Your Veteran Neighbors: They Save Millions of Lives In the Wars America Never Has to Fight.

Introduction

My deep thanks to the Hamilton Institute and Robert Paquette and my dear friend Juliana Pilon for the honor of speaking to you on Veterans Day, November 11. Indeed, today we honor our veterans… of World War I and World War II. Of Korea and Vietnam. Of Iraq and Afghanistan. However, today, many Americans see our military services and defense industry as too interested in endless wars & and seeking to even profit by such wars. Some even believe we are being led into war by a sinister Israeli and American Jewish cabal. So, we hear the demand to "stop endless wars," including the current conflict with Iran, though an ill-defined "defund the military" campaign. Now, most Americans genuinely do honor our veterans and almost universally thank our soldiers "for their service." Troublesome however is like the war in Iraq, some who claim to support our veterans do not support the fights they are now waging. That is today very true of the conflict with Iran.

The US has three objectives with respect to Iran: allow zero nuclear weapons fuel; keep free the Hormuz Strait; and end their terror proxies. But here is the rub: to do that the US would have to finish the war and that requires ending the regime in Tehran. Without that, which will take time for an internal resistance to succeed, the US is forced to continue very-low level conflict to take out—when needed-- the regime's nuclear weapons technology, to then both deter the regime and ***prevent wars we never have to fight***. Let me again make this point: our veterans prevent and deter wars we never have to fight.

Unfortunately, the world has nation's both deterrable as well as non-deterrable. An Iran with nuclear weapons is not deterrable. That is why we have had to continually take out their nuclear weapons technology to prevent Iran getting a nuclear weapon. And second, the US has had to simultaneously ***degrade and deter*** the Iranian conventional and terror capabilities, so they do not create a sanctuary from which to develop the nuclear weapons.

However, the strike, talk, strike, talk of the past 8 months led to the mid-term defeat because the promised job was not done. Iran cleverly played diplomatic

rope-a-dope and strung out our recent military campaign for 8 months. While doing everything to raise gas prices. Something Iran has been doing for 47 years. The American voters made a point. The choice facing America is clear. Do not let Iran get nuclear weapons. But get the job done.

Now this conflict with Iran is not one of our choice. The Iranian regime attacked the US starting in 1979, and not the other way around. The critics are bonkers if they think our military action against Iran is a "war of choice." In addition, forgotten is that Judge George B. Daniels, appointed in 2000 by President Clinton, and chief Justice of the Federal Southern District Court of New York confirmed in a 2018 decision that Iran was the key state sponsor behind 9-11 and owes the survivors of 9-11 at least $6 billion. Making things even more challenging is that Iran is now allied with and gets financial and technology assistance from three nuclear armed enemies of the United States--Russia, China and North Korea. And has repeatedly come close to getting its own nuclear capability. Furthermore, there is no secret "Jewish" conspiracy to enrich the defense industry and keep the US at war. Finally, the JCPOA did not do the job, not close. The key deal requirement

upon which everything else rested was the requirement Iran disclose all its military related nuclear work, which it refused to do. The IAEA decided to "fudge" that requirement. The Senate also never ratified the deal as a treaty. So, we proceeded forward and pretended there was a deal. And as General Tom Hayden explained the JCPOA gave Iran an industrial strength nuclear weapons program and a pathway to a nuclear bomb.

Now while Iran is a deadly threat, there is more. China is dedicated to what the CCP itself—publicly-- characterizes as "unrestricted warfare" against the West and particularly the United States. And Russia is waging much the same against Ukraine and Eastern Europe, particularly Poland and the Baltics. Two of these three are nuclear armed. If the US fails to take down the Iran regime, they too will be nuclear armed.

Thus, critical to our nation's security is that many of the 2.5 million currently serving soldiers and 19 million veterans who have secured, maintained and modernized our nuclear deterrent for over 80 years, must continue to do so, particularly because the external nuclear threat is now more serious than at any

other time in our history. Never before has the US faced two nuclear armed peer enemies as we are projected to face within the coming decade. And a third in Noth Korea. And possibly a fourth in Iran.

Veterans, the Brothers Mayhem and Nuclear Deterrence

Now with this compelling good news let me walk you through where we have been, where we are today and where we should be heading when it comes to nuclear deterrence. And why Iran is a very difficult endeavor.

I have devoted the past near half century to sustaining nuclear deterrence. The story I have to tell is how a host of military officers, both retired veterans and then serving military officers, played an extraordinary successful role in the endeavor we often refer to as the "Cold War." I've worked with hundreds of senior military officials in keeping America's military strong, ending the Cold War, defeating the USSR, freeing Eastern Europe, confronting state sponsored terrorism and working to defeat the cooperative cabal of what I call the crazy brothers mayhem--Iran, China, North Korea and Russia.

Let me start with a novel idea. These four are not normal nations. Since 1951 they have conducted cross border invasions, wars of national liberation, armed interventions and terrorist attacks on at least 42 nations: The Republic of Vietnam, the Republic of Korea, Cambodia, Laos, Grenada, El Salvador, Nicaragua, Guinea Bissau, Guinea, Mozambique, Guatemala, Columbia, Honduras, Peru, Venezuela, Chile, Paraguay, Ethiopia, Morocco, Burma, Jordan, Lebanon, Iraq, Yemen, Angola, Kenya, Southwest Africa, Egypt, Burma, Somalia, Georgia, Ukraine, Afghanistan, Czechoslovakia, Hungary, South Africa, Israel, West Germany, Italy, the Netherlands, Great Britain, and the United States. Forty-two nations or one out of every five nations on earth. According to one recent scholarly study, these wars included 200,000 terrorist, cross border and armed attacks and the death of some 14 million people, or equivalent to another Holocaust+. And just since 911, according to Professor Gad Saad, there have been 48,410 Islamic terror attacks perpetuated by Iran and its terror proxies.

The Brothers Mayhem

So, if you are angry about “endless wars,” well I just listed the perpetrators. Not the USA, not Israel, not the Jews and not the US military. Just these four nations---China since 1949, Russia largely since the end of World War II, North Korea since 1951, and Iran since 1979—and their multiple terror proxies, Hezbollah, Al Shabab, ISIS, Al Qaeda, Hamas, Islamic Jihad, the Weatherman, Black September, Baader-Meinhof (Red Brigades), the PLO, Palestinian Central Command, the Houthis…. have been at war with the world, especially the “West” in literally over 200,000 campaigns. But despite multiple cross border invasions, no world-wide conflict has ensued because beneath the US umbrella of military strength, deterrence still works. In Korea, Berlin, Cuba, the Sinai, Georgia, Ukraine, and during Able Archer, cross border invasions did not erupt into world war. And while dozens of such conflicts were ended by the US and its allies, no nuclear arms were used, and only seven involved the use of American soldiers. Think that even with a cumulative 279 years or 102 thousand days of warfare, US soldiers and veterans prevented—deterred-- these wars from getting out of hand. No nuclear

weapon was ever ordered to be fired. In short, the US nuclear umbrella deterrent was used every day to make sure that threshold was never broken.

Peace Is Our Profession

For 81 years, American veterans from the US Army, Air Force and Navy have sustained and maintained the US nuclear deterrent. Peacefully for 81 years or almost a century. Above the door to the office of the Commander of the US Strategic Command—the nuclear command-- is the motto "Peace Is Our Profession." In 1961 President Kennedy was threatened by Khrushchev with an attack on US forces in Berlin. President Kennedy told the Soviet General Secretary that such an attack would result in nuclear warfare. Khrushchev took the deterrent threat seriously, and decided not to attack, but in August that same month, to save face, built the Berlin Wall. In 1962, a little more than a year later, even though the US had superior deployed or "in the field" nuclear forces (6000 vs 600 strategic nuclear warheads), Khrushchev still chose to deploy medium range missiles in Cuba and try and seek to markedly and suddenly change the strategic balance. But he got out foxed. On that very day the U-2 spy planes had relayed to the President

the bad news from Cuba, the US deployed the first Minuteman ICBM missile at the USAF base in Malstrom, Montana—all in a short 5 years from its inception. A unique one of a kind deployment guided by USAF General Bernard Schriever and USAF Colonel Ed Hall gave President Kennedy the tools he needed to dissuade Khrushchev from launching nuclear weapons at America, and to also have enough military strength to secretly trade our Jupiter missiles in Turkey and Italy for the Soviets removing their missiles from Cuba. Castro urged Moscow to launch; when informed that the US would incinerate Cuba and Moscow in response, Castro told Kruhchev "But socialism wins as we will have made the imperialists use nuclear weapons against us."

Thankfully, an off ramp to avoid nuclear war was available to Khrushchev because the US was building both for the first time ever a new, solid-fueled ICBM force and a nuclear armed Polaris missile submarine at sea that could replace the deterrent capability of the Jupiter missiles in Europe. And remember the Polaris and Minuteman were triggered by the October 1957 Soviet launch of Sputnik and were started by Eisenhower without any idea whether they would be successful!

Kennedy himself would subsequently travel to the Larence Livermore National Laboratory to personally thank the scientists responsible for the success of both programs.

Now Kennedy long argued there could not be a deterrent strategy that gave nuclear armed enemies two bad choices: launch nuclear Armageddon or surrender. Thus, the media fixation on Mutual Assured Destruction or “MAD” mis-portrays US deterrent policy. The “flexible response” strategy was adopted over time starting during the Eisenhower era and was critical to help the US avoid world war. And with the Minuteman initial deployment, Kennedy could trade away US missiles in Europe to give Khrushchev a way to stand-down without being humiliated—but only because he had Minuteman in his back pocket.

While the Cuban missile crisis ended peacefully, the possibility of nuclear armed powers extending nuclear weapons to their allies still weighed on the Cuban missile crises participants. In 1967, the US proposed the Nuclear Non Proliferation Treaty, which opened for signature in 1968. It was negotiated by World War I veteran Ambassador Thompson. Then there were five nuclear powers. There are

now nine but not the twenty or more feared by President Kennedy in his June 1963 speech at American University.

Reagan: Closing The Window of Vulnerability and Peace Through Strength

Right after the 1968 Presidential election, Soviet General Secretary Brezhnev called President-elect Nixon and demanded that the US agree to ban all missile defenses. Now Secretary McNamara had proposed in 1967 the US build a limited or "thin" missile defense to deal with a nascent Chinese offensive nuclear force. Brezhnev insisted the proposed shield was nothing but a ruse to erect a defense against the Soviet offensive arsenals. Now National Security Adviser Kissinger (an Army Corporal in WWII) negotiated the 1972 ABM treaty ban on missile defense but also the SALT executive agreement on nuclear weapons. But SALT I allowed the Soviets to expand its nuclear deterrent from 2000 to 10,000 strategic long range warheads and the 1979 SALT II deal would have allowed a further expansion to 24,000 strategic nuclear warheads, a collective buildup that so worried analysts that it became characterized as a "window of vulnerability". The Soviets could build—even under "arms control"---500-600 huge ICBMs each able to carry 10-14

warheads. This projected danger helped create the Committee on the Present Danger (1976) which helped propel Ronald Reagan to the White House.

I was asked by the Reagan administration to help shepherd their nuclear deterrent force proposals through Congress because of my strong knowledge of the Democratics in Congresss. Democrats held a 243-192 advantage in 1981, but growing to 269-166 by 1983. That meant to secure a favorable vote in the House, the administration had to secure between 26-52 Democratic votes, primarily "blue dog democrats." But it took more than votes in Congress to win the Cold War. Reagan's "peace through strength" formula could not have been successful without the help of a pantheon of senior military officers and veterans who embraced the Reagan administration and helped end the Soviet empire. Let us meet one such patriot. Gen John Vessey was commander of US Forces-Korea and Vice Chief of Staff of the US Army. He has refused to support the Carter administration proposal to withdraw US forces from the ROK, and in fact worked successfully to change the administration's position. Even though offered promotion to Army Chief of Staff. Reagan heard the story of Gen Vessey refusing the offer and told people to

"go get him as I want a General who can tell me I'm wrong." General Vessey was subsequently appointed by the President to be Chairman of the Joint Chiefs of Staff in 1982, the last WWII veteran to hold that job. His extraordinary humility and great knowledge of miliary matters served the country well as he markedly helped the Reagan administration overcome the push for such Soviet tricks as the nuclear freeze. He summed up the US nuclear deterrent position well:

"*Our strategy is one of preventing war by making it self-evident to our enemies that they're going to get their clocks cleaned if they start one." Chairman: JCS, General John Vessey*

Under a policy of peace strength, including a robust economic war against Moscow's exchequer we brought the Soviet Union down in less than a decade and freed up nations around the world, especially in eastern Europe to pursue freedom and liberty as they saw it.

The Peace Through Strength Trifecta

But it was sometimes a close call. For example, after a very bad mid-term election outcome, by a 245-176 vote on Dec 1982, the House turned down a "closely

spaced basing" mode for the Peacekeeper missile, cutting out the center piece of the nation's nuclear deterrent. It looked like the US was stuck. The drive-by media cheered, claiming the President's "peace through strength" strategy was broken. How then to move forward? Well, luckily a group of pro-defense Democrats and Republicans including Senators Nunn, Tower and Gore, and Representatives Aspin, Dicks and Dickinson, got together and urged the President to create a "Commission" under the chairmanship of retired USAF Brig Gen Brent Scowcroft. The report would fully study the President's strategy and then report to the administration and Congress a summary of their findings, laying out the President's strategic vision, and whether it fit into the current strategic environment and balance. Now Scowcroft had been national security adviser to President Ford and was widely respected by "moderate" elements in both parties. During the Commission study period, the Reagan administration took two additional measures that markedly changed the debate---for the better-- over the current strategic environment. On March 8, 1983, the President addressed the National Association of Evangelicals and declared the USSR was an "evil empire."

Ambassador to the UN (and lifelong Democrat!) Jeane Kirkpatrik and speech writer Tony Dolan both heavily influenced the speech, which framed the struggle between the US and the USSR in stark moral terms. Reagan warned that declaring a "nuclear freeze" and treating both the US and the USSR on equal terms was a danger, as he aimed his remarks straight at the American Catholic Bishops who were calling for just such a freeze at the time, even though the idea was originally pushed by the USSR itself. [A freeze the Pope did NOT support.] The reaction was predictable with the New York Times joining the Kremlin in condemning the speech as "provocative" and potentially upsetting "arms control."

However, Reagan wasn't finished. The Chief of Naval Operations, Admiral Watkins, was quietly brought into the Reagan campaign for missile defense, then currently banned by the ABM Treaty. The President had long supported missile defense and wanted to shoot down incoming missiles rather than just avenge an attack. Watkins secretly went to all other chiefs of the services and got their buy-in to support Reagan's secret initiative. Now days before the President was going to give his speech, scheduled for March 30th, Secretary of State Schultz called

Colonel Bud McFarlane, who was National Security Adviser to the President and well aware of what the President was planning. Schultz was in a royal panic, terribly worried the White House was going to go for missile defense. McFarlane suggested they together go see the "boss." When Schultz arrived, they both rushed over to the Oval Office. Schultz immediately warned the President, declaring "Some damn fool sir is trying to sell you missile defense!" Not missing a beat, the President smiled and said to his Secretary of State, "Well, George, that's true and that damn fool is me." Needless to say, Schultz thought he had been set up, which he had, but the President shortly gave his "SDI" address to the nation and called for a major US effort to build missile defenses to intercept nuclear warheads. The reaction was predictable. Senator Edward Kennedy and the Kremlin both condemned the proposal as a "Star Wars" first strike and "reckless red-scare" scheme.

A week later, the last of the peace through strength "trifecta" dropped. On April 8th, the Scowcroft Commission report was completed and reported its approval of building the MX missile and the entire nuclear deterrent force being proposed by

the President. But the report had a twist that flummoxed the nuclear freeze folks. R. James Woolsey, an Army officer but also previously Under Secretary of the Navy and later Director of Central Intelligence, was a member of the Commission but also drafted the final report. He took to heart the recommendation of Wyoming Senator Malcolm Wallop that you can't make an elephant (Peacekeeper) a rabbit (small, fast and mobile) nor could you make a rabbit (a small single warhead mobile missile or SICBM or Midgetman) an elephant (a huge, heavy 10 warhead missile such as the Peacekeeper). Thus, you needed both a rabbit (SICBM) and an elephant (Peacekeeper), and thus with a clever sleight of hand Woolsey closed the window of vulnerability in two steps, not one. The Commission also endorsed the simultaneous Reagan START arms control proposals of major reductions in Soviet nuclear weapons and the eventual elimination of heavy, large, multi-warhead land based missiles, envisioned down the road to be achieved in future arms control deals such as START II. The Commission also endorsed the companion idea of missile defense, as a means of making any attack on the United States much more difficult to achieve, thus helping the nation's deterrent strategy. Taken together the

Commission report passed muster and led to the defense budget being approved by wide Congressional margins, (the Senate vote was 85-13, the House vote 251-148), saving the President's nuclear deterrent strategy and budget. Here the reaction was mixed. The Washington Post favorably praised the report, as their editor Steve Rosenfeld understood deterrence, while the New York Times welcomed the lesser emphasis on survivable basing for the MX, while Representative Barney Frank said approving the missile was a "three stooges" decision.

But the fight wasn't yet done. A year later, the 60 or so House Democrats opposed to all things nuclear demanded that they would hold up the defense spending bill unless they could fence the entirety of MX or then Peacekeeper funding until after the 1984 election. Rep Pat Schroeder (D-CO) fenced all strategic moderation funding but with a novel twist. To approve the money after the election, the House and Senate would both have to approve in each of 20 consecutive votes all the proposed funding, to be held over a 90 day campaign with all the votes to be tallied between March 1 and May 30, 1985. This required supportive votes in the subcommittee, full committee, floor, and conference and then back to the floor for

final passage, for both the authorization and appropriations process. The closest vote was in the House Appropriations Committee, whereby a 27-26 vote the Committee approved the funding. Final vote was the Senate adopting the conference report 55-45. By 1986, the first 50 Peacekeeper missiles went into silos in Wyoming, Midgetman was developed, deployment of the new Ohio class submarine with the new D-5 missile was secured by 1990, with continued funding for the B2, B1 and B52, and with funding for the European fielding of the INF Pershing and Ground Launched Cruise Missiles approved as well. Subsequently the banning of all INF missiles was approved in a 1987 treaty with the USSR, and subsequently thousands of nuclear warheads were eliminated under START I (1991) and START II (1993), with huge reductions in conventional arms under the 1991 Conventional Forces Europe (CFE) treaty, which collectively were the single greatest reduction in armaments in history. Thank you, President Reagan!!

Holiday From History

However, after 1991 and the end of the USSR, the United States and its allies switched gears and dramatically curtailed military spending to the point where just

before 9-11, a decade hence, US military spending was fully 59% (in purchasing power) below that of 1991 when the USSR was disbanded. The US and its allies also took a holiday from thinking about deterrence, about its sustainment and modernization, while also not anticipating the new challenges of a nuclear armed, peer adversary in China, or the cyber, space, hypersonic speed, and missile defense technology challenges. You can only kick the proverbial modernization can down the road until you literally do run out of road. USAF Major General Garrett Harencak called this a holiday from procurement a holiday from history as "we even stopped thinking intellectually about the need for a nuclear deterrent and what were serious threats to the United States." We killed the Ohio submarine production in 1992; Peacekeeper Rail Garrion was ended in 1991; the SICBM was curbed (1991) and the B2 bomber stopped at 20 aircraft in 1997 just as the latest model B-52 was nearing 50 years in service. And we limited annual production of the D-5 submarine launched missile to 12 in 1998. Projected to the time when a new modernized force will be put in the force, the US nuclear force was projected

to be 60, 48, and 68 years old, respectively, for our ICBMs, submarines and bombers.

By 2010, when the White House and Congress agreed to fully modernize the nuclear deterrent, when James Miller for the Obama Administration and Senator Jon Kyl for the US Senate, the nuclear force was between 40-72 years old including MMIII (1970); Ohio submarine (1982), the B52H (1972), and the ALCM (1982). A new Sentinel ICBM, Columbia submarine, B21 bomber, advanced air launched cruise missile, and a life extended sea-launched D-5 would be procured but only sometime around 2032-45.

In 1991 at the end of the USSR, the USA spent $65-70 billion a year on its nuclear deterrent. After 35 years, today the US is spending $65 billion including the NNSA which has all our warheads, labs and nuclear weapons infrastructure. Given inflation during that period, the $65 billion in 2026 would purchase $27 billion worth of weaponry by 2026. Thus, our current nuclear deterrent funding is some 60% (in purchasing power) less expensive as it was at the end of the Cold War.

Looked at in its entire acquisition, the cost is as follows: the ICBM force ($140B),

the subs and D-5 missile ($130B), and the B21 ($14B for 20 airplanes). Including National Nuclear Security Administration within the Department of Energy and nuclear command and control costs, the entirety of the nuclear deterrent modernization program is $350-$400 billion over the next 10-15 years. To many that is a lot of money. However, the Columbia submarine and Sentinel ICBM will both last until roughly 2080 or half a century, costing some $8 billion a year on average for the entire lifetime of the deterrent. Americans spent $8 billion this year on Halloween candy and costumes.

The Challenges of the Future

Now what is our most serious deterrent requirement today? It is the quartet of China and Russia and Iran and North Korea. But my remarks will now center on Iran and Ukraine as the US forces in the Middle East now engaged with Iran are most controversial and probably the least understood and Ukraine measures against Moscow are roiling energy markets, both combined had huge impacts on the just completed mid-term elections. And they both are serious challenges to our security.

First, it was Iran that trained armed and gave sanctuary to the 911 terrorists. Second, the IRGC head Soleimani was the architect of 9-11. Third, Osama bin Laden himself explained in his declaration of war against the United States issued in 1997 and 1998 that Iran gave sanctuary to Al Qaeda. Fourth, Iran went so far as to skip stamping the hijacker's passports with Iranian visas, knowing that this would prevent them from entering America on their mission to fly airplanes into America's skyscrapers and Pentagon and probably our US Capitol building. And fifth, by mid-2025, David Albright's ISIS, the Iranian opposition group, the NCRI, had convincing intelligence that Iran was weeks from again having a deliverable nuclear weapon, leaving the US with little room for restraint.

Iran and Ukraine face us with different deterrent challenges.

First, deterring Iran, however, is made very difficult by the eschatology of the regime. When Khomeini was asked wouldn't Israel destroy Iran if they determined Tehran had used nuclear weapons against Israel, Khomeini responded that he didn't care about Iran but did know that with nuclear weapons detonated over Israel "all the Jews would be dead" and the command of Allah would be fulfilled.

Iran President Rafsanjani once quipped Israel was a “one bomb country.” Add to that the proxy terror groups that might also be given nuclear weapons---the Houthis, Hamas, Islamic Jihad and Hezbollah—and the deterrent task before the US becomes even more formidable. Those seeking to perish under Armageddon are not easily deterrable. That is why we arm. As previously explained, the Iranian eschatology is known as Shia Twelvers. Mamdani is one.

Second, the United States in 2014 refused to aid Ukraine and came close to the same position in 2022 when Russia took even more Ukraine territory. Key was that with respect to nuclear battlefield systems the Russians far outnumbered American forces some 4000 to 5000 to 100. Why the imbalance? In 1991 the United States unilaterally took down over 90% of our theater, nuclear weapons worldwide and left only 100 gravity bombs in Europe with which to balance thousands deployed in Russia and able to hit targets throughout all of Europe. In April 1999, Mr. Yeltsin secretly called for the development of such highly accurate low yield and numerous battlefield nuclear weapons with which to use to change the outcome of a conventional battle which Russia might be losing. Those forces have been built

by Mr. Putin. And are the basis for the dozens of threats from Putin to exactly use these weapons if Ukraine or the United States or NATO engages Russia in the wrong way or two robustly in the eyes of the Kremlin. Are such threats a bluff or would Putin be so reckless to use such weapons and what would the US and its allies do in response?

Admittedly, the single most important task of deterrence today is to prevent the use of nuclear weapons against America and her allies. To do so we have to have the forces able to hold at risk those elements of power which are adversaries hold dear. That means the leadership and the machinery that holds them in power, and the weapons with which they use to commit aggression. These assets we hold at risk and have done so for much of the nuclear age going back to at least the mid Eisenhower administration. As President Kennedy remarked the Minuteman missile deployed in October 1962 was his “ace in the hole” because they enabled the United States to hold at risk key Soviet targets which enabled him to blockade Cuba and demand that the Soviets remove their missiles. Fortuitously as explained earlier the United States could also secretly offer to remove our medium range

missiles from Turkey and Italy because we could now reach key Soviet targets with our Minuteman missiles deployed in Montana. However, we are not always going to have the flexibility of a convenient offramp to offer adversaries that threaten us with nuclear weapons. Some are not deterrable and their nuclear forces have to be found and eliminated.

The American veterans which we honor today, not only have to deter the Russians in Ukraine, but also China with respect to Taiwan and the western Pacific. The United States has never faced a two peer nuclear armed adversary as we do with China and Russia. Combined the capability to do so can only be secured with a robust modernization of our nuclear triad and theater forces. The Posture Commission of the United States concluded in 2023 we need the addition of theater nuclear capabilities, such as a sea launch cruise missile, but also, we could quickly add the number of warheads we have deployed on our D-5 Navy and MM III USAF missiles.

Up to this point, some 16 years after the 2010 bipartisan agreement to modernize our nuclear deterrent, we have been relatively on track to get this job done. But

many of those elected to Congress this past week are advocates of Communism and Islamic Jihad. They see the West as rich and corrupt and driven by white supremacy. They see wars in Iran, Afghanistan, and Iraq as wars against Islam and for oil. These people believe Islam and Communism can bring about Utopia. And they have proposed legislation to unilaterally cut US nuclear forces to 200 missiles from 700, from near 2000 to under 1000 warheads. In the face of 4500 Chinese and Russian warheads within the next decade.

However, the Iran IRGC are celebrating the mid-term results. Unless the regime in Iran is driven from power, (by arming the internal resistance), the IRGC will do whatever it can to coerce the West for concessions under the threat to disrupt energy supplies and cause price hikes in western economies. And work to surreptitiously reconstitute its nuclear weapons program at Pickaxe and Minzadayi, to carry out the Jihad of "death" to Israel and the United States. Remember these are "Twelvers" who must create Armageddon here on earth to bring back the Mahdi or the 12th Imman to then send all good Muslims to heaven, all unbelievers to Hell, and ruling over those Muslims on earth for 1000 years under an Islamic

utopia. Remember when the Israelis raided Iran and brought out with them millions of pages of data revealing Iran plans to secure seven nuclear weapons to use against Israel and the United States. Though experts and media had previously assured us Iran had no intention of building nuclear weapons. Missile defense gives us one option of stopping such Armageddon should we miss the creation of an Iranian nuclear arsenal, and if Iran delivers Armageddon in the form of a missile. That is where the deterrent of missile defense comes in to complicate an attackers objectives, to deny the ability of such crazies as the Ayatollah who see virtue and success in death.

Closing, Some Thoughts

Deterrence is complicated but is multiform. The veterans alone within our military cannot do the job solely on their own. Let me explain. The 9-11 hijackers Mohammed Atta and Mohammed Hamzi --two of the pilots—overstayed their visas. Each were arrested for traffic violations. But the police officers were prohibited in North Carolina and in Florida from asking them their immigration status which would have revealed that they had both overstayed their visas and

were subject to deportation and being turned over to the immigration service. So, because we didn't want to ruffle the feathers of the open borders folks, we missed an opportunity to prevent the death of over 7000 Americans and the expenditure of nearly $7 trillion. Similarly, if you all remember members of the US military and their civilian colleagues refused to complain about Major Nisan, the psychiatrist at Fort Hood, who repeatedly called for Jihad against America, He murdered 13 and wounded 32 fellow soldiers because people did not want to appear to be impolite or critical of Islam so they refused to tell the authorities of the violent tendencies of this military doctor.

My key point is that our veterans are deterring the bad guys so we do not have to fight wars. In that they save millions of lives. A salute to all that serve today and have served yesterday. In the military officers that I have worked with since 1981. I have never found a more ethical honest and patriotic group of people than these military officers within the army, the Navy, Air Force and the Marines, both men and women from every corner of the United States. And in closing, I want to salute m late Uncle Clint Gardner who landed on Normandy, got wounded but made it

back to his unit in France and ended up at the Battle of the Bulge; and then was asked by Eisenhower to go and lead a team of US soldiers to Buchenwald and write down and photo everything he found so the Nazis couldn't deny what they did.