

RECOMMENDATIONS FOR ELIMINATING NUCLEAR THREATS

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9:00 A.M.

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SPEAKERS:
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JESSICA MATHEWS: Good morning, all. I am Jessica Mathews, president of the Carnegie Endowment. I am happy to see so many people here at this hour on this gray morning. I should mention, however, that you don't get too much credit because our speakers – for our speakers this is actually the second event of the day.

But it is our very great pleasure this morning to host the Washington rollout of the findings of the International Commission on Nuclear Nonproliferation and Disarmament. This commission, as I think most of you probably know, was a joint initiative of the Japanese and Australian governments, which assembled a broad and deep team of – international team of experts to produce a very, very serious contribution on all three fronts of the issues on which it worked.

Carnegie was honored to serve as the North American-based research center for the commission and to have one of our scholars, Alexei Arbatov, from our Carnegie Moscow Center, as one of the 15 commissioners. Vice President George Perkovich, head of our nuclear policy program here, also served as a member of the advisory group, so we feel a certain deep connection to this important work.

The report is extensive and detailed but beautifully presented and organized and very easily accessible. If you don't have a copy, there are some available outside the room immediately after today's event and I urge you to pick one up. The commission was really the first to attempt to give full and equal emphasis to all three aspects of the nuclear problem; that is, nonproliferation, disarmament and the future of the nuclear power industry.

It made, I think also, a single contribution in linking two of those. That is, thanks to the work of the so-called “four horsemen” – Secretaries Perry and Shultz and Kissinger and Sen. Sam Nunn – there is now a serious discussion and debate and beginnings of serious work on the question of eventual nuclear disarmament. That was given an enormous boost by President Obama in his speech last year in Prague.

And there exists a very well-known agenda of steps in the near-term that start us down a path that could end many decades from now with disarmament. What has been missing until now is a detailed agenda of steps that link those near-term steps to that very long-term goal, and that very broad middle lay there as a much more murky area and it was one of the major goals of this commission to dive into that murkiness and provide a list of steps of how you achieve that transition. I think that will stand as one of the very, very important contributions that the commission made.

To present the findings of this report we are honored to have two old and valued old friends – not “old” but old friends – of Carnegie, the co-chair of the commission, Gareth Evans, and Commissioner Bill Perry. I also want to recognize Nobuyasu Abe, who served on the advisory group and is representing the Japanese government for today's event. Ambassador Abe, we are honored to have you with us and want to thank you for the Japanese government's leadership on this issue.

Secretary Perry will set the stage for the report first, and then Gareth Evans, who, as I said, co-chaired the commission, will fill us in on the conclusions.

Gareth may be less well-known to you than Secretary Perry. He brought to this work more than 20 years of policy experience in the Australian government and then Australian politics, during which, among many other things, he served as foreign minister, and for many years led the International Crisis Group with brilliant and energetic leadership. I think that really, when you see it up close, almost unbelievable energy and commitment and intellectual depth that he brought to this job and made it the quality report that it is.

After Secretary Perry and Gareth Evans have spoken, we'll have plenty of time to open the floor to questions. So let me turn now to Bill Perry. Thank you.

WILLIAM PERRY: Thank you, Jessica. I'll start off by saying what a pleasure it is to be here in Washington and see so many longtime friends and colleagues in the audience, and also take the opportunity to congratulate the Carnegie Endowment, having just been selected one of the world's leading think tanks by the Think Tank Index report, which just came out a day or two ago.

My job, as Jessica said, is to do the scene-setting: What is the environment in which we were working when we did this commission report? I'm going to start that by observing that just Wednesday of this week there was an op-ed in the Wall Street Journal, authored by the "gang of four" – you know, Shultz, Kissinger, Nunn and myself. This was the third of a series of Wall Street Journal op-eds, the first of which was issued just three years ago, which it laid out the growing danger of nuclear weapons and proposed that we ought to start moving towards the elimination of nuclear weapons.

All three of these op-eds have had a very strong reaction all around the world. I must say, the reaction after the first op-ed truly surprised us. We were expecting only the usual academic responses. We got quite a large response from senior people all over the world.

So we asked ourselves, why? Why is this happening? Our message was certainly not new. It had been expressed many times before, indeed by some people in this room. What was new about it that was being expressed by four people recognized as "Cold Warriors," and that gave it a certain validity which otherwise might not have existed.

I want to start off by saying, what inspired the four of us who had been responsible – largely responsible through the decades of building the Cold War arsenal – what inspired us to take this position that we should start dismantling it now. And while I cannot speak for all four of us, I will give you, very briefly, what inspired me.

And there were certainly several experiences in my life during the Cold War which played a fundamental role in shaping my thinking. I want to share very briefly two of those experiences with you. One of them occurred many decades ago.

At the time I directed a scientific laboratory in California and served as a scientific consultant to the Defense Department and the CIA. And one morning I got a telephone call from a former Stanford classmate who at the time was the deputy director of the CIA – Bud Wheelon; some of you know him – and he asked me if I would come back to Washington with him to consult on a very important technical problem.

I said, sure; I'll rearrange my schedule and come back and see you next week. And he said, you don't understand; I need to see you right away. So I got on the night flight and flew back to Washington and met him first thing in the morning, and I was stunned when he showed me pictures taken by a U-2 of an unfolding missile deployment in Cuba. That was my first introduction to what has come to be called the Cuban Missile Crisis.

In the next 13 days I worked on a small technical team, which every day looked at the data coming in, being collected by intelligence, prepared a report which was on President Kennedy's desk the next morning to help guide him through his decisions for that day. Every day I went into that center, I believed it would be my last day on Earth, and to this day, I believe that we avoided a nuclear catastrophe more by good luck than by good management.

Fifteen years later – and this time the second experience occurred – I was now in government – I was the undersecretary of defense for research and engineering, and I was awoken by a telephone call at 3:00 in the morning, and I sleepily picked up the phone and heard the voice at the other end say he was the general who was the watch officer that night at the North American Air Defense Command.

And the general got right to the point. He told me that his computers were indicating 200 ICBMs on the way from the Soviet Union to the United States. I immediately woke up. (Laughter.) This of course turned out to be a false alarm, and the general had recognized it as such and was calling me in the hopes that I could help him determine why his computers had malfunctioned so that he had some answers when he briefed the president on this the next morning.

Well, I tell you these stories so that you know that the danger of a nuclear catastrophe was never an academic issue to me. I lived with it every day and believed it was a very real danger. Now, ironically, at the same time I got this phone call about the danger of a Soviet nuclear attack, I was responsible for the development of America's nuclear weapons: the B-2, the MX, the Trident missile, the Trident submarine, the air-launched cruise missile. Most of these systems are still in our inventory today.

And at the time, I fully realized the risks associated with these deadly weapons but believed it was necessary to take those risks because of the dangers we faced during the Cold War. But when the Cold War was finally over, I believed it was not necessary to take those kinds of risks anymore and that we should begin the dismantlement of this deadly Cold War legacy.

My first opportunity to act on that belief came when the president appointed me the secretary of defense in 1994. And, as secretary, my first priority was working to reduce the nuclear arsenal and the nuclear dangers associated with it. I won't describe that in any detail but simply to say the outcome was that during my tenure we actually dismantled 8,000 nuclear weapons, both in the United States and in the former Soviet Union.

We facilitated three nations – Kazakhstan, Belarus and Ukraine – going from nuclear nations to non-nuclear. And to put that in context, at the time Ukraine was the third-largest nuclear power in the world. They went from third-largest to zero. And I helped steer the Comprehensive Test Ban Treaty through the Pentagon so that President Clinton could sign it.

When I left office in 1997, I truly believed we were well on the way to dealing with this deadly Cold War nuclear legacy, but in the last decade those efforts have stalled and even reversed. Russia and China today are both building new nuclear weapons.

The question over the last number of years as to whether the United States intended to follow suit. North Korea has gone nuclear and Iran is following close in its footsteps. If North Korea and Iran cannot be stopped from building nuclear arsenals, I believe we will cross over a nuclear tipping point, greatly increasing the danger of a nuclear catastrophe in the world.

Now, I've described my own views on this, but I would say all four of us have a common view that we are at a nuclear tipping point and are very greatly in danger of going over that tipping point, and that that must – we must do everything possible within our powers to prevent that from happening.

And it was that thinking, then, which led, in the fall of 1996, George Shultz to observe that this was 20 years after the Reykjavik summit, where first two leaders of the United States and Russia seriously discussed the idea of

eliminating nuclear weapons. It was time to revisit the Reykjavik summit and see if those ideas ought not to be revived.

The immediate consequence of the workshop we held on that subject was the publication of the first op-ed in January of 1997. The –

MS. MATHEWS: Of 2007.

MR. PERRY: – 2007, yeah – January 2007. It was – the response to that, as I said, was quite overwhelming, but the response for the first year or two was what I would call “track two” response – unofficial response. No governments took any serious position on the issue.

But in the last year there have been a remarkable response – official – from governments, kicked off by President Obama’s remarkable speech in Prague last spring, followed by Obama and Medvedev’s meeting in Moscow and the statement of both presidents that they would work towards the elimination of nuclear weapons and, more immediately, move towards a new START treaty.

Substantial actions taken by the British government, Norwegian, Japanese, Australian governments, all in favor of the elimination of nuclear weapons. And then President Obama’s speech to the United Nations’ General Assembly last fall, followed by a resolution which was unanimously approved by the Security Council.

If I look at all of these events together, I would say two things about them. First of all, they were totally unpredictable three years ago. I would not have imagined seeing governments take those strong positions three years ago. It has truly been a year of miracles. I think back to the annus mirabilis that we all thought about at the time when the Soviet Union broke up and Eastern Europe broke free. It has been a year of miracles.

Before I become overtaken with irrational exuberance – (laughter) – I should note that what remains to be done is much, much more important and much, much more difficult than what has been done.

Opposing forces to nuclear disarmament are gathering strength. We will face a substantial battle – the president will face a substantial battle – if he gets his START treaty, follow-on treaty, negotiated, he will face a substantial battle in getting it ratified in the U.S. Senate and an even more substantial battle in getting the Comprehensive Test Ban Treaty ratified.

More than anything at this stage, what we need is less rhetoric about where we are going and more concrete, positive action about how to get there. We need a clear path forward through the minefields, and that path should have practical steps that can be taken that lead in that right direction, but each step in and of itself can be justified on grounds that it will improve our security.

The International Commission report on Non-Proliferation and Nuclear Disarmament laid out such a clear path forward, largely – and I’m proud to be associated with those recommendations – I think the success of the report was largely attributable to the leadership of the co-chairman, Gareth Evans. And Gareth is here today to tell you more about that report; what its findings are and how we reached them.

Gareth, over to you.

GARETH EVANS: Okay. Thanks, Bill.

Well, despite the glowing introductions that you just heard from Jessica and Bill about the quality of this report, I'm sure that some of you are just quietly thinking, well another day; another global panel of the great and the good; another big, fat report – so what? Where's the beef? Where's the value added?

I think the first thing to say about the report is that we can't identify the value-added in this document. The first is obviously the timeliness of it, thanks to Bill and the "gang of four," thanks to President Obama. I think all of us have a sense, notwithstanding the obvious difficulties still out there, that we are riding something of a wave in terms of the opportunity for forward movement on this, rather than resisting the tide as being the environment in which so many previous reports of this kind have been written.

Secondly, I think we can point to the comprehensiveness of the report as distinctive, as Jessica was kind enough to say. A lot of previous enterprises of this kind have tended to focus on one or other of the big issues – disarmament, as with the Canberra Commission, or nonproliferation, as with the Blix Commission, to the exclusion of fully drawing out all the complexities of all the interrelated areas, including peaceful uses and the interconnections between them. We've tried to do just that, and in language which will hopefully make this report very accessible and a kind of useful handbook to everyone who's in this business and not just the total wonks, the total aficionados.

The third thing, I think, about the report that does add considerably to its value is the very representative character of the commission that produced it and the consultative process that we went through to get there.

This wasn't just composed of a group of characters, all of whom had totally well-known and supportive positions for nuclear disarmament kinds of agendas and could be relied upon to be singing from day one from the same choir sheet. We had people like Klaus Naumann, the German general who had been on record as supporting extended deterrence in its fullest form.

We had the father of the Indian bomb – one of the fathers, Brajesh Mishra – and we had, I also have to say, some Japanese colleagues, that Nobu will attest to – a little less than totally enamored of all dimensions of the nuclear disarmament agenda because of familiar anxieties about the security environment of Northeast Asia.

But the fact that we were able to will that very disparate group of people together in producing a unanimous report I think does – and to do it without being reduced, I hope, to lowest common denominator banalities, gives us something again to talk about in terms of the value added in the report.

And the final thing about it is an attempt in everything we wrote to be very pragmatic, to be very hard-headed, to be very realistic, not just to produce a familiar wish list of a bunch of desirables – what we would like to be the case.

Throughout the report I hope is conveyed a sense of the real-world constraints, complexities, the formidable difficulties that lie in the path of getting to the world that we will ultimately want to see, one without nuclear weapons which doesn't rely on these shockingly indiscriminate and inhumane weapons of destruction, but we have to recognize that that's not a given, that aspiration. There are many, many people with many, many different agendas, many states with different agendas, and we have to be very conscious of how those constraints operate.

So putting it all together, what we have tried to do is to produce a report which does map the way forward in a very realistic fashion, and essentially the way we've done that, the structure of the report is, first of all, to analyze in some detail the four big risk areas: the risks associated with present nuclear arsenals; the retention thereof; the danger of the misuse, whether by accident, miscalculation or design; secondly, the dangers and risks associated with proliferation, breakout; thirdly, the risks associated with nuclear terrorism; and, fourthly, obviously the risks

potentially associated with major expansion of civil nuclear energy, particularly if accompanied by the creation of new enrichment and reprocessing facilities in new countries, which is very much on the cards if the expected increase in nuclear civil capacity does in fact take place.

The second part of the report is very detailed evaluation of the particular policy issues right across the spectrum of issues – nonproliferation, disarmament, peaceful uses.

And the final section of the report, which I'll concentrate on in this summary, brings all those threads together and lays out basically three action agendas for the short term, which we describe as the next three years through to 2012, by which time we do want to establish real momentum across a wide spectrum of related issues and to generate a sense of both preliminary achievement but also forward momentum; secondly, the medium term, which we define as the 15-year period through to 2025, when we've set ourselves a very, very significant target of disarmament, a dramatic minimization of the number of weapons that are out there; and, thirdly, the longer term, beyond 2025, and the task and the objective is to get from that minimum environment to actual global zero.

And what we've done in each of those three categories is to set out what we believe is achievable, but also very many constraints and difficulties will have to be surmounted, and the way to do just that.

In terms of the short term to 2012, the issues really – and the aspirations are these: first of all, to put in place the key building blocks for both disarmament and nonproliferation. Critical in this respect is the physical security agenda, which is going to be center front with the Obama summit in April, the whole question of loose nukes and dealing with residual problems of security of both weapons and weapons material.

A second building-block issue was obviously comprehensive test ban treaty ratification and bringing into force, if we can possibly manage it within this period. And a third critical building block is the effective concluded negotiation of a fissile material cutoff treaty to ban the further production of enriched uranium or plutonium for weapons purposes.

All of those things are going to be very tough-ass to fully deliver on the security agenda, to get the CTBT through the U.S. Senate, and then to get others following that lead, and certainly the current environment in Geneva, getting the FMCT negotiated – all tough-ass within their timeframe, but that has to be the short-term aspiration.

On the disarmament front there are three big tasks in the short term. The first is obviously to rapidly conclude the U.S.-Russia bilateral START follow on, which we had all been hoping would be concluded by the end of last year, but it still seems to be drifting – but not only to conclude that, but to get moving a significant series of follow-on negotiations to engage in further deep reductions.

We you consider that the U.S. and Russia had between them 22,000 of the 23,000 nuclear warheads still in existence – 95 percent plus – without that critical bilateral leadership, it's going to be very, very difficult indeed to develop and sustain disarmament momentum elsewhere. It's absolutely crucial.

The second crucial thing is to try and get something happening on the multilateral disarmament front, involving the other players. It would be pretty quixotic to imagine anything is going to be achievable in terms of actual arms reduction negotiations drawing to any kind of conclusion, perhaps even getting started within that timeframe, involving players outside U.S.-Russia – China and the others – but we do believe it's possible to significantly advance the foundations for multilateral negotiations with studies with strategic dialogue and perhaps even the beginning of some more formal multilateral process. That must be an aspiration for the short term.

Also on the disarmament front, absolutely critical in center front is to start getting some runs on the board when it comes to nuclear doctrine; getting the view firmly established with international policymakers that the role of nuclear weapons is and must be – has to diminish, must diminish, and has to be articulated in those terms.

Absolutely crucial in this respect will be U.S. leadership, and the Nuclear Posture Review is obviously center front in everybody's focus and thinking in this respect. We're not arguing in this report that the U.S. jump directly and immediately to a no-first-use commitment.

That would probably be a bridge too far, given the neuralgia that continues to generate after anxieties about its misuse in the past by Russia and others, but the first cousin of no first use, a declaration that the sole purpose of nuclear weapons, so long as they exist, is to deter the use against the U.S. or its allies is an absolutely critical and, the commission argues, essentially indispensable ingredient of generating the forward momentum that we want on these issues, not least going into the NPT Review Conference in May, which is the third area that I want to mention is on the commission's agenda for the short term, the nonproliferation part of it.

I talked about the building blocks – security, CTBT, FMCT. I talked about disarmament, but the third issue is of course nonproliferation itself. And here the objectives must be, first of all, within this next three-year timeframe to try and resolve once and for all, if not sooner than that, the Iran and North Korea breakout – the potential breakout situations, but also of course to have a successful conclusion to the NPT Review Conference coming up in May.

We argue that the critical priorities for the NPT Review Conference are these: There are many, many issues on the table, as any of you involved in this process will know – literally hundreds of draft resolutions and paper and many, many axes to be ground in many contexts. But really for the NPT Review Conference to be accounted a success, it seems to us on the commission there are three big things that have to happen.

First of all, there has to be agreement on a set of measures that are designed to strengthen the NPT regime itself – a familiar litany of issues here relating to compliance enforcement, verification safeguards, strengthening the IAEA itself; issues on which the U.S. and others of the nuclear arms weapon states have been very vocal and for which agenda you'll find this report both, I hope, articulate and wholly supportive.

But the second thing that has to be done is for the NPT review conference to reach agreement on a very clear statement, again about disarmament. The inherent and inexorable interconnection between the disarmament and nonproliferation objectives is an absolutely central theme of our report, and we certainly hitch our wagon to the argument that without serious visible movement on the Article VI commitment by the weapons states, serious, serious movement and commitment on the disarmament front generally, we're just going to be finding it very, very difficult indeed to get any kind of buy-in on the nonproliferation-regime-strengthening part of the argument.

So what we're arguing for, coming out of the NPT – and we've spelled it out in detail in this report – is an updated articulation of the famous 13 practical steps that were agreed in 2000 but which have disappeared without trace in the 2005 NPT Review Conference, which will involve, in our recommended articulation of it, some very, very clear commitments to achieving a world without nuclear weapons and all the steps that have got to take place along the way by the nuclear arms states participating in the NPT Review Conference. It's very, very important that a statement of that kind does get up.

And the third ingredient that will be necessary if the NPT Review Conference is to be accounted a success is to reach some kind of an agreement on how to move forward on this endlessly controversial issue of a Middle East weapons-of-mass-destruction-free zone, which was treated, back in '95 when the NPT was indefinitely extended as a

critical issue by the nonaligned movement of the G-77 countries, who were absolutely determined that there be movement on this front, and they made provision to that effect a condition of their support for indefinite extension.

And I think for all the degree of difficulty involved in getting movement on this front, for obvious reasons, it is crucial that we find a way forward, and interestingly, our commission, I think, in the regional meeting we held a few months ago in Cairo, may have created the conditions for some forward movement because we did get the Egyptians and other key Arab states around a table, together with the Israelis and the Iranians.

And coming out of that meeting was a sense that maybe, just maybe a way forward might be for the U.N. secretary general to convene a meeting within a year or so's time of the key regional players, not with a view to commencing negotiations on a weapons-of-mass-destruction-free zone. That would be, again, pretty quixotic to imagine that could happen anytime soon, but at least to articulate and draw out the preconditions and prerequisites for movement on that front.

And if we can get some agreement of that kind emerging from the NPT Review Conference, I think there's every chance that that will be seen by the relevant countries as significant forward commitment and movement on that front. I hope so anyway.

So there is a very long agenda of things that we're talking about just in the next three years to get the ball started and the ball moving, and all of these things have their own intrinsic importance, but together, the synergies that will flow from movement on each one of those fronts are very important in ensuring movement on the others, and we do have to think of this as a total package.

For the medium term, more quickly, 2025, what the commission is arguing for is essentially by then a disarmament outcome or an arms control outcome which will result in the achievement of what we call the minimization point, which bears a lot of resemblance to what the "gang of four" has described as a base camp or a vantage point. And it's essentially the idea that we're not going to get to zero anytime soon, but it's sure as hell possible to contemplate getting to a place from which zero looks a lot more achievable than it does now.

And what we're arguing for and what we believe is achievable – and that's going to be very hard work – is basically a 90-percent reduction in the number of actual nuclear warheads that are out there, getting down from the present 23,000-plus to under 2000, meaning 500 each for the U.S. and Russia, down from 9,000 and 13,000 respectively, and no more than a thousand for all the other nuclear arms states put together, which doesn't sound too ambitious to the extent that that's possibly where they are now – all the other states – around about a thousand in total.

But if we can get a commitment – and one of the things we argued for early on is the achievement of a no-increase commitment. If we can get a no-increase commitment while the U.S. and Russia are coming down to those levels, then I think that will be a very, very significant achievement indeed.

Accompanying that, a second element characterizing where we want to be in 2025 is the question of doctrine, and here we're saying that it's absolutely critical that everybody be signed up by then to an unequivocal no-first-use position.

Hopefully, that can come about much, much sooner than that; thus the point of my reference to the Nuclear Posture Review and United States leadership on a sole purpose – a variation on the no-first-use formula, but certainly it's critical if we do want to have serious movement towards elimination to have not any low numbers but a

genuine commitment to a no-first-use doctrine to ensure that those weapons won't be used – won't be used first and won't be used for other than a response to purely nuclear contingencies.

The third thing we argue for is a critical element in 2025 to accompany the low numbers in the doctrine is actual force deployments that implement and give weight and credibility to that doctrine, meaning, in effect, very low numbers of weapons actually deployed, some of them undoubtedly for survivability purposes on submarines, yes, but most hopefully dismantled, requiring time to be put together, and certainly with very long lead times involved in their actual usability.

If we can get to a world in which those conditions are satisfied, we will have achieved, I believe, a great deal indeed, even though it's not the paradise world that NGOs and others would like us to be achieving even sooner than that. It's a hell of a big step forward.

The longer-term objective beyond 2025 is of course to get from low numbers – and the doctrine and so on I've described – to actual zero. Here we have not succumbed to the temptation to pluck a date out of the air and set a target for actually achieving that outcome, even though we passionately believed, as a commission, that's what we had to be trying to do – get there as soon as possible.

We just felt it was impossible at this stage to set a target date with any credibility at all, given the really formidable array of obstacles that will stand in the way of that final step down from low numbers to zero – psychological obstacles of a familiar kind – all the obvious geopolitical obstacles, neighborhood fragility, volatility in particular environments, particularly in the Middle East and South Asia, which are going to make it very, very difficult for Pakistan and Israel to join forces unless there's movement there.

Plus the obvious issues of verification and enforcement, people having confidence – complete confidence that there won't be secret breakouts occurring in a world where people don't have that security blanket of a residual small number of weapons to deal with.

All of those things are not impossible to overcome, but they will take time and will take a lot of sort of self-reinforcing momentum to develop, and a lot of other things happening in terms of the peace and security front on many fronts.

But what I hope we've not lost sight of is the absolute necessity to maintain a very strong commitment to getting zero, and you won't find in the report any kind of argument that it's a satisfactory alternative to zero to just have a world with low numbers. It's a very useful place to be, a very desirable place to be, that way station, but it's not the end station.

So finally, the basic themes that run through the report should by now be pretty apparent to you: One, the notion – as Bill has articulated again superbly this morning – that it's sheer dumb luck that we have survived as long as we have without a nuclear catastrophe, given the risks not only of deliberate use of weapons by misguided people, but the risks of miscalculation, the risks of accident, the risk of human error, the risks of technical error. They are there. They're real. They're certainly not negligible. It's a miracle really that we've managed to get through this for as long as we can.

And, secondly, when you add together the risks associated with the retention of existing warheads, plus the risks of proliferation, plus the risks of terrorist misuse, plus the risks associated with civil nuclear – unless we can find ways of controlling and reducing those – we do have a problem which defies the kind of complacency that's been so evident for at least the last decade, which we're now growing out of but it's been there and it's just not real,

that complacency we do have with nuclear weapons, the one thing, apart from climate change, that can destroy life on this planet as we know it, and with the potential for producing that result much more immediately than anything that can happen in the atmosphere.

And the final basic theme that runs through this is that the only place to be targeting, the only place to be trying to get to is a world – as I've just said, not of minimum nuclear weapons but a world of no nuclear weapons. Now, in that respect, what you will find running through the report is that very useful three-part mantra that was first articulated by the Canberra Commission back in '96, which has run through the Blix Commission and many other subsequent reports and is, again, a central motif in what we have to say.

And the three elements in that little mantra – and I will conclude on this note – are these: So long as any state has nuclear weapons, others will want them. So long as any state has nuclear weapons, they are bound one day to be used, if not by deliberate design, then by accident or by miscalculation, and any such use would be catastrophic for life on this planet as we know it.

That's the theme of the report, but what we've done is, as I've said, not just play the violins and get out the roses and say this is where we want to be. What we've tried to do is to map the path by which we can actually make the dream of that kind of world a reality. Thank you. (Applause.)

MS. MATHEWS: Okay, let's open the floor now. There are microphones. Please do introduce yourself. And who would like to begin? In the back.

Q: Thank you. Chris Lindborg with the British-American Security Information Council. Thank you again for your presentation here today.

The report suggests that tactical nuclear weapons based in NATO, Europe and Russia could be removed well before 2025, but that NATO and Russian doctrines would need to change significantly along with progress being made on conventional weapons issues first, and that these factors could long delay any progress on removing these particular tactical weapons.

I would just like to hear a little more elaboration on this conclusion and whether there has been any discussion on what the first step would look like in this overall process to try to move it forward. Thank you.

MR. EVANS: Want to do that? Should I – okay. What we're saying, of course, is that a nuke is a nuke is a nuke and we should no longer be drawing this distinction which has been part of the bilateral arms control negotiations up to now between strategic and tactical weapons, and indeed further distinctions between deployed and non-deployed, and with delivery systems introduced as a further qualification.

What we're saying in the report is that to get where we want to be there's got to be an overall complete reduction, complete elimination of all classes of weapons. And the distinction itself between tactical and strategic doesn't really amount to terribly much when you've got countries in immediate juxtaposition to each other, as with India and Pakistan and so on, for example.

But in the specific European context where this is most salient, we do have the issue at the moment of a few hundred U.S. weapons scattered around the place in several locations, and rather more than that – unspecified numbers because there's one area in which the Russians haven't been very transparent at all, but certainly running into the thousands, and in which it's absolutely critical that the next phase of the arms reduction talks between the U.S. and Russia address this issue.

It's not going to be easy to reach agreement on this because, as we move to the next stages of bilateral talks, the issue of conventional imbalances is going to loom rather larger than it has so far, as is the issue of ballistic missile defense, and we know that all of these issues are going to be very tough ones to resolve.

I don't think there is any disposition on the part of the U.S. or its NATO allies to unilaterally downsize to zero the NATO component in this respect that will be seen a reciprocal bargaining exercise, but that has to be a key item on the agenda, not to the exclusion of tackling the next stage of the strategic weapons themselves as well but that's the way forward.

There is no easy solution to this one. This is one in which the Russians are very conscious that – or they see tactical nuclear weapons as a kind of strategic equalizer, and the environment that they currently see is stacked against them in terms of conventional capability, in an ironic reversal of the Cold War logic and environment when of course the West was anxious about conventional superiority on the Russian side.

So I can't be any more explicit than that other than to just identify where we need to go and how we need to approach this. It's a lively issue in Europe at the moment with the Germans taking strong positions on this and trying, I know, to craft a sort of a consensual position on the NATO ally side, and I hope very much that that happens in the next little while.

MS. MATHEWS: Yes, right in front of the camera. Okay, then two rows back. Go ahead.

Q: Okay, Todd Jacobson with Nuclear Weapons and Materials Monitor. Secretary Perry, your op-ed this week seemed to take a little bit of a different angle at the issues that you guys have discussed. Could you elaborate at all on the rationale behind, you know, that op-ed, and also the timing of it, and just kind of – the reasons that you're talking about that now and how it fits with the broader arms control issues?

MR. PERRY: Previous op-eds that have focused on the issue of getting the major reductions needed have stated that while we – as long as nuclear weapons did exist, we needed to maintain a confident deterrent. What this op-ed focuses on is how you go about maintaining that deterrent in the meantime.

There have been suggestions that we needed – in order to maintain deterrence, we would need to be able to test nuclear weapons or we would need to be able to develop new nuclear weapons. And this op-ed was intended to make the point that, from a technical point of view, it's possible to maintain the deterrence without testing and without developing new weapons, but that it was comparative to maintaining a strong scientific, technological capability at weapons laboratories in the meantime.

So on the one hand, it was arguing for maintaining that scientific capability of laboratories. On the other hand, it was taking the position that if that were maintained, then the concerns over testing, the concerns over designing new weapons, was overblown.

MS. MATHEWS: Okay, and then right behind there. Right. Go ahead.

Q: Charles Ferguson, Federation of American Scientists. That was actually my question, so I've had some time to think of a variant on that, Secretary Perry. So let me ask more directly, on that issue of the third op-ed, did you have a particular political audience in mind? That's kind of the obvious question. (Laughter.) Are you concerned that with the Democrats losing another seat in the Senate, how are we going to win over enough Republicans to support both the new START and a Comprehensive Test Ban Treaty?

And a related question dealing specifically with scientific talent – I was just at Sandia National Labs earlier this week and there is serious interest at that lab to taking steps toward nuclear disarmament, and they want to know what they can do to play a constructive role. How can they restructure the existing arsenal and the nuclear weapons complex?

So could you speak a bit about what scientists – what role they can play, both scientists within the government and outside the government? Thank you.

MR. PERRY: Thank you, Charles. I am – let me qualify what I'm saying. I'm going to be speaking for myself, not for the whole four of us on this question. I have a different background and come from a different point of view than the others. In particular, I'm on the board of governors of both the Los Alamos Laboratory and the Livermore National Laboratories, and I speak from that background and that experience.

I have, partly from that background, have argued for the importance of maintaining this scientific capability and, as this op-ed did, argued for not slacking in our funding of the scientific effort at the laboratories. But more importantly, I'm making the point that we have such a splendid capability at those laboratories, and it has improved actually in the last 12 years or so since the beginning of the Stockpile Stewardship program, and the key is in maintaining that capability.

Our capability is such that we already have had several very successful life extension programs on the existing nuclear weapons. To those who are concerned that these nuclear weapons are going to be obsolete in another five or 10 years because they were designed many years ago, the answer to that is our scientific capability has dramatically improved since then, and the ability to understand how nuclear weapons operate, to simulate them and to conduct hydrodynamic testing on them.

So I'm expressing a high level of confidence that the scientific capabilities of laboratories, if properly supported, can maintain the capability to extend the life of existing weapons for many, many decades in the future, and that, in particular, nuclear testing is not likely to be required in that environment.

This will be an important debate of course at such time that we get serious discussions underway on the ratification of the Comprehensive Test Ban Treaty. And when that time comes, I expect to be testifying to the Senate and giving more explicitly my views on the capability of the laboratories to be able to properly protect our deterrent, even in the face of no testing.

I would further add to that that the capability the United States has to maintain confidence in the nuclear weapons without testing far exceeds that of any other nation. The scientific capability of the laboratories, the equipment they have, the simulations they do – most recently the really stunning development of the National Ignition Facility, a unique capability the United States has, we of all nations are the least ones that are going to be needing testing to maintain our confidence, and therefore are the last ones that should be arguing that we would need to test in order to maintain our deterrence.

MS. MATHEWS: Let's turn over here, please. We'll take it right here.

Q: Henry Sokolski with the –

MS. MATHEWS: Henry, wait one minute. Back behind you.

Q: Henry Sokolski with the Nonproliferation Policy Education Center. One of the large battles Carnegie engaged in recently had to do with the U.S.-India nuclear deal, and it's a fact. I noticed that you have some views on that and I wanted to perhaps hear from the entire panel, or at least Mr. Abe, who I know, from private conversations, has been thinking about this.

I'm curious how you see its implementation and your goals – how they might be related and how its implementation might require conditioning.

MR. EVANS: Well, if I could perhaps open up on that and then throw it to the other two. The good news about the India-U.S. and NSG-India deal is that it does demonstrate that there are parallel processes which the international community can sensibly undertake to bring into the tent, at least partially, the three elephants that are outside it at the moment – India, Pakistan and Israel.

One of the themes of our report is that for all the attractiveness morally of continuing to chant the mantra that these three countries simply have to join the NPT as non-weapon states. The truth of the matter is that none of them are likely to do so for the foreseeable future, and we have to find, as an overall strategy, ways of signing them up to both the nonproliferation and the disarmament disciplines that are at least notionally associated with membership of the NPT.

So to the extent that this deal did involve certain conditions being put on the Indians, which they accepted, about exposing some of their civil facilities to inspection and so on, that that was a demonstration of a way forward on that front.

The bad news, of course, is a very bad deal, and the report makes no bones about that – very, very unfortunate that really serious conditions were not put on about non-production of further fissile material for weapons purposes, not even conditions relating to non-testing, although in the real world, of course, we're the Indians to test. And I'm sure that there wouldn't be much left of the practical implementation of that agreement.

But, nonetheless, the optics of it were pretty awful in terms of the overall nonproliferation objectives that we're all hopefully trying to achieve. And the only way forward, I think, in terms of other players in this game is to say that, yes, if you adopt a criteria-based approach to this for nuclear civil cooperation with countries outside the NPT – criteria based on both past performance and future commitments. Now, that is a way that you can have deals of this kind take place in the future, but a replication in other contexts with other countries – Pakistan or Israel – should it want such a deal, is not the way to go.

So this report is quite tough on that issue. But, colleagues?

NOBUYASU ABE: Thank you.

MR. EVANS: Nobu Abe, I should say, is not only a member of our advisory board; he was formerly the undersecretary general for disarmament in the U.N. system, and very, very senior and very, very distinguished arms control diplomat, and we're delighted to have him as a member of our advisory board throughout.

MR. ABE: Thank you, but since I left the Japanese government the year before last – so I'm not speaking for the Japanese government. What I say is purely my personal view.

I think I still believe that U.S.-India deal was basically wrong idea. It was based on sort of misguided understanding of the current world and the wrong objectives. But, as you said, still the deal was done. So under the

circumstances, what the commission came up with is a practical idea to involve them – I mean, India and Pakistan – to the exercise of nonproliferation and disarmament. But the report kept still a fine line between the weapons states recognized by the NPT and those who are not, namely India, Pakistan and Israel. So that sanity is still maintained.

If I may say, otherwise you are – even though that deal was done and approved by the Nuclear Supplies Group, each country member is free to exercise its own policy. Japan, on its part, is still insisting on Indian accept ratification of CTBT for any future nuclear cooperation with that country.

I understand that Australia, for example, still has a reservation about sending uranium to India. So it's still free for every country to maintain discipline on those countries. Thank you.

MR. PERRY: I have testified on this subject, and basically my testimony was that I did not think – if I had been negotiating the deal it would have been a different deal. Maybe I wouldn't have gotten a deal, but I would not have negotiated that deal.

But the notion of advancing – bringing India into the tent and advancing U.S.-India relations, that was a very positive one. On balance, I recommended that the Senate not disapprove the agreement.

Q: Diane Perlman, George Mason University, Institute of Conflict Analysis and Resolution. Well, first of all, I agree with your point that it was a matter of dumb luck that we survived and that deterrence is a theory and it works in some cases and breaks down in other cases. And there's also spiral theory, and it looks – you said we're at a tipping point and it looks like we could be entering, you know, spiral dynamics and asymmetric conflict.

So I think one of the most important things is doing tension reduction. And, also, I would recommend parallel processes to support this important work and dealing with underlying conflicts, tension reduction, and working – using much more sophisticated methods that are being now applied to work on reducing tension and transforming some of the major conflicts – underlying conflicts, basically dealing with the cause rather than just the symptoms. So could you comment on that?

MR. EVANS: Well, absolutely. I mean, first of all, insofar as deterrent theory is concerned, you'll find in chapter six of the report an attempt to bring together all the many, many arguments that are being utilized – good, bad and indifferent – to justify the retention of nuclear weapons for deterrent purposes, both by good guys and bad guys, and I think that's probably a fairly useful compendium. The report, by the way, is available on the Web at www.icnnd.org for those of you who can't, so far anyway, get your hands on the physical version.

I'm not quite sure that I fully appreciated the larger question you're making, but in just the larger context of conflict prevention and education and strategy – well, I mean, all of that stuff we argue for, of course, in the text of the report. It's a very clear current running through the report that if we are going to ultimately get to the world where we want it to be, we're going to have to not just rely on formal arms control mechanisms and the de-legitimization of nuclear weapons through tackling head-on those familiar arguments.

We're going to have to work very, very hard to create cooperative strategies for conflict threat reduction, including fundamentally rethinking relationships like NATO-Russia and so on, which are still locked, I'm afraid, in a bit of a Cold War time warp, and people haven't broken out of that, and until they do, it's going to be very, very difficult to get major forward movement on the scale that we argue for.

MS. MATHEWS: If it's okay with you, I want to take a couple together –

MR. EVANS: Sure.

MS. MATHEWS: – because the number of hands is growing. There was one way in the back, and then we'll take in the middle. Then we'll go over there.

Q: Thank you. Tom Collina, Arms Control Association. Thank you all very much for producing a very impressive report that I'm sure was a huge amount of work, so congratulations on that.

And, Secretary Perry, thank you for the recent remarks you just made a minute ago on the Test Ban Treaty. They're very helpful. Hopefully we'll have a transcript of this event so we can use those remarks further.

MS. MATHEWS: If I can just say, the transcript and the audio/video will be up on our Web site on Monday morning.

Q: My question relates to the Nuclear Posture Review, which we're expecting out March 1st, and it's for the whole panel, which is, tell us what you think are maybe the most important findings of the NPR, and how the international community will respond to them. You know, what we're expecting – do you get the sense that this will really further us down the road that you're all postulating or are there some real roadblocks here that might be created? Thank you.

MS. MATHEWS: Okay, let me take one more. Right there.

Q: Thank you. Jenifer Mackby from CSIS. Secretary Perry, in the Congressional Commission report with which you are also involved, the section on the Nuclear Test Ban Treaty commented that China and Russia may be doing low-yield testing, and that seems to have produced a life of its own among the opponents.

So I'm wondering if you could tell us what evidence that's based on and if there's anything that can be done to counter it, or if it's significant, i.e. the testing that might be being conducted. Thank you.

MR. EVANS: Bill, do you want to start on that?

MR. PERRY: I'll start on that specific question. Some of the members of the commission argued that there was evidence that both China and Russia are testing, and in particular, in the concern of Russia, that this was a violation of the agreement they made and therefore Russia could not be trusted to move forward with such an agreement.

We did not, in the commission, have access – were not in the position to make an intelligence judgment and verification of that issue and did not propose to do that in an unclassified report. What we did say in the report was that if indeed there was an ambiguity about what testing meant, that was the allegation, that the Russians definition of what testing meant, and that should be clarified in any ratification.

I have no doubt that in the Senate testimony on this issue, that question will come up, and that there will be a call for the Senate to have a clearer and unambiguous definition of what testing actually means. In my judgment, that issue can be resolved satisfactorily.

MR. EVANS: Was there something about the NPR?

MR. PERRY: I think the importance for the NPR is to, first of all, endorse unambiguously President Obama's Prague speech, the goals for the United States. I think it's very important to have the NPR go on record on that.

Secondly, they should be making – I mean, it should be explicit about concrete steps and moving towards that goal. And, finally, it should make a strong statement about nuclear policy, which can assure the world that we're still not in the position of planning to use nuclear weapons, particularly in a preemptive way, an impression that had been left in the world in the last decade or so.

MR. EVANS: Can I just add – (audio break). As I said in my opening remarks, I think this is hugely important, in particular that last element – nuclear policy, nuclear doctrine. The Prague speech just stated, of course, that it was the U.S.'s objective – everybody's objective should be to reduce the salience of the role of nuclear weapons but it wasn't really spelled out in any more detail than that, whereas all the other elements of the Prague speech have since then been largely operationalized.

So to the extent that the world is waiting for the NPR, it's very much to see what happens on the doctrine front. And my personal belief, the commission's strong belief, unanimously, is that what we'd like to see come out of that NPR is a very clear statement on doctrine, at the very least a declaration, as I said, that the sole purpose of nuclear weapons is to deter others from using them against the U.S. or its allies.

This was a lively issue, actually, for debate right the way through the commission because there's still a constituency around the place, not just for extended deterrence but for extended nuclear deterrence, and keeping open the possibility of the use of nuclear weapons to deal with non-nuclear contingencies, particular extreme ones that might flow from the further development of biological weapons in the future.

But after wrestling with this backwards and forwards, the commission's very strong view was that we just simply can't make serious progress toward disarmament without, at the threshold, making absolutely clear that nuclear weapons' role and salience must be reduced in this way and only kept available for nuclear threat contingencies.

The argument is, of course, that not that the allies should be less well-protected than they are at the moment by the U.S., but that the conventional capability of the U.S. and the countries themselves is amply sufficient to deal with any other contingency that's remotely foreseeable for the future.

But it's very, very important going into the NPT review conference that some movement take place on this. It's very, very much part of the atmospherics in the lead-up to the conference. It's a very crucial ingredient, I believe, for a step of this kind to be taken, and without it there will be real sense of deflation from many, many other countries around the place.

I'm not suggesting that moves toward disarmament and taking an important step of this kind is by itself going to have the demonstration effect that's going to make bad guys good guys overnight, but what it does mean is that there's a much better chance of getting the kind of consensual support that you need in the NPT Review Conference itself where agreements are done by consensus.

You need it in the Security Council when it comes to any agreement on sanctions and so on, in the case of breakout worries. You need it in the IAEA board of governors in Vienna to deal with things like attempts to sort of multilateralize the fuel cycle. You need it, of course, in Geneva where the negotiations are stuck once again on the Fissile Material Cutoff Treaty.

All of these situations require multilateral buy-in and a big, big stumbling block to getting that buy-in in the past has been a perception that the big guys are just not serious when it comes to disarmament, when it comes to the Article VI commitment.

So for the U.S. to demonstrate seriousness in the way that would be involved with NPR movement on this doctrine issue in the way we've described would be, I believe and the commission believes, hugely important. And that's a view that we've been stating with some vigor to the U.S. administration in recent months.

MS. MATHEWS: Mr. Abe, do you want to add anything on this NPR?

MR. ABE: Yes, if I may. I think Gareth Evans made a perfect, excellent description of the report, but one thing, if I may add, is that there's still – even though this report is rich with all the research and details of roadmaps, but still a lot of works are left for further research.

For example, it recommends research of what to do to work – to go between nuclear deterrence and reduction and zero between the allies, for example. And then, in that sense, there are a lot of things we need to continue to do, say, between the U.S. and Japan and other countries to work on how exactly you walk between reducing the dependence on extended deterrence and reducing number of warheads to zero, and also reducing the role for the nuclear weapons.

And that also applies to the government-to-government level. The report also recommends intensive security and strategic dialogue between the U.S. and Russia, and also I think it's very important. It recommends the intensive strategic dialogue between the U.S. and China, which is very important if we are to proceed down the road.

MS. MATHEWS: If I may just follow up that and ask a question. Yesterday Dmitri Trenin gave a talk here at Carnegie on the U.S.-Russian reset, and where it had come in this last year and what the outlook was for next year.

And those who know him know that Dmitri certainly stands among the optimists about the U.S.-Russian relationship, and he said that he expected the START agreement to be finished but that he believed that it would be – the START follow-on, excuse me – the last strategic cut that Russia would be willing to look at for a very long time because, he said, the two countries are now completely out of phase in their nuclear force postures – the U.S. focusing on defense; the Russians focusing on offense. And, for the reasons that you mentioned earlier, Gareth, the weakness of their conventional strengths really forces it.

If that's – I wanted to get both of your sense of whether that is a correct assessment, and if it is, how does that square – and did it come up in your discussions – with what you described as further deep cuts being absolutely critical to the mid-term agenda?

MR. EVANS: Well, Dmitri is right about that, that's very depressing, but I don't think we should, you know, sort of hang up our boots at this stage and abandon the struggle to get some movement on this front.

I think it's critically – to take this thing forward, it is a matter of the U.S. looking long and hard at the ballistic missile defense issue, which is clearly a very big show-stopper in Russian and indeed Chinese minds in terms of further major movement on disarmament.

It will require some clear and focused attention to perceived conventional imbalances. I don't think the Russians are seriously looking at any kind of arithmetical parities of a crude kind – they know that's unrealistic – but

at least some attention to the concerns that they have, and on specific issues, certainly, like mounting conventional warheads on intercontinental ballistic missiles and having the potential to use those to knock out silos and so on.

That's one of the things that the Russians are very concerned about. The Chinese too, for that matter, in our discussions with them; plus, of course, the larger issue, which I mentioned in passing before, about the whole question of NATO-Russia accommodation and rethinking the nature of that whole security arrangement for the whole area, and thinking whether it might be possible to move beyond the rather confrontational position that continues to apply to something more approximating a common security arrangement.

All of these things I think will play into this, and unless there are movements on those other fronts, it is going to be very difficult to see those talks resuming with further rounds of deep reductions. But the point remains, it's absolutely critical for some momentum of some kind to be maintained in the bilateral stuff because without it, it's going to be very, very difficult indeed to get other countries to either hold the line on their present numbers or themselves to move into multilateral disarmament mode.

So it's absolutely critical but I don't think we should sell the past just yet, but just concentrate very hard on the way to move forward that strategic dialogue.

MS. MATHEWS: Bill, do you want to add anything on that? Yes, please.

MR. PERRY: My own independent imports on that issue tend to agree with Dmitri's, unfortunately, and I think that's bad news if it's true – that judgment turns out to be correct.

The START follow-on negotiation now underway and hopefully to be consummated in another month or so is, at best, a modest step forward. I have strongly supported it, even though it's a modest step forward, for two reasons: first of all because it brings the United States and Russia together, seriously discussing strategic issues, which is a very important benefit in and of itself, but also because I believed it was a launching pad for a follow-on treaty, which would be much more substantive.

And Dmitri's judgment, as I understand it, said that follow-on treaty is really not in the cards. So I would say, if that is correct – and I fear it may be – I think that's very bad news and we should be doing everything we can, working with the Russians, to try to turn that issue around.

MS. MATHEWS: He did say that he felt that joint work on missile defense was an area for potential breakthrough that perhaps could –

MR. PERRY: Yes.

MS. MATHEWS: – could flip that –

MR. PERRY: I agree with him on that also.

MS. MATHEWS: Yeah.

MR. PERRY: And I think there's some hope in that area.

MS. MATHEWS: To your right.

Q: Thank you. Thank you very much. I noticed the commission met in –

MS. MATHEWS: Introduce yourself. Introduce yourself.

Q: All right. Andrew Pierre, Georgetown University; at one time Carnegie. I noticed the commission met about three-and-a-half months in Cairo, and I assumed that they were representatives or people – individuals from a number of the Middle Eastern countries.

I'd be interested in the discussion with them about the implications of Iran today, not just if Iran should detonate but if Iran should move, you know, its program to everything but detonation, or perhaps go in the other direction. How significant did your colleagues in Cairo think the Iranian program was, and other – potential other decisions in the Middle East regarding nuclear weapons?

And, secondly – maybe this should be directed to Jessica; I don't know – is there any plan to bring this report to areas such as the Middle East or Northeast Asia, where I would make that suggestion it would be a good thing because in some ways you're walking through an open door in this room, with a few exceptions, but the awareness of even this type of thinking, it seems to me, is much less great in many other regions of the world, which are the important ones on this issue.

MR. EVANS: If I can respond to the latter question first, yes, I mean, this is a quite extended rollout process that's going on. There are quite extended consultations in the lead-up to the report itself, not only in the formal regional meetings, which took place in Santiago, Chile, in Cairo, as you said – and I'll come back to that in a moment – in Northeast Asian Beijing, and in South Asia in Delhi, with a full suite of regional participants.

Not only that, but there are a lot of bilateral consultations that accompany it all the way through and will take place over the next six months. I've got something like 23 countries to visit in the next four months and 40 or more presentations like this to do, so I'm just getting my wind now. But it's very much part of the deal to try and get this stuff out into people's thinking.

So far as the Cairo meeting is concerned, I can't say too much about it because it was Chatham House Rules and it was totally off the record, but we did have participants from a full range of regional countries, as I said in my remarks, including Iran and Israel, which created some interesting exchanges across the table.

That meant that we weren't very specifically plunging into the detail of what countries might be inclined to do, were Iran to cross that big red line and actually move from quasi or virtual status and break-out potential, as it is at the moment, to actual weaponization.

A lot of other conversations have taken place about that, which I will come to in a moment, but that wasn't really the central theme there. The main focus was on the larger response to the issues in this report generally and the particular issue of the weapons-of-mass-destruction-free zone for the Middle East and what might lead to some way of taking that forward without getting to the stage of commencing negotiations, which everybody acknowledges is unreal.

But in terms of the likely response to Iran, I mean, I think it is the case that we do have to take very seriously the potential for breakout by Egypt, Saudi Arabia and Turkey. We don't want to overstate that, and one of the many elements of realism in this report, if you look at page 36 on, was there's a discussion of four or five separate considerations that might make that proliferation surge that we all talk about in the abstract less likely to occur in

practice than might immediately be thought – the technological constraints and normative constraints and politically heavying (ph) constraints from the U.S. and others that are going to work in that environment.

But, nonetheless, I mean, the degree of discomfort within Iran that actually did acquire nuclear weapons, and an inability, I think, to live in the region comfortably, permanently with that is very real and we do have to worry about it.

So I think the crucial thing in most people's minds – and I've been working the Iran issue personally for quite a long time and I still believe personally that the Iranians are absolutely undeterrable when it comes to acquiring breakout capability and continuing to have full enrichment capability and everything that goes with it.

But I still continue to nurture the belief – I hope not naively – that they are perfectly capable of being dissuaded from crossing the big red line and actually weaponizing, for a whole variety of reasons – I mean, a fear, genuinely, of retaliation from Israel and/or the United States, fear of losing any kind of residual soft treatment from Russia in particular, China as well, concern about accelerated impact of sanctions and so on, in that environment when they no longer have any shred of color or protection from the NPT.

Considerations of that kind all, I think, weight pretty heavily on them, as does the sense that most of the pride issues that have been involved here are satisfied by demonstrating technological capability, demonstrating break-out capability rather than actually doing it.

And also, at the back of their minds is the notion I think that any regional hegemonic status that they might acquire through having weapons might well be short-lived, for exactly the reason we've began talking about the response of the other – Sunni and other countries in the region. So it's a very, very delicate balance. There's an awful lot of theater about this at the moment, but, you know, the issues are very finely poised.

But what the commission comes out is very much in favor of just, you know, as much patience, as much caution, as much attention to getting a proper negotiated solution as is possible, while being very tough-minded about curbing a breakout, not rushing, certainly, to any military responsibility, just that which we basically think would be catastrophic.

MS. MATHEWS: All right, the last two questions. I see one in the very, very back.

Q: Thank you. Young-Ho Kim (sp) with Voice of America. My question is for Secretary Perry.

This morning you just highlighted the urgency of the North Korea nuclear problem, and I understand that you have been supporting diplomatic solution to the problem. That includes serious coercive measures. Do you think the current sanctions against North Korea is – that can be characterized as serious coercive measures or do we need something more? Thank you.

MR. PERRY: No, I do not, and for serious – and by that I mean effective – coercive measures to be useful, that requires a full agreement of all members of the – all the other five members of the Six-Party Talks to the seriousness and the danger of the threat and a willingness to act together on coercive measures.

I do believe that significant economic and political sanctions could be effective with North Korea if they were fully implemented by all the other five members of the Six-Party Talks. They have not been, to this point, and so North Korea has always found a loophole or a way out. This means the United States, Japan, South Korea, Russia

and, most importantly, China, having a common view as to how dangerous the threat is and what can be done to put real pressure on North Korea.

While I'm emphasizing the coercive nature of it, obviously any negotiation has another side to it, which is the positive incentives as well. While China is perhaps the key to effective coercive measure because they have more to withhold than any of the rest of us do, probably South Korea and Japan are the key measures of the positive incentives.

But if we can get all five of these nations on a common page in how serious this danger is and how we should work together to deal with it, I still believe that diplomacy could be effective with North Korea, even at this late date – obviously much more difficult to implement now that they have nuclear bombs than before they got them.

MS. MATHEWS: Who would like to have the very last word?

Q: John Liang with Inside Missile Defense. A question for Professor Evans. You said earlier that – in response to a question about the U.S. and Russia, that the United States needs to “look long and hard,” quote, unquote, at ballistic missile defense. Could you flesh that out a little bit?

MR. EVANS: Well, basically I think the subtext of the report, although we're not quite so stark, is that walking away from the ABM was a mistake, and that we ought to try and recreate some controls and disciplines on strategic ballistic missile defense.

We drew a distinction between strategic and tactical theater missile defense, which is a difficult distinction to draw in some of the contexts we're talking about and will create further complications as negotiations and discussions proceed.

But there is just something inherently destabilizing about strategic ballistic missile defense, which is starting pile up problems, very obviously, in terms of the Russian talks, which we've been discussing, and certainly the future Chinese talks, and we've just got to make some hard calls about that.

The irony is, of course, if you do get to a world without nuclear weapons, it will be fantastically useful to have ballistic missile defense there as a reinforcing support to ensure that there is no sort of backsliding and breakout from that environment. But anytime between now and then there is a pretty strong argument – although there are counterarguments – pretty strong argument that it causes far more problems than it solves.

So that's really where our heads are on that issue, but we don't pretend that that's going to be an easy one for the period ahead.

MR. PERRY: If I could add to that, the idea of a cooperative program in ballistic missile defense was in fact first proposed by Ronald Reagan. At the time, either people didn't take – though he was not serious or they thought he was being naïve.

In my judgment, it is possible to have a serious and meaningful cooperative program on ballistic missile defense with the Russians in a way that could serve U.S. security interests – serve Russian security interests and could advance this whole agenda of treaties in a significant way. Whether we will get to that such a program remains to be seen, but I do believe that you could craft such a program that would have those characteristics.

MS. MATHEWS: All right, I want to thank all of you for your questions and your attention, but in particular for the members of the commission and Ambassador Abe, in his role, for making a really substantial perhaps turning-point kind of contribution to this debate, and for taking the time to discuss it with us this morning. Thank you. (Applause.)

(END)