

AIR, SPACE, AND CYBERSPACE POWER IN THE 21ST CENTURY
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DAY ONE

SESSION TWO

Dissuasion and Deterrence in the New Security Landscape

10:30 A.M. TO 12:30 P.M.

Dr. Clark Murdock

LIEUTENANT GENERAL FRANK G. KLOTZ: Ladies and gentlemen, could I ask you please to be seated so that we could begin the second panel? Please be seated as soon as possible so that we can begin the second panel. Welcome back, everyone. I'm Frank Klotz, the Commander of Air Force Global Strike Command. And it's an honor here for all of us to participate in the 38th IFPA Fletcher Conference.

Today, I have the distinct honor of being the moderator for Session 2 panel entitled "Dissuasion and Deterrence in the New Security Landscape." Now, allow me to introduce the members of this esteemed panel. You have their more extensive and comprehensive biographies in the literature, which has been handed out by the conference organizer. So I will only make note of their current position.

First of all, General Kevin P. Chilton, the Commander of the U.S. Strategic Command. The Honorable Andy Weber, Assistant to the Secretary of Defense for Nuclear and Chemical and Biological Defense Programs. Dr. Paul Bracken is Professor of Management and Professor of Political Science at Yale University. Dr. Clark Murdock is the Senior Advisor at the International

from being able to impose unacceptable costs on them. We've demonstrated repeatedly in the post Cold War era that we're not deterred by the prospect that our adversaries may have chemical weapons or biological weapons. We've also demonstrated that we might be deterred if they have nuclear weapons. After all, that's why we engaged in preventive attacks, to prevent Iraq from gaining a nuclear capability.

But when you come back to extended deterrence, I think we sometimes forget what a serious business it is. United States, for example, is putting its homeland at risk to a nuclear armed adversary. It's the question that the Chinese have asked, would we be willing to risk Los Angeles for Tokyo? But for the non-nuclear ally, the commitment and the trust is even greater. French President Chirac said nuclear weapons, fundamental guarantee of France's sovereignty. Prime Minister Blair and the British white paper, that nuclear weapons are the ultimate assurance of our security.

Now, if that's that important, we're asking non-nuclear allies to accept the U.S. guarantee in place of that. That's pretty serious business. It brings back what some of you refer to as the Healey Theorem that was developed by British Defense Minister, Denis Healey, who noted in the '60s that it only took 5 percent credibility of American retaliation to deter the Russians, but 95 percent credibility to reassure the Europeans. So this is serious business. How do you assure your allies that our extended deterrent is credible?

The Strategic Posture Commission underscores that credibility is in the eyes of the beholder and makes references to both the potential adversaries that we're trying to deter and the allies that we're trying to assure. But in a report that CSIS recently put out by myself and Jessica Yates, we draw a lot of attention to the third audience. And the third audience is really what we in the United States, the American public, Congress, the military and U.S. government officials, think about their deterrence. And they and our potential adversaries, and our allies, watch what we say and think and do about our nuclear forces all the time. General Chilton said it's a daily business. Well, if we screw it up on a daily basis, they watch that, too, and it has implications for what we do.

And we found that it was pretty surprising when you start looking at perceptions today, even after we've been revitalizing our nuclear capabilities and deterrent in the recent past, is people draw surprising conclusions. A number of statements by the leaders of moderate Arab states, when asked about the prospect of a nuclear Iran, start talking about the credibility of U.S. assurances and security commitments to them, even though anybody who looks at the American political scene recognizes that the American people don't have much faith or desire or trust in an American extended deterrence to many of these same Arab regimes.

So this is a case where they seem to be a lot more assured than our actual extended deterrent would justify. Similarly on the Israeli case, well obviously the Israelis weren't going to rely upon assurance. They developed their own capabilities. Yet, it's also the case that many of Israel's potential adversaries seem to believe that we will come to their defense, including of nuclear weapons, of Israel if there's a conflict of that kind. So this question of perceptions and credibility are very important when thinking about extended deterrence.

So, as long as nuclear weapons exist, extended deterrence and assurance are serious commitments. And if the United States government, which concludes Congress is not serious about sustaining our nuclear forces, how can you maintain a credible deterrent during this time? So this is a balance that has to be struck. Achieving global reductions in nuclear inventories can only be achieved if nations reduce their reliance upon nuclear weapons. So logically, that holds together. Can't reduce weapons if you don't reduce reliance upon them.

But at the same time, we have nations acquiring nuclear weapons, not to use them, but to prevent, to threaten their use. And they threaten their use for both defensive purposes, we tend to focus upon that. But they also focus on offensive purposes; nuclear blackmail, coercive diplomacy. And if the second age, which may never transition to a post nuclear age, if the second nuclear age is one of multiple powers, they're becoming more attached and more reliant upon their nuclear weapons, the disconnect between the way we've been thinking about nuclear weapons and the way our potential adversaries gets wider and wider during this time, because it's not just the capabilities. It's how we think about them.

event have said that we will extend to 12:50 question time for this particular session. I realize the brochure says 12:30. But, we have until 12:50. So, if you have any questions that you would like to pose to members of the panel, either collectively or individually, please do not be deterred or dissuaded from doing that.

Let me go over very quickly, one more time, the ground rules that Bob laid out for the first particular session. We'll take questions from the audience. Please, if you do have a question, stand up and identify yourself and where you're from. Remember that all questions and comments should be limited to the conference topics.

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BEGIN DISK 8A

DR. MURDOCK: -- intercontinental ballistic missile launches or regional ballistic missile launches, you need to have that same surveillance and a situational awareness of the space domain. And it starts with intelligence long before anything is launched into the domain studying potential adversaries, capabilities and intents and it culminates in adequate sensors deployed around the world and networks that keep track of what's going on in that domain. Perhaps the more difficult one is cyberspace, but no different if you want to think about deterrence in cyberspace. You need to work the attribution problem.

And it is not an insurmountable problem, and it's a problem that is being worked, for sure.

GENERAL KLOTZ: Other questions? A question down here, General Miller?

AUDIENCE: Chris Miller from the Air staff. This question is for Dr. Grande and General Chilton and anyone else on the panel who would like to answer it. Just curious about your thoughts on the use of traditionally nuclear delivery systems, short or long range ballistic missiles, for deterring a range of unconventional threats, everything from biological, all the way up through nuclear.

DR. GRANDE: As you might know, there was a big debate in France after not the last nuclear policy speech, because we don't do-- we are a truly presidential system, so we don't do NPR, so we do nuclear policy speech by the President. But it's more or less the same process. So, the last speech by Chirac in 2006 which raised the big debate because he mentioned the nuclear retaliation in the context of terrorism, although he made clear that it was not the purpose, there was some misreading about that so there was a big debate that started with that.

Let's say that from a French doctrinal perspective, we are very clear about the fact that nuclear weapons are about deterring existential threats. So the point there is that the nature of the threat, whether it's nuclear, biological, chemical or conventional, is not the critical issue. Obviously, the nuclear threat is the most relevant, but the others, as if they create an existential threat, a vital threat to a vital interest, the president leaves open the option of putting a nuclear weapon at play, and we've made that clear in several contexts. And honestly, when I look at bio weapons, I really do think that it is an issue that we can't completely underestimate in that line of thinking. And that's one of the reasons I'm personally reluctant in the so-called sole purpose logic, when it's nuclear, it deters nuclear, full stop. I think there can be a danger here.

Having said this, I think we also have to be clear that nuclear weapons are not made to manage contingencies that emerge in low intensity or even high intensity warfare because there are, let's say, a more manageable-- because there are little more options than conventional means. And I think it is important to make clear to the rest of the world, also for diplomatic purposes, that those weapons are special and they're not easy to use conceptually because I wouldn't imagine a situation in which we western countries would be the ones breaking the taboo.

GENERAL KLOTZ: I wonder if any other panel members would like to comment on that?

AUDIENCE: I meant a traditional nuclear delivery means, not so much the nuclear weapons. So if we're using an ICBM, for example, not armed with a nuclear warhead ... (inaudible)?

DR. GRANDE: If I may, I have a one sentence follow-up on this. I'm sorry, I didn't touch upon that. Honestly, we have a very strong reservation on this issue for doctrinal reasons. I think it

could be very complicated. I see the point, especially given the virtues of trident, of using it in a conventional-- it might not be cost effective, but it might be effective. Having said this, I nevertheless view with a certain anxiety a situation in which a U.S. or U.K. trident submarine would fire conventional tridents, and I would wonder what would be the flying time, what would happen in Moscow, Beijing or elsewhere during that period? So I think that if you do a cost and benefits balance on the whole, the conventional use of strategically dedicated means might prove more dangerous or creating more instability than the benefits that you can expect in terms of times of delivery, and so on and so forth.

GENERAL CHILTON: I'll just add a couple of thoughts on. Again, I think it's important to go back in the history of why we even talk about prompt conventional global strike. And it was the realization that if there was a desire to go after a target with a conventional weapon really quickly on the other side of the world, the only way we could do that-- Well, we couldn't do that. The only thing we had were nuclear weapons to do that, and that's maybe in certain circumstances or threshold you absolutely don't want to cross, yet you want to achieve the effect.

The question, though, is a conventional problem called the strike, a replacement of the nuclear deterrent, though, I think is one that's very debatable. First of all, if you go back to my comments about the necessity of fear, the fear element of a deterrent, I don't fear conventionally tipped intercontinental ballistic missiles, nor do I think our adversaries. So there's a difference there in scale, if you will. That said, there could be some second or third order deterrence value from it. But I think it's very debatable that you start looking at equivalencies there.

The other thing as we look at-- There's filling this niche, and the niche is prompt capability with a conventional strike capability, adding another arrow to the quiver, if you will, to national decision makers options. Again, as I caution in missile defense, you have to look more broadly at the context of deployment of such a system. Deployed in large numbers, a highly precise intercontinental kinetic weapon might very much look to an adversary like a first strike cluster if you deployed in vast numbers, and along with a vast missile defense system, it could be destabilizing. And so we have to weigh not only whether or not you want this capability, I think there is a valid need for it, war fighting means, but then you also have to look at it through the

lens of deterrence and what other nations might think of this as you deployed. What second and third order consequences, as were mentioned earlier, that other people might have, and they get a vote in the direction they're going to go.

In my mind, I guess to kind of close the thought out, I think of the capability besides filling the niche, as more of an escalation control weapon, potentially, which is more of a war fighting element of deterrence than deterrence itself.

GENERAL KLOTZ: Paul, you had a comment?

DR. BRACKEN: Just quickly. I mean, I think the answer to your question will look in terms of escalation control. My own personal feeling is we're confronting this very quickly with mixed loads for tridents or SSBN-X, which there's a lot of money being put into. The other point I'd make is that if you look in the first nuclear age, the super powers put enormous effort into separating conventional and nuclear forces in everything from command and control to politics. And any general who overstepped that bounds and talked about nukes tended to be fired. If you look at the North Korea/India/Pakistan and even to a certain extent Israel, you do not see that. So the threat environment we're going into, they are mixing not consciously, but they're not separating them, I would say, their conventional and nuclear forces. This also applies to command and control. And if you believed the published descriptions of the Pakistani or Indian command and control systems, I have a bridge that I'd like to sell you.

GENERAL KLOTZ: Well, I'm afraid, ladies and gentlemen, that we have run out of time in this most stimulating discussion. However, all the panelists will be around. You'll have an opportunity to pursue them individually as we move to lunch.

Now speaking of lunch, since we're starting late, it's going to begin immediately after we leave this auditorium. It'll be served in the atrium ballroom. So once again, thanks to every member of our panel here. Would you please join me in a round of applause? [applause]

END OF SESSION 2