I, too, once toiled in the lower reaches of the same building that you now work in – except the original one, on 43<sup>rd</sup> Street. And, also, that I am not a nuclear expert, and I do know that there are nuclear experts sitting in this room. But I do have more than a passing interest in the issue of security of South Asia – and, specifically, my native Pakistan – so I'm going to be talking about Pakistan.

I find it strange that only Pakistan is mentioned as a nuclear crisis point, when there are, indeed, two nuclear-armed states in South Asia – India and Pakistan. And, combined, in my view, their potential conflict poses a much greater nuclear threat to the world than any other single country or region.

A nuclear exchange between these two neighbors would not only destroy vast populated areas inhabited by a sixth of the world's population, but also bring on nuclear winter and its attendant horrific results on life and the economies of much of the Northern Hemisphere.

This is why I've decided to speak today of Pakistan and its concentric circles of domestic, regional and international security. I shall speak about the security imperatives of Pakistan; the fears of the world about its nuclear capabilities and programs; and what we know, and do not know, about its attempt to safeguard its nuclear weapons and other assets. And I shall do this on the basis of publicly available information.

Let me preface my remarks by a few words about the nonproliferation regime. There is gradually emerging a view among a large number of experts, even at this conference, that the recent U.S.-Indian civilian nuclear deal has weakened the NPT, by setting aside the production of nuclear weapons by a nonsignatory state.

It has seriously eroded the stance of the major nuclear powers against the emergence of new nuclear powers. The question being asked is: If we recognize India as a nuclear state, then why not Israel and Pakistan? Israel is, after all, a major U.S. ally, and Pakistan is a declared non-NATO ally. And what about other near-nuclear states? There are no clear answers to this question.

A potential and unintended consequence of the U.S.-India nuclear deal may well be a decision by Pakistani authorities to accelerate production of nuclear weapons, in the belief that India will be able to free up resources for its own weapons programs following the deal.

So where does Pakistan stand? Regardless of the rights or wrongs of Pakistan's nuclear activities, it's the country whose location determines a number of domestic, regional and international security concerns. It is located on the cusp of South Asia and Central Asia, bordered by India, Afghanistan, Iran and China. And having been recruited in the United States war against the Soviet Union in Afghanistan in the 1980s, it has now become home, itself, to violent insurgencies and militancy in the aftermath of the precipitate U.S. withdrawal from the region in 1989.

Domestically, its society and polity have been poisoned by what's known as the "Kalashnikov culture," and the emergence of an imported fanatical Islamic extremism, that threatens to destroy the state from within.

Regionally, it still fears the rising economic, political and military power of a hegemonic India to the east. While many believe that Pakistan may have abandoned its hope of wresting the disputed territory of Kashmir from India by military means, there are still concerns that it may harbor the desire to continue to bleed India through a thousand cuts, by supporting militancy inside Indian-held Kashmir.

Strong perceptions also exist in the Pakistani minds that India may wish to bracket Pakistan by insinuating itself into Afghanistan and fostering militancy directed against Pakistan from the west, both in the Northwest Frontier Province and in Baluchistan. Recent comments by Christine Fair of RAND about the insidious role of Indian consulates in Afghanistan and Iran may bolster these views inside Pakistan. Yet the reality is that the economies and polities of South Asia and Afghanistan are inextricably linked and can only benefit from the absence of conflict, linking South Asia with the greater Central Asia, energy interdependence and trade with the resulting development of individual economies may be the best time antidote to war; especially nuclear war.

Globally, South Asia represents one-sixth of the world's population and one that is dominated by a youth bulge of potentially productive persons who should be able to produce dividends, not only for their own countries but also for the world economy. India has a middle class of about 300 million people, Pakistan has a middle class of about 30 million and we'll have a purchasing power that could help lift sinking Western economies; and they could become the manufacturing hub for the world, competing with China for domination of the global marketplace.

Against this optimistic scenario is a frequent litany of fears about Pakistan, as a nuclear state with perhaps 60 to 100 warheads. What are these fears? I'll go quickly through these; number one: the failure of the state. There are persistent fears and pronouncements that the state, especially under a relatively weak civilian government may collapse leading to the splintering of Pakistan. Historically, civilian governments that succeed military or autocratic governments in Pakistan have been weak, and the reason is very simple: because of the paradox of power of military rule, it stunts civilian institutions.

Despite these burdens of history though, recent experience in Pakistan indicates a very strong civil rights movement and a powerful desire on the part of substantial elements of its society to fight for those rights. While they may not have yet shown their collective outrage at this so-called Islamic warriors that wish to take over large tracks of territories or coalesced into a unified movement against those insurgents and militants, the potential exists for this coalition to emerge. They will need help from outside.

How will that happen? Through a longer-term engagement with civilian institutions, not necessarily the government alone, and extended economic aid that is not seen by Pakistanis as transactional but as an investment in their future as true partners. This would be along the lines of the U.S. engagement with both Israel and Egypt. Recent United States moves in this direction from the White House and from the Hill or portend well for this to happen.

Here I'm referring to the re-emergence of the Kerry-Lugar bill and legislation sponsored by Representative Chris Van Hollen. Another powerful domestic factor is the often stated policy of the current army chief, that he wishes to keep the army out of politics. Although we've heard this refrain before, if he sticks to his word and a civilian government at least makes a good effort to run the state as best as it can, chances of a military intervention are at a low ebb.

Then there's the fear of Islamist takeover; while recent events in FATA and Swat may fortify this notion, particularly the fact that the provincial and federal governments have ceded territory to the militants. The fears of an Islamic takeover or Islamist takeover of Pakistan, I believe, are exaggerated. The Pakistan army still remains a key political glue for the country and it more accurately now represents the component provinces than ever before in its life. It's still a relatively disciplined entity and although its training does need to shift from conventional to counterinsurgency; it has the capability of defending the territory, given the right weapons and support.

Again, recent U.S. moves to help strengthen those capabilities may help in that direction. The challenge for the friends of Pakistan I see is to invest heavily in broadening the world view of a cohort of officers that was recruited during the period of General Zia-ul-Haq and that are now poised to get into the general officer rank of the Pakistan army – and to bring them into the world, to train them into open up their minds.

Although Pakistani society and even its military are becoming increasingly conservative, there is no evidence yet of a groundswell of radicalism. There's also the fear of more proliferation from Pakistan, based on the experience of the A.Q. Khan network. And an underlying assumption about Pakistan remains that it may actually pursue such proliferation and even additional nuclear weapons. Until we find evidence of this, I believe this may be a false bogey and we are living in the past. With the attention of the world focused on the A.Q. network, I believe it's very hard to imagine a new proliferation attempts slipping through the shields.

That said, one must understand that when a country like Pakistan has deep security concerns from its own neighborhood, it will do anything to protect itself. And recall also that the A.Q. Khan network was not solely designed for nuclear purposes; it had a dual purpose because this was a period of sanctions of Pakistan in order to maintain its own weapon systems for which the spare parts had been stopped. It had to rely on this network to acquire them.

One must also acknowledge that there was a set of willing Western businessmen who were prepared to aid in these efforts. That said, one really must differentiate between the acquisition of technology by Pakistan and the sale of nuclear secrets to other countries. There is no condoning the latter, and in order to put a stop of any recurrence of this, Pakistan I believe has shared the results of its internal investigations and interviews with A.Q. Khan. It's not likely that it will allow A.Q. Khan to be put at the disposal of any foreign entities.

Another fear is the penetration and control of nuclear weapons by militants. And this is a real and abiding fear that members of military networks and sympathetic insiders may penetrate the security setup and take over nuclear weapons. No security system is perfect but we have to believe that, based on all the reviews of Pakistan's security safeguard systems, including the report of the IISS that the system is robust, in their words.

So we have in place, as many of you know, concentric security cordons as well as a dedicated staff as well as systems for vetting the staff that work on these systems. So I won't go into the details of the nuclear command-and-control system, because these have been shared widely with the public.

So what to do? There may be ways of meeting the concerns about Pakistan as a potential nuclear crisis point. Now that the NPT system has been cracked by the civilian-nuclear deal with India, why not consider a similar deal for Pakistan? Bring it into the global, under the global umbrella, set it on the part of sharing details and all its facilities over time, along the same lines as India.

A path of cooperation may be much better than one of confrontation, but then there may be well the knock-on effects of such a deal. They'll be hard to avoid; what about Iran, what about the future of Brazil or even Saudi Arabia or any other country that goes down this path?

Most important, meeting Pakistan's security concerns would reduce the chance of conflict and nuclear warfare in the region. India and Pakistan's friends need to encourage both countries to soften their stances and open up their borders through trade and commerce. As those economic ties develop and expand, the need for conflict will be diminished.

Finally, the world needs to stop taking a condescending approach to the new nuclear powers. The nuclear genie is out of the bottle. Until the major nuclear powers go for visible and verifiable reduction and elimination of their nuclear arsenals, their statements about the new nuclear powers will ring hollow. Against this, President Obama's recent statement is powerful rhetoric, but is it realizable? That remains to be seen. Countries seek security. If the world does not guarantee their security, what is to prevent themselves from seeking it themselves? Thank you.

ROBBINS: Thank you so much. I wanted to start by, I haven't been writing down all the things that completely intrigued me so I wanted to throw out to the non-Pakistan experts a Pakistan question to begin with. Sandy, do you feel safe? Do you feel that the Pakistani nuclear program is secure?

SPECTOR: Well, I think there are different dimensions to this. I must say that the steps that Pakistan has taken – and I've met a number of the military officers and others in charge – do provide a degree of reassurance. I think the United States has been working with Pakistan pretty actively for the last decade to try to enhance security and to share best practices. So I think in that sense, there really probably has been substantial improvement over what might have been.

LEVITE: Although that pertains to the security around the weapons and not to the weapons themselves.

SPECTOR: Well, that's right because to provide information about safety systems within the weapons themselves, would mean transferring classified information but at least the information about security external to the weapons has been transferred, I believe.

LEVITE: Personal reliability and perimeter security.

SPECTOR: I think the understanding we have is that these weapons may not be fully assembled in which case this arrangement would also provide a degree of safety. What is most troubling to me is the political dimension. That is, who may have the ultimate say over how these weapons get used, when they get transported, what would happen during a crisis?

And, you know, there are elements in Pakistani society that are very, very conservative, if you wish, that have been supporting radical elements in one fashion or another; be it the Taliban or providing support at one stage at least the group responsible for the Mumbai attacks and so forth. And to what extent does this sort of shadow presence within the Pakistani government control things? How far does their influence extend? Why was A.Q. Khan temporarily released from house arrest? Who were the players that helped to orchestrate that?

So I would say, the physical side, weapon security is probably much improved. But on the political side, I think we've seen more sources of anxiety, some of which Mr. Nawaz addressed in his comments.

ROBBINS: Eli, do you feel that the A.Q. Khan network is shut down and we don't have to worry about them anymore?

LEVITE: I think there is one fundamental misunderstanding about the A.Q. Khan network and the one fundamental misunderstanding is that the A.Q. Khan network was a two-way street rather than a one-way street. The reason the A.Q. Khan network was able to operate with the degree of impunity that it did was because, at the end of the day, the program had enjoyed, sort of the degree of freedom of maneuver and transferability transfer funds and people to go back and forth and so on because it was seen this absolutely germane to the ability of Pakistan to maintain a vibrant nuclear weapons program.

And if that meant that you had to export certain things to generate the money or to get some technology in return – let alone against the background which the Pakistani felt betrayed after the Afghani war and things of that nature – so be it. That sentiment that had driven the program and those economic incentives that have been influencing the program, have not completely gone away.

In fact, what worries me is that the Indian deal has actually exacerbated that perception among the Pakistanis and I think that Nawaz had already talked about this. So to that extent we're actually talking about certain elements within the Pakistani nuclear establishment, feeling that in order to keep the program vibrant, in order to catch up with India or at least not to fall behind India, they actually have to engage in very pragmatic external activity – not necessarily as defiance, although for some that may be an extra incentive. But I think for others it's sort of a very pragmatic way of staying afloat, particularly against the very dire financial situation.

If that is the case, am I reassured? No, because I think the same security arrangements that Sandy had talked about pertain to weapons rather than to the technology of such. And when one

looks at the patterns in the past, I mean, P1s were thrown into the market precisely the time that you actually wanted to modernize, improve P2s and so on.

And given that Pakistan is not part of the Nuclear Suppliers Group then what kind of formal prohibition are they exactly under? And if someone wants to stop them, offer them incentives, let them do it. That is the Pakistani approach. So I don't see this prospect as marginal at the end of the day, and Sandy had already talked about the fact that once A.Q. Khan is let out and clearly he's let out by some people and so on. I don't know whether it's happening at the moment and we are simply unaware of it, or whether it's potentially could happen and we are simply unaware of it. It would just complicate American-Pakistani relations which are not easy as sort of they already are. I would say one has to be exceptionally vigilant.

ROBBINS: And you feel that the Pakistani government at this point has it under control, or that everybody is watching so closely that you're less concerned about it than our colleagues here.

NAWAZ: I am less concerned. And the reason is that there are great incentives for them not to get involved in these activities and, particularly if somebody does get involved, to get caught, because the risks are very high. A.Q. Khan was released by President Musharraf; he was the, quote, unquote "indispensable ally of the United States." And then he did make available the results of the investigation and the interviews with him to the U.S. So they may have been some quid pro quo in that arrangement.

Today Pakistan is on the brink of getting enormous amount of help from the United States and the international community. It needs this help because much more than even the militancy that threatens the country from within is the threat of economic collapse. And it cannot possibly take the risk of jeopardizing the situation, which is that for the first time in a long while, Pakistan has been promised a long-term economic relationship with the United States. Kerry-Lugar will have a five-year appropriation, with the possibility of another five years. So 10 years...and it'll be a stated objective of the relationship with the people of Pakistan.

ROBBINS: But that assumes that Pakistan is a unified actor. I mean, that assumes that the people who have the conversation with Hillary Clinton or with Holbrooke or whoever are the same people who were – and we'd certainly know from the relationship between the ISI and extremist groups that Pakistan often does things that are not necessarily in its own interests because of the complexity of it.

NAWAZ: Yes, of course. In the past this has been the case, but you now have essentially a troika in which the army chief is a key player, the prime minister is increasingly becoming a political force and then you have a fairly powerful president who still retains all the constitutional powers of President Musharraf. And so they are working together as recent events have indicated. It's not as if they'll be a breaking away of any one of these to act on his own. And the ISI does report to the army chief and it is reporting to the prime minister. So, to the extent that the senior command of the ISI is concerned, it's all brand new. These are people appointed by General Kayani, unless you suspect that there's double dealing at work. You have to give them the benefit of the doubt. It's at the operational level in the field, particularly on the western border that there is ambivalence and there will always be ambivalence because by the nature of the work you need to hire locals to work with the Afghan Taliban or the local population.

ROBBINS: From your mouth to God's ears. This fourth failure to detect, that's the fourth failure to detect, that's something rather chilling to talk about for a while. Is there a way to, I mean we heard Secretary Steinberg talking about the additional protocol should not be a question of choice but a question of responsibility or perhaps the lowest common denominator.

Is there a structural regime that can be put into place? I mean, I'm utterly puzzled by the Syria thing. I mean, aren't the Israelis watching Syria? Isn't the United States; I mean, I know that certainly the Bush administration was obsessed with the question of Syria and what it was doing inside of Iraq.

How can a country like Syria get that far down without, I mean, where are all those cool Jason Bourne satellites and things like that and how did we miss it?

SPECTOR: (Chuckles.) I have a feeling my North Korean expert to my left may be a better individual to explain that. (Laughter.) But I think –

ROBBINS: He threatened me.

SPECTOR: I mean, there is the other side of the story. The other side of the story is that in most of these cases, eventually we did detect it – although in the Iraq case it was only after –

ROBBINS: But that's – (inaudible, cross talk).

SPECTOR: – after a war. So there is a risk as states undertake this that they are going to be caught, and I would assume that we are watching more closely than ever. But the Syrian case says you may be able to go pretty far down the line before you're observed.

Now, just looking at the IAEA part of the picture, a lot of ideas have been thrown out for strengthening the system. We found that when Iran gave us the additional protocol – this is between 2003 and 2005 I believe – as well as access to scientists and documents and access to most but not all sites, we had a much higher degree of confidence as to what we were observing and that we were getting our hands around the program. And maybe that's what we want to aspire to, "additional protocol plus." And I do think there is flexibility in the IAEA Statute that has not been exploited by the director general to use special inspections more aggressively.

So we may be able to make considerable progress without starting with a brand new protocol or what have you. One option is to set some models for best practices. We're seeing the Emirates, for example, as they go forward with their nuclear power program, adopting certain, more than the minimum restraints by renouncing enrichment or reprocessing and adopting the additional protocol. Maybe we can use, establish a model for what we consider to be really superior nonproliferation behavior that includes these add-ons to the IAEA system, would be embraced voluntarily as a gesture of good faith.

NAWAZ: Could I just add something to that, Carla? I think there's a paper released probably in the last few days by Pierre Goldschmidt from Carnegie which actually does present some very workable approaches and most of them based on the suggestion that Sandy made is really the exercise of already existing authority within the IAEA. So it's not really a question of even adding on to it, but to be able to go in and conduct special inspections, for instance.

And it's a question of the political will within the IAEA to make sure that it actually follows through on what authority it's already been given. In the past there's been kind of a shirking away from that because the – particularly the major powers were not all in unison on this. So it may be well worth taking a look at some of those very practical suggestions in Pierre Goldschmidt's paper. It's a pity he's conducting a parallel panel at this point otherwise I'm sure we would have asked him to add a word or two.

LEVITE: Let me tackle your question in two different ways. One is, I think part of the answer had already been given, but just that in all fairness, I would say that I think that the Director General of the IAEA has gone one step further and talked about Additional Protocol plus in certain cases and what he specifically talked about is the need to have access to people, sites and documents.

So I think that what he tried to at least analytically to correct, the question is about doing it practically, but at least analytically the DG tried to create a new norm that in certain cases where suspicions arise he would need powers that go beyond what he is provided the AP.

And the question is how hard he is pushing for this? And I am not in a position not to second guess him. But, my point is, that the requirement for having something called Additional Protocol plus, is very important. And to the extent that one needs legitimacy for pursuing it, I think Mohamed ElBaradei is as best as one can be to confer it, to make the case, why we need to go beyond the Additional Protocol, at least when some suspicions arise.

The second thing pertains not to the will or authority, but to the investigative capabilities, I think we have discovered the Additional protocol, when aggressively applied does provide a remarkable detection capability, particularly in conjunction with the analytical capability and the technical abilities of the Agency. We've seen that even in operations where very extremely small quantities of material were involved and when, as in some of the cases at hand, there has been a deliberate effort to try and sort of deny any evidence to the Agency.

But I think the third thing we need to point out with respect to the Additional protocol is that, assuming the parts about the NIE with respect to Iran are correct, with respect to 2003 and the period immediately thereafter, I think it's quite clear that the Additional Protocol had the considerable deterrence value, which is to sort of make sure the Iranians realize, not immediately, but after a while, that they can't sustain certain activities and still entertain a very high probability that they won't be caught, and if caught the penalty associated with this may be significant. The point is that the AP has considerable deterrence value, not just detection value assuming detecting non compliance carries a serious penalty.

Going beyond this just one more step, just to say that indeed there is sort of, we talked about Pierre's concept of what is necessary to verify, but I would say that all of this belongs to one category of measures. What we do not have at present is a corresponding system which says what happens if you fail to collaborate with the agency? So it's still not clear that if you get caught you pay a penalty, but if you fail to collaborate there is also a penalty. So we have a double problem there that I think exists, evident also in the case that was just pointed out by Sandy about Syria. I mean, again, they don't collaborate, the Iranians don't collaborate. And there is no penalty associated with this behavior.

In terms of the first part of your question, I think that when one looks at proliferation in general, we had assumed that proliferation can occur either through a strictly indigenous activity, or in some cases through some kind of collaborative effort. I think that a while back we began to suspect that maybe something more ambitious than merely a collaborative proliferation effort is possible, that is to say a turnkey project.

I think that what we have failed to realize was that a fourth type of proliferation was also possible, which helps explain a great deal of what we were talking about. If we look at business contracts, there is something called BOT: Someone builds, and operates facilities for you and then transfers them to you. And if there is someone who is willing to undertake that role, then clearly—and Sandy already alluded to that fact—in cases where such a thing occurs, the domestic requirements in terms of infrastructure, participants, the human resources and so on for nuclear proliferation to occur are limited or even nonexistent because everything comes from the outside. Someone has to contract, external contractor does it for you then it hands it over down the road at some point. We, I think, we already saw some evidence of that in Libya and the case at hand may actually suggest that sort of we are seeing a more fully fledged model of this phenomenon in the case at hand.

ROBBINS: We haven't talked a lot about Iran and I wanted to throw another question out here about Iran. There is a wonderful phrase, "the point of no return," and obviously it means different things to different people, but for the longest time it was the idea of developing the technical competence to enrich uranium.

And if you recall that Mohamed ElBaradei gave an interview to the Times a couple years ago and said they passed that point already and for him it appeared to be that he was making the argument that there is no point in going to the mats with them; let's try to figure out some sort of compromise on which they have a pilot program or they have something since they've already mastered it intellectually.

What we have right now is something of a standoff; the Obama administration has reached out, but at the same time this question of, are you going to have a mutual freeze on sanctions versus freeze on enrichment or not freeze in terms of adding to the enrichment capability, but no one has been quite clear at this point about what deal is potentially out there and particularly fascinating because in the contact that I've had with the Iranians, I'm not even sure they want a deal. They don't seem to be very eager to talk.

I think they've been thrown very much off balance by suddenly having a nice United States. Everything that all we liberals always warned of seems to be true. What is this "point of no return?" How far along are the Iranians, and do you believe that at this point, given the fact that they seem to have figured out how to do it, that hoisting ourselves on the demand that they don't have any enrichment capabilities, is that perhaps so far gone there's no point in continuing on that position?

SPECTOR: Well, I think we have a new administration which creates a new opportunity. It would have been extremely difficult for the Bush administration, after taking such a tough stand in insisting that Iran halt all enrichment activities, to back away from that position—which was originally taken for a good reason in the sense that the Iranians did not yet have the skill to put together thousands of enrichment centrifuges. But a new administration can take a fresh look at this and not face quite the political penalty domestically or internationally that the Bush administration

might have faced if it abandoned its very tough line on this matter. But the trick, if you do soften our negotiating position, is to give away as little as possible. .

One idea that's been thrown out is that enrichment continues in Iran, but the output is moved to another location, for example, to Russia for fuel fabrication or what have you, so that no stockpile of low-enriched uranium accumulates. So once you open the door and you say, we can look around for other options, there are opportunities for creative conceptualizations that might square the circle, that is, options that might be enough to allow Iran to claim that it's maintaining its technology, but at the same time are not advancing towards the bomb, in terms of stockpiling of low-enriched uranium or building additional cascades or what have you, or not taking it so far down the road that we feel they're just a month away from a bomb.

And I thought, as I commented earlier, that is what Blair was saying, in effect. We do have a little room here. He wasn't proposing how to exploit it, but he was definitely saying certain things that we might have been seeing and that would have made us extremely unhappy are not occurring, and we can have some discussions in that space. So, it looks like the Obama administration is setting up a bargaining environment in which it will have a bit of a flexibility, but we haven't seen yet how the administration plans to exploit it.

ROBBINS: Eli, do you have an opinion on this?

LEVITE: (Sighs.) A judgment, an opinion. I would say three things. First of all there is a measure of uncertainty exactly where the Iranians are and this measure of uncertainty pertains to a combination of three factors. We know something about a suspicion of undeclared activity, I think, both in terms of statements made by, repeatedly by U.S. officials as well as by Agency officials, there are some suspicions there as undeclared activity. And mind you –

ROBBINS: President Ahmadinejad talked about this P2 program and we're still unclear about where it is and what it is.

LEVITE: MR. LEVITE: The tragedy is– we talked earlier about the agency tools, that the Iranians have unilaterally redefined Subsidiary Arrangements and walked back on them. If they had even been upheld to the very thing that they had formerly ratified then they would have been in a situation where they would have had to declare certain activities which currently they don't have to declare. So, in terms of the Iranian interpretation, they are under no obligation to declare setting up additional facilities until they reach very advanced stage.

So, at one level there are suspicions and beyond that there is some undeclared activity. At the second level there is wide suspicion about additional activity in the weaponization area. And I think, again, if one only draws on what the Agency briefings and things of that nature, based on the Agency putting together resources from many of the member states. And at the third level there is dual use declared activity. So we have to factor all three in, in terms of assessing where the Iranians really are.

Now, I think that one thing we've learned over the years is that at the end of the day what stands between a device – and I deliberately say a device rather than a warhead – but what stands between a device, what stands between a country and a device, is essentially, at the end of the day, the ability to produce fissile material rather than the weaponization capability as such, and that

countries like South Africa and so on could have an arsenal, at least of these crude devices, if they actually wanted it.

And I think that sort of, in that respect, it's less than inspiring that the Iranians are, even by their own admission as well as by the agency monitoring, in possession already of a significant quantity of LEU that by all measures is sufficient to produce at least one device and continue to churn a fair amount more down the road.

So, in that respect, the technical "point of no return," which was interpreted to be "when will they be on their own in terms of their ability to produce the low-enriched uranium, have the technical capability to convert low-enriched uranium to high-enriched uranium, and then turn that into a device" has been reached? I think that technical challenges for them to do so are not there anymore in any significant way. There are practical aspects, but not technical challenges, and consequently the period in which it would take to do so is measured in months rather than years.

Again, I think that that's perfectly consistent with the statements of Secretary Gates, the Director of National Intelligence and so on that are saying, they are years away from an arsenal. But in terms of their ability to get to the first device, North Korean style, if you wish, then the issue is six months, nine months, a year, whatever. That's a rough estimate— for at least one device. So I think that's roughly where they are.

I would add one thing, which is I think that if – that the difficulties that the Iranian model presents, and the biggest challenge that we are facing is that the Iranians are trying to pretend that what they are doing is perfectly legitimate under the NPT, and in fact, one should not discriminate between, say, certainly India but even Japan and Iran. I think that is a misleading argument, that is a false argument because I think the Japan hasn't tried either to conceal or to turn away the Agency, in fact is subject to very robust inspections by the agency.

But the point that I want to make is that even using existing types of instruments out there, and holding Iranians up to their word in terms of what they're up to and what they're not does create some interesting opportunities for diplomacy if one really wants to entertain diplomacy seriously. Whether it's the Iranians are willing to reassure or the United States is worth a serious try to find out.

ROBBINS: And your opinion on where we go with Iran?

NAWAZ: I would just add I think it may be risky for the U.S. to try to do it alone with Iran, that it would be critical to bring in partners like Russia and perhaps even China because there are relationships there that you can leverage. And it doesn't then put the U.S. in the situation where if it doesn't succeed it faces complete and utter failure. So it would be critical to try and get the Russians and the Chinese on board.

ROBBINS: Thank you. We now are going to throw it open to the audience. We have – sorry, we have 20 minutes. There are mikes on both sides. What I would ask is first you identify who you are, and second of all, it would be great if we didn't have speeches and tried to focus on questions, which would be – and since I am totally blinded by the light, I apologize if I went to college with you and I don't recognize you. Of course there are no women lining up so when I went to a women's college.

(Laughter.)

Q: Greg Thielmann, Arms Control Association.

We've heard some discussion about model nonproliferation behavior and embracing the additional protocol, strengthening IAEA. I want to return to the Israeli attack on the Syrian nuclear reactor and the implicit U.S. endorsement of the attack. Is that in any way a model for the kind of movement that we've been suggesting in other contexts because here is a case when the U.S. has significant intelligence information about significant proliferation behavior? It did not share it with the IAEA for seven and a half months, didn't even share it with most members of the U.S. Congress for seven and a half months.

It exercised, as Spector said, the most pure form of the Bush preventive war doctrine that we saw during the entire period in which that doctrine was in effect – preventive war, not preemptive war which can be justified under international law. It seems like in so many ways this is an example of all of the wrong things that most of us in this room are trying to achieve. I was just wondering if I could get a response.

ROBBINS: Of course it worked, but oh well.

Q: Yeah, and if it worked, in what respect did it work, and how long does it work? And does the model work for other instances as well?

SPECTOR: Well, when I spoke about it, I attempted, and I'd like reemphasize this, I attempted to draw the precedent as narrowly as possible. And when you contrast this with the situation after the Israeli bombing of Iraq's Osirak reactor in 1981, the contrast is pretty stark. Osirak was designed as a research reactor, openly purchased, under International Atomic Energy Agency safeguards, and it was a little hard to explain how it might be misused for plutonium production.

The Syrian case was a virtual mirror image creating what may be a unique case that we may never see again: The reactor was designed, it appears, for plutonium production, secretly purchased, kept clandestine despite Syria's full-scope safeguards obligations, and physically disguised. These were factors, I believe, that led the international community to be more hesitant before it responded to this episode, and even to this day there has been very little international response. There was the NPT preparatory commission meeting and an IAEA Board of Governors meeting both after the April 2008 disclosures by the CIA, and even then it appeared that no one was saying the attack was a good idea, but countries weren't rushing to condemn the Israelis either.

So I wouldn't endorse this or encourage it, but there did seem to be an tacit acknowledgement internationally that something unique was happening here – that is, a preventive attack under some very special conditions that may have at least partially justified it. And, in the background, there was the historical failure to deal effectively with the Iranian case. So the question that the Israelis confronted I think, among others, was if we did expose this to the IAEA, what would have happened? There would have been a stall by the Syrians. They would have continued construction. And in the end, the reactor would have started to operate, as the process ground on.

So I think – I think the way to deal with this episode is to try to define it quite narrowly and to anticipate that we’re not going to see similar cases again and therefore not start a cascade of these preemptive attacks.

Q: Alton Frye from the Council on Foreign Relations.

President Obama plans to convene a nuclear summit within the next year, presumably before the NPT review conference. Should invitations go to Israel, Pakistan, India, Iran, North Korea, Syria, and if so, which do you think will likely show up for that summit?

ROBBINS: Have a sort of practitioners’ room? Is that what your –

LEVITE: I think that a lot depends on what are the ground rules for the invitation. I mean, the CTBT, as you’re well aware, has defined conditions for entry into force, that 44 states that have significant nuclear facilities have to ratify it. So if you use the same criteria, I suspect that quite a few of those that would be receiving invitations would show up. As you’re well aware, for example, Israel has sort of signed on to the NSG guidelines, to the sort of signed the CTBT, and so on. I think that if you ask us as Israelis, I can’t speak for the current government for sure, but if you ask Israelis whether they have a stake in the nuclear order, I think the answer is unequivocally yes.

So to the extent that President Obama is trying to create a new nuclear order and a more stable one, one that is more immune to proliferation, one that checks it, one that provides diplomatically viable alternatives to extreme, last-resort measures, that would appeal to Israelis? I can’t see a reason why not. I can’t speak for the others, but I assume that you’ve heard the Pakistanis say that they would probably show up before us.

(Laughter.)

NAWAZ: I think the Pakistanis would show up if India was invited and said it would show up because they are both linked– particularly with regards to the CTBT.

ROBBINS: And just think of the great networking potential there for these countries.

(Laughter.)

Q: Shahriar Sharei with the World Federalist Movement, an NGO.

In the Middle East nonproliferation – of course Israel is an important – very important country with its estimated over hundred nuclear warheads. Now, the question I have for the panel is that for – in exchange for some sort of agreement, NATO-type agreement with the U.S., do you think Israel would give up its nuclear weapons, and would that make a nuclear free zone Middle East possible or not?

LEVITE: We have a panel deliberately focusing the issue of a nuclear weapon free zone tomorrow. So I invite you there– I’ll make sort of this PR pitch for the panel.

But I would say very quickly because we’re running out of time, that I think the issue for Israel around the nuclear weapon free zone is framed first and foremost around its relationship with

its neighbors. Above all, I think that will be the driving force. The Israeli government has repeatedly been on record as well as in terms of formal decision that it has been taken – that whole notion of moving towards the regional nuclear disarmament will depend on the evolution its political relationship with its neighbors.

Q: Yes. My name is Wael Al-Assad. I'm Jordan. I work for the League of Arab States. I'm the director of disarmament on multilateral relations there.

I have a very short comment and a smaller question. The short comment is I'm very confused with the title. Why have we put Iran and Syria together with North Korea and Pakistan while it's very obvious that they are totally different, two separate cases. Iran and Syria have categorically denied that they are going to a military program. The IAEA could not confirm – they say we do not know yet. We need to investigate. And in spite of the insinuations from the panel of the inability of the IAEA, the IAEA is the only authority in the international community that can confirm or unconfirm the existence of a military nuclear program in any country. That's one thing.

The second thing – Pakistan and North Korea have declared nuclear capabilities and that's a totally different approach towards what we can deem as a nuclear crisis or not.

ROBBINS: Your question?

Q: May I first finish my –

ROBBINS: No, I really would appreciate it if you could ask a question.

Q: Yeah, I know, I know, okay. The question is, Dr. Sandy have stated – have actually criticized Israel for attacking Syria, and he blamed Israel that their attack on that installations have made it very difficult for the IAEA to investigate and to confirm whether there is illegal activities there or not. I would be very much interested in knowing the response of the – of Dr. Spector.

And one last thing, if I may: I think you got your wish as a journalist because there's many unsubstantiated facts and information that have been put here as being facts confirming the existence of nuclear programs where there is no real confirmation. Thank you.

ROBBINS: Thank you.

SPECTOR: I think there are a lot of unanswered questions about the Syria case even at this moment. Why was the IAEA unable to get satellite images of the site after the attack? The United States has cited such photos as showing that when the site was further deconstructed by the Syrians in the course of razing it, the images revealed that the reactor had a similar lay out to the Yongbyon reactor. But the IAEA was not able to get access to those pictures.

Syria, of course, has denied the agency access to the debris from the site, which would certainly have provided additional guidance about the presence of uranium, the presence of graphite, and the rest. So I think we have to realize that – at least my view is the IAEA, given what has been granted access to, has done a pretty extraordinary job because I understand the actual quantity of evidence of the uranium – seven particles – was microscopic, and still agency scientists were able to figure out what they were looking at.

So we have to appreciate both the capabilities of the agency and the legal limitations that the agency confronts, as we look at its activities – and the fact that Syria is certainly not cooperating, which makes the job infinitely harder.

ROBBINS: Thank you.

Q: Yes, thank you. Simon Henderson, the Washington Institute for Near East Policy.

I know Sandy for so long and have learned so much from him I hesitate to correct him, but if I may correct him on a couple of points. One is he said that A.Q. Khan has been released from prison. It was house arrest.

SPECTOR: He's back in there.

Q: And we don't know why or the circumstance or the background to it. In fact, according to his daughter who wrote a letter to the newspaper in Pakistan nine days ago, she complained that in fact the net result was he hadn't been released; he still couldn't see people; he still couldn't go out. The why of it – well, according to the Islamabad high court in their one-page three-paragraph statement, it was a deal between the deputy attorney general, a senior bureaucrat of the interior ministry with A.Q. Khan, and the deal was predicated on the fact that according to the piece of paper, the court judgment he hadn't done anything wrong, and –

ROBBINS: Is there a question?

Q: And the circumstances was that of his future existence was confined to a secrete annexure. He's –

ROBBINS: I'm sorry.

(Inaudible, cross talk.)

ROBBINS: – question.

Q: The question is simple. The question is simple. He's back under house arrest because the U.S. made a fuss. That would appear to be the clear reason. Why did the U.S. make a fuss if Pakistan doesn't appear to have been bothered that he was under, that he was going to be released?

SPECTOR: Well, this is funny, Simon, because you obviously have been very keen to reveal the challenges A.Q. Khan posed to proliferation over the years's and have hardly been his defender. The important thing here was the symbolism, that at least he was under house arrest. That was the only penalty he suffered after all of these various smuggling activities, and to have released him from this, I believe, sent a very unfortunate signal around the world,, to the effect, that as far as Pakistan was concerned, there was simply nothing he had done that would lead the country to consider punishing him, in even the slightest way.

So I think that's why the United States pressed back. But he still may be released again. He's now on appeal, and the current house arrest is pending the appeal, so we don't know how this

is going to come out. What I was wondering about is which political factions were behind the maneuvering that led to his release; that is, who may have helped to influence the outcome in the first instance, and whether this reflects a readiness in some quarters to vindicate him rather than to keep him under wraps, as the United States would prefer.

Q: Well, the answer to that question is it's Rahim Malick (ph) who was the person he did the deal with.

Q: Tariq Rauf from the IAEA. I know all of the panelists to a greater or lesser degree so thank you for your comments. But I must say that there has been some loose talk about the IAEA, and I will take this up separately with each of you – (laughter) – since there isn't enough time to comment on each of the points that were raised, that I had some issue with. But let me just say that the IAEA safeguard system is an information-driven system.

And I would like to pick up on a point that Sandy just made in response to one of the questions, and that is about, for example, the lack of satellite imagery from the day of the bombing till six weeks later in Syria. The same thing goes for the A.Q. Khan network. We hear from various people that A.Q. Khan had been followed for years and years so how come he was not shut down? How come a lot of this information was not shared with the IAEA? In the CIA briefing on Syria, there are lots of photographs purported to have been taken from within the reactor while it was being constructed. We saw those pictures at the same time when they were posted on The New York Times Web site.

So my question to you, the three of you, is when you make the accusation that the IAEA has not been using all of its legal authority, which I would deny – the agency is using the legal authority that it already has. But if those member states or other states that do have information that they believe points to clandestine nuclear weapon development in other states, what is stopping them from sharing this information with the IAEA, which of course is recognized as the sole verification agency in the area of nuclear nonproliferation. Thank you.

LEVITE: Tariq, I think the answer is very simple: What ends up happening with this information under the best of circumstances is a very time-consuming exercise. Under the worst of circumstances, it provides a cover for the continuation of the program.

Not all of the problem resides with the IAEA. The IAEA has actually done a fairly thorough investigation. Sandy has given high grades for the performance, the investigative performance of the IAEA and I think rightly so. But I think it's unquestionable the IAEA hasn't used all of the authority under its disposal, and I think it's unquestionable that this is evident in the IAEA process with Iran. Iran has unilaterally decided not to play by the rules of the IAEA.

I'll give you another example: How much emphasis has the IAEA given to the Discontinuity of Knowledge that occurred with respect to UF6 in Iran? How much emphasis is given to that specific issue? Discontinuity of Knowledge constitutes one of the greatest offenses under the Safeguards system. That has happened. Several hundred kilograms in the process have gone missing. Can you do something better than just rely on the operator's accounts to sort it out?

So what happens is I think part of the answer resides outside the IAEA. Part of it resides with certain powers and so on. Part of it resides with how the IAEA is actually harnessing its

authority. And I think we need to engage in very real soul searching on both parts. One is with respect to the sharing of information and part of it with respect to the use of the information.

ROBBINS: We actually have a few minutes left. Do you both have – do you want to both do your questions?

Q: Thank you. Thank you. I'm the ambassador of Algeria in Vienna, chairperson of the board of governance of the International Atomic Energy Agency.

I wanted just to comment regarding the presentation made on Syria. It appears that if the agency have proven that the installation destroyed by Israel is – was at least having undeclared nuclear activities, I think it is not correct when the issue of Iran – sorry, of Syria brought to the attention of the board in September 2008 – it was clearly said by the DG that the work of the agency regarding verification in that country specifically that destroyed installation was significantly hampered by the fact that it has been destroyed completely first –

ROBBINS: Well, that's already been raised. Do you have a question?

Q: No, no. I don't have. I said since the beginning I wanted to comment. I think it is important to know how it is. And second is that also the information provided by the other members regarding that installation was not shared by the agency to the Syrian authorities. And also that the board is still divided regarding Syria because there is no evidence that there is undeclared activity in that installation which has been destroyed.

And I think it is important to remind –

ROBBINS: Okay, thank you. Thank you very much. Okay, I'm sorry, we have one more person here. We only have about a minute left.

Q: Carla, I'm trying to figure out how to formulate a comment into a question.

ROBBINS: Thank you. That's – I've been doing that my whole life, but yes.

Q: Laura Rockwood. I'm with the IAEA. I'm the lawyer for the Department of Safeguards. Let's see how to do this: a special inspection can be triggered by the IAEA if we have reason to believe we don't have enough information available to fulfill our responsibilities. Now, if you accept that before we carry out a special inspection that we must consult with the member state, and the member state can at that point say no, and our next option is to go to the board of governors who would have to then make a determination that an action was essential and urgent in order to get the state to be bounded to a special inspection.

Would it not have been more effective to have given the agency the necessary evidence it needed to trigger a special inspection, much as the way the intelligence information helped us do that in the case of North Korea, instead of jumping the gun, so to speak, and putting us in a position where it is very difficult now to make an argument to the board that it is perhaps essential but clearly not urgent to have a special inspection? Just a thought, Sandy.

ROBBINS: You did that brilliantly. I just want to congratulate you.

(Laughter.)

SPECTOR: Well, I thought I was going to get out of that one. (Laughter.) I think we all know what was really going on here. There was the view of Israel that the facility represented, an extremely serious threat and a deference, if that's a right word, on the part of the U.S. government to Israeli desires. As I understand the history here, the information was brought to our attention. We immediately began to figure out how to exploit the IAEA system effectively, how to use the U.N. And as we were deliberating this, the story goes, the airstrike took place.

I think there was an element of realpolitik to all of this that overwhelmed what would have been the most effective process from the standpoint of the IAEA. Now the question is, can we exploit what's left; in other words, under the current circumstances, can we utilize IAEA authority more effectively. And my impression here is that the United States is probably discouraging tough IAEAit because we want to see if we can get this other diplomatic initiative with the Syrians moving forward, in the hopes that we will be able to solve this problem in a more enduring way by bringing Syria more into the international mainstream.

So, we all talk about the nuances of the safeguards process on the one hand, but there's a political process that is also operating and not infrequently they are in conflict. What would be the clearest, most – what's the right word – transparent use of IAEA authority is not always the tool that governments reach for first.

ROBBINS: Thank you. You both have one line you want to add?

LEVITE: Yeah, I think that the willingness to share information with the IAEA and to wait for the process of its investigation would be highly dependent on how reassuring does that option look in terms of how long will it take, what happens if the other party refuses to collaborate, what happens if it's caught lying, in terms of both the Agency action as well as in terms of the – sort of agents outside the –

I find it remarkable that while some people have talked about Syria – they haven't talked about Libya, but I'll tell – sort of let's talk about Iran. I think the remarkable thing is that Israel has been remarkably patient for six years. And a lot of people would have said that if there is any opportunity for actually taking some more coercive action would have been ideal to do so earlier versus Iran. But for six years Israel actually entrusted its future with respect to a country that also refuses to recognize its existence with the Agency and to the international community. Where does that leave us now?

NAWAZ: Let me just –

ROBBINS: A final little statement.

NAWAZ: Let me just end by saying that the IAEA is only as good as its member states want it to be. And if they give it the resources and the powers and are consistent in the application of those powers, then it can be effective, otherwise there will always be quibbles.

ROBBINS: Thank you for the panel and to the audience for some great questions. And I'm glad I managed to annoy several of you.

(Applause.)

(END)