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***Implementing the New Triad:  
Nuclear & Non-Nuclear Forces in Twenty-  
First-Century Deterrence***

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Thank you, Bob. It's a pleasure to be here, see so many old friends, including many *old* friends. [laughter] This is a subject that I commend you for addressing, Bob, in this conference every year because excellence in thinking about and acting upon matters affecting nuclear weapons is something that this country has to continue to aspire to and that we're having difficulty motivating young people to do. And nuclear weapons deserve no less, and this country deserves no less than excellence in this field. So I commend you for the conference.

I'm going to accept your invitation to move away from its sweet spot a little bit and let me explain why. The question that underlies this panel is: does our conduct with respect to our own nuclear weapons establishment have an important bearing upon proliferation around the world? And I think that the answer to that question is mostly not. That is, I don't think that the

calculations of the Iranian leadership or nuclear weapons establishment, or Kim Jung-il's, are materially affected by the size, shape or depiction we make of our own arsenal. Nor, really, is the principle lever allowing us nationally or internationally to counter those sources, let alone A.Q. Khan or Osama bin-Laden, affected by what we do with our own nuclear arsenal. I'd have to say in all candor that the basic answer to the question underlying the panel is "mostly not."

Conversely, I would say while it's not the cause of proliferation, neither is it particularly a high leverage cure at this moment in history, either. That is, as we think about the problems, which are terrorists in possession of weapons of mass destruction, rogue states in possession of weapons of mass destruction or a rising China somehow aspiring to a type of behavior in the nuclear field that we would find threatening to us in the main, as we look at those problems and figure out how to solve them, our own nuclear arsenal doesn't have much leverage among the other tools that we would use. Now, this conference has identified some important exceptions to that general proposition, but they're exceptions. I think the general proposition is that our nuclear posture doesn't matter much, either in solving our problems or causing our problems at this particular moment in time in the area of counterproliferation.

And so if I may, I wanted to use my time to address some things that I think are actually sweeter spots of this subject of counterproliferation than is our own nuclear posture, with full respect to the importance of the subject. Let me start, and I'm just going to pick three, these come from some work that I do in a Harvard-Stanford collaboration, of which Bill Perry is the co-

chairman, and then others that I'm working on for Senator Lugar; I'm the co-chairman of his policy advisory group.

Let me start with intelligence. I was a supporter of the invasion of Iraq on the weapons of mass destruction grounds, and so I was—I don't know how many of you were in the same position—one of the people who was “totally wrong” about what Iraq actually had in the area of weapons of mass destruction. I won't try to justify my view at this point, but to focus on the importance of the problem. And Don Rumsfeld captured this in a different context, his ballistic missile threat panel, when he said that when we have uncertainty or lack of data, we have no alternative in the weapons of mass destruction arena but to err on the safe side. And his conclusion there was that since we had uncertainties about the development of a ballistic missile threat, we had to err on the safe side, namely earlier deployment of missile defense. And in the case of Iraq, we erred on the safe side of conducting an invasion that in retrospect, at least on that ground, wasn't necessary. And that's just an intolerable situation going forward, to have as poor a picture of what we're up against as is illustrated by those two instances.

An analogy is the 1950s. Remember the missile gap, where we knew our principal security threat, but we didn't know its size and shape? It took us a long time and a lot of effort to penetrate the veil of the Soviet nuclear program and come to have a reasonable understanding of it that could undergird our military, and it turned out our diplomatic efforts to deal with that problem. And I think we need something similar in weapons of mass destruction intelligence, and I'll just give you some examples of what I have in mind. Whether Negroponte and the whole new structure are going to

deliver this, I cannot say. But the first is that whereas the problem of intelligence about the Soviet problem was solved from the outside looking in, that's not going to work in the case of weapons of mass destruction. And so you're looking at the development and exploitation of close-in techniques, not human intelligence per se, but close-in techniques that are forensic in their nature. And there's a technological revolution going on in that field and a great deal more that can be done. There isn't a lot that I can say about that in this setting, but truly a revolution is going on in that field.

Secondly, I'm of the view that even as we have vowed that every young man who went through the al-Qaeda camps in Afghanistan, would be treated as a potential threat, and we better find out what that individual's up to today, so likewise, everybody who has developed the technological expertise or been part of a weapons of mass destruction program around the world should be treated the same way, as a potential threat. And that gets into tracking the individuals in the work force, and I think that's something that would also be a lucrative intelligence sort if we began to exploit it better. And last, we have to look at the quality of our own work force in weapons of mass destruction intelligence, in the intelligence community, its technical depth.

The second thing about weapons of mass destruction intelligence is that there's a whole new customer set out there. We in Defense are no longer the biggest customer. By the way, we never were a big customer before counterproliferation: the diplomats were because all that we ever did with intelligence about weapons of mass destruction was issue demarches and make sanctions determinations. And the point of counterproliferation was to get Defense into the game, and then Defense became a customer and a

demanding customer for weapons of mass destruction intelligence. Now we have Homeland Security, we have Health and Human Services in the bio area, we have law enforcement. In the post-9/11 world, the customer set for weapons of mass destruction intelligence is much larger. We need to begin to articulate that demand and serve that demand.

And finally, and Bob Joseph is big on this theme and I couldn't agree with him more, we need to begin to tie intelligence to action more closely. Long before 9/11—this is a caricature—but the characteristic of counterterrorism intelligence was more or less to study intelligence groups and write papers about them. And now, counterterrorism intelligence is highly operational. And I would like to see the same thing happen with counterproliferation intelligence, and that's the reason why the National Counterproliferation Center is in the new DNI structure.

A second thing that I think is going on today that is very high leverage for our security is the disaster unfolding in North Korea. You've talked about deterring rogue states. But I don't want to be in a deterrent relationship with North Korea. That's the whole point. I don't want to be in a conference about deterring North Korea. It's a huge failure that we're even contemplating being in a deterrent relationship with North Korea. It's the biggest setback in counterproliferation since Pakistan went nuclear and it's, I think, the biggest security setback of the last half decade. We've said that North Korea having nuclear weapons was intolerable, remember that? But we're tolerating it and it goes well beyond Kim Jung-il, you know, plutonium has a half life of 24,400 years. He's not going to be around that long, I don't know how long his regime is going to last, not 24,400 years. So

he in that bizarre system is creating a lasting threat to us. I don't know whose hands those weapons and those materials are going to end up in later.

Is it possible at this point to talk him out of it? I don't know. Five years ago, I would have given it even odds. I wouldn't necessarily do that today. The Six Party Talks have gone nowhere. We congratulate ourselves for having them, but they produce no results. And I'm afraid that after five years, the North Koreans are just so emboldened by what they've gotten away with that we may not be able to turn them around.

What to do? Well, I think one thing we need to do is consider what our alternative is to talking them out of it. That's what I call plan B. Plan A is the Six Party Talks. What's plan B if the Six Party Talks don't work? And a plan B which is acquiescence, which appears to be plan B at the moment, is not acceptable to me. And I think we need to get serious of how in a coercive manner we might obtain the same result that we're seeking in a negotiated manner.

The final thing I wanted to touch on is something that Senator Lugar has had us working on for him that arises in the context of the India deal, about which I testified not long ago. And that is the fact that the spread of nuclear power around the world, which is a human necessity and has to happen and has to happen fast, brings with it a world of proliferated fuel cycles if we're not careful, and that's not acceptable. It's not okay to have enrichment and reprocessing going on everywhere. A substantial fraction, I guess a third, of the nations that have gone nuclear so far in human history have experienced periods of social disruption. The Soviet Union collapsed, China had the

Cultural Revolution and Pakistan, you tell me what you call that. But that's not stability. And so if you have everybody out there making fissile material and couple it with the standard ambient level of human disorder, that's a formula for trouble. And we can't have that.

And therefore, we need to find a way of building a ban on enrichment and reprocessing that complements the ban on proliferation of weapons per se. That's a big project, big diplomatic project I should say, that this country needs to lead soon. Because we can't afford to wait for nuclear power, but we can't afford to have enrichment and reprocessing going on all over the world either.

So these are some items that to me have urgency, real leverage and require some American leadership. And at the same time, I'm all in favor of thinking about and being careful about the new triad, but I honestly believe these things are more important. Thank you.

### **Questions and Answers**

**Audience:** Thanks, David Roop from Global Security Newswire. Regarding comments that Mr. Carter and Mr. Miller made about how our nuclear—The suggestion that our nuclear arsenal doesn't really play into the calculations of potential adversaries, I think Mr. Miller's elaboration on that was that nuclear proliferation is driven by regional tensions. But can't you say that the U.S., because we're a global power and have a presence in the Middle East and right on the border of Iran, is a regional concern in that area? Hasn't the U.S. been North Korea's preoccupation for the last 50 years? And isn't Iran concerned about our intentions now?

And then sort of the broader point is we're trying to negotiate disarmament with North Korea and the Europeans are trying to negotiate disarmament with Iran or stop their development. And doesn't what we do in terms of our doctrines that we're telegraphing out and the types of systems that we have in development undermine those efforts? Thanks.

**Dr. Pfaltzgraff:** Well, who would like to address those questions? There are several embedded in that comment. Ash, do you want to begin?

**Dr. Carter:** As far as North Korea is concerned, I think we have everything to do with their motivation. But I don't think it's the details of our nuclear posture that motivate them or that tip them one direction or another, it's a more general perception of threat from us. I think as far as Iran is concerned, we're the biggest factor in their nuclear calculus at the moment, but they have other fish to fry regionally as well. And I really stand by what I said. I think if you look for the high leverage items in protecting us against weapons of mass destruction going forward, manipulating our own nuclear arsenal is not a high leverage item. Now, Congressman Schiff's given some important "buts" to that, which are not regional in nature, but he was very clear in saying global in nature.

And so if you want to do what Henry and I, and I think Congressman Schiff and maybe other members of this panel want to do going forward, which is to make the NPT more relevant and useful by having it capture fuel cycle matters as well, that's a diplomatic job. But we may find that amending some aspects of our own nuclear posture has leverage in those negotiations. I



don't rule that out. But the high-leverage things, I think, are elsewhere in our policy and in the circumstances in the world.

And the other thing I really want to say is to second what Congressman Schiff said also, which it is not the possession of nuclear weapons by other states that is in my estimation principally alarming about the spread of nuclear technology or nuclear weapons, but rather nukes falling into the hands of others that are not states. So Henry's diagram, frightening as it is, is about the connections among coherent governments. But you can't guarantee that governments will remain coherent, or that nongovernmental parties don't get a hold of nuclear weapons. And that takes you into Congressman Schiff's world, and I'm very glad he raised that on this panel. It's not really the subject of this panel, but it is the subject of the nation's security. Which just makes my point again. If you're starting with our nuclear forces, that's a very important subject in its own right. But if you're starting with threats to the United States from proliferation or weapons of mass destruction and terrorism, it's a long way back to our arsenal. I wish by manipulating our own conduct with respect to our nuclear forces we could solve these other problems. I wish, because then the solution would be within our grasp.

But it's not that way. It has the character of what my good friend, Bob Herman, the former NRO director, calls a proctoscopic tonsillectomy. [laughter] You can get there from here, but it's not the most direct route. The most direct route to stopping nuclear terrorism is to corral fissile material and attack terrorist groups. The most direct route to

counterproliferation is to go to each of these circumstances like North Korea and fix it.

**Audience:** Hi, I'm Liz Stanley from Georgetown University. I'd like to ask anyone on the panel to address the possibility technologically and politically of maybe developing a sensor network, to put sensors. If the big problem is this material getting in the hands of non-state actors, putting sensors in all of the different reactors, research and production reactors, all over the world. Obviously, the IAEA might not like this, but I'd love to hear some feedback or ideas about that.

**Dr. Pfaltzgraff:** Who would like to comment on that? Ash, would you like to start?

**Dr. Carter:** I'm happy to start. There's something in what you say except that when it comes to a clandestine North Korean or Iranian centrifuges, we're not going to get the cooperation of the participant to do that. So I think that those kinds of upgrading of the IAEA's tool kits by which it monitors declared facilities is always a good idea. I'm not sure that system is broken, it may be antiquated, but I'm not sure it's broken.

But where I think your point has force, it gets back to the point I was making about intelligence, we can't afford to have as fuzzy a picture as we now have of what everybody's doing in this field, which is the most important field to our national security. And I believe that from a technological perspective, the breakthrough is going to come from close-in, but not human, intelligence. Human, it's always great to have if you can get it, but it's hard

to get. But there is a revolution going on in close in sensing because transducers are getting smaller and more sensitive, on-board storage of a much greater capacity and on board processing is greater so that the data to be exfiltrated is less and you can do low-probability-of-intercept exfiltration of data, and so forth. So there's a technological revolution going on in the field of close-in.

And to my way of thinking, if you're speaking technologically and ask where we are most likely to find a lucrative source of better insight into weapons of mass destruction programs in the future, it's from that revolution.

**Audience:** Ash, I think there's a difference between North Korea having one or two nuclear weapons and 10 or 15 nuclear weapons because in the second case, they'd be more willing to transfer that. Could you, in the context of a course of strategy or a carrot strategy, how would you—Can you sketch out some of your thoughts about how you would engage to try to discourage transfer?

The second, with regard to Elaine, I hesitate to push back on Elaine a little bit because when I do, 99 times out of 100, she's right and I'm wrong. [laughter] But with regard to RRW, I'd like to argue that there'd be a little bit more—There could be an important element of assurance in connection with that program. And the reason why I say that is the laboratory directors have told us their concerns about our ability, not over the next year or two or three, but over the next two or three decades, about our ability to sort of assure the safety and reliability of this stockpile developed under the Cold

War under fairly stringent military requirements. And therefore, they've recommended that we proceed on this RRW approach as a risk management tool to help us understand whether it's feasible to move on this new path as a hedge against the possibility that their concerns bear out over two or three decades. I think this can be an important element of assurance in the context, not necessarily over the next two or three years, but over the five, ten, fifteen years. So I'd like your thoughts on that a little bit.

**Dr. Pfaltzgraff:** Ash, would you like to begin and then Elaine?

**Dr. Carter:** Sure. Well, John, I think you're absolutely right, the more they have, the greater the chance that they would regard some as surplus. Our old joke, and you remember this, when they thought North Korea had one, maybe two, and people would say, "What are you going to do if the North Koreans test a nuclear weapon?" our answer was, "Tell them to test the other one." [laughter] That joke's not funny anymore, but one thing I want to say is that that's only one route that I worry about with North Korea, the deliberate diversion.

The North Korean regime sells drugs, it counterfeits money, and additionally I cannot know exactly what I mean when I say "the North Korean regime." There are people who are free to do those kinds of things within that system, and my guess is that we'll find when North Korea collapses what we found in Iraq, which was that our standard mental image of the dictatorship where it's a pyramid and the big man's at the top and he calls all the shots, that wasn't the way it was. It was rotten, it was rotten from below and people were freelancing and following their own interests much more than they

were following Saddam Hussein who was, by the way, writing novels more than he was focused on technical programs.

And my guess is we'll find something similar in the North Korean case. And therefore, if you lift up that rock, I don't know what you find under it. I don't know who's doing what in an A.Q. Khan type mode. And finally, this can't go on forever, this situation where you have a communist, a Stalinist throwback in the modern world with a per capita GDP which is now two orders of magnitude below the South Korean. It can't go on forever, and that means at some point there's going to be a reckoning, a collapse, potentially a cataclysmic change of some kind. And in that context, we'll have the same worries we had with the collapse of the Soviet Union. So count the ways that North Korea is a disaster.

And then we get to deliberate use of North Korean nuclear weapons against us. And I know there's been discussion here, I gather, today about deterring North Korea. Well, as I told you, I don't want to be in that circumstance and I'd consider it a massive failure that we're as far down that road as we are. The problem of deterrence with respect to North Korea isn't just us deterring them, it's them deterring us. Nuclear weapons are the weapons of the weak, and my concern is what are we going to do if they threaten Japan or use them against Japan? So everywhere you look at this problem of North Korea, it's a mess. It's a serious, serious setback. And of course, Iran's a long way from that point. So to me, North Korea rivals nuclear terrorism as a right up in your face current problem.

**Audience:** Thank you, I'm John Keyes (?), the National Defense University. Dr. Carter, I want to push you a little bit more on the North Korea point, and also goes to something that Congressman Schiff just said. I fully agree, I don't think our nuclear forces are what are driving what North Korea is doing, and I certainly agree that we don't want to have to settle, relying on nuclear or non-nuclear forces to deter a nuclear armed Korea. And we should have a plan B, a negotiation approach now that doesn't seem to be working. But that's the trick. I mean, what's plan B?

It seems to me that as long as we are militarily and politically bogged down in or by Iraq, North Korea and Iran recognize that we're in no position to initiate any kind of military action, and they're acting accordingly. There's not a good military option in either case as long as we're in that situation. So we're really left with incentivizing China or Russia to bring or to enable through Security Council action, a much higher amount of economic hurt upon the North Koreans than is currently the case or is possible. Which is sad, because I think contrary to what I've heard some of the administration people say, I think clearly the Chinese and Russians don't view the problem, North Korean, Iranian nuclear weapons, the same way we do. I don't think they want them, it's not as important to them. But maybe they are more concerned about how we'd react to North Korean and Iran having nuclear weapons.

But you talked about plan B, I heard you talk about plan B before. Is there anything—Do you have an idea of what that plan B is?

**Dr. Carter:** Yeah, I do and I wish that we had more of an effort in government working on plan B. Plan B is, to my way of thinking, the way of obtaining CVID in a coercive manner. And it has a military dimension, it has a political dimension, and an economic dimension. And a couple comments about it, I can't lay the whole thing out, but there are more tools there than you might think; political, economic and even military. The key to plan B is preparation of the battlefield, and the effectiveness of an alternative to a negotiated outcome with North Korea is, as you quite rightly say, going to depend upon the participation, or at a minimum the acquiescence, of China and South Korea. And that will be most easily obtained if we have attempted and conspicuously failed at plan A.

And so effective prosecution of plan A is necessary to the preparation of the battlefield for plan B. And for those who are pessimistic about the diplomatic path, I say to them they're entirely entitled to their view, but they need to recognize that prosecuting that path is essential to getting to where they think we'll end up anyway, which is on plan B. At the moment, we have none of the above. We're not succeeding in plan A, we're not succeeding in plan B, and I honestly have no idea how to describe U.S. policy with respect to North Korea except to say that it's acquiescence. And no one else around the world seems to understand except the Japanese, and I would summarize the Japanese position on North Korea as "we're with you 100 percent, whatever your policy is, but we don't know, we couldn't describe it either." [laughter]

So at the moment, it would be hard to say we have a policy at all, and therefore to get to the other part of your question, is our policy being

hobbled by Iraq? I'm not prepared to accept that the greatest nation on earth can't operate in two hemispheres simultaneously with effect. I think that the Chinese and the South Koreans are mainly concerned with things in that region as they affect North Korea, and we would be able, notwithstanding the fact that we're continuing and must continue to operate in Iraq to be effective over in Asia also. We just took our eye off the ball there. Honestly, I can't explain how we got to where we are. It surpasses my understanding that the North Koreans have gotten as far as they are, completely unopposed. And part of it has to do with the fact that the public seems indifferent to it, there's no outcry about it and I suppose Iraq has something to do with that.