

HIGH STAKES AND HARD CHOICES: U.S. POLICY ON IRAN

HEARING

BEFORE THE

COMMITTEE ON FOREIGN RELATIONS

UNITED STATES SENATE

ONE HUNDRED TWELFTH CONGRESS

SECOND SESSION

—————
MARCH 28, 2012
—————

Printed for the use of the Committee on Foreign Relations



Available via the World Wide Web: <http://www.gpo.gov/fdsys/>

U.S. GOVERNMENT PRINTING OFFICE

75-021 PDF

WASHINGTON : 2012

For sale by the Superintendent of Documents, U.S. Government Printing Office
Internet: bookstore.gpo.gov Phone: toll free (866) 512-1800; DC area (202) 512-1800
Fax: (202) 512-2104 Mail: Stop IDCC, Washington, DC 20402-0001

COMMITTEE ON FOREIGN RELATIONS

JOHN F. KERRY, Massachusetts, *Chairman*

BARBARA BOXER, California	RICHARD G. LUGAR, Indiana
ROBERT MENENDEZ, New Jersey	BOB CORKER, Tennessee
BENJAMIN L. CARDIN, Maryland	JAMES E. RISCH, Idaho
ROBERT P. CASEY, JR., Pennsylvania	MARCO RUBIO, Florida
JIM WEBB, Virginia	JAMES M. INHOFE, Oklahoma
JEANNE SHAHEEN, New Hampshire	JIM DEMINT, South Carolina
CHRISTOPHER A. COONS, Delaware	JOHNNY ISAKSON, Georgia
RICHARD J. DURBIN, Illinois	JOHN BARRASSO, Wyoming
TOM UDALL, New Mexico	MIKE LEE, Utah

WILLIAM C. DANVERS, *Staff Director*

KENNETH A. MYERS, JR., *Republican Staff Director*

CONTENTS

	Page
Cartwright, Gen. James E., former Vice Chairman of the Joint Chiefs of Staff, Washington, DC	14
Kerry, Hon. John F., U.S. Senator from Massachusetts, opening statement	1
Lugar, Hon. Richard G., U.S. Senator from Indiana, opening statement	3
Pickering, Hon. Thomas R., Under Secretary of State for Political Affairs and former U.S. Ambassador to the United Nations, Washington, DC	5
Prepared statement	9
Sadjadpour, Karim, senior associate, Middle East Program, Carnegie Endowment for International Peace, Washington, DC	17
Prepared statement	19

HIGH STAKES AND HARD CHOICES: U.S. POLICY ON IRAN

WEDNESDAY, MARCH 28, 2012

U.S. SENATE,
COMMITTEE ON FOREIGN RELATIONS,
Washington, DC.

The committee met, pursuant to notice, at 10:02 a.m., in room SD-419, Dirksen Senate Office Building, Hon. John F. Kerry (chairman of the committee) presiding.

Present: Senators Kerry, Menendez, Webb, Shaheen, Lugar, Corker, and Risch.

OPENING STATEMENT OF HON. JOHN F. KERRY, U.S. SENATOR FROM MASSACHUSETTS

The CHAIRMAN. The hearing will come to order.

Good morning. Thank you all for being here with us this morning. This is an important hearing on a timely subject.

Iran, I think it is safe to say, presents the biggest foreign policy challenge facing the United States and others at this moment in time. There are many facets to this particular issue—decades of mutual antagonism, Iran's support for terrorism, a deep-seated regional sectarian rivalry. But also their perceptions of U.S. involvement in the region, the unresolved Mideast peace process, which contributes or at least provides certainly an excuse for many in the region.

And of course, front and center is Iran's nuclear enrichment and reprocessing program, which continues despite best efforts of the international community, the International Atomic Energy Agency, and the U.N. Security Council to confirm its represented, purported peaceful interests.

According to American intelligence officials, obviously, there are serious questions that remain about whether Iran has, or has not, made a decision with respect to nuclear weapons. But based on abundant evidence, there is little reason to doubt our intelligence community's assessment that Iran is developing various nuclear capabilities, technologies that better position it should it choose to build or break out to a nuclear weapon.

In response, the Obama administration has worked with a broad international coalition to assemble an unprecedented sanctions regime. The administration is now implementing new legislation requiring countries to significantly reduce Iranian crude purchases or risk being cut off from the U.S. financial system.

The European Union has banned new oil import contracts with Iran and will end all preexisting contracts by July 1. And most

recently, Swift, the Belgian cooperative that manages the world's financial transfer network, announced that Iranian banks will no longer have access to the system.

Collectively, these steps are having, to the best of people's knowledge, significant effect on the Iranian economy, and they make it increasingly difficult for Iran to sell oil and obtain hard currency. I think certainly this pressure has affected Iran's nuclear program, but it hasn't yet achieved compliance with the international community's nuclear program requirements.

I believe the reality is that sanctions alone are highly unlikely to simply create a spontaneous Iranian decision to moderate their nuclear program. I think it is going to take diplomacy, and it is going to take some level of understanding about mutual interests.

The President has rightly and repeatedly said that all options are on the table. And I personally do not think anybody should doubt the President's resolve regarding this.

The prospect of a military confrontation gives next month's P5+1 meeting added urgency. Even at this late date, a coordinated strategy of pressure and diplomacy gives us, I think, the best chance of avoiding conflict, which I think is in everybody's interests if it is possible.

So we must engage in hard-nosed diplomacy that affects or offers Iran a strategic choice—to continue to push forward in defiance of international norms as an outlier facing crippling economic sanctions and the possibility of a military confrontation, or embrace the opportunity of a new Mideast of publicly certifying the legitimacy of what it has already insisted is a civilian program by fully cooperating with the International Atomic Energy Agency under a comprehensive inspection regime and thereby rejoin the mainstream of the community of nations.

I would comment parenthetically that there is a long history of our involvement going back to the 1950s and plenty of reasons for people in that part of the world to have their own suspicions. And it is important for us also to be thoughtful about how we can proceed forward here in the most effective way.

After more than three decades of hostility, it is certainly not realistic to expect that one high-level meeting is going to resolve all the differences or erase all of those decades, years of either misunderstanding or mistrust or actions by one or the other that exacerbate that mistrust. To have any prospect of success, we need an approach that gives diplomatic engagement space to breathe without creating delay and certainly without being drawn into a drawn-out process that reduces the options for Israel or for other countries with respect to potential breakout.

That is the challenge. The challenge is to find a solution that is acceptable to both sides but also gives the international community confidence that Iran neither has the capacity nor the desire to make a mad dash to nuclear weapons.

To help us sort through these challenges, we have, I think, an excellent panel of witnesses. First, we will hear from Ambassador Tom Pickering. Maybe I should say Secretary Tom Pickering, one of our most capable and experienced diplomats.

He is a former Under Secretary of State for Political Affairs, but he has also served remarkably as Ambassador to the United

Nations, Russia, India, Israel, El Salvador, Nigeria, and Jordan. I don't know if I left anything out there, Tom. That is an extraordinary portfolio by anybody's standards, and it is a delight to have his experience and wisdom here.

Then we will also hear from Gen. James Cartwright. "Hoss," as he was called and is called, retired last year after 40 years of service in the Marine Corps. His last assignment was as Vice Chairman of the Joint Chiefs of Staff, and he previously served as Commander of STRATCOM.

And last, we will hear from Karim Sadjadpour of the Carnegie Endowment for International Peace, and Karim is certainly one of our leading experts on Iran, an important voice in this discussion.

And we welcome all three of you back to the committee.

Senator Lugar.

**OPENING STATEMENT OF HON. RICHARD G. LUGAR,
U.S. SENATOR FROM INDIANA**

Senator LUGAR. Well, I thank you again, Mr. Chairman, for scheduling this very important hearing, and I join you in welcoming our distinguished witnesses.

I hope that their insights will give us a better understanding of the impact of United States policy and the efforts of the international community in confronting the Iranian threat.

As a personal aside, as I see Ambassador Pickering, I am reminded of his rescue of Senator Sam Nunn and me from problems at the Moscow airport, but that is a long story. I appreciate it, nonetheless.

And likewise, Karim Sadjadpour has been so helpful at our congressional Aspen Institute conferences in which we have discussed Iran. He has brought his insights, together with 20 members of both houses, and we appreciate that.

I said at our last hearing in December on Iran that Iran was a direct threat to United States national security, the security of our close ally Israel, and other United States interests in the region. That situation persists today. Iranian intransigence toward fulfilling its international obligations with respect to its nuclear program continues.

Iran's parliamentary elections on March 2 were boycotted by opposition candidates and reformers, and the election results appear to embolden Iran's hard-liners. Even as its isolation grows, little has changed in Iran.

Democratic movements across the Middle East and North Africa gave voice to the demands for democratic pluralism and respect for the rule of law and human rights, but the Iranian regime continues its brutal repression of journalists, political activists, students, and trade unionists.

Moreover, it continues its persecution of Christian pastor, Yousef Nadarkhani, who faces execution because of his religious beliefs. Iran's support for the regime in Syria, where the death toll has surpassed 8,000 people, has enabled President Assad to pursue his deadly campaign of attacks against the Syrian people.

Outside Iran, the political posture of many of Iran's neighbors has changed and with it, perhaps, their inclination to respond

to Iran's acquisition of nuclear capability by seeking their own weapons.

Four years ago, I commissioned a staff report entitled "Chain Reaction: Avoiding a Nuclear Arms Race in the Middle East," to assess the risks of nuclear proliferation in this volatile region should Iran get a nuclear weapon. It reviewed the history of nuclear proliferation and focused on three countries—Saudi Arabia, Egypt, and Turkey.

That report expressed grave concerns about a Middle East arms race, and I will be interested to learn our witnesses' views on this proliferation dynamic.

In order to confront the threat posed by Iran to our national security, our interests in the region, and the security of Israel, I continue to believe that our challenge lies in the achievement of an international consensus that presents the Iranian regime with the plain choice between pursuing its nuclear weapons program or preserving the economic viability of the country.

In December, the Senate unanimously passed an amendment to the Defense Authorization Act sanctioning those institutions doing business with the Central Bank of Iran, which lies at the center of Iran's efforts to circumvent multilateral sanctions. I am hopeful about reports suggesting that these and other sanctions are beginning to bite. I am also encouraged by the news that certain European Union countries and Japan have significantly reduced their crude oil imports from Iran, and that the United States and its international partners are working with other importing countries to further cut off the Iranian regime's lifeblood derived from its oil revenues.

I have repeatedly urged the Obama administration to lessen our own need for foreign oil imports by permitting such things as the construction of the Keystone XL pipeline from Canada. Although the United States imports no oil directly from Iran, the more non-Iranian oil on the global oil market, the more there is for others seeking alternatives to Iran's crude.

The Energy Department says Keystone would help lower gas prices for Americans, and it would give the United States more flexibility in a crisis. All options in the Iranian crisis remain on the table.

The fundamental question for United States policymakers is whether a sanctions regime can be imposed that will verifiably stop Iran's nuclear weapons program. Can we say that sanctions are having the intended effect of inducing change in Iran's behavior?

I'll be interested to hear our witnesses address this question because it is, I believe, the fundamental issue. If a cornerstone of our current policy is sanctions, it seems to me incumbent to ask: Are they working and are they being used to good effect?

I thank you again, Mr. Chairman, for this hearing.

The CHAIRMAN. Well, thank you, Senator Lugar.

I appreciate the participation of everybody.

And Mr. Secretary, you are on. All the full statements will be placed in the record as if read in full, and we welcome your testimony.

STATEMENT OF HON. THOMAS R. PICKERING, FORMER UNDER SECRETARY OF STATE FOR POLITICAL AFFAIRS AND FORMER U.S. AMBASSADOR TO THE UNITED NATIONS, WASHINGTON, DC

Ambassador PICKERING. Thank you very much, Chairman Kerry and Senator Lugar and members of the committee.

It is a great pleasure to be back and, indeed, an honor and privilege for me to be asked today to testify on this most important issue, as you have described it. I thank you for your invitation.

It is also an honor and a privilege for me to join General Cartwright and Karim Sadjadpour, both of whom I admire and respect and both of whom I believe will have very important contributions as well to make.

My hope is to use my prepared testimony as a basis to address three issues regarding Iran and the United States, which I believe are responsive to a number of points in your opening statements. First, what do we know about Iran's nuclear program and its evolution? Second, what is the current diplomatic situation, and what might we expect? And third, what options are available to us and my recommendations in that regard.

My career has been in diplomacy. I will, therefore, focus my time and attention to that aspect of the subject.

Let me begin by saying that the Iran nuclear program is not a new device. It began under the Shah and, indeed, we had concerns that under the Shah the program was much broader in its future intent than a civil nuclear program.

When the revolution came in 1979, that program was terminated by the incoming government. After the attack of Iraq on Iran and the long 8-year war, Iran showed new interest in a program. Among other things, it purchased a civil power reactor from Germany, the delivery and construction of which was shut off by the United States.

It then went to the Russians, who made a deal consistent with proliferation that the fuel would be provided by Russia and then Russia would take back the spent fuel to do everything possible to assure there would be no plutonium route to a bomb.

Subsequent to that, Iran got very interested in enrichment, seeking, as it said, to provide itself with the possibility of assuring its own future needs, even though it had a one-reactor program where the fuel was provided by Russia.

Iran now has something on the order of 6,000 to 9,000 centrifuges, enriching in the main to the 3.5 percent low-enriched uranium requirement for civil power reactors. It has an additional small set of centrifuges enriching to 20 percent in order to provide, in their view, the necessary fuel for a research reactor originally provided by the United States, which makes medical isotopes.

The upgrading of Iranian enrichment capability is worrying, as well as the accumulation of a large amount of low-enriched uranium, which, were there to be a breakout effort, would probably be detected but would certainly give them something of a head start. And there are various estimates about how long it would take.

The conclusion that I reach—but I believe it is a conclusion reflected by a number of others, including the United States Government, Israel, and, indeed, Iranian friends—is that Iran is attempt-

ing to put itself in a position to know enough about technology and have enough equipment that were it to make a decision to make a nuclear weapon, it would be able to do so.

I think the other important point is that the U.S. intelligence judgments recently reaffirmed by General Clapper seem to continue to indicate that Iran has not made a decision to make a nuclear weapon.

Let me now turn to diplomacy. In recent days, diplomacy has quickened in terms of its possibilities. Some weeks ago, Iran invited the P5+1, the European three—Britain, France, Germany—Russia, China, and the United States, to resume negotiations on its nuclear program. It did so in a fairly straightforward way compared to past efforts.

Recently, the P5+1 has responded positively, and as you know, overnight the information was published that the talks will take place in Istanbul on April 14. Leading into the talks, there have been two or three interesting developments that I think are worth looking at in terms of trying to read the tea leaves.

Not only was there the invitation to the talks, there was more Iranian cooperation, I understand, with the IAEA and efforts to clear up the past. More significantly, the famous fatwa in Iran against making nuclear weapons was reissued by the Supreme Leader in terms that for the first time in my knowledge actually mentioned nuclear weapons.

And the Supreme Leader took notice in his blog site, whatever that may be, of the President's recent speech to AIPAC and did so positively. These may or may not be significant. We will have to wait and see.

It is also true that the President in his speech to AIPAC made something of a serious point, and I am grateful for it, that diplomacy was a choice for him to move ahead for the future. That means we are on the verge of new talks.

Past talks have suffered, Mr. Chairman and members of the committee, because they have been a series of one-night stands. Meetings that took place over 1 day, where one side or the other, either Iran or the United States, had a proposal, and the other side rejected it. They went away and then spent another 6 to 8 months negotiating a resumption of talks.

Happily, Catherine Ashton, who speaks for the P5+1 in recent days, has said the intention on our side, if I can call it that, is to open the door to a negotiating process which lasts more than 1 day and, hopefully, will have some continuation to address not only what issues are not acceptable, but how they might be made acceptable through a negotiating process. That is important.

Let me now briefly run through the options that I feel are out there for us and for Iran for the future. The first might be a throw-away option, but it is not an insignificant option to some. That is the question of whether we just sit back and let Iran proliferate.

Perhaps that may be a form of containment. Perhaps it is not. I feel it is not a good option. It puts down the tools that we have now put ourselves in place to use through sanctions to assist in opening to diplomacy. It condemns us to perhaps a stark choice between permitting proliferation to take place and using military force.

Not only that, further proliferation in the region I think is a significant possibility if Iran proliferates. The more proliferation we have, the more chance there is for the use of a weapon either through accident, miscalculation, or design. That is not the world we want for us or for the future, and I would say that others in the region, including Iran, need to think very carefully about that.

The second option is military force. There have been volumes written on this. My sense is, without going into all the details, that the risks that we and others would take, including Israel, are far more significant than the advantages we might achieve. And the general assumption is that an advantage of setting back the program for several years would be a useful justification.

I don't agree with that. I think that it is, in my view, a seriously flawed approach, particularly now when we haven't exhausted the other options, including diplomacy.

I would only say two or three things about the military option. It has a very high propensity, in my view, of driving Iran into the direction of openly declaring and deciding, which it has not yet done, according to our intelligence, to make a nuclear weapon seemingly to defend itself under what might look to them and others to be an unprovoked attack.

Iran has great possibilities for asymmetrical reactions, including against Israel through Hezbollah and Hamas, who have accumulated a large number of missiles. And we can go on from there, including the potential vulnerabilities of Americans overseas to asymmetrical reposts and the fact that were that to happen, one option for us would be a larger, more engaged, more significant all-out attack on Iran to try to stop such attacks against Americans.

It is a series of potential escalatory possibilities that puts us deep in the potential for another land war in Asia, something I think that we have spent the last number of years trying to get out of.

The next to the last option is sanctions. You and others have described it. I believe, quite frankly and very succinctly, that sanctions without an open door to a process to exploit the value of those sanctions in the diplomatic arena is a mistake. Expecting, in fact, that through the escalation of sanctions, Iran will, like the Marxist famous ripe plum, drop into our laps—that Iran will accept any particular alternative we have in mind—is certainly in the dream world rather than reality.

But I do very much believe that sanctions—and there is a whole panoply of these—can be very helpful in moving us into a diplomatic direction. And then that raises the question of diplomacy.

Now let me say just two or three things again about the importance of diplomacy. And hopefully, you will want to explore some of this as we go ahead.

Diplomacy, in my view, is a question of timing. Timing is very significant. Timing ought to take advantage of sanctions, but it ought to move the process when seemingly the other side, through its invitation, is ready.

It also ought to enjoy the opportunity to move before we have exhausted all of our sanctions because that is throwing away our future leverage to affect the outcome of diplomacy if we, in fact,

continue to wait. We don't have an unlimited time, but we have some time for diplomacy to work.

The second question is how should we start? Very frankly there is on the table already an Iranian proposal which is very simple, but potentially a good starting place. That proposal would, in effect, commit Iran to cease enriching uranium to 20 percent if we, on our side of the fence, the P5+1, were prepared to help them obtain the fuel for the research reactor that makes medical isotopes.

To me, this is a good starting place. It is a good starting place for a number of reasons. It is a proposal on the table. It is a simple proposal, and it is one that could be accomplished at coming meetings at Istanbul, in my judgment.

It might be followed by other steps and stages. And I want to say two things here about those. A follow-on step that would be germane and relevant would, in effect, be to take the original Iranian proposal, once agreed, and turn it into a cap on enrichment in Iran at 5 percent, which basically accommodates their stated intention to have fuel for future nuclear reactors but, on the other hand, keeps them from escalating enrichment up the line toward weapons grade.

The second piece would be to take the accumulated 20 percent material which they have, something around 100 kilograms, and use that to be turned over in exchange for the turnover to them of the fabricated fuel elements to make the reactor function. And perhaps this deal at that stage could be enriched by a freeze, not a cessation, but a freeze, on several of the important sanctions—those perhaps on the Central Bank of Iran and those that relate to a stop in European purchases of crude oil.

Beyond that, I will say only that other steps and stages might take advantage of two very important objectives that are significant for Iran. One is to do everything we can to strengthen and improve and, indeed, embed International Atomic Energy Agency monitoring in Iran.

It is the one way we have to demonstrate and, indeed, control an Iranian program at the time which they may seek, either clandestinely or otherwise, to achieve a breakout. In regard to that, for a long time, I have personally advocated that we then should be willing to put on the table a positive response to Iran's interest in enriching material for civil purposes only—that is, below the 5 percent threshold.

And I would add to that that we should continue to insist that an accumulation of such material be under safeguards and perhaps moved out of Iran if it is above any current need which they have.

Finally, I think an endgame for diplomacy would, importantly, have four elements. A full commitment on the part of Iran to stay completely away from bombmaking, if I can put it that way. Second, a full inspection system that would have the maximum capability both to control and deter that. In return, permission for Iran to enrich below the threshold of 5 percent and, second, the gradual removal of sanctions on Iran.

One final point, Mr. Chairman. There are other issues non-nuclear, as you and Senator Lugar have pointed out, between the United States, the Western countries, and Iran. They need to be addressed, perhaps outside of the nuclear framework. But they can

help to improve relationships and, indeed, build on early progress, which I hope will be achieved in the nuclear area.

They relate to the futures of countries like Afghanistan and Iraq, where we share some common interests, but they also relate to questions of Iranian preoccupation with drugs and, indeed, our preoccupation with Iranian support for terrorism, for violations of human rights, and for Iranian objections to and steps taken in the past against the Middle East peace process.

We have an opportunity now, Mr. Chairman, to move ahead. Not too long ago, an Iranian friend of mine who had played an important role in Iranian foreign policy over the years told me, "The historical record shows that every time we have been ready, you have not been. And every time you have been ready, we have not been." Maybe we can emerge from that position of the past to begin with some small things that we can use to find a way to pull the curves of mutual interest together rather than to have them continue to bend apart.

Thank you very much.

[The prepared statement of Ambassador Pickering follows:]

PREPARED STATEMENT OF THOMAS PICKERING

Mr. Chairman and members of the committee, it is an honor and a privilege to be asked to testify this morning on one of the most important issues of the day. I thank you for your invitation. It is also an honor to join General Cartwright and Karim Sadjadpour, both of whom I admire and respect.

My hope is to use my prepared testimony to address three issues regarding Iran and the United States:

- (1) What do we know about Iran's nuclear program and its evolution?
- (2) What is the current diplomatic situation and what might we expect?
- (3) What options are available to us?

My career has been in diplomacy. I will therefore focus most of my time and attention to that subject.

THE NUCLEAR PROGRAM

Let me begin by saying Iran was interested in nuclear questions at the time of the Shah. He started a large program. Indeed, the Shah was responsible for articulating a program to build 20 civil power reactors which has now been readopted by the present, revolutionary government. There were many of us who had suspicions that the Shah—much as Brazil, South Korea, and Taiwan in those days—was interested in objectives beyond the civil program. But, out of deference to the Shah and his position in the world and his influence, the United States asked fewer questions than it should have.

When the Islamic revolution came in 1979, interestingly enough, the new regime called off the Shah's nuclear program. The new regime set a firm policy—a fatwa or Islamic ruling—that nuclear bombs are un-Islamic and forbidden. And, interestingly enough, the Supreme Leader, Khamenei, within the last few weeks has repeated that particular fatwa, which at the moment appears to be from his perspective a binding attribute of Iranian policy.

After the Iraqi attack against Iran in the early 1980s, the long 8-year war, and much attention to Iraqi nuclear developments, we saw evidence that the Iranians began to reconsider their nuclear program. By the 1990s, the United States had a concern about a reactor at Bushehr the Iranians bought from Germany and we succeeded in persuading Germany to cancel the deal. Then Iran sought Russian support to build the reactor.

The Russians have a continuing policy that they will build reactors overseas, but only on the basis that they provide the fuel and take back the spent fuel. Since civil light water nuclear power reactors produce plutonium in the spent fuel, it is important that the spent fuel route to a nuclear weapon, at least with respect to the Russian-built Bushehr reactor, has been closed for now by the Russian policy and by its long term contract with Iran.

At the time of the new deal with Russia on Bushehr, Iran became interested in enrichment. Enrichment of uranium is, of course, important for civil power reactors,

but that requires a very low level of enrichment, 3.5 to 5 percent. Any enrichment level above that raises suspicion because it begins to point toward moving to much higher levels, around 90 percent, which makes uranium capable of being fissioned in a bomb. So the United States became worried about Iranian intentions regarding enriching uranium.

At the same time, in the late 1990s, the United States learned that at least some Iranians in the atomic establishment made a deal with Mr. A.Q. Khan from Pakistan. Iran bought, according to the description by some Iranians, material to build a uranium enrichment capacity. Some Iranians claim that they did not know what they had acquired from A.Q. Khan but they paid a great deal of money for it.

It turned out the Iranians acquired materials that helped them develop their enrichment program. Iran apparently bought a schematic plan for a nuclear weapon that appears to have Chinese origins and perhaps additional material.

That particular set of efforts went ahead until 2003. Without trying to judge why, in 2003 Iran apparently made a conscious decision not to continue activities that would, in effect, constitute a committed program to make nuclear weapons.

Since then, we believe that the Iranian posture essentially has been to try to develop technology and perhaps equipment that would put them in a position to be able to make a decision to move to a nuclear weapon, but they have not decided to develop a nuclear weapon. That conclusion seems to be a widely shared view in the U.S. Government and reportedly in Israel. It parallels some Iranian explanations of its own program.

In the meantime, I would say the following about the Iranian program: They have around 6,000–9,000 centrifuges. The bulk of those are enriching to the civil nuclear reactor scale, 3.5 percent, at the underground facility at Natanz. They are storing the low enriched uranium (LEU) material because Iran has no current use for it. This storage of growing quantities of LEU is another of the reasons why the United States has had serious questions about Iran's civil nuclear program. It could constitute a basis for a "breakout" by moving it into higher levels of enrichment for a weapon.

Second, a few years ago, Iran decided to start enriching uranium to 20 percent because it has a research reactor in Tehran, which the United States supplied to the Shah. The Tehran Research Reactor (TRR) is used for making medical isotopes (isotopes used, for example, in cancer treatments). Iran had run out of fuel for that reactor which consists of fuel elements of 20 percent enriched uranium. So they started enriching to 20 percent. Iran now has accumulated approximately 100 kilograms of 20 percent material, and approximately 3–4 tons of LEU (3.5 percent) now in Iraq, on which if they did further enrichment work, would put them in a position to have material for two, three, or four nuclear weapons. They would then need to develop the capacity to fabricate that material into a usable weapon that could be effectively delivered for it to have a military use—a process that might take several years. They have also developed and begun testing at least one trial fuel element for the TRR.

Iran has also started a plutonium-based program. They have a (40 MW) research reactor at Arak which could be used to produce plutonium. But that plant is not now functioning; it is still being worked on. One of the key questions that is often ignored with the preoccupation with Iran's uranium enrichment, is that the United States and the international community needs to find a way to deal with the potential this reactor provides Iran to produce and then separate plutonium for a weapon should it decide to do so. It is not yet operational. It's a heavy water reactor, which means it could use natural uranium with a heavy water moderator to produce plutonium. Iran is developing a heavy water plant to support the Arak reactor.

RECENT DIPLOMACY

Six weeks or so ago, the Iranians said they were prepared to restart negotiations with the E3+3 on their nuclear program. They appeared to offer renewed talks without preconditions. They sent a letter to the IAEA, the International Atomic Energy Agency of the United Nations, which is the U.N. agency designated to carry out nuclear inspections to prevent proliferation and which has been also Iran's appropriately preferred intermediary for negotiations on the nuclear issues. The letter was, unlike previous Iranian letters, apparently almost a "plain vanilla" diplomatic invitation, without preconditions and qualifications, which was encouraging.

Within recent days, there has been a response on the part of the so called E3+3, (essentially Britain, France, Germany, Russia, China, and the United States) accepting the Iranian offer to negotiate. We understand that these negotiations will begin on April 13, but it is still unclear where. There has been some speculation they might be held in Geneva, Switzerland.

Interestingly, other possibly helpful signals have come from the Iranian side. The Supreme Leader was reported to have commented positively on President Obama's speech to AIPAC [American Israel Public Affairs Committee], something that we would not have expected and has happened rarely, if at all.

Within days prior to the Supreme Leader's remarks on President Obama's speech, he reissued the language of the fatwa against military nuclear development, this time referring specifically to the prohibition on making nuclear weapons. And just before that, he reintroduced into the world of literature a book he wrote 40 years ago on an arcane subject having to do with the origins of Shiism. But the value of this particular introduction is that the last two words of the title contain the words "flexible compromise."

Reading these tea leaves suggest a possible message from Tehran on negotiations. We do not know exactly what to make of that message but it is hard to ignore.

On the U.S. side for a long time there has been an internal dispute between the United States Government and some Europeans, and possibly inside the U.S. Government as well, over the question of whether, in any negotiations, we would end up permitting Iran to do any enrichment. This is a "right" which Iran claims as a signatory to the Nonproliferation Treaty. There have been past proposals, including on my part, that it might facilitate a helpful conclusion to negotiations if enrichment were permitted at civil levels (3.5–5.0 percent) and was concretely firewalled from efforts to make a nuclear weapon by serious IAEA-run inspection systems in Iran.

That set of differences has perhaps begun to change. Secretary Clinton in a speech in February opened the door very carefully to the possibility that, with good behavior and real progress, Iran would be permitted to enrich to levels consistent with civil energy needs.

President Obama, who has not declared himself in months on the question of how to move forward, was quite specific in his AIPAC speech that diplomacy—"the big D," as a lot of my friends call it—is now something he wishes to support. From his perspective, while the military option is always there, it is now apparently a clear second choice—rather than the first choice is diplomacy.

This is a help because we now seem to be witnessing the beginning of an exchange of signals across the airwaves which could serve to reinvigorate the preparations and the potential for a negotiation.

We have had 32 years of separation from Iran and, with the rare exception perhaps in setting up the Karzai government at Bonn in 2002, we've had almost no cooperation with the Iranians on issues of importance to both of us. We have a relationship effectively dominated by mistrust and misunderstanding.

My own view is that anyone who believes that he understands enough about Iranian internal politics to be able to use it as a set of guideposts to calculate how to move ahead on negotiations is doomed to failure. This is particularly true for America whose favorite fetish is trying to pick the negotiator on the other side. And anybody in Iran who thinks he understands American politics enough to know the full answer to the future of our relationship is probably in the same trap.

We will need to move ahead on the basis that we will deal with Iran the way it is and Iran must deal with the United States the way it is. Both sides will have deal without preconditions.

Finally, there has been some encouragement regarding the duration of the meetings. In the past there have been 1-day meetings where one side simply rejected the proposal of the other. There was no opportunity provided to negotiate and discuss differences. It appears that the intention this time is to make the up-coming meeting a multiday event with hopefully then the opportunity for constructive give and take.

WHAT ARE THE OPTIONS?

As a long term participant in Washington "option production," I see four options. This is unusual—in Washington there are usually only three and the decisionmaker is supposed to choose the middle one.

The first option is a nonoption. But it is important to understand it. That is to "sit back and enjoy it." Iran will proliferate and then we can rely on deterrence to deal with the problem. Not a very good option—one that in my view can only encourage proliferation and its attendant dangers in the rest of the region.

It is certainly clear that within the last 2 years, several Arab countries have developed a new fascination with civil nuclear power. The United States is very much aware of and concerned about it. The United States is apparently finding ways to keep it hedged, but it is nevertheless a problem.

There are serious concerns on the part of some that Iran would immediately provide its first nuclear weapon to Hezbollah or Hamas, or a similar organization. I

don't fear that happening. I think the first instinct of any nation that acquires a nuclear weapon is to make sure nobody else gets one. The second instinct is to sit down and figure out what one really does with the bomb.

A move toward further proliferation in the region would set back the hope that many people have, however hard it may be, that we could actually move in the direction of either lower numbers or maybe even zero nuclear weapons in the future.

Therefore, the "sit back and enjoy it, let them proliferate" option for all those reasons makes no sense. It might be a result of the failure of other options, but it is not in my view a useful option.

The second option, the one that might be dangerous to choose because it has many more disadvantages than advantages, is the military option. Let me from the perspective of a former diplomat set out a few key pros and cons.

On the advantage side, our friends in Israel would like to be able to set back the Iran program even 2 (or maybe 1) years, if they could. They would do so on the expectation that something else more helpful will turn up in the meantime. That is a weak justification to move to the calamitous decision of using military force.

At the moment at least, Iran apparently does have a conscious nondecision to make nuclear weapons. But if they are attacked without provocation, and particularly if they are attacked on the basis of "they might get a weapon but they haven't decided yet," there would be several results.

One is that Iran would be pushed toward saying, "We never thought we would want to build a weapon. Now that we have been attacked, of course we have to build a weapon to defend ourselves. We will now go ahead and do it come hell or high water."

The second is that Iran which enjoys about a 15-percent popularity in the Muslim world, would see that popularity skyrocket if it became the "victim" of a poorly justified and supported preemptive attack. Could we then stick with the sanctions program?

Another question is an operational one: Would the United States or Israel be able to know what all the targets are and where they are? We have had some success in looking at the Iran program and knowing when they began their various parts of it and what they chose not to tell the world at the time. With the help of periodic inspections from the IAEA, we have had a pretty good idea of where Iran's nuclear sites are located. But would we know where all the targets are? I don't know the answer to that question. It remains hard to be pretty sure about what you don't know on these kinds of issues.

On the other side, the retaliatory capability that Iran could exercise is large. They have influence with terrorist organizations that straddle Israel with large numbers of missiles.

There is no question at all in my mind that they could operate in a terrorist way against "soft" American targets all around the world. Iran or surrogates could attack businesses, NGOs [non-governmental organizations], missionaries and virtually every American establishment in the region and beyond. And what would the U.S. Government be able to do to protect the huge American traveling public if, in fact, there were a very concerted and determined Iranian reaction in the form of continuing asymmetrical attacks against Americans? Launch a fuller scale attack against Iran?

Even if the Iranians were to decide not to risk high profile attacks against American assets and interests so as not to escalate the U.S. retaliation, Iran has a network that could cause great damage to the U.S. presence in the region and worldwide that could help to avoid being traced directly to the Iranian Government.

So let me leave the military option aside. It is not, in my view, something one would totally rule out in extremis if Iran actually decided to make a weapon and other options could not stop it. We could take the information on which we would base that decision to the international community. In the case of a clear obvious decision by Iran to develop a nuclear weapon, the United States would still have a serious problem in the United Nations Security Council getting support for multilateral military action against Iran, but there would be more justification.

And if Israel were to attack on its own, the United States would share in the blame—the responsibility for the action—whatever role we actually played.

In Israel there are some differences over some aspects of the military option. But I think there are no differences in Israel over the question of the serious problems an Iranian nuclear weapon would cause for them. But there are certainly differences about when and how the Israelis might act.

The United States, at least, has the option, given the strength of its military forces, to respond to any later decision by Iran to go for a nuclear weapon. Under current circumstances, Iran, to carry out such a decision rapidly, would literally have to declare their intentions to the IAEA inspectors, or take steps to remove the

enriched material that is now under IAEA safeguards from IAEA controls. So there is a significant challenge with the existing level of transparency of Iran's program were Iran to try to use stored material from the present civil program to build a weapon.

The Israelis now believe that increasingly it will become harder for them to use military force to attack the Iranian program because the Iranians are beginning to enrich in the deep tunnels under the mountain at Qom/Fordow. Losing the capacity to take military action to stop that aspect of the Iranian program is worrying to Israel and might become a driver of action on the part of Israel to use military force.

Finally, internally and politically in Israel, large numbers of people believe that Israel should not go alone; that it should only attack Iran with the United States in concert.

These are critical questions that Prime Minister Netanyahu has to resolve: Can he bring all the members, or most of the members, of his security cabinet along with him? Not all of them are apparently now convinced that they should stand where Netanyahu stands on the issue of strikes against Iran, although I have to say I think a great majority of them are there.

Within the last 6 months, the Israelis have changed, just in the normal rotation, the chiefs of all three of their intelligence services and of their military. The outgoing chiefs of the intelligence services and the military have spoken out forthrightly and politically about the dangers and problems with military action. The incoming chiefs, are in my view, less influential politically and maybe less capable of speaking out on their own, and it is not certain whether they share the notion that they would recommend an attack on Iran.

The third option is sanctions. We have relied heavily on sanctions to move the question ahead. Indeed, in my view, sanctions have had a potentially useful effect. I have been concerned that we have not securely tied the sanctions to diplomacy. In the last few days, however, we are beginning to open the door to diplomacy with the President's AIPAC speech.

But sanctions alone, without a decision on what we would take to the negotiating table on core issues such as Iran's enrichment program, has meant we have been hooked to a policy that has all pressure but no open door to negotiations and possible acceptable outcomes. The United States seems to be expecting this policy of sanctions and pressure will produce Iran in our hands, like the traditional Marxist ripe plum dropping from the tree, with almost any outcome we would dictate acceptable to Iran. That Iran in effect would finally accept all the U.S. demands. Of course, bringing Iran around to our way of thinking would be the easy way to bridge the gap between any permitted enrichment and no enrichment. But will it work? I think not.

The fourth option is diplomacy. It has possibilities, but is not a certain solution.

It appears to me that under present circumstances, we have to start with something the Iranians have proposed. They suggested some time ago they would stop enriching to 20 percent if the E3+3 would provide the 20 percent fuel elements for the Tehran Research Reactor. Ending 20 percent enrichment, which takes them halfway to the enrichment level for a bomb, not mathematically but in terms of the physics of enrichment, would be a helpful step.

This small package to begin with could be enhanced in a second stage by two further steps. First, a cap on Iran's enrichment at 3.5 percent or 5 percent as a follow-on to Iran agreeing to the cessation of enrichment at 20 percent. Iran would have no further need for material enriched above 5 percent if the needs of the TRR were assured by the E3+3.

Second, we should consider asking Iran to turn over to us the material it has enriched to 20 percent at the time we deliver the fuel elements for the TRR reactor. Some freezing or easing of sanctions might be a fair quid pro quo for such a steps.

That could be a good beginning.

An important follow-on objective for subsequent stages of negotiation should be to expand significantly the inspections and monitoring of Iran's entire nuclear program. This would be a far more important goal of successful negotiations with Iran than to persist in our insistence that Iran suspend or freeze enrichment which it is highly unlikely not do and where the knowledge of how to enrich is now well established. Right now Iran is under a limited regime of inspections and monitoring. The United States and its allies ought to negotiate, with the IAEA's full participation, an agreement to improve, and indeed strengthen, the inspection process for the future. Iran has in the past accepted in principle a broader area of inspection under the Additional Protocol and related arrangements of the IAEA. In return for Iran agreeing to expanded inspections the United States would recognize Iran's right to enrich for civil purposes only.

In addition there is a wider range of issues to be taken up with Iran.

Regime change is certainly something the Iranian Supreme Leader is apparently deeply concerned about. If I were Supreme Leader and I thought somebody was trying to change my regime, I guess I would be concerned about it too.

While some of our colleagues might imagine that regime change will solve our problems with Iran, I believe that remains farfetched and highly unlikely. Our past history at changing regimes has been pretty parlous. It is not something that we do very well and certainly not without many unanticipated consequences. Those Iranians who might replace the present regime seem no less attached to an Iranian nuclear program at least. And besides, in the longer term, in Iran it's the people of Iran—many of them very young—even under their unhappy system, that are going to decide how to deal with their regime and its future. Since Iranian beliefs in regard to the perceived U.S. regime change policy appear to stand in the way of progress in dealing with Iran's nuclear program, the United States will need to consider how and when that policy, or the Iranian perception of it, should come off the table.

While the Iranians would congenitally be unwilling to believe any professions of faith in the direction of no regime change from the United States, there are some things that we might do in terms of actions that could begin to help them build some confidence. These might include making clear to them that we are not helping internal hostile activists in Iran who have carried a gun against them, and provide ways to communicate about actions that concern them. Secretary Clinton's recent public expression of concern about assassinations in Iran is a case in point. It would also help if we begin to consider freezing or relaxing the imposition of some sanctions in return for real progress in making their nuclear program more open and more fully inspected and in improving relations with Iran in other areas.

Thus, as we look toward the coming negotiations on nuclear issues, the United States should try to find a way to improve both the atmosphere and make progress. Without mixing a broader agenda with Iran with those nuclear discussions, the United States could begin to speak with Iran about such issues as the future of Iraq and Afghanistan, drugs, and outstanding financial issues. We could deal with some of the many other bilateral issues between Iran and the United States.

We have some interesting issues on our side that we want on the negotiating table as well: Iran's support for terrorist organizations and past Iranian intervention in the Middle East peace process—to name two.

My recommendation is that we now take the sanctions pressure and turn it into a useful diplomatic tool to begin serious diplomatic negotiations with Iran. Such a new direction will require much care and management of the rhetoric to cause the diplomatic process move forward. The United States now has an opportunity to start in the forum of the E3+3. But sooner rather than later, direct talks between the United States and Iran will be necessary.

We have much to do. There is once again a difficult challenge but an invaluable opportunity ahead of us.

The President has brought us to where we are and the course has been hard. The path ahead is slippery and difficult. It will require the greatest care and leadership on the part of President Obama and Secretary Clinton. Thirty-two years of deep distrust, buttressed by misunderstanding, will not disappear overnight. The challenge for diplomacy on both sides will be to turn the old zero-sum question into a new era in which we try to extract some win-win results. Compromises that are painful on both sides will be needed. Hopefully, we can now find a way to reverse the perils of the past.

An Iranian friend of mine who has played an important role in Iranian foreign policy over the years once told me that "The historical record shows that every time we have been ready, you have not been, and every time you have been ready, we have not been." Maybe we can emerge from that position of the past to begin with some small things—that we can find the way to pull the curves mutual of interest together rather than have them continue to bend apart.

The CHAIRMAN. Thank you very much, Mr. Secretary. Very constructive and important.

General Cartwright.

**STATEMENT OF GEN. JAMES E. CARTWRIGHT, FORMER VICE
CHAIRMAN OF THE JOINT CHIEFS OF STAFF, WASHINGTON,
DC**

General CARTWRIGHT. Thank you, Mr. Chairman, Senator Lugar.

I, like the Ambassador, kind of thought maybe I had already had my last hearing ever. So this is an honor, and I do appreciate the opportunity.

I think also in the comments from the Ambassador, I would align with him pretty much totally. The only thing I would add as a caveat on the military options is that even though we may have an assessment, a personal assessment of those options, they should never be removed from the President as options.

They have to stay on the table. And I just want to make sure that that is understood.

I think, first, the construct here of risk. If Iran were to obtain a nuclear weapon, there are all sorts of prognostications out there about what could happen in the region from an arms race, the failure of extended deterrents. None of the options look good, and so this is a significant threat. It is one that we have to pay a lot of attention to. The good news is several administrations have and continue to do so.

I also want to make sure people understand for the most part, historically, nation states, when they seek to have nuclear weapons, seek to have them as a shield, a guarantor of their sovereignty and their ability to remain sovereign.

When you move that over to a surrogate, or a terrorist, that is where it becomes a sword. That is where the greatest threat is to an unpredictable act of violence.

It is that nexus that people probably most worry about, at least in my community, associated with Iran gaining a nuclear weapon. It is not as much the idea that they are going to conduct some sort of attack. They would never win that kind of an exchange. It would be an existential threat on them, not on others for the most part.

I also want to talk a little bit about the military activities that have occurred over the past few years in the region in an understanding of this threat. And I think the first thing to understand is that we have put in place and worked with the regional partners active and passive defenses.

The simple things that keep terrorists from obtaining their objectives, someone who wants to attack you, but seemingly is undeterrable—you can take the objective away from the adversary by doing simple things like creating standoff distances from buildings and those types of activities.

Those measures have been in progress of several years. The region has been, as we would say in the military, hardened to those types of threats, which you have to worry about particularly in order to maintain the viability of several of the options that the President might have.

The second has been to have an active role in the region in exercises and working with the local armed forces in ensuring that they are capable of responding to any threat. On the active side of defenses, we have moved radars, missile defense capabilities into the region that are significant and would put into question any first strike or decapitating type of strike that Iran may wish to undertake.

And then I think equally important is we have changed our posture in the region. Some of it has been the result of the ongoing

conflicts in Iraq and Afghanistan, but our posture in the region is significant from the standpoint of military capability.

I think the third issue that I would bring out is one of context. We are, in fact, a nation that has been at war for over 10 years now. We are a nation that has significant financial issues out there that we are working our way through.

None of those should be interpreted by the Iranians as limiting our ability to go in there and do what we need to do. By the same token, if you look around the yard out there, you have the decisions on leadership in places like China, Russia, France, U.K., United States over this year. That is in some part going to affect diplomacy and discussions and probably has. And it may be interpreted by the Iranians as a window of opportunity, and so we should be careful as we move through that period.

The last issue that I would like to cover just briefly here is the idea of how a weapon is developed and how they might go about that in the Iranian side. And generally, there are three stages here in the thought process.

The first stage is that you have a limited number of scientists and technical people who believe that they have at least the essence of being able to build a device. That leads you through the reprocessing activities, the enrichment activities, and takes you to weaponization.

In weaponization, again, a limited number of people trying to understand how to actually put a weapon together that will attain a critical mass and then react.

The third activity is a delivery system. And in the delivery system, that is a very visible activity, much like an underground test, but it is a very visible activity that you can watch and we can watch develop. It takes a lot of capability to develop rockets that can, in fact, deliver over long distances, but also short distances.

It also takes very precise entry and pointing and those types of activities which you can watch and takes several years to develop. The worry here is that things could interrupt the timeline, and the intelligence community has spoken often to this. But if outside assistance is gained through intelligence and intellectual capital on how to reprocess, that could accelerate the process.

If there is someone who understands how to build a weapon, that accelerates the process. Many people look at weapons and think this is what it took us, the United States, to do. There is no reason to build a weapon exquisite—to the degree of exquisiteness that the United States has. You can develop a weapon in a much more simple format and do it much quicker. So we have to be careful about trying to equate our timelines with their timelines.

And then I think the third issue here is one of if you have just a few scientists, that is a vulnerability. There is always the option, as we would say, to cut the head of the snake off and remove that capability.

Once a country moves on, the second stage generally is to build a succession plan. In other words, depth in your scientists, depth in your engineers, the ability to have people come in behind if you lose somebody. I would say that is likely and quite possibly where the Iranians are right now.

The third stage is called franchising. This is when you distribute the capability. You have indigenous capabilities, and they proliferate to more places than you can obviously find. And that becomes a very dangerous situation. That is a situation we and the Israelis are very worried about that we might be approaching and one that we have to watch very carefully in the assessments.

I think in my mind the breakout is the transition between that second and third stage to where they start to proliferate intellectual capital and physical infrastructure. We are starting to see underground facilities and know about them. That is the type of indicators that we are worried about.

And I will hold at that point and stand ready for your questions.

The CHAIRMAN. Thanks. Thanks very much, General.

Mr. Sadjadpour.

**STATEMENT OF KARIM SADJADPOUR, SENIOR ASSOCIATE,
MIDDLE EAST PROGRAM, CARNEGIE ENDOWMENT FOR
INTERNATIONAL PEACE, WASHINGTON, DC**

Mr. SADJADPOUR. Thank you, Chairman Kerry and Senator Lugar and members of the committee.

It is really an honor to be back here with you. I am honored to be here alongside Ambassador Pickering and General Cartwright. I always admire my friend Ambassador Pickering's youthful optimism.

Let me begin today with two quotes from Henry Kissinger, which I think really nicely frame our national policy discussion on Iran. The first quote is from Kissinger's book on 21st century diplomacy, and he says, "There are few nations in the world with whom the United States has more common interests and less reason to quarrel than Iran."

But several years later, Kissinger also said something which I think was quite brilliant in its simplicity. He said that Iran has to decide whether it is a nation or a cause. If it sees itself as a nation and it pursues its national interests, there is tremendous overlapping interests between the United States and Iran. But if Iran continues to see itself as a cause, in opposition to the United States, in opposition to Israel, we are going to continue to butt heads.

And I would argue that the Obama administration, more than any United States administration since the 1979 Iranian revolution, tried to probe that question. And they tried to probe that question with a policy of unprecedented overtures to Iran, which I would argue went unreciprocated by the Iranian regime.

And I think after a year of a policy of engagement, the Obama administration came to the realization that for Iran's leadership, anti-Americanism, enmity toward the United States, has in a way metastasized. Opposition toward the United States has become central to the identity of the Iranian regime, and this applies very much to the Iranian Supreme Leader Ali Khamenei.

And so, I think from the vantage point of the Obama administration, they have concluded that it is very difficult to reach an accommodation with the regime in Tehran, which needs us as an adversary for their own ideological legitimacy.

Now let me move to Iran's internal power dynamics. And I think for our intents and purposes, Iran has essentially become a one-

party system, and that is the party of the Supreme Leader, Ali Khamenei, who rules in conjunction with the Revolutionary Guards who have really eclipsed the clergy in terms of their political and economic influence. And Khamenei is the one who is steering Iran's nuclear ship.

And since he has been in power from 1989 onward, he has tried to preserve the status quo in Iran by avoiding transformative decisions. And increasingly with this unprecedented degree of international pressure, the international economic and political coercion, Khamenei's back is increasingly up against the wall.

The Central Bank sanctions and actions by Swift have essentially cut Iran off from the global financial market. The looming EU oil embargo promises to decrease Iran—or Iran's exports to Europe, which is about 20 percent of their oil export market, stands to be dried up soon.

But I haven't yet seen indications that this unprecedented pressure, as I said, has affected Khamenei's nuclear calculations. For a variety of reasons, Khamenei has long been averse to any type of compromise. He believes that when you are being pressured, compromise projects weakness and invites even more pressure.

He believes deep down that United States policy toward Iran is not behavior change. It is regime change. And again, if he shows signs of compromise, the United State is going to increase the pressure.

The lessons he has learned from contemporary history is that when Gaddafi gave up his nuclear program in 2006, he made himself vulnerable to the NATO intervention of 2011. The lesson he drew from the experience of Pakistan is that when Pakistan obtained a nuclear weapon and detonated a device, paradoxically, that alleviated the pressure against them and, in fact, turned outside pressure into outside engagement and incentive.

So, for a variety of reasons, Khamenei is averse to compromise, and so far the unprecedented degree of international pressure, while impressive, hasn't affected his nuclear calculations. And I would have to say that the most important variable on this realm has been the price of oil.

That when oil prices hover over \$100, \$110 a barrel, this really softens the blow of any type of international sanctions, no matter how expansive they are. So where does that leave us? Where does that leave U.S. policy options?

I think if we are going to resolve this issue diplomatically, we do have to provide Iran an exit path. Pressure alone is not sufficient, and in that realm I very much welcome Ambassador Pickering's suggestions. I think they are constructive, and they are welcome, and I share Ambassador Pickering and General Cartwright's assessment that the risks of military action significantly outweigh the rewards of military action.

That said, I think we need to be sober about the nature of the Iranian regime and sober about the interests of the Iranian regime and realistic about what both diplomacy and coercive diplomacy can really achieve here.

I think dialogue and coercive diplomacy with Iran can slow down their nuclear program, their nuclear progress. It has slowed down their nuclear progress, but I don't think it can entirely stop their

nuclear progress. I think dialogue can very importantly prevent our cold conflict with Iran from turning into a hot conflict with Iran by making it very clear to the Iranians what our precise redlines are.

I think the outreach of the Obama administration has served to expose the fact that Iran is the intransigent actor in this equation, not the United States. That has really strengthened the breadth and the depth of our international alliances.

But I would argue that as long as Iran's current Supreme Leader, Ali Khamenei, remains in power, I think the likelihood that Iran will be willing to make meaningful and binding compromises on this nuclear program is not very high. So, for that reason, I would argue that this is a conflict.

Our conflict with Iran is a conflict which has to be managed. It is unlikely to be resolved. And I would say it is unlikely to be resolved until this regime is eventually forced to change under the weight of its own internal contradictions and economic malaise.

As I said earlier, I think the most important determinant for this regime's future will be the price of oil. And in that respect, President Obama's speech at AIPAC I think is well worth hearing, that all the talk of military action tends to benefit Iran because it increases the risk premium of oil prices.

When this change will happen in Iran is entirely unpredictable. But I think the events in the Arab world over the last 2 years are an important reminder of that old maxim from Trotsky, Trotsky's old maxim about dictatorships. He said while they rule, their collapse appears inconceivable, and after they have fallen, their collapse appeared inevitable.

And I think the Iranian regime is at the crossroads of that maxim in that their short-term collapse and their long-term survival appear very much unlikely.

I would argue that the most important role that we, the United States, can play in expediting change in Iran is to inhibit the Iranian regime's ability to control communication and to control information and, as Secretary Clinton said, tear down their electronic curtain. I agree with Senator Kerry that our approach up until now toward Iran has focused too exclusively on sanctions and hard power, and it hasn't focused enough on media and communications.

If you look at what has transpired in the Arab world over the last 2 years, the role that satellite television and Al Jazeera played were enormous. And I think that we have the capacity to play a somewhat similar role in Iran with our Voice of America Persian language service, but so far it has really lagged behind.

And I think there is an important role for Congress to play in all of this. The Voice of America Persian language service has the capacity to reach over 20 million Iranians, but so far we haven't really taken it seriously.

And I will stop my comments there and look forward to your questions.

Thank you.

[The prepared statement of Mr. Sadjadpour follows:]

PREPARED STATEMENT OF KARIM SADJADPOUR

Ayatollah Ali Khamenei has never been a gambling man. Since becoming Iran's "Supreme Leader" in 1989, he's sought to preserve the status quo by eschewing transformative decisions. But as unprecedented political and economic pressures—

including sanctions against Iran's Central Bank and a looming EU oil embargo—push his back against the wall, Khamenei increasingly has two paths to deliverance: a nuclear compromise, or a nuclear weapon. Each could be perilous for him, and the regime.

Khamenei's aversion to compromise is well-established. He's long asserted that Washington's underlying goal in Tehran is not behavior change but regime change, and yielding to coercion would only project weakness and invite greater pressure from Washington. Just as Perestroika hastened the demise of the U.S.S.R., Khamenei believes that compromising on revolutionary ideals could destabilize the foundations of the Islamic Republic.

Contemporary history has validated his worldview. In Khamenei's eyes, Libyan dictator Muammar Ghaddafi's abdication of his nuclear program in 2006 was precisely what made him vulnerable to the 2011 NATO intervention which ended his regime, and his life. Pakistan's 1998 nuclear weapons tests, on the other hand, helped turn foreign pressure and sanctions into foreign engagement and incentives.

While Khamenei may shun compromise, however, his path to a nuclear weapon would be a perilous one. To begin, overt signs of weaponization—including the expulsion of nuclear inspectors or the enriched of weapons-grade uranium—would likely trigger U.S. or Israeli military action. Unless Khamenei wants to provoke a military attack on Iran for domestic expediency—which is improbable but not implausible—he will continue to favor a deliberate, incremental approach.

Time, however, is arguably no longer on Khamenei's side. He must calculate whether his regime can sustain severe and escalating economic pressure for the duration of time it will take them to acquire a nuclear weapon. Despite media hype, if Tehran were to decide tomorrow that it wants to weaponize, it is, according to best estimates, at least 2 years away—and likely more—from the finish line.

What's more, Khamenei must also take into account the fact that Iran's nuclear facilities have likely been penetrated by foreign intelligence agencies. Unforeseen roadblocks—including computer viruses, "accidental" explosions, mysterious assassinations, and defections—could likely set back Iran's nuclear clock even further.

Faced with this seemingly binary choice, how will Khamenei decide?

It has been correctly observed that the few instances in which Iran has compromised on revolutionary rigidity, or shown signs of conciliation vis-a-vis the United States, have been when the regime has perceived "existential angst."

Today Iran is once again subject to enormous pressure, but two factors are different.

First, in previous instances in which Iran felt a need to compromise, oil prices were below \$25 barrel. Today they hover over four times that amount, which softens the blow of sanctions.

Second, the instances in which Iran has compromised in the past were spearheaded not by the obstinate Khamenei, but by wily former president, Hashemi Rafsanjani. In the last few years, however, Khamenei has purged Rafsanjani and his more pragmatic acolytes from positions of authority and surrounded himself with sycophants who share his rigid worldview.

That said, it's possible that in the near term Khamenei will calculate that the costs of continued intransigence are too high, and he will attempt a tactical and temporary compromise in order to stave off pressure and sew divisions within the P5+1, namely to peel China and Russia away from the United States and EU.

There are currently no indications, however, to believe that international pressure will compel Khamenei to make the types of meaningful and binding compromises on its nuclear program—which would likely include capping enrichment at 5 percent, sending out stockpiles of low enriched uranium (LEU), and agreeing to an intrusive inspections regime—that would reassure the United States and placate Israel.

It's oft asserted that in order to persuade Tehran not to pursue a nuclear weapon, Washington must reassure Khamenei that the United States merely seeks a change in Iranian behavior, not a change of the Iranian regime. While this makes sense in theory, in practice it's complicated by Khamenei's deep-seated conviction that U.S. designs to overthrow the Islamic Republic hinge not on military invasion, but on cultural and political subversion intended to foment a soft or "velvet" revolution from within. The following Khamenei speech on state television, in 2005, is both representative and revealing of his world view:

More than Iran's enemies need artillery and guns, they need to spread cultural values that lead to moral corruption . . . I recently read in the news that a senior official in an important American political center, said: "Instead of bombs, send them miniskirts." He is right. If they arouse sexual desires in any given country, if they spread unrestrained mixing of men and

women, and if they lead youth to behavior to which they are naturally inclined by instincts, there will no longer be any need for artillery and guns against that nation.

Khamenei's vast collection of writings and speeches make clear that he fears American cultural WMDs and soft power more than bunker busters and aircraft carriers. In other words, Tehran is threatened not only by what America does, but what America represents. For this reason Khamenei has asserted that "the conflict and confrontation [between Washington and Tehran] is something natural and unavoidable." Herein lays our policy conundrum: No nuclear deal with Tehran can be made without Khamenei, but it appears almost equally unlikely that any deal can be made with him.

Where does this leave us?

Shortly before his death, the great American diplomat and cold war scholar, George Kennan—reflecting on 70 years of experience in foreign affairs—observed that "Whenever you have a possibility of going in two ways, either for peace or for war, for peaceful methods or for military methods, in the present age there is a strong prejudice for the peaceful ones. War seldom ever leads to good results."

We should keep Kennan's words in mind while at the same time being sober about the nature of the regime in Tehran, and the challenges it poses. Realistically, the utility of continued dialogue and negotiations will not be to resolve our differences with Tehran, but to prevent our cold conflict from turning hot. The Obama administration's unprecedented and unreciprocated overtures to Iran also help expose the fact—both to the outside world and the Iranian people—that Tehran is the intransigent actor in this equation, not Washington. This has served to strengthen both the breadth and the depth of our international coalition.

The goal of coercive diplomacy should be to significantly slow Iran's nuclear progress, and contain their regional political influence, until the regime is eventually forced to change—or is changed—under the weight of its own internal contradictions and economic malaise. When this might happen is entirely unpredictable, but the events in the Arab world over the last 2 years are a reminder of Trotsky's old maxim about dictatorships: "While they rule their collapse appears inconceivable; after they've fallen their collapse appeared inevitable."

The CHAIRMAN. Well, thank you very much, Mr. Sadjadpour. It was very interesting.

Everybody, I think, has made a significant and interesting contribution here. You may be the first witness in 26 years to have quoted Trotsky before this committee.

[Laughter.]

But it was a pretty astute observation, without doubt.

Let me just begin, if I can, I want to come back to you, Mr. Sadjadpour, but I want to set it up this way.

Ambassador Pickering, you said there were three options, and your first option was this potential of doing nothing, and you then go forward and they do what they want to do and they break out. I don't think—I am not sure that is, in fact, an option under any circumstance because Israel isn't going to let it be an option.

And that is really the quandary that we are in, that there really are only two options. Either there is going to be military action because one country is going to make a judgment about where they think the rush to a weapon will occur. And based on that, they will self-help, regardless of whether we are there.

And the other option is that that doesn't take place because Iran, hopefully in its wisdom, sees that that takes everybody to a bad place, including them, and that there is a much better road to go down. And therefore, there is something along the lines of an agreement that you have defined or some other agreement.

Now I say that because I want to go directly therewith. There are those two poles that I think probably you would agree, Mr. Sadjadpour, those are the two poles. If that is true then, you made the judgment a moment ago in your testimony. You said there is

no evidence that Khamenei is going to see things differently or move in a different direction.

How do you say that? Do you know whether there is an internal debate? Do you know why then are they going to go to these talks? Does that mean you are predicting these talks are a mere delay process and destined to fail, or is something happening that maybe none of us are aware of at this point?

Mr. SADJADPOUR. I think in the near term what the Iranians will attempt with the talks is to offer some tactical or potential cosmetic gesture of conciliation in order to try to stave off pressure and create so rifts within the P5+1 to try to peel China and Russia away from the United States and Europe. But again, there are no indications to believe that Iran is prepared to make the types of meaningful and binding compromises which Ambassador Pickering has suggested.

And you know, again, I think that Khamenei's current dilemma is that, on one hand, he is averse to compromise because he believes that the United States endgame is not simply to change Iran's nuclear ambitions, but to change the Iranian regime. On the other hand, I think the path for him toward a nuclear weapon is equally perilous. It is not that they are months away. They are years away. And if, indeed, he pursues that path, he has to assume that it is going to trigger some type of military action.

The CHAIRMAN. So what is your advice to us with respect to this question of their perceptions? I don't disagree with you. I think there is great fear in certain quarters that our primary goal is not the nuclear plan at all. It is, rather, the regime change. And we have to deal with that in any kind of dialogue or any dealings.

But given the speech that you quote in your written testimony that the Supreme Leader gave in 2005 regarding bombs versus miniskirts and so forth, it really poses a major challenge to us to try to get over that inherent deep suspicion. What is your counsel?

Mr. SADJADPOUR. I wish I could be more optimistic in this sense. But my perception of the Supreme Leader is that his cynicism toward the United States is cloaked in ideology, but it is driven by self-preservation, meaning he is shrewd enough to appreciate the fact that were there to be an opening with the United States, it could bring about unpredictable reforms and open up outside phenomena like globalization which could well sweep him aside.

So I compare him in some ways to the late Kim Jong-il or Bashar al-Assad in the sense that I think he surely appreciates the fact that he can rule over a closed system, but not an open system.

The CHAIRMAN. But he is a smart man, a very, very smart man and very clearly driven by religious foundation. It would seem to me that that would also be very compelling to him with respect to the alternatives, which are to find themselves even more isolated, more punitive set of sanctions, greater threats in some ways to a regime, and ultimately the potential of a very concerted military action.

If everybody's efforts are exhausted and there isn't sufficient verification, sufficient compliance, it may not be Israel acting alone at that point.

Mr. SADJADPOUR. Well, you know, he has been ruling a system which has been enduring sanctions and punitive measures and

threats for the last few decades. And the economic welfare of the Iranian priority has never been his top priority or the regime's top priority.

And at the moment, I would say this. That Khamenei, what is paramount for him is the preservation of the system, to preserve the status quo. But I would say at the moment, he doesn't feel existential angst. The pressure is significant. The threats of military action, I am sure, he takes seriously. But so far with these soaring oil prices, they have managed to muddle through.

And I think it is plausible, within the realm of possibilities, that he calculates that a limited Israeli military strike on Iran's nuclear facilities could be net positive for the regime because they would—it could resuscitate revolutionary fervor and, in fact, prolong the shelf life of the regime. So I think those are his calculations at the moment.

The CHAIRMAN. Well, hopefully, I mean, I understand those calculations. I think there are some much brighter and more significant options available, and the question is obviously whether or not, over the course of these next weeks, it will be possible for them to see that and for people to reach what Tom Pickering has said is sort of the confluence of interests here. It seems to me there are real possibilities there.

But I am going to just stop there.

Senator Lugar.

Senator LUGAR. Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

Just following up this thought of existential angst, you have mentioned one specific idea that could be used to reach out to the Iranian people, and that is the Voice of America Persian language service. Now if that was to be beefed up, and I gather from your testimony that you feel not much is happening there, and it is worth our committee taking a look into, what would the messages of our broadcasts be?

In other words, if we were to try to improve our image among the Iranian people, the 20 million listeners or what have you, what would we say?

Mr. SADJADPOUR. It is a great question. What I would say is that the conclusion I have reached about Voice of America is that, like the Iranian regime, it is going to be very difficult to reform, and it is something which we have to take outside the confines of the U.S. Government. And there should be a public-private partnership in the same way that BBC works.

And it is notable that BBC Persian has been in existence for about 2½ years, and in that short period, it has already managed to significantly eclipse Voice of America. So I think that we can do much better. In this country, we have a fantastic track record on doing media. But again, I think doing it within the U.S. Government is difficult.

And in terms of what the message should be, I think what we simply can do is provide Iranians information about United States policy, about what is happening in their own country, inhibit the regime's ability to control the information they receive, and inhibit the regime's ability to prevent Iranians from communicating with the outside world and with one another.

So I think that, as Secretary Clinton described, the electronic curtain is a very apt term.

Senator LUGAR. Well, let us say they do begin to communicate. Are we hopeful then that the Iranian public or elements of it, young people or whoever, come out into the streets, that they decide simply that they have had enough and this becomes irrepressible? What is the scenario for making any difference to Khamenei with regard to his situation?

Mr. SADJADPOUR. Well, as my colleague Tom Carruthers says, it is always impossible to predict popular uprisings because it is not social sciences. It is psychology, and we can't predict when these psychological tipping points are going to happen.

I would say this. If you look at the collapse of the Mubarak regime and the Ben Ali regime in Tunisia, it seemed to me there were three important factors—corruption, economic malaise, and repression. And if you look at objective metrics, Iran ranks higher than Mubarak's Egypt and Ben Ali's Tunisia in all three categories.

So the discontent certainly exists within Iran, but I would argue that the Iranian opposition, in contrast to the Arab opposition movements, has reached an impasse and that they have recognized that they can't reform the system from within. But because of the fact that they have already suffered one disillusioning revolution, they don't have the same type of revolutionary romanticism which exists in the Arab world. So they have revolutionary ends, but they are not willing to pursue revolutionary means.

That said, again, I think it would be useful for us to be able to communicate to the Iranian people what our policy is toward their nuclear program. Because at the moment, the only information they hear is from their leadership, which says that the United States and imperial powers are trying to deprive Iran of this wonderfully fantastic technology, which would totally change the Iranian economy, when the reality is, in fact, much different.

Senator LUGAR. Ambassador Pickering, if, in fact, Voice of America Persian was revived and these messages were getting to the public, granted that, as Karim has pointed out, the people might not come out into the streets. Perhaps not quite ready for that.

But how does that affect your point four of this diplomacy situation if all of this is going on as we have revived something very different and are obviously going after Iranian public opinion with the thought of potential regime change?

Ambassador PICKERING. Senator, it is a very interesting and important point. First, I begin with the notion that I have clearly no objection and, indeed, some reason to support the idea that the people of Iran should know much more clearly what is going on.

I went there as a tourist in 2004, and I was amazed at the number of people who came up to me on the street as an apparent foreigner and said, "Why? What are the real problems between the U.S. and Iran?" They were totally isolated. And I think that is a significant point.

Second, it would help to reinforce a point that I would like to differ just a little bit from Karim on, that the Supreme Leader is so implacably dedicated against any deal, so frightened of any deal that he won't come. I think that we only have to look back to 2002

when my good friend, Jim Dobbins, was negotiating, with the help of Iran, the new Government for Afghanistan.

And at the end of that, he famously writes in his book he got a long message from Iran saying we would now like to explore other options for negotiations with the United States. He brought it back, and it died in the inbox somewhere, or it died in somebody's circular file, or it died with somebody's ideology, whatever it was. But it didn't get anywhere.

So my sense is, from Iranian friends who have worked with the Supreme Leader, that he is suspicious. He is, indeed, as Karim said so correctly, upset by the notion that the only U.S. policy is really this regime change policy and that in the end, it will do him in.

But nevertheless, throughout the period, he apparently has said you guys who want to deal with America are wrong and you won't succeed, and they will end up confirming that to you. But go ahead and try. And we have a number of cases where they went ahead and tried, a number of cases where it didn't succeed. Not, I think, entirely all on the part of Iran, although they certainly played a significant role in making the negotiations very difficult.

So my hope is, to get back to your original question, that with more enlightenment on the part of the people of Iran they can support a negotiating process that will give them confidence that, in effect, with good behavior on Iran's part, with an ability to come together on these issues, there will be a much better option than either bombing or continued unlimited repression of one kind or another, which has its own consequences.

Senator LUGAR. Yes?

General CARTWRIGHT. Could I just offer just a quick comment? The only thing that I would add to this is that broadcasting to the Iranian people is like telling them what to think. What we really need to do is to engender an internal dialogue and the tools to do that, which allow both collaboration internally and exposure to the outside.

So the work that many of the agencies have undertaken is to try to get things like the Internet opened up because the maldistribution of wealth that is occurring as a result of these sanctions is going to put pressure on the system.

Senator LUGAR. Thank you.

The CHAIRMAN. Senator Shahee.

Senator SHAHEEN. Thank you very much.

Thank you, gentlemen, for being here.

There is the prospect for a new round of negotiations.

I was in Brussels over the weekend at the Brussels forum, and Lady Cathy Ashton was there talking about what we might look for as an indication that the Iranians might really be serious about those negotiations. And I wonder if, I guess, Ambassador Pickering, I would ask you first what you think we ought to be looking for to determine whether the Iranians are really serious?

Ambassador PICKERING. Thank you, Senator.

I think it is the most important question. My own sense, and I spoke briefly about this in my presentation, is that we ought to take a proposal they put on the table, which I believe happens to be in our interest, which is that they would stop producing mate-

rial at 20 percent. Which at least in the physics of enrichment is a long way up the line, a lot further than 3.5 percent.

And in return, we would provide the fuel elements to continue to allow them to operate a reactor that makes medical isotopes, as civilian as you can get. And it seems to me that is a test case, and we ought to be able to try to be creative and move ahead with that test case.

The second piece is, overall, their proposals have been they would like to run a civilian program. We have plenty of good reasons for believing that in the past they have flirted with nuclear weapons and done things that have taken them out of the purely civil. But we also know from our own intelligence that in 2003, apparently for reasons that we don't know, but we can imagine, they stopped that bomb program.

And so, we ought to take them to a position to do everything we can to put that so solidly in concrete they cannot move beyond it on the one hand and put in place the kind of inspection mechanisms, broaden the IAEA mandate, work with the IAEA to do that.

Buttress that with our own sources of information so that, in fact, we create as much of a deterrent as we can against their getting away from the firewall that I talked about earlier, that we would hopefully put in place through negotiations.

Now, look, nobody knows whether negotiations will succeed or not. I don't share Karim's notion that the situation is so bad that it is almost feckless to try. And he and I both agree, and he said so here, that we ought to try.

Indeed, if we are contemplating other options like the use of force, I certainly think we ought to exhaust diplomacy before we get there. We have been there before, Senator, as you know, and it hasn't treated us or the region or, indeed, others very well to jump over those particular possibilities, if I can phrase them that way.

Senator SHAHEEN. And can I get you to talk a little bit more about the impediments to being able to accomplish that kind of a negotiation?

Ambassador PICKERING. Sure. I think that we would all agree that Iran has a very intensive way of negotiating. It may have learned, unfortunately, lessons from North Korea that has its own way. I suppose that if you have ever had the experience of raising children to the age of 2 years, you get some sense of how and in what way that process operates at a perhaps slightly more elemental level of psychology.

They are extremely hard bargainers. They have grown up, after all, in a society where bargaining is a science, not just an art form. And so, we have those questions already.

They may have internal differences. They may seek over a period of time, as I believe they did when they first agreed to the arrangement in October 2009, that, in fact, they would turn over to us 1,200 kilograms of low-enriched uranium in return for the fuel elements I am now advocating we provide for the 20-percent material.

But nevertheless, that failed. It failed in part because I believe there was serious internal disagreement. The Supreme Leader did not really want President Ahmadinejad to claim some credit for this. He didn't trust that. He was concerned.

So we have had problems on both sides in being able, if I could put it that way, to manage the negotiating process.

And I, without digressing too much, see, in fact, arrangements here on the Hill which I deeply am opposed to to try to impose restrictions on the President with respect to what he can negotiate, rather than to follow the normal rule in which you are hopefully fully consulted but then have the opportunity to up-or-down approve an agreement that the executive branch brings to you as a result of our constitutional and traditional processes in that regard.

Senator SHAHEEN. Thank you.

I will tell you what my pediatrician said about negotiating with my 2-year-old, and that was they are totally self-absorbed.

[Laughter.]

Ambassador PICKERING. I couldn't know of a wiser statement.

Senator SHAHEEN. Karim, you talked about the possible belief on the Iranian part that an Israeli strike could be a net positive for the regime. Do you think the Israelis have taken that into their considerations, and how do they react to that?

Mr. SADJADPOUR. That is a great question. Just quickly on the issue of negotiations. I always say that in America, our negotiating culture is getting to "yes." In Iran, the negotiating culture is staying on "maybe."

But with regards to an Israeli strike and whether the Israelis have taken that into consideration, my sense is that they don't take that argument very seriously for two reasons. I think there is two schools of thought.

One school of thought, and I think this is probably reflective of Prime Minister Netanyahu, says that a strike on Iran, a military strike on their nuclear facilities could actually expedite the demise of the Iranian regime. And he has said this before in interviews, and you may argue that he has motivated biases to believe that.

The second school of thought among those in Israel who would support military action is to say that that is OK, that we will set them back 3, 4 years, and it may entrench the regime. It may not. But this is an existential threat to us, and so we can't afford to take this lightly. And if need be, we will do it again 3 to 4 years later. It is like mowing the lawn is sometimes an analogy that they use.

So my sense is that what it would do to Iran's internal politics hasn't been a first-tier consideration for them.

Senator SHAHEEN. Thank you. My time is up.

The CHAIRMAN. Thank you very much.

Senator Corker.

Senator CORKER. Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

Great hearing, and very much appreciated. And outstanding witnesses. Thank you very much.

And to Mr. Pickering, Ambassador Pickering, the isotope offer, if you will, that you are talking about, that is an old offer. Is there any reason to believe that today that still has a degree of life?

Ambassador PICKERING. Senator, that is an offer that I think is only a few months old, and that may be in terms of the time scale of Iran an old offer. But I think that it has been on the table not so long that it would be dead.

Now there are some considerations here that we need to keep in mind. The Iranians have produced one fuel element at 20 percent, which they are now testing in the reactor. My friends who are much more expert than I in this say that no one, even the Iranians, would be sufficiently confident enough without a long test of that one fuel element to feel they have now achieved independence with respect to the operation of that reactor. So I think the dependency piece is still there.

There are also, obviously, other important things we can do. They had talked about building three or four more such reactors to make medical isotopes. My own view is that there is probably technology that would be available that could make the one reactor they have much more efficient at producing medical isotopes.

So there are things here that I think we can turn into win/win, even if, in fact, the basic proposal might be complexified, if I could put it that way, by the Iranian negotiating reaction. And we need to think down the road about that.

Nevertheless, it is still their proposal. It is giving them what they have asked for, and I believe in that sense, it is very much in the U.S. interests. I believe it is in Israel's interest not to have any more 20-percent material, not to have any more material above 3.5 percent produced as a place to start. There are gains in both directions.

Senator CORKER. Thank you.

General Cartwright, I certainly want to thank you for all the time you spent with me during the Libyan issue, and I really appreciate it. I know you had a lot going on, and thank you for your service.

And speaking of that, what would the leadership of Iran take away from Libya? I know that has been alluded to, but we had diplomatic relations. They did do away with their weapons of mass destruction, and we did, in fact, implement regime changes. So what did they learn from this?

General CARTWRIGHT. My sense, Senator, is combined with Libya, the Arab Spring activities in the region, there is a sense that they are emboldened more to need some sort of a guarantor of their sovereignty and that internal the dialogue is such to make that even more pronounced that see what has happened—see what happens if we go along with this path of denuclearizing, see what happens if we give too much of a voice to the populace.

I mean, it is an internal dialogue. That is why I was pushing on making sure that if we actually embrace trying to give the Iranian people a way to communicate, it is probably going to be more efficient than just Voice of America. In other words, having them be able to talk amongst themselves and with people external is probably a more powerful weapon than just broadcasting to them.

But they have looked at that lesson. I can't tell you what is in their mind, but we have heard reporting along the lines—see what happens if you go down this path?

Senator CORKER. And just for what it is worth, you know, to me, that was a problem with our involvement there and expressed it at the time, and mostly what the outcome ends up being. You talked about the difference between shield and sword, and obviously, the shield component, especially in light of what you just

said, is, you would think, of paramount importance, especially when you only have a handful of weapons at most.

What is it in their psychology that would move them along toward the franchise component where they would actually allow those weapons to be in terrorist hands? And this is way down the road, I understand. But why would that be in their self-interest in any way?

General CARTWRIGHT. This is again supposition, sir. Certainly trying to guess what the future is going to bring here. But the dialogue that you would fear and the thought process that you would fear is one that the acknowledgment that even if they have a dozen of these weapons, there is no way to win a nuclear exchange. But these weapons in the hands of a surrogate, even at the onesie or twosie level, become items that create blackmail scenarios all around the world.

And then what you are trying to do is undermine confidence. The thought process that one of these could emerge in a city someplace in the world is a very destabilizing activity and makes the weapon far more powerful than exploding it.

Senator CORKER. You mentioned the opportunity Iran may see this year because of all the leadership changes that are taking place around the world. I didn't exactly understand what that opportunity might be for them.

General CARTWRIGHT. It is a double-edged sword for them, actually. On one side, they could see leadership changes that would favor their position. On the other side, they could see leadership changes that potentially would change the position of Russia or China in the P5. They could see the lack of will potentially of nations to want to go to armed conflict in a year of—

Senator CORKER. During that period of time?

General CARTWRIGHT. Yes, sir.

Senator CORKER. But I still don't understand—I understand they don't know what the outcomes of these elections might be, and you don't know whether they would be good or bad for them. None of us know that here.

I don't understand what actions, though, that would cause them internally to possibly take.

General CARTWRIGHT. Well, a potential scenario is to declare—to declare either the dash or just to declare that they are going to test or have tested. We have no way of proving or disproving that action, and the declaration, in and of itself, is extremely destabilizing.

Senator CORKER. Is there, speaking of declaring and not declaring, do you sense—and our intelligence community, obviously, has come under much criticism because of the Iraq issue. Do you sense—and you know, I had a classified briefing yesterday at length. I didn't really learn anything that I haven't read multiple times in the Washington Post and the New York Times.

And is there a sense from your perspective that because of what happened with Iraq that the intelligence community is almost overconcerned about saying anything that might be provocative, and I mean, is there a hesitancy on their part to really lay out more provocative situations as it relates to Iran?

General CARTWRIGHT. I have not seen hesitancy on their part to have a dialogue about the “what if” side of it. But as they lay down,

they want to make sure whoever reads the documents has a clear view of what they actually know, not what the supposition side of it is.

In conversation, in briefings, they will often get into here is potential turns, potential misunderstandings of how we are interpreting the data. I think more what is happening here with our intelligence community is they are trying to be very precise about what they actually know and don't know and then have a dialogue after that and document that.

Senator CORKER. Just one last question, Mr. Chairman.

Mr. Sadjadpour, what is our policy as it relates to Iran? Is it regime change, or is it not? I mean, I think that would be an interesting thing for me to even know.

Mr. SADJADPOUR. I think our policy at the moment is to try to subject Iran to enough political and economic pressure to compel it to moderate its nuclear program, to make, as I said, meaningful and binding compromises on its nuclear program.

I think in the last year or so, many folks in the Obama administration have come to the realization that as long as Ayatollah Khamenei remains Supreme Leader, it is going to be very difficult to get Iran to make those meaningful and binding compromises. So, in some way, Khamenei's perception that U.S. policy is regime change, not behavior change, is becoming a self-fulfilling prophecy.

The CHAIRMAN. Thank you very much.

Senator MENENDEZ.

Senator MENENDEZ. Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

Thank you all for your testimony.

Ambassador Pickering, let me ask you, we originally had some resistance to the sanctions that we approved in the Congress last December. And but for those sanctions and the fact that we have a great success moving in the direction of multilateralism as it relate to those sanctions, which are always more desirable, would we have any traction with the Iranians at the end of the day?

Ambassador PICKERING. Senator, if you have gained the impression that I was against the sanctions, that is not the impression I intended to leave. I intended to say that it is extremely important we use the sanctions in a creative way to move toward diplomacy, and I think that has been the general view of the three of us here.

Senator MENENDEZ. It still begs my question. I didn't suggest that was your view. I was asking, but for the sanctions, would we have any leverage going into a process to get the Iranians to engage in a discussion that would hopefully have this solved without a military process?

Ambassador PICKERING. Yes. I think that we have just had a discussion with one of your members about regime change, does that have an effect? Some may argue that pressures that look like regime change may have a positive effect in moving Iran toward a deal. Others may argue, as I think Mr. Sadjadpour, although he is best able to speak for himself, that this is having a negative reaction on the Supreme Leader's willingness to make a decision.

We have had lots of discussion of all options on the table. There is only one reason for me to believe that all options should be on the table because it has initially and very importantly a potentially positive effect on Iran's willingness to look at a negotiating option,

and we have discussed some of that in detail. So it isn't sanctions alone, but the panoply of efforts.

We need to be careful, however, in calculating that, that as we move with those efforts, we do not drive the Iranians in a direction that Mr. Sadjadpour signaled that we would not wish to see them go about trying to find a solution to this problem and, hopefully, a solution to this problem short of what I consider to be the highly risky, very low advantage military option.

Senator MENENDEZ. General Cartwright, you have said in the past, and correct me if I am mistaken, "if they," meaning the Iranians, "have the intent, all the weapons in the world are not going to change that." Not change their intent, but do all the weapons in the world change their ability to achieve nuclear weaponry?

General CARTWRIGHT. My general belief is that a limited strike would—and we have had that conversation here today—would, one, probably steel their resolve. In other words, make them more resolved to move forward. You never know for sure because of all of the other things that are going on.

But as the franchising of this enterprise, nuclear enterprise occurs, the effect of bombing and the ability of bombing to actually find all of the targets becomes problematic, No. 1. And No. 2, the intellectual capital now has been so diffused that should they continue to intend, the ability to rebuild is actually well within their power.

And so, it is not a question of trying to eliminate some sort of thought process by kinetic energy. That usually tends to take you in the opposite direction. What we want is for the Iranian people to come to the judgment on their own through a variety of meanings, sanctions, the threat of force potentially.

My worry is that, like in Iraq and Afghanistan, the bombing itself is not going to change their mind.

Senator MENENDEZ. You said in your testimony that Iran doesn't need to make a U.S.-style weapon. What is your estimate of how long it would take if Iran decides to break out and to have them enrich uranium to 90 percent and make a crude nuclear weapon?

General CARTWRIGHT. Yes. It would depend on whether they were getting any assistance in that area from somebody who has worked in this area and built a weapon themselves. But assuming that they haven't, well within a year they would be able to do something like that. That is after they have gotten the reprocessed material, not all the way to weapons grade in our construct.

Senator MENENDEZ. Mr. Sadjadpour, this conversation about the thought process of Ayatollah Khamenei, if he believes that regime change is our goal, then he is less likely, I would assume, to think that there is any process worthy of a negotiation.

If he thinks, as you described it as behavior change, that we simply do not believe that for the world and our own national security interests and certainly in the region that having nuclear weapons in a country that has so much oil and obviously doesn't need it for domestic power is our goal, does his thinking change? Is there some way to persuade that it is not regime change, but simply behavior?

Mr. SADJADPOUR. The challenge with Khamenei is that he responds to both incentives and overtures and disincentives and pressure in the same way. When President Obama tried to reach out,

and we can go into more detail about some of the things which President Obama did, which haven't really been publicized—for example, the private letters which President Obama sent to Ayatollah Khamenei, two private letters—Khamenei was very cynical. He said that this is an iron fist with a velvet glove on it.

And so, he in a way is paralyzed with mistrust, and again, I think that it is expedient for him to project this cynicism because he recognizes that an opening with the United States—I would argue that there are three symbolic pillars left of the Islamic Republic. It is enmity toward the United States, enmity toward Israel, and the veil, the hijab for women. And if he gets rid of one of those pillars, it could really shake the foundations of the system.

So, in theory, it makes a lot of sense to say, OK, Iran is pursuing a nuclear weapon because of a sense of insecurity vis-a-vis the United States. So let us simply eliminate that sense of insecurity in order to curtail their nuclear weapons ambitions.

But as I said in my testimony, the reality is that what Khamenei obsesses about is not U.S. hard power or U.S. military action, it is U.S. soft power and this idea of a soft or velvet revolution. And I don't think, realistically, we can reassure him that we are not pursuing that path because what it would take is for us to cease saying anything about Iranian human rights abuses, which isn't likely. It would require us to shut down Voice of America and Radio Farda. I even think it would take us, it would take us shutting down Hollywood before he thinks that—

Senator MENENDEZ. Well, that is not going to happen.

Mr. SADJADPOUR. That is not going to happen.

Senator MENENDEZ. Let me ask you one final question. Is anybody concerned about, OK, so Iran gets nuclear weapons. Is anybody concerned about what Turkey and Syria do in the region? How is it that they say to themselves, "I can live and secure my people without my own nuclear power?"

Ambassador PICKERING. I addressed that in my opening remarks, Senator, and I think it is very clear that, in effect, we have had this renewal of sudden interest on the part of a number of states in the region, United Arab Emirates for one, and others in "a civil nuclear program."

Many of us have felt for years that if Iran proliferates, there will be enormous pressure on Turkey, Saudi Arabia, Egypt, United Arab Emirates, and others to move in that direction. And indeed, there are some feelings they have already thought well enough about that to be able to perhaps make that kind of move.

And that kind of proliferation adds significantly to the instability that is at the essence of the nonproliferation argument. The more people who have these, the more chance you have for use by accident, miscalculation, or even design. The franchise process may be there, although I myself believe very strongly that everyone who gets a weapon's first instinct is to make sure nobody else gets it.

And their second instinct is to wonder what are they really going to use this thing for? And to some extent, I think that is an argument against putting weapons out to franchisees, who are not McDonald's employees but are likely in their own way, once they have one, unless you have some kind of remote control permissive action link to control use of that weapon, going to use it for their

own purposes. So franchising is not an absolutely certainly controlled process, and we need to be concerned about proliferation on its own to other nation states as well as the franchise problem.

And my sense is that proliferation in the region is going to be self-stimulating. If you just look at the history, India says it got a weapon because China had a weapon. Pakistan said it had to get a weapon because India had a weapon, and we see others going on.

So this chain is one that we have worked hard to try to break, and in a number of cases, we have been successful. It has not been a totally feckless proposition.

You look at South Africa. You could look at the potential for South Korea in the past, for Taiwan in the past, and so on. And I think we obviously need to keep it up. And so, strongly, strongly, my view is we must stop proliferation in Iran.

The CHAIRMAN. Senator Risch.

Senator RISCH. Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

Mr. Pickering, you made comment about the 2003 decision that was made, which I think everyone agrees to. I have reservations about the permanency of that decision or the depth of that decision. You seem to accept that decision as one that it really overrides what is going on today.

How do you square that with the fact that they are building so many centrifuges, they are increasing the number of centrifuges rapidly, and the degree to which they are enriching nuclear material? How does that square with the 2003 decision?

Ambassador PICKERING. I share your concerns. I believe that were you to get a briefing, you would not believe that there is such a rapid expansion of centrifuges, but any expansion concerns me.

My own—

Senator RISCH. By the way, I do get briefings. I am on the Intelligence Committee.

Ambassador PICKERING. OK.

Senator RISCH. Relatively regularly.

Ambassador PICKERING. I assumed you were. In any event, you might want to ask that question again with respect to the pace and speed.

The next question that I think we have to address is are the centrifuges solely devoted to a program which our Intelligence Committee, at least as of the last time I heard, believes is not a weapons program. I don't know the answer to that.

They claim they would like to have the material so that the reactor that they have and the reactors they might buy in the future, they can assure there will be fuel for that.

And I—

Senator RISCH. But the problem—the problem—

Ambassador PICKERING. Let me, if I may, please answer that?

Senator RISCH. Go ahead.

Ambassador PICKERING. And then I will get into the dialogue. The fatwa is more than just the isolated musings of an addled cleric. But you will have to get experts on Shiism to talk to you about it. I have looked into it. I believe it could be reversed. I believe it could be rapidly reversed were they attacked.

Finally, I would say we need to find a way, in my view, to get the various pieces of this program under control, regardless of what

we may say or believe about where they are going in the future, and that is, in my view, the purpose of negotiations.

And thank you for your patience, and I am ready for any other question you have got.

Senator RISCH. Well, I guess the only part I have difficulty with is the degree to which they are enriching. I mean, it is hard, when you look at the percentage and the degree to which they are enriching, it really hard to say, well, you know, this could be for civilian or it could be for medical.

There are some real issues there. Would you agree with me on that, Mr. Pickering?

Ambassador PICKERING. I do, and I have a fundamental question about why they would need enrichment at all if they haven't bought the reactors and they have to go to Russia for the reactors. And Russia seemingly will not provide the reactors without the fuel and the spent fuel.

These all worry me, and they are all very much part of my continuing concern about what we are engaged in here. My hope is that we can start a process that can get at these, but I mean, I believe that it is incumbent upon us to do everything we can to make that process work.

But I can't tell you any more than anybody else at this table can tell you there is any guarantee that it will work.

Senator RISCH. You made a comment, I think it was parenthetically, but you talked about, I think I picked up your comment about Iran's preoccupation with drugs. And you were using it as compared to our preoccupation with their nuclear program, something like that.

It is something we don't talk about much. Could you give us, briefly give us your thoughts on that?

Ambassador PICKERING. Yes, sir. I merely said it was a subject in which Iran would like, I believe, to talk to us about seeing, in fact, whether more active action could be taken, and I think that they specifically refer to Afghanistan. They have made comments, and I don't think there are any reasons to doubt these, there may be that they have lost over 3,000 people in the long war against drugs moving across their border from Afghanistan.

And we have had a considerable problem in Afghanistan, as you know. Our problem has been—

Senator RISCH. What—

Ambassador PICKERING [continuing]. The lack of an ability to provide a serious and immediate or at least fast-acting alternative to the cultivation of drugs that doesn't at the same time produce a significant recruiting tool for the Taliban. And as we are now postured, we are working on long-term solutions. While at the same time, drugs continue to produce significant amount of income, which I cannot believe stays away from funding Taliban interests in Afghanistan.

So it is a part of the problem. And to some extent, they see a common interest in both our parts, but I have been in Russia and I have talked to Iranians, and they both say why aren't you, now that you are, you know, in a big position in Afghanistan, doing more to stop the drug cultivation which, in some ways, feeds the problem monetarily.

And our answer has to be, well, we are going to have to do everything we can. But we cannot feed the problem in terms of producing more new fighters in the hands of the Taliban if we can possibly avoid that. And this has been a very tough decision, one that I am troubled by, but I wish I could tell you I knew a fast-acting and easy solution to deal with it.

Senator RISCH. That same question has been asked by a number of us United States Senators, and it is the elephant in the room nobody wants to talk about.

General Cartwright, just briefly, you talked about the steps that Iran would have to go through to produce, to get to the point of a nuclear weapon. And a number of those were based upon your analysis, or at least an analysis of their own development.

Assuming you have access to intelligence information, are you concerned with the commerce between North Korea and Iran, which could short-circuit some of those steps? Because obviously North Korea has accomplished those steps and has already gone through this. And they both, in many respects, have similar motivations regarding the United States. Does that concern you?

General CARTWRIGHT. It does. It does. It concerns me from the standpoint of weaponization reprocessing and then weaponization. Also concerns me from the standpoint of delivery. The components that could be manufactured or at least developed in Korea for their weapons systems, missiles, could easily migrate. And you just have to worry about that because it would fundamentally change the timelines to fielding these types of capabilities.

Senator RISCH. And of course, this is not only measured by us, but also by the Israelis?

General CARTWRIGHT. Right.

Senator RISCH. Thank you. My time is up.

Thank you very much, Mr. Chairman.

The CHAIRMAN. Thanks very much, Senator. I appreciate it.

Do any other Senators have additional questions they wanted to ask?

Senator Shaheen.

Senator SHAHEEN. Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

You may have addressed this in your opening remarks, but there has been a lot of—in the media, there has been a lot of discussion about redlines and whether there should be redlines for—that should govern our negotiations with Iran. I think Secretary Panetta said that a redline would be an Iranian effort to actually construct a nuclear weapon.

So I have two questions really. One is, is there general agreement on what that Iranian effort to actually construct a nuclear weapon would look like? And second, what do each of you believe with respect to redlines around any future U.S. action or negotiations?

Ambassador PICKERING. I might go ahead, and I would certainly defer to General Cartwright and all of the military pieces. My sense is that the best bright redline I could come up with at the moment is a decision to make a nuclear weapon. We may or may not know about it immediately.

If that decision is to use what has already been produced in the way of, say, low-enriched uranium as the basis for upgrading, then

we will know about it because all of that material and the operational system that supports it is under IAEA control—seals and visits and cameras.

If the decision is to develop a completely black program from zero, with no relationship to the existing program except for perhaps the passage of information, and even that would open it up to some transparency, then I think it would take a quite long time to produce. If there is intercommunication, if I could put it, between the black program and the existing program, then there are obviously chances of detection, but not perfect.

But my feeling is that is a much better redline than the redline of nuclear capability, which, as we know, floats around and is something the Israelis are concerned about because they are feeling that they have perhaps limited military capability with respect to some underground and other installations.

My feeling is that nuclear capability already exists. If you look around the world, most people who engage in one way at all with things like enrichment and reprocessing have “nuclear capability.” The nuclear capability is dual purpose, as we all know. There are reasons why we call it sensitive technology and why we have struggled for years to try, despite the freedom to use it in the Non-proliferation Treaty, to bring it under some more control.

And indeed, my own view is that it would be well worthwhile for us to look at even having the declared nuclear states put their sensitive facilities under much more strict international control and perhaps multinational management as a way to get at this fundamental problem. But it is a very fuzzy area.

Does reading a book that gives you some of the critical information about this, which is in public, entitle you to be in the area of nuclear capability and, therefore, subject to bombing by somebody who doesn't trust you or doesn't like your program? So we see all of that. And I don't know that I have a good bright redline to give you under nuclear capability.

You could begin to think about, at least on one side, the use of research to develop tools that have nothing to do with civil nuclear power but have to do with weapons development. And those have been the IAEA concerns about possible military developments in Iran, including such things as ignition systems for nuclear weapons and the explosive systems that are used, in effect, to create a fission reaction in nuclear weapons, which are quite different.

And we have seen signs, as the IAEA has, of those before 2003 in Iran, and they are worrying. And it is one of the things that the international community, including the United States, would like to have the Iranians clear up as we work our way through a negotiating process that should try to end this program.

Would they be redlines? Possibly. But again, it would take a lot of scientific work and some real care, in effect, to understand what those were and how and in what way they could be dealt with.

My own view is if that is the case, the first option would be to deal with them the way we have been dealing with them in Iran and use our considerable pressure and our growing pressure, in a sense, to try to get that set of situations explained, stopped if it continues, we don't believe it is, and put behind us.

Senator SHAHEEN. So, based on that, I assume the answer is that there isn't a commonly accepted definition for nuclear capability that we could all agree to?

General CARTWRIGHT. Could I just add just briefly?

Senator SHAHEEN. Yes, please.

General CARTWRIGHT. I mean, there are kind of three issues here. If the adversary doesn't know what your redlines are, they don't know when they cross them. So you have to put them forward.

If you put them forward and then you negotiate through them, beyond them, you lose credibility. And the third issue, which I think we are probably starting to see play out with the Korean missile launch here that is projected, is other parties may see this differently than we do. And so, in the case of Korea right now, the Japanese and their administration are taking a look at alternatives that we may not be considering.

And so, this is a very difficult area, and making those lines too bright red oftentimes undermines our credibility.

Senator SHAHEEN. And so, does that argue for not doing that? For not trying to set—

General CARTWRIGHT. My sense is you have to have redlines. You have to put them out, but you have to also understand that you are entering into a negotiation and that other parties may see those redlines differently, and it makes it very difficult to move forward.

Senator SHAHEEN. Mr. Sadjadpour, do you share that?

Mr. SADJADPOUR. I do share that, and I wanted to note that of the three examples General Cartwright gave, the first two exist in the context with Iran, meaning we don't have clear communication with them to communicate redlines to them, and that is why I do advocate dialogue. I think, if nothing else, it is very important to be able to communicate those redlines to them directly.

And over the last 6, 7 years, Iran has continuously transgressed what were perhaps not very bright redlines, but things that the Israelis had communicated in the public realm would be redlines. My concern is their facility in Fordo outside of Qom, and it is my sense—this is speculation. But it is my sense that if they go beyond 20-percent enrichment in Fordo, that could be transgressing a redline, which could trigger some type of military conflagration.

Senator SHAHEEN. So, General Cartwright, if the Israelis were to bomb Iran, I assume that would result in some corresponding action on the part of the United States.

And can you—do we have any good predictions for what would result in the Middle East as the result of that kind of action?

The CHAIRMAN. Before you answer that, if I could just say I have to go to a meeting at noon. So I apologize.

Senator Lugar, would you close it out, if you could, afterward and—

Senator SHAHEEN. Yes, that is my last question.

The CHAIRMAN [continuing]. I thank all of the witnesses for being here today. It has been a very, very helpful and important hearing. Thank you.

I am sorry, Senator, to interrupt you.

General CARTWRIGHT. You know, you are trying to forecast, and my crystal ball is probably no better than anybody else's here. But the concern would likely be that there would be an initial exchange of ballistic missiles, short and medium range, which I believe the Israelis have already put into their calculus and for which the region is now starting to develop a very robust capability against.

It doesn't mean it is a shield. It just means the likelihood is diminished. Then the likelihood of asymmetric actions, as people have called it, but terrorist type acts that are focused at undermining the confidence of each of the nations' populace and government, and they could take the form of critical infrastructure. They could take the form of going against civilian population concentrations.

All of those are possible. So that is where things like passive defenses, stand-off and what not, are important to try to deter what is generally accepted as nondeterrable type activities, but remove from the adversary the goal they seek.

The other is that, and we have talked briefly about, is that an attack like that could very easily steel the resolve of the Iranian people that, "See, this is what we have said." And so, I think all of those are on the very negative side of this activity of considering. And again, I would never remove this as an option from a President, but I think our judgment here at the table is that it is not a good option, and certainly it should be left for the very last.

Senator SHAHEEN. Thank you.

Thank you, Senator Lugar.

Senator LUGAR [presiding]. Thank you very much.

I have just one final question. I mentioned in my opening remarks that sometimes the thought is expressed that the Iranian program could trigger other countries in the Middle East to feel that in terms of their own defense or prestige or for a variety of other reasons, including maybe the continuity of their own regimes, they ought to develop nuclear weapons programs.

Is that a realistic assumption, or is it simply a debating tool? Or do you have any judgment as to technically or financially or foreign policywise whether it is likely—and I don't want to name countries for fear of being accused of at least impugning their situations. There are some candidates at least often mentioned. But as a general principle, is the proliferation idea a valid one?

Ambassador PICKERING. Perhaps I could start? I know the others will want to comment as well.

My sense is that it is more than just a kind of arguing point. It is more than chimerical. It is, in fact, serious enough for us, in my view, even in advance of any such steps, to be taking actions, and I have welcomed the agreement that we have signed, the 123 agreement with the UAE, which is buying reactors from Korea. Which agreement, in fact, with the UAE's full cooperation, is keeping them away from the sensitive facilities and taking actions that make sense.

Others may or may not be prepared to come along. In the past, we have had a history with Turkey on this issue. My feeling is we have had a history with Egypt on this issue, and we need to find ways to reinforce the reasons that I think you, with great justifica-

tion, have put forward that might move them in this direction, including questions of defense and stability.

I think we should give very careful consideration to what additional assurances we should give those states that do not proliferate with respect to the threats and dangers that might be against them beyond what we already have under the Nonproliferation Treaty.

Whether that is as extensive as Article 5 of NATO or not, I don't know. But it would seem to me that it would be in our interest to do that whether Iran proliferates or not perhaps in terms of building our relationships and stability in the area. Whether other nuclear powers ought to also join us in this as a way of providing a kind of more secure roadblock against disintegration in the area, I would not foreclose other states in the region.

I would have to be cautious, and we would have to think through very carefully how this related to Israel, which, as we all know, has not declared and at the same time is widely assumed to be in that category. But up until now, and certainly my experience in Israel, where I lived there for a period of time representing the country, is that they are not throwing around whatever it is they think—people think they may have, if I could phrase it that way, in a threatening way.

And my sense is that we need to look at all of those questions and options and examine them. I hope they are being looked at because they can help us provide for more stability and more security in a region which, at the moment, is being a little more than torn apart by instability, insecurity. Not just in the country we are talking about, but elsewhere.

Senator LUGAR. General Cartwright.

General CARTWRIGHT. I think, Senator, the thing that worries me probably the most here is—and I am trying to choose the words carefully. It is the proliferation issue of the technology, not necessarily the pure weaponization or the ownership of weaponization. It is the fact that the fuel cycle is now very well understood around the world. That the nodes on the fuel cycle where weaponization can occur are now known how to make them relatively obscure to visibility and inspection.

And that that knowledge, that intellectual capital is now moving and potentially moving faster as a result of this activity and is likely—you can look at the pattern of Iran versus North Korea—is likely to emerge in other places. They may emerge in allies. It may emerge in adversaries.

But that knowledge is not going to be uninvented. So we are—if you look farther down the road, which I know you do, this problem is not going away. In the short term, we are worried about Iran. And the longer term problem for us as a planet is the proliferation of this activity.

Mr. SADJADPOUR. Senator Lugar, I share very much Ambassador Pickering's comments, and I would say that if there is one country in the world which perhaps is more concerned about a nuclear-armed Iran than Israel is it is Saudi Arabia. Saudi Arabia views the Middle East very much through sectarian lenses. They see the Iranian regime as being irrational Shiites which can't be deterred.

And if they were to decide, if the Saudis were to decide to build their own nuclear program, it would take them probably over a decade. The option, which many people talk about, is Saudi Arabia somehow acquiring a nuclear device from Pakistan. I am not sure if that is a strong possibility. But I would just go back to Ambassador Pickering's proscriptions that this is something that we should be talking about and planning for right now.

Senator LUGAR. Well, I thank you each for those responses because this is, I suspect, another avenue of diplomacy that is related to Iran, which we are discussing today, but also clearly pertains to longer term objectives of security for our country, as well as for our friends in the Middle East.

Do you have any further questions, Senator Shaheen?

Well, we just thank you all very, very much. This has been a tremendous hearing, tremendously informative for us and we hope for citizens of the country who have been listening to you and to the responses to our questions.

And the hearing is now adjourned.

[Whereupon, at 11:57 a.m., the hearing was adjourned.]

