Thank you, Mr. Chairman, members. Mr. Chairman,

thank you for those kind words.

I would like to share my recollections of the previous two crises

involving North Korea, 1994, 1998, and some thoughts about the

crisis in which we find ourselves today.

I’m not an expert on North Korea. I’m fond of saying that there

are no real experts on North Korea. There are specialists, but the

specialists don’t have much expertise.

My knowledge of North Korea and Korean affairs came in, sort

of, seat-of-the-pants fashion when I was serving as an Assistant

Secretary of Defense in 1994, when, very similarly to now, North

Korea was preparing, at that time, to remove from the research reactor

at Yongbyon, the fuel rods containing five or six bombs worth

of plutonium. The United States was trying to deal diplomatically

with that threat, but we were also, at that time, considering military

options.

The then-Secretary of Defense, Bill Perry, ordered the preparation

of a strike plan on Yongbyon, and we prepared a plan of that

sort, which we were very confident would be successful at destroying

the research reactor, entombing the plutonium at Yongbyon,

destroying the reprocessing facilities and the other facilities there

with a strike of conventional precision air-delivered weapons. We

were, in fact, even confident that we could destroy an operating nuclear

reactor of that kind while it was operating without creating

a Chernobyl-type radiological plume downwind, obviously an important

consideration. Such a strike, had we carried it out, would

have effectively set back North Korea’s nuclear program many

years.

But while surgical in and of itself, the overall effect of a strike

of that kind would hardly have been surgical. The likely result of

that, or certainly a possible result of it, would have been the

unleashing over the DMZ of North Korea’s antiquated but very

large ground force, a barrage of artillery and missile fire on Seoul

and its suburbs.

We and our allies, South Korea and Japan, would very quickly,

in our estimation then, and I believe that’s still true now, within

weeks, have destroyed North Korea’s military and destroyed its regime.

Of that, we were as confident as we were confident that we

could destroy Yongbyon in the first place.

But a war there would take place in the crowded suburbs of

Seoul, and the attendant intensity of violence and loss of life—ours,

South Korean, North Korean, combatant, noncombatant—would

have been greater than any the world has seen since the last Korean

war and I think would shock the world with its violence and

intensity.

Fortunately, at that time—now, this is 1994—that war was

averted by the negotiation of the Agreed Framework. Now, the

Agreed Framework was controversial, it remains controversial, so

it’s important to know what it did and didn’t do.

What it did do was freeze operations at Yongbyon for 8 years,

until just a few weeks ago, verified by onsite inspection. The six

bombs worth of plutonium was not extracted from the fuel rods

then, and, for the subsequent 8 years, and no new plutonium was

created in the reactor during that period. Had the freeze not been

operating during that period, North Korea would have been able to

produce enough plutonium for an additional 50 nuclear weapons.

The Agreed Framework did not eliminate Yongbyon, but froze it.

In later phases of the agreement, Yongbyon was to be dismantled,

but we never got to those phases. Nor could or should the Agreed

Framework be said to have eliminated North Korea’s nuclear weapons

program. For one thing, while the freeze was verified, there

was no adequate verification going on elsewhere in North Korea

that there wasn’t a Los Alamos-like laboratory preparing the other

wherewithal than fissile material required to make a nuclear weapon

or a hidden—a uranium enrichment facility, which, as it turns

out, there was.

In addition—this was mentioned by Secretary Armitage—way

back in 1989, North Korea extracted plutonium from some fuel

rods. The amount’s unknown. It could be as much as two bombs

worth, as Secretary Armitage said. No one outside of North Korea

knows where that plutonium is or how much of it there is. No technical

expert, nobody in the physics community, my community,

would doubt that North Korea has the intellectual wherewithal to

make a bomb or two out of it if it had it. And, therefore, it could

have a starter kit toward a nuclear arsenal. And, again, later

phases of the Agreed Framework called for North Korea to cough

this material up, but we never reached those later phases.

So from a threat perspective, the Agreed Framework produced a

profoundly important result for our security over 8 years, a thaw

that is disastrously—I mean, a freeze, which is disastrously thawing

as we speak. But it was an incomplete result, as events 4 years

later—that is, 1998—would show. In that year, North Korea

launched a ballistic missile over Japan.

President Clinton, I think rightly, concluded that the United

States, relieved, I suppose, over the freeze at Yongbyon, had moved

on to other crises, like Bosnia, Haiti, and so forth. Not so, the

North Koreans. And he judged that the United States had no overall

strategy toward North Korea, toward dealing with this funny

place. He asked Secretary of Defense—former Secretary of Defense

Bill Perry to conduct an overall policy review and come up with an

overall strategy, and Bill Perry asked me to be his senior advisor.

We looked—we did exactly what you all would do—we looked at

all of the logical alternatives. One alternative was to undermine

the North Korean regime and try to hasten its collapse. And we

looked at that very carefully. We could not find evidence of significant

internal dissent in this rigid Stalinist state—however, certainly

nothing like Iraq, let alone Afghanistan—that could provide

a U.S. lever for an undermining strategy.

And then there was the problem of mismatched timetables. Undermining

seemed a long-term prospect, at best; whereas, our

weapons of mass destruction difficulties were near-term.

Finally, our allies would not support such a strategy. Since an

undermining strategy is precisely what North Korea’s leaders fear

most, suggesting it is U.S. strategy without a program to accomplish

it seemed to us doubly counterproductive.

Another possibility we looked at was to advise the President to

base his strategy on the prospect of reform in North Korea. Maybe

Kim Jong Il would do in his country what Deng Xiaoping did in

China, open the country up and encourage a more normal positioning

in the international community for North Korea. One can

certainly hope that, but hope’s not a strategy. We needed a strategy.

We needed a strategy for the near term. So we set that aside,

as well.

Summing up the first two options, our report, which is available

in unclassified form, stated, and I quote, ‘‘U.S. policy must deal

with the North Korean Government as it is, not as we might wish

it to be.’’

Another possibility was buying our objectives with economic assistance,

and our report said that we could not offer, I quote again,

‘‘North Korea tangible rewards for appropriate security behavior.

Doing so would both transgress principles the United States’ values

and open us up to further blackmail.’’

In the end, we recommended that the United States, South

Korea, and Japan all proceed to talk to North Korea, but with a

coordinated message and negotiating strategy. After many trips to

Seoul, Tokyo, and even Beijing to coordinate our approaches, in

May 1999, Bill Perry and I and an interagency group, went to

Pyongyang and presented North Korea with two alternatives.

These are the two paths that Secretary Armitage, who was working

outside of government along the same lines at the same time, referred

to earlier.

On the upward path, North Korea would verifiably eliminate its

nuclear missile programs. And, in return, the United States would

take political steps to relieve its security concerns, the most important

of which was to affirm that we had no hostile intent toward

North Korea. We would also help to dismantle its weapons facilities.

Working with us and through their own negotiations, South

Korea and Japan would expand their contacts and economic links.

On the downward path, the three allies would resort to all means

of pressure, including those that risked war to achieve our objectives.

We concluded the policy review in the summer of 2000, and

I stepped down from my advisory role.

Over the next 2 years, North Korea took some small and reversible

steps on the upward path. Whether it would have taken further

steps on this path is history that will never be written.

And, finally, Mr. Chairman, and in closing, that brings us to today’s

crisis. News reports late last week indicated that not only is

the freeze no longer on at Yongbyon, but North Korea might be

trucking away the fuel rods where they can be neither inspected

nor entombed by an air strike. This is the disaster we faced in

1994. But as this loose-nukes disaster unfolds and the options for

dealing with it narrow, the world does nothing.

This is especially ironic as the world prepares to disarm Iraq of

chemical and biological weapons by force, if necessary. What is

going on at Yongbyon as we speak is a huge foreign policy defeat

for the United States and a setback for decades of U.S. nonproliferation

policy. Worse, 17 months after 9/11, it opens up a

prospect of nuclear terrorism.

There are no fewer than five reasons why allowing North Korea

to go nuclear with serial production of weapons is an unacceptable

threat to U.S. security. First, as has been mentioned, North Korea

might sell plutonium. Second, in a collapse scenario, loose nukes

could fall into the hands of warlords or factions or whomever is

around. Now, the half-life of plutonium 239 is 24,400 years. What’s

the half-life of the North Korean regime? Third, even if the bombs

remain firmly in the hands of the North Korean Government,

they’re a huge problem. Having nukes might embolden North

Korea into thinking it can scare away South Korea’s defenders—

us—weakening deterrence and making war on the Korean Peninsula

more likely. Thus a nuclear North Korea makes war more

likely. Fourth, a nuclear North Korea could cause a domino effect—

this was said also earlier—in East Asia as South Korea, Japan,

and Taiwan ask themselves if their non-nuclear status is safe for

them. That’s not a question we want them asking themselves or

really that they want to ask—or they wish to have to ask themselves,

but they might have to. And fifth and finally, if North

Korea, one of the poorest and most isolated countries in the world,

is allowed to go nuclear, serious damage could be done to the global

nonproliferation regime. So that’s five reasons, any one of which is

riveting.

What should we do at this juncture? Let me sum up with some

suggestions—some factors that the administration might keep in

mind as it attempts, as we tried to do in 1999, to formulate an

overall strategy to head off this disaster.

The first is, of course, that we have to make clear to North Korea

that the concealment or a reprocessing of these fuel rods poses an

unacceptable risk to U.S. security.

The second thing we should bear in mind is that no American

strategy toward the Korean Peninsula can succeed if it’s not shared

by our allies, South Korea and Japan. Their national interests and

ours are not identical, but our interests do overlap strongly. And

they can provide vital tools to assist our strategy, and they can also

undercut and undermine our strategy if they’re not persuaded to

share it.

Third, the unfreezing of Yongbyon is the most serious, urgent

problem. In comparison to what they might have done back in 1989

as the starter kit, this moves them to a new plateau of serial production

and a real arsenal. In comparison to the uranium program,

which is a dribbling out of material in the years ahead, this is a

big bang of immediate possession of a substantial cache of nuclear

weapons. So the freezing of Yongbyon is the most serious problem.

Fourth, President Bush has indicated that he intends to seek a

diplomatic solution to this crisis. It’s possible that North Korea can

be persuaded to curb its nuclear ambitions, but we have to understand

it might be determined to press forward.

So whatever we do on the diplomatic front I think we have to

view as an experiment. And in any diplomatic discussion, the

United States must ultimately—our goal must be to obtain the

complete and verifiable elimination of North Korea’s nuclear program.

Now, there’s much debate over what the United States should be

prepared to give in return and an aversion, which I share, to giving

North Korea tangible rewards that its regime can use for its own

ends. But it does seem to me that there are two things that the

United States should easily be prepared to do.

First, I indicated earlier that there’s little reason to have confidence

that North Korea will collapse or reform or transform soon,

and little prospect that the United States can accomplish either result

in a timescale required to head off loose nukes in North Korea.

That being the case, a U.S. decision not to undermine the regime

could be used as a negotiating lever. Much as we object to its conduct,

we can tell the North that we do not plan to go to war to

change it. Only the U.S. can make this pledge, which is why direct

talks are required. We can live in peace, but that peace will not be

possible if North Korea pursues nuclear weapons. Far from guaranteeing

security, building such weapons will force a confrontation—

that’s what we need to argue to them.

We can also argue that since North Korea has enough conventional

firepower to make war a distinctly unpleasant prospect to us,

as I noted earlier, it doesn’t need weapons of mass destruction to

safeguard its security. This ‘‘relative stability’’—and I believe that

was a phrase the Secretary used earlier—in turn, if restored, this

relative stability on the Korean Peninsula, can provide the time

and conditions for a relaxation of tension and eventually improved

relations if North Korea transforms its relations with the rest of

the world.

The second thing we should be able to offer is some assistance,

with dismantlement, because at some point, Yongbyon has to be

dismantled, as must the centrifuges for enriching uranium, the ballistic

missiles and their factories, and the engineering infrastructure

that supports them. The United States can surely suggest to

North Korea that we participate in this process, both to hasten it

and to make sure it takes place. This assistance would be similar

to the Nunn-Lugar Program’s historic efforts to prevent loose nukes

after the cold war.

Mr. Chairman and members, let me close with one final thought.

Once nuclear materials are made, either plutonium or enriched

uranium, they are exceedingly difficult to find and eliminate. These

are not visible or highly radioactive materials. They last for thousands

of years. In the case of uranium, 715 million years is the

half-life. There is no secret about how to fashion them into bombs.

They can fall into the hands of unstable nations or terrorists for

whom cold war deterrence is a dubious shield, indeed.

These facts describe America’s and the world’s dominant security

problem for the foreseeable future. It’s of the utmost importance to

prevent the production of nuclear materials in the first place.

Therefore, the main strategy for dealing with the threat of nuclear

war—weapons must be preventive. And our most successful prevention

program, such as Nunn-Lugar, have been done in cooperation

with other nations, and maybe there’s that possibility with

North Korea. But, in exceptional cases, and maybe that’s the case

with North Korea, it may be necessary to resort to the threat of

military force to prevent nuclear threats from emerging.

Thank you.

I would just—two observations. It is an excellent

question, and it is a particularly timely one, because, as I think everyone

here has been emphasizing, we cannot succeed with our objectives

unless we are together with the South——

Koreans. And the same thing is true of

them. So what is the basis? Our interests do not coincide. They

overlap, but they do not coincide.

I would make two arguments to the South Koreans in that regard.

The first one is that the pursuit of nuclear weapons by North

Korea does make war on the Korean Peninsula more likely. It is

not just a matter that they can fall into the hands of terrorists or

get out and, thereby, come back at the United States, but not at

South Korea. That is true, too, but it is also true that South Korea

has enjoyed, prospered, grown its economy, democratized against a

background of stable deterrence on the Korean Peninsula. Pursuit

of weapons of mass destruction by North Korea can disrupt that

stability which they have enjoyed for decades by convincing North

Korea that it has something more than its conventional army, that

it can change the equation in some way. So that does threaten

South Korea’s security.

But the other part of the answer, I think, has to be to them—

and this is something that we always try to remember in talking

to the South Koreans and the Japanese—when we go to the table

with the North Koreans, we cannot just go to the North Koreans

with what we want. We have to go to the table with what the Japanese

and the South Koreans want, also; and, likewise, they, when

they go to the table with the North Koreans, need to go with what we want.

So when we talked to the North Koreans, we always mentioned

the abductee issue. That was not an American issue; it was an allied

issue. And if we want the Japanese to back us and want what

we want, we have to want what they want to some extent. There

has to be a common portfolio of desires and then a common portfolio,

as Ambassador Bosworth said, of carrots and sticks put forward.

So they need to back us a little bit where our interests overlap

but do not coincide, and we need to do the same for them.

Ambassador Bosworth just touched on the point—

a precise point I was going to make. In dealing with North Korea,

there is kind of a threshold question, given the behavior of the government

with respect to its own people. And I remember the famine

days of 1996 to 1998, and that was truly upsetting, I think, to

any human being who has children and sees children in the condition

that North Korean children were in because of the inability of

their own government to give them what they need.

And we are talking about dealing, as I quoted from the Policy

Review report, with the government as it is, not as we wish it was,

and you really—I think that is a threshold for us all. I got over

that threshold by considering whether we had any realistic prospect

of changing it, and also by considering the damage that it

could do for the period when it lasts.

I think logic, human nature, all tell you that this cannot go on

forever, what you see in North Korea, but I cannot produce for you

the kind of evidence that you would require that you can base your

strategy on the prospect that they will collapse before they cause

lasting damage to our security. And what that means is, you have

to swallow hard and go deal.

And I do not have any insight, particularly, into the administration,

but I read the Bob Woodward book and so forth, and I think

that is a threshold question for any President, and it is perfectly

understandable that it is a threshold question. It is one you have

to reason your way through.

Ambassador GREGG. I think a coincidence contributed to what

you speak of, Senator, and that was the issue of the Rumsfeld report

on anti-—or missile threats to the United States in 1998, and

then, I think, within 60 days, the firing of the North Korean Taepo

Dong missile, which they claim was something designed to launch

a satellite that would have played music praising Kim Jong Il. But

whatever the case, it took us aback, because it was more sophisticated

and more long range than we thought possible.

And so North Korea became the poster child for missile defense,

and I think that when the Bush administration came into office,

that that was certainly a mindset that applied very strongly in certain

parts of the administration to North Korea.

I think the President—I have been very interested to see how

he—how consistent his statements have been on North Korea since

the Kelly visit. He has never wavered from saying we are going to

find a peaceful solution to this through dialog.

And I welcome that. I think he is realizing that some of these

ideological wish lists run afoul of reality in the world and that the

stakes are huge in northeast Asia. And so I think he is very much

now on the side of a diplomatic solution. It just has to be worked

out by the rest of the administration what shape that takes.

That’s fine.

If I can take a crack at that, it is an excellent question,

and it is an issue of sequencing here. I think they go hand

in hand. In other words, we cannot repair our relationship with

South Korea until and unless—and I think Steve Bosworth made

this point—we show that we are on top of this issue. ‘‘On top of

this issue’’ means we have a strategy. We have arrived at that

strategy and are conducting that strategy in a process that includes

them in a respectful way as befits the people who actually live

there. And with that strategy, we can then go forward to the

North.

So these two things have to proceed in parallel. I do not think

we can repair our relationship with South Korea and say, ‘‘Let’s repair

that first and then we’ll go North.’’ Part of the repair is to be

indicating that we have a strategy for the North that includes

them.

A final comment. I think red line is the right word. Red line is

the right word. I think North Korea needs to be made to understand,

and we need to understand, ourselves, that going further

than the freeze, taking those fuel rods out and putting them where

we cannot get at them, doing irreparable harm to the status of the

freeze——

Is something the United States cannot

live with.

Absolutely.

Yes.

Correct.

Just one comment. I have been concerned, since the

freeze began to thaw and we have been so preoccupied with other

things and have a difficult relationship with South Korea and are

still formulating our strategy, that North Korea would get the opposite

of the message we should be sending. The message I fear

they get is, ‘‘We’re out to get you, but we’re not going to do anything

about your nuclear weapons.’’

I would prefer just the opposite, which is, ‘‘We don’t have to be

out to get you, unless you’re after weapons of mass destruction. We

can ‘keep on keeping on’ with you, much as we dislike you’’——

‘‘but we cannot if you are going after

weapons of mass destruction.’’ And that is where I think—our willingness

to make that statement really is conditioned on their not

pursuing weapons of mass destruction.

So I would not, also, give it unless we got back from them the

assurances we need that they are not going forward with weapons

of mass destruction.

I do not know what the likelihood is, but I agree

that you cannot base a strategy on it.

A final thought. I agree with everything that has

been said. I am always struck, as I think about North Korea, with

the case of Albania. Albania was two generations into Stalinism

when it finally collapsed—the same kind of xenophobic absolute

control.

North Korea is now almost a generation beyond that. No Stalinist

regime has lasted as long as North Korea. North Korean students—

children have, if my information is right, 4 hours of political

education a day. Their parents had it, and their grandparents had

it. That is a phenomenon—that is a rigidity that I do not think humanity

has experienced in a dictatorship before. And therefore, I

do not have any doubt—I understand what is being said here about

the need for any leader to enjoy the respect of those around him.

But, in that kind of system, if Kim Jong Il gives the order to go

this way, they will go that way, at least for a time. That means

that if he gives the order to go cross the DMZ, they will go across

the DMZ. It also means that if he gives the order to go in the direction

of Deng Xiaoping or something else, they will go in that direction

also, for a time, a critical time. So I do not know anybody on

the North Korean scene who does not think that he is absolutely

the audience for any message we send.