Thank you, MIKE. And

thank you for holding this Special

Order.

I think you have done an outstanding

job of getting out to the American people

the problem with cutting our missile

defense system at a time of war. I

have been here a little bit longer than

you. I came in 1992. In 1992, we had 18

Army divisions. We are down to 12 now.

Actually, in 1998, we were down to 10.

We’ve built it back up in the last 10

years. We had 24 fighter wings; we now

have 12. We had 546 Navy ships; we now

have 283. Do you detect a trend?

Historically, we have cut our defenses

after a war. We did that after

World War I, so that when World War II

came along, we were training with

wooden dummy rifles and it took us a

while to get built up into that fight. By

the end of the war, we were building

hundreds of planes a day, but it took a

long time to get there.

But the world has changed. We’re not

in a situation now where we can build

up defenses after the fact. We have to

be prepared ahead of time. We had a

golden opportunity to do that. The

President, earlier this year in the

Democratic Congress, passed an $800

billion supplemental that was supposed

to help us get out of the financial system

that we’re in. The President called

for shovel-ready projects, things that

could be done immediately to help the

economy. Well, just a couple of things.

I also serve on the Education Committee,

and we had about $14 billion in

that supplemental for education, education

programs, the Pell Grants,

which are very important. But to put

$12 or $14 billion into IDEA and the

same amount into Pell Grants—those

are long-range things that will help in

the long run—it showed where his priorities

are, which it’s good to find out

where his priorities are. But at the

same time, out of $800 billion, $300 million

went into defense; $300 million out

of $800 billion. Now, that $300 went to

MILCON, which are important

projects, and we need to build on military

bases. Nothing went into weapon

systems.

When I came to Congress, we were

building the B–2 bomber, and it was

supposed to be 132 planes. That was

what was needed for defense of our Nation.

That was planned out. Everybody

bought into it. Everybody agreed on it.

They ended up building 21. At the same

time, we were planning a new fighter

because we needed it to compete worldwide

with things that Russia and China

were doing, and we were going to build

750 F–22s. In this last budget that was

just passed in the House—hasn’t finally

become law yet. We’re still in conference,

but they have made a decision

that now we don’t need 750; we can get

by with 187.

I don’t know what’s changed in the

world to make it all of a sudden much

safer to give us 187, that that will now

satisfy the need. It’s a trend that’s

very disturbing, cutting $1.2 billion out

of our ballistic missile defense. Historically,

as I said, we have cut our defense

after a war. I don’t know that we have

ever in our history cut our defense during

not one, but two wars which we

have going right now in Iraq and Afghanistan,

and as you’ve mentioned,

the problems that we see with Iran.

Today’s announcement that Iran has

a covert uranium enrichment facility

should really come as no surprise. Why

develop a covert enrichment facility if

Tehran claims its program is solely for

civilian purposes? Why don’t they tell

the world? Why don’t they brag about

it if that’s what they’re doing? I think

people understand there’s a reason why

they’re doing it covertly. This deception

shows a clear intent by Tehran to

hide a growing nuclear weapons capability.

In the unclassified judgments from

December 2007 National Intelligence

Estimate on Iran’s nuclear intentions

and capabilities, it was assessed that

However,

the NIE went further to say that

Well, what I heard this morning in

the President’s speech is that they had

been building this plant secretly, covertly,

to enrich uranium for years.

These efforts have been restarted. Today’s

announcement means that previous

estimates on when Iran could

achieve a nuclear weapons breakout

are now inaccurate.

This disclosure also highlights just

how uncertain our intelligence can be.

Just a week ago, the administration

explained that its primary reason, as

you said, for scrapping the European

missile defense system to be located in

Poland and the Czech Republic was because

the threat was now downgraded.

In December 2007, our intelligence community

judged that Iran didn’t have a

covert uranium enrichment facility.

Now, less than 2 years later, it does.

How, then, could the administration be

so confident in its assessment that Iran

can’t develop a long-range ballistic

missile by 2015, or maybe buy one from

somebody?

We need to be skeptical of policy decisions

based solely on intelligence. Intelligence

can be wrong as much as it

can be right. We have to take into account

that it cannot be, even with the

best efforts of our Intelligence Committee,

the sole basis for a decision. I

mean, you can also look at human nature.

You can look at past history. You

can look at how they reacted in the

past. Based on that, how can we expect

them to react in the future?

We’ve witnessed Iran successfully use

a long-range rocket to launch a satellite

into space, work closely with the

North Koreans, who themselves appear

to be pursuing ICBMs and continuing

to expand their nuclear capabilities.

What other covert facility programs

does Iran have under its sleeve?

Apparently, they came up with this

information because they found out

that we had already known about it, so

now they’re telling the world. What

else do they have going on that we

don’t know about or that they’re not

telling us or that we’re not finding out

about?

It’s time for the Obama administration

to do something concrete about it

beyond pinning their hopes on upcoming

talks and relying on Russia to protect

our security interests. This starts

with: stronger sanctions against Iran

right now; robustly funding missile defense

so that now we have defenses in

place before 2018 or 2020, unlike the administration’s

plan; and an Iran containment

strategy, working with our

allies, which will deter Iran and will

dissuade allies and friends from proliferating.

I want to commend you, MIKE, for

the job you’re doing as ranking member

on the subcommittee. It’s a very

important job. I appreciate your holding

this Special Order and getting this

information out to the people. The

American people have to understand

this important issue.

Our defense is our main responsibility.

We do a lot of other things

around here, but the defense of this Nation

is our number one responsibility.

We do a lot of things that we’re not

obliged to do by the Constitution, but

this is our responsibility.

I commend you for the job you’re

doing. Thank you for holding this Special

Order.