Mr. Chairman, I would ask unanimous consent

that my opening statement be placed in the record as if read.

And so I will just briefly refer to it. I would suggest

and highly commend to my colleagues the report that Secretary

Armitage—commend the Armitage report to my colleagues.

And the report—there are some key suggestions that spark discussion.

‘‘We have to regain the diplomatic initiative. The U.S. policy toward

North Korea has become largely reactive and predictable,

with U.S. diplomacy characterized by a cycle of North Korean provocation

or demand and American response.’’ Good idea. But even

now the Bush administration claims the ball is in North Korea’s

court. North Korea says it is in our court. From where I sit, the

ball is sort of stuck in a net somewhere, Mr. Secretary.

‘‘A new approach,’’ he went on to say, ‘‘must treat the Agreed

Framework as the beginning of a policy toward North Korea, not

as the end of the problem. We should clearly formulate answers to

two key questions. First, what precisely do we want from North

Korea, and what price are we prepared to pay? Second, are we prepared

to take a different course if, after exhausting all reasonable

diplomatic efforts, we conclude that no worthwhile accord is possible?’’

Another great question. You have answered. I think State

has answered. But, all due respect, I do not think the administration

has answered that question, at least I do not quite know the

answer. You also point out that ‘‘The U.S. point person should be

designated by the President in consultation with congressional

leaders and should report directly to the President,’’ another good idea.

Mr. Kelly is a fine, fine guy, but I do not know that that has

been in consultation with us. I do not know how far that has gone.

And, in no way, Mr. Secretary, am I suggesting that you are not

fully up to the job. But it raises the profile, it raises the issue here

in this body, if, in fact, it has been one that is more engaged at

the front end. I think it is a point being made by—I hope I am not

mischaracterizing, but a point made by Senator Hagel about this

should be a little higher profile, because we keep—we sound like

we are downplaying it.

I will not go through the rest of the report, but I really, truly—

I agree with what you say in the report. I know there are—I should

not say ‘‘know’’—it is my impression that there is some—not disagreement,

but some nuance differences—a word I know the President

does not like when I use it with him, ‘‘nuance’’—differences

within the administration on how to proceed.

Which leads me to the essence of my statement, which is that,

as I understand, the chairman indicated that we should be talking,

and talking now, and be prepared to discuss all issues now, and

need to have direct talks. I think he is dead right. I have shared

that view from the outset, enunciated it early on.

And I have a few questions, if my—start the clock ticking on my

5 minutes now, since I did not make the whole opening statement.

I am a little—let me just put it this way. How does the equation

change in the minds of the administration, in terms of moving this

from an important issue to a crisis, if it is—would be moved by it?

How does the equation change if North Korea uncorks that stuff,

reprocesses the material, gets the additional plutonium, and goes

from having one or two nuclear weapons to having six to eight,

which is, in the near term, a capability they posses—how does

that—how do we view that?

I mean, obviously, we do not view that as good. It is a bad idea.

But do we view that as materially changing our security relative

to North Korea? If the Lord Almighty came down and sat in the

middle of this room and said, ‘‘Look, they’re going to eight, but

that’s all they’re going to do,’’ what is the change between one to

two, and six to eight?

I think he is the one that recommended I read it.

Proliferation of the actual weapon.

The fissile material.

All right. Now, so we worry that they would divert

the plutonium to some other source, whether it is a non-state

actor or a state actor, as opposed to putting it in new nuclear warheads

that they would produce.

because you are materially disadvantaged by what he is about to

do. But, OK, how—this notion of multilateral/bilateral, I think we

all agree—I may be wrong—that if we can do this multilaterally,

in talking with the North Koreans, it’s a much better way to do it.

But, in my discussions with the Japanese and the South Koreans,

they’re saying, ‘‘Multilateral is good, count us in, but don’t wait. We

recommend you do it bilaterally.’’ Now, am I wrong? Are they not

recommending that?

No, I understand that. No, I understand that.

But this is a matter of, maybe, form over substance right now,

and—but you’re saying—so everybody understands, because I do

understand it, and the Secretary has been kind enough to lay it out

for me, as well—is that you’re just looking for an umbrella so that

we—not ‘‘just’’—but looking for an umbrella where you have the

Chinese, the Russians, the South Koreans, the Japanese, and anyone

else, who—and us—who sponsors a meeting somewhere,

whether it’s New York or wherever else, and that that’s the rationale

for the meeting, but once in the meeting, you and/or the Secretary

or old Kelly back there are going to sit down with these boys

and talk turkey one to one.

Yes, and——

But, seriously, I understand that’s the rationale.

But what—the reason I pressed the first point—I realize my time

is up, and I’ll cease, Mr. Chairman—but one of the reason why I

asked the first question about how, materially, does—do things

change, in terms of our flexibility and our security and our concerns

if we go from two to eight, because that’s what we’re talking

about there. Once they uncork this, you have, as you point out, *x*

number of kilos of plutonium that not only can be used to build

those weapons, but also used to export to terrorists, if they were

so inclined. And that’s going to happen pretty soon, based on—or

it may very well happen pretty soon, based on some intelligence

data that has been made public, as well as what hasn’t been made public.

And so I—we’re not going to have a chance—I won’t have a

chance in a second round, because you’re going to have to go, but

I really hope we do not let, you know, form impact so significantly

on substance here.

And I appreciate his——

His point of view. Speaking for myself,

not him, there is always the chance that this is a bluff, that

they really aren’t going to go forward and, to use the phrase being

used now, ‘‘uncork’’ this and that we have time.

What I wanted to ask, and maybe someone else will, is, What is

the downside? What’s the downside for us—for example, us signing

a nonaggression pact, for example? I mean, what is the downside,

if that’s one of the demands? You don’t have to answer it now, because

my time’s up. Maybe someone else will want to speak to that.

I thank you very much.

If the President of the United States said he

wanted it, I’ll bet you a million dollars they would change. But

that’s up to him.

Well, the only reason is if he got your attention

Mr. Chairman? Sorry, you go ahead and finish up.

Very briefly, Mr. Chairman.

Back in the old days, when I was chairman of the Judiciary Committee,

after a couple of fairly high-profile hearings on the Supreme

Court a practice emerged whereby administrations, successive administrations,

Democrat and Republican, I am told, would school

the prospective nominees on how to appear before a committee.

And they would watch tapes of how the committee, Judiciary Committee,

functioned and witnesses before the committee, nominees,

and how they responded.

I respectfully suggest the administration should put out a tape

of how you respond to questions. It would be a very good measure

for the rest of the administration when they come and testify.

Are you going to tell us the answers?

I’m curious what you said.

I haven’t forgotten.

Substantial change.

The Senator has a time constraint so I will yield

to Senator Dodd.

Gentlemen, I think this is some of the best testimony

I have heard in the long time I have sat here. You each sort

of—I do not know whether you got together, but you each asked

and spoke to and answered a different question that is on the

minds of all our colleagues.

Ash, you laid out how we got to where we are, in terms of what

actually was negotiated, was anticipated, the context in which it

was done, the decision process, which basically came down to what

you just said a moment ago—if there was a way to change the regime,

it was not going to be more catastrophic for the short-term,

and our friends around the region short-term and maybe long-term,

then that was an option that would warrant being considered. But

the conclusion was that that was not the best option, and you chose

another option, which I wholeheartedly agree with.

And I should note, for those who may be listening, we are not

talking to, you know, a uniform group of three specialists and experts

who all come from the same political perspective here.

Ambassador Gregg, I do not want to in any way damage your

credibility, but I thought your explanation and exposition on what

you think went wrong was brilliant, absolutely brilliant. I mean,

who knows for certain, but I was talking to Senator Hagel—I think

it is the single most succinct and accurate and most probable explanation

of us never being able to read someone else’s mind as to how

a series of a chain of events and circumstances brought us to this

point, without in any way making apologies for the regime in the

North and being pretty hard-baked about it.

And Ambassador Bosworth, you being in another administration,

and Ambassador Gregg, if I am not mistaken, not that you speak

for any Bush, but you had a fairly close relationship with the first

Bush, you are a very well-known Republican.

So I just want the audience to know, who may be listening, that

this is not somehow a panel that we put together, or you put together,

Mr. Chairman, that was decided to come at it from one political

perspective. And I thought your explanation about essentially

what went wrong in the South, Mr. Ambassador, Ambassador

Bosworth, was equally as cogent.

But it leads me to a couple of questions and a few generic observations.

One is that I do believe that, early on, the biggest issue

that this administration occupied itself with in terms of foreign policy,

slash, strategic policy, slash, defense policy its first year, was—

and I, in turn, occupied myself with it—was the issue of national

missile defense, its nature, how broad it would be, how necessary it was.

And to put it in raw political terms, if there had been a fundamental

transformation, if there had been a revolution in the North

and the present regime was overthrown and a democratic republic

was put in place, there would have been no rationale for national

missile defense based on what was being suggested at the moment,

in terms of its urgency. So we should all not kid ourselves that

whether or not that moved the administration to be empathetic or

sympathetic to a crisis occurring, I am not suggesting that, but

without North Korea, there is a pretty lame—pretty lame—rationale

of the urgency for and the pitifully small but incredibly expensive

national missile defense program that has come forward from

the administration.

And then, on top of that, I do not think we—I mean, I have been

here for—well, I have been here as long as you guys. I have been

a United States Senator for 31 years. I have dealt with seven

Presidents. And I say ‘‘dealt with.’’ I have served here with seven

different Presidents, probably only dealt with four in a real sense.

And the fact of the matter is, I have never seen an administration

as fundamentally divided as this administration is on our place in

the world and how to deal with it. And we are kidding each other.

I know you all say, and you are all diplomats, and you are all

not going to go in and suggest that you know what is his thinking

and the administration, how—but this is a fundamental divide that

exists, not on Korea, but on the issue of the moral certitude and

what response we take to that. And there is a legitimate case.

And I think we all make a big mistake if we do not go back and

read the writings of the intellectual right on this notion in the foreign

policy establishment for the last 10 years. There is a consistency.

This is not something—I mean, we all make a mistake of not

reading, you know, the think-tank guys downtown. There is a gen-

uine consistency to a very different road to be taken, a different

path suggested, and has been being suggested, since the late 1980s.

And we have an administration now that is divided as to whether

or not that path is the one to take, which I will, at another time

and place, not here, characterize in detail by quoting and reading

the people who have been your counterparts on the other side of

this equation who have been making a very sound, from their perspective,

and intellectually defensible argument. I think they are

wrong, but this is not something that is just a little bit of a difference

on tactics within this administration.

The thing that has startled me is—‘‘startle’’ is the wrong word—

has interested me is, it tends to be a combination of the civilian

military, the civilian defense, and the politicos in the White House

exempting the President, because I do not think he has made up

his mind—at least I pray to God he has not made up his mind

yet—and, interestingly enough, the uniformed military and the

State Department. I mean, I find this an unusual coalition in the

way that things have broken down in past Democrat as well as Republican

administrations.

And so the reason I bother

to suggest this is that I do not think

it is unreasonable for anyone—anyone—in any country who loves

us, hates us, fears us, has an incredibly warm feeling about us, to

not acknowledge that. They wonder whether or not we have set

upon a path of regime change, not just here, and not just in Iraq

or—how about Iran or North Korea? There is—we would be lying

to the American people—there are people in this administration—

and they are good people; they are bright people, they are honorable

people—they are acting out of what they think is the best interest

of the United States of America. And there are our colleagues

here who think regime change is the only answer.

So for us to sit down and assume that all North Koreans are stupid

and they have not—they cannot detect that, is not to suggest

that that is the reason they have acted the way they have, not suggesting

they would have acted better if it did not—if that were not

part of the division of the administration, but there are a lot of

things that aid and abet in the confusion.

My greatest worry, Ambassador Gregg, is that I do not think

that Kim Jong Il is as much of an imbecile as he is made out to

be, by any stretch of the imagination. Not by you, but, I mean, you

know, the caricature of him. But I do worry that he is isolated. I

do worry he will make the mistake that is often made, as we make

it as well, between U.S. policy and Asian policy, generically, of

misreading—misreading—miscalculating what the response of the

United States may be and/or the world may be to his actions. I do

not think he has a very keen antennae for that part of—that requirement

of a leader. I am not sure he is accurately assessing

what may happen.

And the only conflict worse than one’s intent—one that is intended

is one that is unintended. And I see this as a—I was thinking

earlier, Mr. Chairman, of being a sophomore in college, as a

history major, listening to a professor talk about how when the

Russian army mobilized in World War II along the border, it never

intended that it was going to end up in a war, and that—and Germany

responded, and how we got very rapidly to a point of no re-

turn very quickly that maybe history could have avoided, depending

on the misreading of one another and our intentions. And that

is my greatest concern with regard to Kim Jong Il. That is my

greatest concern, misreading us here.

Now, none of us can divine—at least I cannot, and you have all

said you cannot, although you are more qualified to do it than we

are—what the final intention—if there has been a final judgment

made by Kim Jong Il now as to whether or not he has concluded

his security, if you will, his stability in power rests upon the acquisition

of more nuclear weapons, or whether it is still not too late

to work something out. I do not know the answer to that question.

And I also do not know the answer to the question of how in

charge—is he in charge? One of you said you thought that he

was—he had to pay, he thought, significant—he is still working out

control—I think it was you, Mr. Ambassador—and that the military

is part of that issue, and they are not particularly enamored

with the prospect that there may be a diplomatic way to maintain

their present position.

And so this prelude here leads me to a couple of questions. I had

the privilege of the President, without revealing it, confiding in me

asking me what I thought went wrong with his meeting with Kim

Dae-Jung. And I was interested, genuinely, as to the President’s

wondering why this went wrong, why things did not go very well

in that meeting.

Well, I think part of where we are now is that I think the administration,

if not the President, was betting that President Roh was

likely to lose, and they would have a very different South Korea

to deal with, Mr. Ambassador, which is part of, I think, their being

perplexed now as to how to respond.

The one thing, Ash, you and Secretary Perry did so—I think the

single most underestimated contribution you made, beyond the fact

we don’t want 50, 60, or 100 more, depending on the calculations,

nuclear bombs or weapons out there, is that you made sure—I remember

talking to you throughout this and to Wendy and to the

Secretary—you made sure that North Korea—I mean, excuse me—

South Korea, Japan, and us were on the same page. As my recollection

was there was no daylight. None. No daylight.

And which leads me to why I am a little perplexed about one aspect

of your testimony, and that is that although I think you think

that should be reestablished if you can, Secretary Bosworth points

out that South Korea, particularly in light of what they need to

be—and I just returned from South Korea, as well, with Senator

Sarbanes and Senator Specter. We met with the outgoing leadership.

We went to the DMZ. We spent time there. We met with the

South Korean generals. And I got the same questions you got, Ambassador

Gregg, in the North, I got those same questions in the

South. And I share your commitment. I have never abroad ever

criticized the President, and I will not do that. I think it is totally

inappropriate. And my answers were not as succinct and as insightful

as yours were, and as diplomatic. So I did not give many

answers. I listened.

But we are in slightly different paths, Ambassador Bosworth, in

terms of what we view to be our—what is inimicable to our interest

and what is most inimicable to our interest. And it is clear that it

is going to be a little more difficult to put Humpty-Dumpty back

together here. He has not fallen off the wall completely, but, boy,

the cracks and fissures are visible of him sitting up on the wall

right now.

And so, Ash—I apologize, Mr. Secretary, for keep calling you

Ash—Mr. Secretary, I would like to——

To ask you, if, in fact, the course of

action which you broadly outlined and with some specificity as to

how you think we should proceed from here—if that fails, either in

its failure of not being initiated or fails in its execution—it is initiated

and is not able to be executed—you talk about the need to

have a—essentially a red line here—my term, not yours.

In light of what Ambassador Bosworth said, I see no realistic

prospect in the near-term that we can credibly lay out a red line,

which is, ‘‘If you do not ultimately, North Korea, cease and desist,

with legitimate consideration being provided by the United

States’’—in a contract, you need consideration on both sides—‘‘if

you do not cease and desist, we keep the military option on the

table.’’ gressI think South Korea has moved so far that how in the devil

do you keep that incredible option unless you first and fundamentally

repair the relationship with South Korea? That’s my first question.

By definition——

Is, by definition, your definition of ‘‘going beyond’’—

and that is to begin to reprocess?

That is a red line

That is a fault line, right?

Now, I am going to ask you a question I understand

you may not wish to answer, because it is—I am going to ask

it in a way that I think that most Americans would understand

it—presumptuous of me to say that, but—hypothetically, if the

President of the United States, in his State of the Union Message,

in which he was very somber and straightforward—if, in his State

of the Union Message, he said, ‘‘Notwithstanding the fact that I do

believe an ‘axis of evil’ exists, it is not my policy to change the regimes

in those countries. It is my policy to be prepared to act if

those evil regimes take actions inimicable to our interests,’’ would

that have changed the mindset at all, or some version of that, if

the President were to enunciate and speak directly to it?

I just got back from Davos. Every world—I mean, literally—I did

not speak to every world leader who was there and every head of

state, but I spoke to one heck of a lot. You guys have been there.

And the phrase, as if it were equivalent to the Monroe Doctrine,

that everyone was familiar with, whether it was an African Foreign

Minister or the head of state from a European country or the Middle

East or Asia, was they all knew the phrase ‘‘regime change.’’

They all believe, whether—they either—they moved from either

questioning, wondering, and/or being certain that this administration

is driven by the notion that is borne out of an ideological purity,

a moral certitude, that regime change is its obligation and

mission, that it will not do it willy nilly, it will not do it if the price

is too high, but that is the goal.

Now, how does that play? I mean, it is one thing—am I making

any sense here? Can you speak to that a little bit? How would it

change if we were able—if the President articulated that his policy

dealt with—it is like, you know, the old thing, ‘‘love the sinner, but

hate the sin’’—I mean, if it is shifted and if it is believed, what impact

would that have?

Yes.

I agree.

Anyone else?

That is sort of what I meant when I——

One of the reason why I, like Senator Dodd, from

a slightly different perspective, am a little skeptical here about—

and I agree with you, Ambassador Gregg, in my experience with

the President I think this is a work in progress. I think he is working

his way through this. I think he is listening to both sides of

the argument being presented to him. And, so far—I get in trouble

with my colleagues for saying this on my side of the aisle—I think

his instincts have been pretty good. I think, at the end of the day,

he has made the right decisions, in my view. I think we waste a

lot of the good that could have come from those decisions by what

it takes to lead up to them, but, nonetheless, I think—so I have

some considerable faith, more than hope, that he will choose the

path that the three of you, and the chairman and I—I think we are

all basically on the same page—the generic path that we are talking about here.

But what I worry about is—and I hope it has changed—I think

he—I don’t—I don’t think, at least at the outset, that he, as former

Presidents who have also been Governors at the front end, fully appreciated

that little nuances are read as messages to change entire

messages. When he said we were going to reconsider and we were

going to go back, we always add something else into the mix, like

the three things you set out, Secretary Carter in what our objectives

were, one of which was, you hope to get to missiles, you hope

to get to destruction of the facilities, et cetera, but you never insisted

that also wrapped into this same agreement would be conventional.

It was—and when the President threw in conventional,

I think a lot of people around the world thought, ‘‘Well, this means

he really does not want to proceed,’’ because there is very strong

criticism on the center right of the whole Agreed Framework to

begin with. I mean, it was an uphill battle, once the Congress

changed, as the Ambassador pointed out.

So I hope when he reaches this next point, I hope, again, we do

not get to the point where it inadvertently or advertently places the

conditions on discussions that doom it to failure from the outset because

it causes us to question our motives, or, I think, our motives

to be questioned when the offer is made, just as I hope the Secretary

of State, when he appears on Thursday, before the United

Nations and makes his case, my unsolicited advice is that he go

with what we have that is strong, and there is plenty there, and

not overplay our weak hand, which is terrorism, al-Qaeda, and nuclear

weapons. That may all be part of it, but I hope the devil we

focus on what is unassailable, quite frankly. And I would hope we

do the same thing as we get to this next point.

But I will conclude by saying—asking you—and I think there is

agreement, but I do not want to misunderstand—do all of you believe

that there is no way to accurately predict—there is no reason

to believe that in the near term there will be a collapse in the

North—that is that the leadership in North Korea will collapse,

will implode? I mean, is there any reason for any of you to think

that is a reasonable basis upon which the President should be making near-term planning?

And the last question I have is, would you all

elaborate slightly—I mean, for just a little bit, if you would, in the

interest of your time and the chairman’s—on what Ambassador

Gregg touched on—I think he is the only one that touched on it—

and that is, who is in charge? Give us your best assessment of the

degree to which you think, and how much latitude and flexibility,

Kim Jong Il has in order to—assuming we get to this point where

there are bilateral—under whatever umbrella—bilateral discussions with the North.

Well, I thank you both. Thank you for the time—

all three of you—and, really, I cannot tell you how much this committee

appreciates having you. I wish the three of you were running the policy.

I have probably damned you by that comment but I really do. It’s first-rate.

This used to be the hardest committee to get on, too.