I thank the

gentleman for yielding, and I appreciate

what you’re doing here tonight,

Congressman AKIN.

Ever since mankind took up arms

against his fellow human beings, there

has always been an offensive capability

that essentially, in time, has been met

with the defensive capability. And first

it was the sword or the spear and the

shield, maybe, and then—

When we

came to having firearms and bullets,

we came to find armor and came up

with a tank, and it has been an ongoing

back-and-forth for a long time. But

now that we face the most dangerous

weapons in the history of humanity—

that being a nuclear warhead borne by

an intercontinental ballistic missile

which can reach thousands of miles

with accuracy—all of a sudden there

became a debate whether we needed a

defense for something like that. Now,

for a time, there wasn’t really the

technological ability to defend against

something like that.

And as you said, when the Soviets

had thousands of warheads and hundreds

of missiles that were capable of

destroying every city that we had that

was of any size, we had to come up with

this equation to where they knew that

if they attacked our cities and they

killed our women and children, that

our missiles would leave almost shortly

after theirs left the launching pad

and they would suffer the same fate.

And it was such an unthinkable scenario

that there was this grim achievement

that said we will have mutually

assured destruction and, therefore,

each will be afraid to launch against

the other.

In a sense, as frightening as it was, it

gave us a real tense time when we

could have a chance to feel relatively

safe because we placed our safety in

their sanity, as they did with us.

That was

the ABM Treaty that you speak of. And

fortunately Bush, this last George

Bush, was wise enough in this day and

age recognizing that the coincidence of

jihadist terrorism and nuclear proliferation

gave us a different equation

than we had with the Soviets because

all of a sudden deterrence wasn’t

enough. We were dealing with an

enemy that was willing to see their

own children die in order to attack our

children.

And so he knew that we needed to

discard this outdated ABM or antiballistic

missile treaty, and he did

that, and unfortunately, tremendous

strides seemed to be made very quickly

in the area of missile defense.

The truth is

that Ronald Reagan was, indeed, the

father of modern missile defense. And

there is a great irony there because,

while we owe him everything, in a

sense, to where we are, he said, Isn’t it

better to protect our citizens rather

than to avenge them? And I thought

that was the quote that, in my mind,

started it all out.

But the tragedy is that somehow now

the modern-day liberals who disdain

Ronald Reagan as much as they do,

sometimes they are biased against missile

defense simply because it was Ronald

Reagan’s idea. And we don’t discuss

it in the realm that it should be discussed,

which is what is best for the

country rather than we don’t want to

give Ronald Reagan too much credit.

This is the ironic tragedy of it.

Two things

have happened since then.

First of all, Democrats in Congress

have begun to see that missile defense

does indeed have a very, very important

role to play in this age of nuclear

proliferation. That’s a good thing. It’s

a good thing. The downside, of course,

is that the Democrat President in the

White House right now is incredibly, in

my judgment, naive as to the danger

that we face and to his approach with

our allies.

He has now, under his budget, submitted

numbers that would cut the European

missile defense site by 89 percent,

nearly 90 percent, which is effectively

killing the program. And this

was the system that we were putting in

place under the Bush administration to

protect the homeland of the United

States, to protect Europe and our forward-

deployed troops against an Iranian

missile.

No. The

radar site is in the Czech Republic.

That was the X–10 radar there, and

they went through tremendous political

machinations to accomplish that

overcoming a 2–1 dissent among their

public. And yet they had the leadership

to say, This is important to us, this is

important to the world, and we’re

going to move forward. And they put

tremendous capital in that, and now

they’re being betrayed by the country

that asked them to do it.

Yes. The

intercepter field itself, with 10 intercepters,

it would have been in Poland.

The tragedy—

and this goes back to the statement

that I said about the naive way of

approaching this—because the Russians

said that somehow they could

exert influence over Iran or over other

countries, that we would give up defending

our homeland, our physical

mechanism to defend our homeland in

order to gain the influence of the Russians

over Iran. Well, this is unbelievable.

Mr. FRANKS of Arizona. Unfortunately,

the Russians have sold us their

influence over Iran about a dozen times

now and never have really given us

anything of substance to be helpful.

And I think this is incredibly dangerous.

Iran has continued to go forward and

defy the world community. This solid

fuel rocket that they have used today

is something that you said was very,

very important. And the ability to

stage is incredibly significant because

it ultimately means that if they have

the guidance systems—and they’ve already

proven that they do by launching

the satellite—that they will have almost

an indefinite range across the

world, because once they learn to

stage, they can do almost anything in

terms of reach.

This is a

Sager, a solid fuel rocket that is something

that we’ve known about for some

time, and we knew the Iranians had it

and at some point they would test it.

But the danger of—

Yes. I’m

convinced that it is.

The danger, of course, is that Iran is

not only a dangerous enemy, to have

these types of weapons, but they can

sell and proliferate this type of weaponry.

And when they prove that it

works, it makes the price go up and it

makes other countries who are trying

to gain this technology much more interested

in the technology. And I believe

that it’s important that we do

whatever is necessary to prevent them

from having successful tests in the future,

including—and this is a big statement—

including shooting those missiles

down with our own missile defense

capability, our Aegis capability when

they come over international waters.

If you will

permit me, I can get through this just

briefly.

You know, the age-old argument

against Ronald Reagan’s perspective is

that this like hitting a bullet with a

bullet. Well, as General Obering, the

former Defense agency head said this,

he said, We don’t just hit a bullet with

a bullet. We hit a dot on the side of a

bullet with a bullet consistently.

And interestingly enough, in recent

days, you know, now they say well,

there’s so much fratricide, if there’s

some type of collision, that if there are

multiple reentry vehicles or multiple

vehicles, we wouldn’t be able to hit all

of them. But just recently we, in a test

down in Hawaii, we shot a Scud missile

off of a destroyer and it went 218 kilometers

into the air and then, off of a

THAD battery in one of the islands

there, we shot two interceptor missiles

16 seconds apart to try to intercept

this. The theory is if the first one hits,

the second one will fly on by, and it’s

no big deal. If the first one misses, the

second one will hit.

But here is the amazing thing that

occurred. At 218 kilometers into the

air, literally exo-atmospheric, into

space, the first THAD interceptor hit

the target dead center and blew it to

smithereens. Fratricide was everywhere.

And the second missile, they

had it almost coordinated at that time

to only 2 seconds apart, it picked the

biggest piece, which was a little over a

meter long, and hit it.

Now, let me suggest to you, if that

doesn’t light your fire, your wood is

wet, because this was an incredible accomplishment

by our missile defense

agency, and it showed that our sensors

have the capability of finding that

most important target, even in an environment

of that kind of fratricide,

and it was an incredible accomplishment

and you didn’t hear it on the

news.

Well, the

gentleman speaks of a system called

GMD, or ground-based mid-course defense,

and it is our only system capable

of defending the homeland against an

incoming intercontinental ballistic

missile from either North Korea or, in

some cases in the United States, from

Iran.

And the significance, as he said, just

we needed at least 44 interceptors, and

as you go through the war colleges

here in the area, nearly always when

they go through their scenarios, they

say we need even more than the 44. But

now all of the sudden—and we only

have 26 actually now. We’re capped at a

number of 30. Now all of a sudden we’re

going to cap it at 30, and I think that’s

very dangerous. Because keep in mind,

this is not just one interceptor per incoming

missile. We want to do everything

that we can to have some redundancy

where we sometimes shoot three

and perhaps even four to one where if

we have one missile coming in, we

want to make sure we get as many

shots off as possible to make sure one

doesn’t land. Because if a nuclear missile

lands in one of your cities, it will

ruin your whole day.

The gentleman

is correct on a number of different

points. Once we don’t build

those, not only are they not there for

the defense capabilities, but we also

eventually lose our industrial base to

build them at all. We can’t just go out

in the street and find someone on the

sidewalk and say come on, we would

like to build a missile defense capability;

we’d like to have you come in

and be one of our rocket scientists. It

takes a great deal of time and energy

to have that industrial base which is in

place now, and I think we make a terrible

mistake.

No, sir. The

KEI is an extremely fast missile, and it

was made to intercept other missiles in

the boost phase, and the airborne laser

and KEI were our only boost phase systems,

and both of those have been cut

precipitously, and that’s the most important

place to try to interdict a missile

because it’s moving slower. There

are no countermeasures. There are no

decoys deployed, and of course, if you

have an impact, then the fratricide

falls back upon the offending Nation.

So this is the most important phase

that we could ever attack or intercept

an enemy missile, and we’re essentially

doing away with both of those programs,

leaving only the ABL in place

as an experiment, as a research project.

The airborne

laser has been cut precipitously

and is now essentially a research

project, rather than a deployable future

system.

That is correct,

and of course, the other irony

here is that there’s really only one

payload that makes any sense to put

on a missile like that, and that’s a nuclear

warhead. The other applications

don’t make a lot of sense.

Well, that’s

correct, and of course, to try to make

the rhetoric they say, well, there are

other mechanisms that we have potentially

to defend Europe, which may be

a land-based SM–3 system with the

augment of Aegis, but there are two

things wrong with that. Number one,

it’s more than twice as expensive to do

that, and number two, those systems

do not protect the homeland of the

United States against any ICBM from

Iran.

The total

missile defense budget, in total, is less

than $9 billion, and the administration

wants to cut it almost $2 billion more.

The thing

that’s important to remember is that

Iran gained most of its missile technology

from North Korea, and Iran has

actually outpaced North Korea now in

their missile capability, but North

Korea has nuclear warheads now, and if

North Korea sold Iran missile technology,

is it unthinkable to think they

might sell them nuclear warheads at

some point? It may not be even necessary

for Iran to build their own warheads.

And here’s the really astonishing

tragedy about this. Rhetorically, some

of the liberals say that the reason that

we should cut our GMD system is because

we need more testing. Well,

under this system, where they’re cutting

down on the number of interceptors

we have, we won’t be able to test

this system again until after 2014.