rightly said that we live in the real world, not the virtual world, and that the real world requires leaders to make decisions to act.

With its languishing economy and literally centuries' worth of natural gas reserves, Iran's claim that it seeks nuclear capability solely for peaceful purposes is ridiculous beyond my ability to express.

It is now open knowledge that for years North Korea gave false overtures that it would engage in negotiations over its nuclear program while holding every deliberate intention to continue its covert development of its nuclear program. We are lying to ourselves and to the world that similar overtures, if made from Iran, will be any less disingenuous. And the implications for our children and our future generations are profoundly significant, Mr. Speaker.

The world must act. As one former Israeli Ambassador put it, ''The game is over.'' Iran is no longer progressing but has now reached the endgame of diplomatic relations.

Mr. Speaker, I am in favor of every sanction and diplomatic effort possible to prevent Iran from gaining nuclear capabilities. However, ultimately I am convinced the only two things that will stop Iran from becoming a nuclear armed nation and proliferating nuclear terrorism globally in the future will either be a direct military intervention from America or other nations, or the absolute conviction in the minds of the Iranian regime that that will occur if their march toward gaining nuclear weapons continues.

The world must act, Mr. Speaker. For the sake of freedom and for all that free people love, Iran must not be allowed to progress one step further in its pursuit of nuclear weapons.

The SPEAKER pro tempore. Under a previous order of the House, the gentleman from South Carolina (Mr. INGLIS) is recognized for 5 minutes.

(Mr. INGLIS addressed the House. His remarks will appear hereafter in the Extensions of Remarks.)

IRAN: A CLEAR AND PRESENT THREAT

The SPEAKER pro tempore. Under the Speaker's announced policy of January 6, 2009, the gentleman from Ohio (Mr. TURNER) is recognized for 60 minutes as the designee of the minority leader.

Mr. TURNER. Mr. Speaker, President Obama's decision to scrap a long-range, European-based missile defense shield was not only met with concern among our European allies, but more importantly has sounded alarms here at home where the President's action will leave the Nation vulnerable to Iranian long-range missile attack.

Three years ago, in response to growing threats from Iran, the U.S. developed plans to install a missile defense system in Eastern Europe to protect Europe and the United States from potential long-range missile attack. Under the program, 10 interceptor missiles would be located in Poland and a radar station would be built in the Czech Republic by 2013. The European-based missile defense system would add an additional layer of defense to the continental United States, which already has a small network of interceptors on the west coast.

The European-based missile defense shield was endorsed by our NATO allies, who called it a ''substantial contribution to their collective security.'' Now, the Obama administration has taken the unusual and highly questionable position of canceling the planned European-based missile defense system in favor of a scaled-back program that will not be ready until 2020.

The threat represented by Iran is real and growing. Last February, Iran launched a satellite, demonstrating substantial progress toward achieving a reliable long-range missile program. A month later, the head of the U.S. European Command testified before the House Armed Services Committee that Iran would be able to deploy an intercontinental ballistic missile, an ICBM, capable of reaching all of Europe and parts of the United States by the year 2015.

The President stated his decision was based upon reduced threats from Iran and greater cost efficiency of his alternative defense system—and anyone watching the news knows that there is no diminished threat from Iran. However, a July 2008 classified report produced by the Institute for Defense Analyses concluded that the European-based missile defense system that the administration now wants to cancel would, in fact, be the most cost effective. I have called on the administration to declassify this report so that all of the facts can be known and we can have a robust debate.

Moscow has made no secret of its opposition to the European-based missile defense system and has repeatedly called for its elimination. Furthermore, European leaders have heard from Russian leaders. The Russians have continually shown that they have no intention of pressing Iran to drop its nuclear and missile programs. For its part, Iran also shows no willingness to be deterred by Russia. Yet, the administration, in courting Moscow assistance in halting Iran's nuclear missile ambitions, has effectively chosen to surrender America's bargaining position with its shelving of the proposed missile defense system.

While the Obama administration's decision to reverse course on European missile defense is being met with smiles in Moscow, Americans have real reason to be concerned. By the administration's own admission, its alternative missile defense system will not be able to be fully capable until 2020, with intelligence indicating Iran will have ICBM capability by 2015. This means the United States could be vulnerable to Iranian missile attack 5 years before the administration gets its new missile defense system ready.

Not only is Iran near its goal of launching ICBMs, reportedly, it has already the ability to construct a nuclear bomb. Last Thursday, a group of experts at the International Atomic Energy Agency stated, in a report obtained by the Associated Press, that Iran is already capable of building a nuclear bomb and is on the way to developing a missile system capable of carrying an atomic warhead.

Remarkably, in the face of Iran's blatant actions to develop a nuclear weapons program, the administration continues to pursue a course of unilateral disarmament. Earlier this year, the President cut funding for missile interceptors to be based in Alaska as part of the ongoing construction of a homeland missile defense system, reducing the number of interceptors by one-third. I opposed that move and offered an amendment in the House to restore the funding. Unfortunately, the President's cuts were sustained by a Democrat majority of the House.

The administration's record on missile defense at a time when both North Korea and Iran are seeking nuclear weapons capable of reaching the United States is troubling. This year, the administration has cut missile defense by $1.2 billion, reducing by one-third our intended west coast shield which would protect us from North Korea's advancements and has stopped a European-based system intended to protect the U.S. from Iranian missile threats. In the face of known threats, this administration needs to rededicate itself to defense of the United States' mainland.

It is now my honor to recognize our ranking member of the House Armed Services Committee, BUCK MCKEON, who represents California's 25th District, was elected in 1991, has been a leader in ensuring the United States has adequate defense, both that our troops have adequate equipment in their conflicts but also in ensuring that the United States has adequate defense systems.

With that, I would like to recognize Representative MCKEON.

Mr. MCKEON. 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 ''Iran probably would use covert facilities, rather than its declared nuclear sites, for the production of highly enriched uranium for a weapon.'' However, the NIE went further to say that ''we judge that these efforts were probably halted in response to the fall 2003 halt, and that these efforts had not been restarted through at least mid-2008.''

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?

□ 1230

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.

Mr. TURNER. Well, I want to thank you, Representative MCKEON, our ranking member on the House Armed Services Committee. I want to thank you for your leadership on the committee, certainly for your leadership of ensuring that we have a quality defense for the United States and also for your highlighting this important issue.

The issues that you've raised concerning Iran are very important. It should not be lost on anybody that, the very day the administration released its decision to drop the European site—to walk away from the Czech Republic and the Poles—the International Atomic Energy Agency released its statement that Iran was nuclear-capable, that they were capable of making a nuclear weapon.

This was on the very same day, as you were saying, that the President said that there was a downgraded threat when, in fact, there is no evidence that the threat has been downgraded. I keep asking the administration to provide us any evidence that the threat is diminishing from long-range ICBM threats from Iran, and we have no information which would indicate that.

Mr. AKIN. Will the gentleman yield? You're getting me upset.

Mr. TURNER. Representative AKIN, I appreciate your work on this.

Mr. AKIN. This is kind of hard to figure out.

I really am thankful. The ranking Republican member, Congressman MCKEON, does a great job on Armed Services, and he is so gentlemanly and scholarly, and he lays the facts out.

I want to just kind of put these things together and ask anybody if this makes any sense at all. What we're going to do is drop missile defense in Europe. Now, this is something for which quite a number of Europeans had to stick their necks out politically. It is the Czechs and the Polish who are agreeing to put this missile defense in. Now, if you draw a line between Iran and New York City, guess what's in line with that? Well, Poland is.

So now we're going to drop this missile defense program to protect our country and Western Europe from rogue states, particularly Iran, which we now know is putting together three things. They're putting together long-range missiles, nuclear warheads and radical Islam. That's not a great combination. So now we're saying the threat assessment has been dropped. How do you figure that? The threat assessment has been dropped when you're putting long-range missiles and nuclear warheads with radical Islam. I don't feel like the threat assessment should have been dropped. I don't know anybody with common sense who would assert that.

Mr. TURNER. Mr. AKIN, you raised a very good point. I'd like you to speak for a moment on this issue:

The European missile defense shield that was intended for interceptors in Poland and for the radar in the Czech Republic was not just intended to protect the United States. Although, it would have provided protection to the United States by 2013, with the President's plan not providing protection to the United States, by their own Web site admission, until 2020.

You make an important point that it wasn't just to protect us; it was also to protect our European allies. In addition to that, the Czechs and the Poles had gone out on a limb.

Mr. AKIN. We cut the limb off.

Mr. TURNER. There had been tremendous pressure on them not to agree to work with the United States.

For a moment, talk about what the unilateralism of the Obama administration does to those allies.

Mr. AKIN. Well, we just basically cut the limb off from underneath them. I mean who else is going to want to partner with us in some sort of a decent effort to defend the Western World from either nuclear destruction or at least blackmail? These guys have gone out on a limb, and we just cut the limb off from underneath them.

What's even worse is the fig leaf of an excuse from a technical point of view—for those of us on the committee, we know this is just a bunch of baloney—of the idea that we're going to use the standard block 3 missile on a ship to stop intercontinental ballistic missiles.

Look, this missile defense stuff is not as rocket science as people think. It's pretty simple. You've got small ones, medium ones and big ones. The big ones are called intercontinental ballistic missiles, and you can't shoot an intercontinental ballistic missile with one of our two-stage missiles off of a ship. You can't do that and make it work very well.

Not only that, think about the logic of what we're saying. The Navy is complaining that they've got a lot of demands in places where they're going to put their ships. Now, if you're going to try and cover this with ships, you're going to have to have probably three ships on station all the time. That's really expensive. It's a lot simpler to put the radar on the Czech Republic and some ground-based interceptors in Poland.

So we're talking about, first of all, a technical solution which is not going to give us the protection we need. It doesn't even make any sense. Then to say the threat assessments have dropped, the President is just not making sense in the kinds of things that he's talking about.

Mr. TURNER. Representative AKIN, to piggyback on what you're saying here, you're making the point that the system that was intended to be in Europe was the system that would provide the greatest capability at the lowest cost.

Mr. AKIN. Right.

Mr. TURNER. You have a great reputation with your leadership in the House and for being the ranking member of the Seapower and Expeditionary Forces for the Armed Services Committee. You were elected in 2001, and you've got a great record of service.

One thing that, I think, is important is that we don't just have to take your word for it. There is the Institute for Defense Analyses' unclassified excerpt of the executive summary for the independent assessment of the proposed deployment of the ballistic missile defense system in Europe. This was presented to our subcommittee at the beginning of this year. This was asked for by the Democrat leadership to do an assessment of exactly what you just said—to compare the system that's being proposed by the administration and the system that was intended to go into Europe. This report, which is an independent assessment, reads that the most cost-effective way to protect the United States was the system that this President just scrapped.

Mr. AKIN. I'm the ranking member on Seapower, and you know, there's something that just doesn't make sense.

I've been aboard our ships that have these standard block 3-type missiles on them, okay? I've talked to the people who run those systems, and they tell me, if North Korea launches an ICBM, their chance of stopping it is about 1 percent. The reason is that the missile on the ship is a two-stage missile. It doesn't have the velocity and the ability to get on track with a much faster, higher-moving missile.

So that's why I say you've got small ones, medium ones and big ones. You fight the big ones with big ones, and the big ones are ground-based interceptors. It's a three-stage. That's why we have them in Grayling, Alaska, that's why we have some in California, and that's why there should be some in Poland.

This decision, I believe, was made all based on politics and not based on logic. I'll tell you what makes me secure. It's secure when we have American troops defending American homelands instead of vague promises from some Russian or some Iranian leader that everything is going to be okay.

Mr. TURNER. Representative AKIN, reclaiming my time, I appreciate your comments.

I would like to yield to Representative BISHOP, who is from Utah's First District. He was elected in 2003. He is the former speaker of the House of Utah, and is a great champion for national defense on the Armed Services Committee.

I know you have thoughts about this, and I would like to yield to Representative BISHOP.

Mr. BISHOP of Utah. Well, I appreciate the gentleman from Ohio for giving me this opportunity.

I am pleased to be with the gentleman from Ohio and with the gentleman from Arizona, who will be speaking, I believe, in just a moment. They have really turned out to be experts on our missile defense system, as well as the gentleman from Missouri, who clearly understands the technical nature of what we can do both on the sea as well as on the land.

I am deeply concerned about what we have been talking about in this area. It is very clear that this decision, based on what will happen in Europe, has significant long-term implications to our relationship with those European allies. The gentleman from Ohio and I have been, on several occasions, meeting with German officials as part of the study group on Germany. Is there really an opportunity, once this country has reversed course this way, to expect them to trust us in long-term decisions and in long-term commitments?

I hate to say this, but the idea of our developing a stronger bond with Europe based on this decision, the idea that the current Iranian regime will become nice in its relationships with the rest of the world—I mean I'm sorry. My beloved Cubs, Mr. Speaker, Mr. Parliamentarian, my Cubs have a better chance of making it to the World Series than the Iranians have of becoming nice all of a sudden unilaterally, or the fact that our European ties will be built stronger because of this particular decision.

If I could, I'll expand this slightly and take us a little bit afield because this does deal with the impact to our European defense; it does deal with the impact of the defense of the eastern coast, and it also deals with the impact of the defense of this entire country. We right now have 30 ground-based missiles to defend the entire country, and they're all situated in Alaska—in one spot.

We talked earlier with other administrations about extending that to other areas, which makes sense, about growing that number, which makes sense, about taking not just a ground-based system but also a kinetic energy interceptor system to try to spread out our defense, which, to me, makes sense.

This administration, much of these decisions being made under a unique gag order by the Secretary of Defense, simply took the process of halting our growth so that, once our 30 missiles are

gone, there is no replacement. Halting the kinetic intercept system, even though we were ready for the first test-fire and everything had run smoothly up to that time, simply putting a stop-work order and halting it. Halting the increase in production of our ICBM defense system. All at the same time.

I want to put out one other element that has an impact, because I see these people every day. Look, I grew up watching ''Bewitched.'' If there's one thing I noticed from that TV show it's that Samantha wasn't real. Nobody can wiggle his nose and create a new solution.

Once we decide to unilaterally stop the production of these missiles, if at some point in the future we decide maybe we made a mistake, you don't easily and quickly fix that mistake because, once the industrial base is gone on these elements, you don't bring it back. You cannot simply turn the spigot on and off and, all of a sudden, have the engineers who know the problems and who have worked through them, come back to work for the government.

As one of the generals who was talking to me off the record simply said, Look, first of all, when the work base is gone, it is gone, and we don't bring it back. Most significantly, the first people who leave are the ones we really want. It's not the worst employees who leave first; it's the best employees who leave our industrial base first. Those are the ones we want.

If at some time we decide we were wrong and we have got to fix this problem, that there maybe is a greater threat than we're anticipating. It will cost this government significantly more to restart that work base. It's not just a matter of we're throwing people out of a job. It's not just a matter of boom-and-bust economies. It's the fact that we will have to spend more to recreate what we already have if, indeed, the threat is more significant. Some people in the military currently see that.

Mr. AKIN. Does the gentleman yield?

Mr. BISHOP of Utah. I always yield. Every time I take a breath, I'm ready to yield. I just breathed.

Mr. AKIN. To me, it seems like you've understated how bad things are, because not only is the industrial base closed up, the buildings shuttered, the engineers working on some other project at some other place, but it takes time to get it back on track. If somebody is shooting missiles at you and they're going to arrive in half an hour, that's not very much time to start up a business and to rebuild your missile defense. You just can't do it in that amount of time. This requires planning.

The gentleman's numbers and statistics are right. The only thing is, they do have ground-based not just in Alaska. I think there are a few in California, but it's not spread out. Am I wrong on that? I thought there were a couple of them in California. Anyway, the point is right, which is that they're not spread out. The other point is we're using something to kill something that isn't designed to work from the beginning. It just doesn't make any sense.

As the gentleman has expanded the topic a little bit, let's talk about the different things that have been cut.

□ 1245

Mr. TURNER. Before we move on, I would like to go to Representative TRENT FRANKS who is the Chair of the Missile Defense Caucus of Arizona's Second District, elected in 2003. We were elected at the same time.

Representative FRANKS was talking just today about the covert issue of Iran and what they have announced with their secondary site. You have been a leader on this, both in highlighting the issue, making sure that the technical discussion goes forward so people know what's at risk and what we have the capability of.

But on the threat side, this administration has stepped forward and said that we have a threat that is not the same as we thought. They say it's lessened. Everybody else that I talked to believes that it's either increasing—but no one will say that it is actually diminishing.

Representative FRANKS, I would love for you to talk about the threat issue to our families.

Mr. FRANKS of Arizona. I appreciate the gentleman very much. I have to say, Mr. Speaker, I think all of the previous speakers have covered critically important points.

Before I give a statement related to the European site primarily, I just want to say I was struck by the chairman or chairman-to-be, we hope, of the Strategic Forces Committee, your comments saying that the statement that was made by the IAEA related to Iran's nuclear capability came on the same day that the President decided to abandon the European site, I thought were profound. Because, in reality, this ostensible alternative that the President suggests that we can put in place of the ground-based system, we were going to build anyway.

That's nothing new. All we have done is to take out the equation of the ground-based system that, as Mr. AKIN says, would have had the actual capability of interdicting ICBMs. That's all we have really done.

Of course, the system we were building in Europe could have protected the American homeland. Any ability to do that in this so-called alternative that we were going to build anyway will be out around 2020.

I just appreciate the gentleman being able to point out that critically important point, because I believe, Mr. Speaker, that the Obama administration's decision last week to abandon the European site will go down in history as a crossroads in European and American relations.

I am afraid that this and future American generations may be greatly affected. When the administration decided to abandon U.S. plans for a ground-based missile defense site in Europe, I believe the President fundamentally disgraced and weakened this Nation by breaking his word to our loyal and courageous allies in the Czech Republic and Poland.

Mr. Speaker, America has become the greatest Nation in history because our word has always meant something. The announcement to abandon the protective missile defense shield in Europe has fundamentally altered that paradigm. After the decision was announced, the newspaper headlines in Poland and the Czech Republic stated the situation in the very starkest of terms.

One Czech newspaper had the quote: ''Betrayed, the U.S.A. has sold us to the Russians and stabbed us in the back.'' That's an incredible statement. In the Czech Republic, the daily Lidowe Noviny commented, that's one of their major newspapers, Obama gave in to the Kremlin. This has weakened America's place in the world.

Mr. Speaker, President Obama's decision to abandon our faithful allies and instead placate Russian belligerence came on the 70th anniversary to the exact day of the Soviet Union's invasion of Poland after two of humanity's notorious monsters named Stalin and Hitler insidiously agreed to divide the nation of Poland between themselves.

Our allies deserve better than that, Mr. Speaker, after they stood bravely in the face of Russian aggression and paid a tremendous price politically and otherwise to stand by us. They had a right to expect America to keep her word and to stand by them. But, ironically, Mr. Speaker, Mr. Obama's terribly flawed reasoning for the abandonment of the European missile defense site really has everything to do with Russia, because Russia has always hated the missile defense plan because they don't want American presence in their quote former ''empire.'' Knowing that this would diminish Russia's influence in the region, even though the Russian military would not be threatened in any way by the European site, it would not be any real defense of any kind against the Russian federation strike.

Russia's leaders know that if an American radar is placed in the Czech Republic and the American missile interceptors are placed in Poland, those two sovereign countries would be stepping further away from the shackles of Russian oppression in the East and joining with the Americans in the West for the cause of democratic independence and human freedom.

Mr. AKIN. I think you just covered something that is absolutely amazing. You know, we don't put enough emphasis, maybe, on history. You are saying to the very day 70 years from the time Russia invaded Poland is when we just drove the knife in the back of Poland and cut the ground out for them as they were trying to defend their own country and the European countries. Is

that what I just heard, 70 years exactly to the day we just sold them down the river?

Mr. FRANKS of Arizona. Yes, sir. Of course, as Mr. TURNER said, on the exact day that the IAEA said that Iran was gaining nuclear capability.

Mr. AKIN. On the same day that the IAEA is saying that Iran is gaining nuclear capabilities; and 70 years before when Poland was invaded, we make the brilliant decision to abandon Poland, to abandon the one tool we have to stop intercontinental ballistic missiles and hold this fig leaf of an excuse that we could use a medium-range missile to try to stop things. This is a horrible decision.

Mr. TURNER. The important point, I think, for the IAEA's, International Atomic Energy Agency, statement is that they are saying it's no longer theoretical. I mean, we are not standing on the House floor, the four of us, saying that we are ringing a bell of the threat to the United States. This independent International Atomic Energy Agency says that Iran has the capability now, today. It's not as if someone is saying in projecting the future, this independent agency, which is charged for overseeing this, being the agency that is supposed to know what capability that countries have, has made this announcement saying that they are today capable of making a bomb.

When you couple that with what Iran has accomplished with their missiles, having already put a satellite into orbit, again, we are not talking theoretical again. This is not as if we are projecting that some day Iran is going to have a missile. Iran used a missile to place a satellite in orbit, the same technology that you would be utilizing in order to reach the continental United States.

Those two technologies, the nuclear capability and the missile technology capability, are coming together to be a real threat to the United States. Now, here is the thing that just confuses me most about the administration's statements.

We know that the plan that they just scrapped would have placed interceptors and radar in Europe that would have been available to protect the United States from intercontinental ballistic missiles projected by 2013, could be 2014; 2013 is when it was projected to be completed.

The President comes forward with his plan and says Iran is going slower—no indication that anyone has or that we have that Iran is going slower—but all intelligence says that Iran could have this capability to reach the United States with their nuclear weapon by 2015. The President comes forward with a plan that says we are going to be ready and able to protect the continental United States by 2020?

This is a gap of 5 years there, even if you use the President's numbers. You use their numbers, you go to their Web site and you see 2020. You see Iran's capability from all intelligence agencies is 2015, and they could be sooner. As Ranking Member MCKEON said, they could buy it, or they could have advances.

But this President, sitting here in 2009 says, I don't have to be prepared. The next generation isn't going to be prepared for the next 11 years; 2020 is 11 years away; and he says, I am not going to have the capability, I don't need the capability. I don't need the capability to protect ourselves from a country that the International Atomic Energy Agency says has the capability to produce a nuclear weapon and where our intelligence agencies say will have the capability of a missile.

Representative FRANKS, I know you have some thoughts on that.

Mr. FRANKS of Arizona. You are exactly right. Here is the thing that is most profound to me. Since the timeframe that you mentioned is correct, that means that any alternative system could come far too late to have any influence on Iran's calculus to go forward with its missile program or its nuclear program.

The idea if we had the ability to knock down anything they threw up, anything that they should launch, if they knew that America could interdict those missiles, all of a sudden they might say we are taking a tremendous chance, maybe on a military intervention here. You never know, and if the Americans can knock this down anyway, maybe we should reconsider. That was the hope.

Mr. TURNER. You are right, the deterrence, the deterrence effect it would be.

Speak for a minute, Representative FRANKS, on Russia because this also amazes me. This President has had Russia say to him abandon your missile defense of the country. He has done so without a concession from Russia. At the same time he is on the eve of going into the START negotiations where Russia is going to be asking for additional concessions from the United States. But there are those in the press, because I was on a couple of talks shows, and they said, well, this really isn't about Russia because this missile defense system was no threat to Russia.

Why is it, if it's no threat to Russia, that Russia would be asking or that we should be conceding? Do you really think the administration is going to be able to advance our security by putting our missile defense system down for Russia?

Mr. FRANKS of Arizona. Well, I absolutely do not. You know, we have had a lot of Russian belligerence lately, as you know. They have spoken against this for a long time. But the report surfaced in March of this year that the President was going to offer Russia a promise that the United States would not build the missile defense site if Moscow would commit to helping us to discourage Iran's nuclear program. That was the so-called equation.

But you have to recall that Russia was actually the one who has already delivered nuclear fuel to Iran. They were the one who was paid $800 million to help build the Bushehr power plant in Iran that could have implications for building fissile material in the future. Of course, they have been complicit in helping them with their missile program.

Moreover, it is just this week—I think this is an important thing to know—Venezuela's Hugo Chavez announced the purchase of more than $2 billion in arms from Russia, including rocket technology, and has declared that Venezuela will get started on a nuclear program with Iran's help. This is some sort of unholy alliance here. To somehow suggest that Russia is going to be a help here, I think, is naive beyond degree.

Mr. TURNER. Representative BISHOP, you were talking about the issue of our industrial base. It has a huge impact when we defund programs because then we lose capabilities that we currently have. If we are not making these interceptors anymore, or if we are lessening the number of interceptors, then we are diminishing our capabilities to defend ourselves.

But we pay a really great cost in the issue of innovation. When you defund a program, not only do you lose the intellectual capital that's there, but what we want to do next suffers. I know you have been a big advocate for ensuring that we invest in our industrial base and for ingenuity in the future.

What are your thoughts on what actions that the administration has taken, its impact now?

Mr. BISHOP of Utah. Well, we were talking about cutting back on all of these missile defense programs, not in Europe, but also with our ground-based kinetic energy to save $1.8 billion. If we look at what we have been throwing around for stimulus money, for other types of programs, even Cash for Clunkers, it kind of is very small in relationship to the impact it is having on research and development. What does it actually cost to try to defend this country?

I appreciate the historical context some of you have been putting into it. The fact that the decision in Europe was announced 70 years to the day, let's face it, if you want to go to some other irony, the time that Secretary Gates was saying that he was going to stop the production of more than 30 ground-based missiles in the KEI was the exact same day the North Koreans were shooting a missile that was threatening Japan going over it.

He was holding a press conference, reassuring the State of Hawaii that we had enough missile defense system to protect everybody on the date of their second shot. I think one of the things we need to do in America is quit holding press conferences about our missile defense and making decisions, because something bad always happens on those particular days.

But it is undisputable, the fact that every program that is started has glitches in them that have to be worked out. That's why you want an experienced work base to try to be there who have gone through that program, who have worked through it, who know what works and know what doesn't work so you don't have to keep reinventing the wheel. As you said, even if we were going to save $1.8 billion by not doing this, if at some point we realize along the line that 30 missiles is not enough to defend this entire country, it is going to cost significantly more than that to rebuild it.

We, for example, on the ICBM rocket motor program wanted to keep a warm line in the industrial base so that we could churn out a minimum number of missile motors so that we could refurbish those ICBMs that we are going to keep. Well, we didn't put enough money in the budget to do that.

What it meant was that there were people who were laid off because the private sector could not keep that warm line functioning. Even though the military knew they insisted they were going to have to have a warm line, what it meant in the long term was instead of putting about $10 million or $20 million in the line, they are going to have to put four times that much money to start the warm line project again.

What I am trying to say is here—and we are throwing around a lot of numbers, let me try to make this easier—it is cheaper for us in the long run to keep an industrial base of experts so that we can maintain what we have and try to find the research and development to improve what we have.

If we start and stop, it is expensive to restart, to reboot that program. It does not save us money in the long run.

□ 1300

It does not give us better defense in the long run. It does not help with research, and it doesn't help people who lose their jobs, gain their jobs and lose their jobs and uproot their families when we don't benefit from it in the long run.

I appreciate you bringing that particular issue up.

Mr. TURNER. One of the things I find fascinating about this administration's funding requests is that they've cut ground-based missiles in Alaska. They've cut the ground-based missiles that were planned to go into Europe. They have done so by trying to sell that they're committed to Aegis and THAAD as defensive systems. And in their plan that they put out upon canceling the system in Europe, they said we're going to invest more heavily in those systems.

Well, let's look at what they really did. Because, obviously, if they say they're going to do it, we'd all think here that in this body, the legislation that's coming through this body would reflect the administration's commitment to that.

However, although this administration has talked about increasing theater missile defense inventories, Aegis and THAAD, and have added $900 million in the budget, we're not seeing the sizable inventory increases reflected in the budget. For example, in FY 2010, the budget acquires less Aegis SM–3 interceptors than the initially projected FY 2009.

So what does that mean? It means that in FY 2009, when the budget came through this House, there was a certain level of purchases that had been indicated for the SM–3 interceptors. And what did the administration do? They came in asking for less. The FY 2009 budget projected that 24 additional SM–3s would be required in FY 2010; yet the FY 2010 budget requests only 18.

Budget documents indicate that the SM–3 inventory will grow from 133 interceptors to 329 within 5 years. Let's do that again. The budget documents indicate that the SM–3 inventory is supposed to grow from 133 interceptors, what we currently have, to 329 within 5 years.

Where will the additional SM–3s come from in the out years? If so, what other programs are going to be squeezed? How are they going to go from 133 to 329 when they're buying less than what was proposed? Where's the big request for the additional ones?

The FY 2009 budget indicates three additional THAAD batteries will be acquired; yet the budget requests no funds for additional THAAD radars. According to the contractor, major suppliers could go cold in FY 2010. So for the administration to say, We're not against missile defense. We're not eliminating missile defense. We're just shifting focus. They're not shifting focus. They're not even buying what was planned.

Representative FRANKS, I know you have been a big advocate for all of these systems.

Mr. FRANKS of Arizona. I agree. I guess I just repeat that we were trying to build out these systems anyway. This was something that was already on the drawing board. We want to have a robust system that is able to interdict short-range, medium-range, and long-range. And THAAD and Aegis, none of us on the Republican side would argue one moment that those aren't important, but the challenge is that we're taking away our ground-based system, which these other things are still on the drawing board, in many cases.

I thought that Mr. BISHOP made a point that was so critical. It might be my last point here, Mr. Chairman, if you would let me make it, because it's really a quote to Mark Helperin in the Wall Street Journal after the President's decision last week to abandon the plans for the European missile defense site. He stated it this way, kind of that historic, 50,000-foot view thing that we're talking about. He said, ''Stalin tested Truman with the Berlin Blockade, and Truman held fast. Khrushchev tested Kennedy, and in the Cuban Missile Crisis Kennedy refused to blink. In 1983, Andropov took the measure of Ronald Reagan, and, defying millions in the street, Reagan did not blink. Last week, the Iranian President and the Russian Prime Minister put Mr. Obama to the test, and he blinked not once, but twice. The price of such infirmity has always proven immensely high,'' Mr. Speaker, ''even if, as is the custom these days, the bill has yet to come.''

Mr. TURNER, I would just say this in closing here. If the Obama administration continues down this road of appeasement and denial, the Nation of Iran will gain nuclear weapons capability and pass that technology on to terrorists, as well as perhaps even the weapons, and this generation and so many to come will face the horrifying reality of nuclear jihad.

Those of us who have been blessed to walk in the sunlight of freedom in this generation will relegate our children to walk in the minefield of nuclear terrorism in the next generation.

I just hope that somehow reason can somehow be injected back into this system and we can understand, from a historical point of view, that when we stood up to despotism in the past, it was always a good thing. When we counted on appeasement, it always hurt us. I just pray that we can catch it soon enough here.

I thank you for the opportunity.

Mr. TURNER. Thank you, Representative FRANKS. I appreciate your comments on that. It's very important we look at this through the lens of the administration's policies with respect to Russia.

There is no historical perspective where conceding to Russia early has ever gained anything at the bargaining table. When you concede to Russia prior to entering into negotiations, they say, What else am I going to get when I get to the negotiating table? They never say, Well, that was very great of you, and I appreciate what you have done. I'm now going to do something, too.

In this instance, the President had already signaled in a letter that allegedly went out in the beginning of the year that he was willing to look at conceding on missile defense for Russia's help on Iran without any indication whatsoever that Russia is willing to help. In fact, as you have pointed out, Representative FRANKS, they have done the opposite. They have been active in selling technology and providing technical assistance to Iran.

But also, Iran has shown no indication of their interest in being dissuaded, and, in fact, the International Atomic Energy Agency said, Time for persuasion and time for dissuading is over; that Iran is now declared by the International Atomic Energy Agency to have the capability to create a nuclear weapon. That was announced the very same day the President decides to

abandon the nuclear shield that we should have had with our missile defense shield, with the President moving from what would have been a 2013 deployment for a missile defense shield in Europe to a 2020 protection.

So I appreciate your points with respect to Russia. As we enter the START negotiations, obviously we have a significant amount of concern as to what this administration is going to be doing with respect to our strategic assets, having already compromised on our missile defense.

Representative FRANKS, thank you for being with us and participating in this.

Just to recap for a moment as to where we are timewise, the President has put forth an alternative plan for missile defense that he says is going to be available for protection for the United States for intercontinental ballistic missiles by 2020. He scrapped the plan that was intended to provide protection for the United States from ICBMs by 2013.

All the intelligence that we have to date shows that Iran could have ICBM capability by 2015. The International Atomic Energy Agency says that Iran already has nuclear capability. Let's put that into a calendar.

We would have had a system that would have protected us by 2013. The President has taken that off the table. The intelligence agencies say that Iran could have nuclear capability, coupled with missile technology, that could reach the United States by 2015. The President says, That's all right. We'll wait for another 5 years and have capability to protect the United States by 2020.

That's an unreasonable time period to put the United States at threat with this threat, and it's one that we should all be concerned about.

I have asked the President and the Secretary of Defense to declassify this report from the Institute for Defense Analyses. It's an unclassified excerpt, executive summary, which I'm holding here, of an independent assessment of the proposed deployment of ballistic missile defense systems in Europe that said that, actually, the system that he scrapped would have been the most cost effective. It would have been a system that would have provided 24-hour coverage at the least amount of cost and, by the calendar that we just have discussed, would have been available as early as 7 years earlier than the President's plan for protecting the United States.

While the administration has dismantled our capabilities in Europe, at the same time they have cut missile defense overall by $1.2 billion, lessening our capabilities in some very important systems, including diminishing, by a third, our capabilities in Alaska.

The administration has indicated that they can use our Alaska ground-based missile systems to protect the United States if Iran should get capability earlier than their system is available in 2020, but to show their commitment to that system, they've cut it by a third. So we're actually going to have less capability there.

Now, in addition to the lessening capability in Alaska, we are losing the opportunity for what would have been an integrated system. With THAAD and Aegis and the European system and Alaska, we would have had opportunities for multiple shots if the United States should have a threat that is posed to us. And, as Representative FRANKS indicated, this system, once in place, would have acted as deterrent to stop the advancement of missile technology and hopefully say to countries that the United States is advancing the type of technology that would provide us the important protection that we need.

The impact of the President's decision on our European allies is one of which many people have grave concern. Both Poland and the Czech Republic are very concerned that this administration unilaterally made the decision to abandon the missile defense shield and to leave them having taken the step of agreeing with the United States, in the face of Russian opposition, without a United States partner there, without a system moving forward; both of those countries having made statements indicating their concern of a continuing strong relationship with the United States.

I know that we all remain concerned about showing to our NATO allies that we remain committed to a strong missile defense for this country, strong deterrence in the area of nuclear proliferation, and this administration, by taking this step backward, weakens, overall, our capabilities and certainly those relationships.

Representative BISHOP, I know one of the areas that you spoke on at the House Armed Services Committee as we were moving forward with the National Defense Authorization Act was this overall cut to missile defense of $1.2 billion. When we look at what it's doing to Alaska, it is lessening our capability. The missile shield that was there was intended to have 40 interceptors. The administration has cut it to 30.

They've significantly diminished the airborne laser. They have reduced the other programs that they've indicated that they're going to rely on with Aegis and THAAD, actually lessening the amount of investment that was projected in FY 2009.

I know you're concerned about what that cut represents, and so am I. Perhaps you could speak for a moment on that $1.2 billion cut that this House and Senate and this administration is advancing at a time that we know that North Korea and Iran are getting increased technology.

Mr. BISHOP of Utah. Well, if sometimes you put a spin on it to try and allow talking not just necessarily about the numbers that we're throwing out there but the human face of what this means, about the individuals who actually are working in these programs to try and make this country more secure, they're the ones who are losing their jobs, which is okay if there's a long-term purpose. But I think you actually put it very well, brilliantly well, in saying so simply that the decision in Europe, instead of being prepared 2 years before the threat is viable, we're now going to change that to be prepared 5 years after the threat is viable. That makes no sense.

In that term, saving a billion dollars is not necessarily in the best interest of this country. Not only do you hurt individuals who are working in that area, but you hurt the entire Nation, who is depending upon their results to provide us with some modicum of protection.

Not only does it not make much sense to say, okay, we already have the holes dug, we're ready to put the missiles in there, and now we stop, even though all the parts are there; not only does it not make sense to say even though the missile is already at Vandenberg Air Base in California, we won't go ahead and finish the test to see if it would have worked or not or how effective it would be; those are not productive approaches. And it illustrates that we, as a country, are now in the position where we seem to be vacillating with not a clear and precise idea of where we want to be in the future and what we will use to defend ourselves in the future.

As the gentleman from Ohio correctly said, even if your assumption is we'll take money and we'll shift it to some other place, to announce shortly after that you're going to flatline military spending and still want to find $60 billion in some kind of savings within the system doesn't mean we're actually going to move forward in any particular area. It puts us into a world that is very, very dangerous.

In the 1930s, we decided to cut our fighter plane program because we wanted to save some money, and when World War II broke out, we found that our bombing runs were having over a 20 percent casualty rate, which was unconscionable. We stopped our bombing runs until we could build up the fighter program to accompany them.

We no longer have that luxury of time. We live in a world where we no longer have the luxury of time, which Abraham Lincoln understood was part of the strategy you have in warfare. We don't have that anymore.

We must be prepared now, not to find out we made structural and strategic mistakes sometime down in the future when we don't have the ability to repair that situation.

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Mr. TURNER. Thank you, Representative BISHOP. I appreciate your tenacity on this and your advocacy for national defense.

To give a recap of the time frame that we're dealing with, this administration scrapped a plan that would

have provided a missile defense capability to the United States mainland from Europe that would have been available as early as 2013. All of our intelligence agencies are indicating that by 2015, Iran could have missile technology to reach the United States. That's why we needed that missile defense technology in 2013. They were going to have ICBM capability by 2015.

The International Atomic Energy Agency said just last week that Iran already has the capability to produce a nuclear weapon. So when we're talking about 2015, and they are going to have the ICBM capability to reach the United States, we are talking about a missile perhaps with a nuclear warhead. This administration scraps that plan and, instead, proposes a plan that will not be available until 2020.

So by all the information we have right now, this administration's action has a 5-year gap that has developed in the time period where the administration is accepting the capability by Iran without having the missile defense technology to protect the United States.

What else are we hearing from Iran? Today there was an announcement that Iran has a covert uranium enrichment facility. This should come as no surprise. This is a country that has continued to seek missile technology, nuclear technology and nuclear capability. We understand that Tehran is not just trying to do this for civilian purposes, that it actually represents a threat to the United States, and that's why people have been such advocates to ensure that this country has the appropriate missile defense technology to protect the country.

So the administration responds and says, It's not just 2020. We have capability in Alaska. That will be our backup plan. We can use our missiles in Alaska to protect the United States from Iran.

The problem with that is that this administration, through this House just this year, cut Alaska's missile defense capabilities by a third. So we would have had our AEGIS and THAAD capability, we would have had our European capability, and we would have had our Alaska capability, perhaps for multiple shots that could have occurred in order to protect this country from Iran's quest for an ICBM with it, as is now said by the IAEA, to have a nuclear capability. Instead, this administration says, We're taking Europe off the table. We are going to rely on what we have, and we're going to take our Alaska capability and cut it by a third.

It puts our country at risk. It puts our families at risk. The President should reverse this decision and should proceed with supporting our allies in NATO, supporting the Czech Republic and Poland, who have been there for us, and put the system in place, protecting the United States.

The President said that the system that he is doing is more cost effective. There is a classified report—I have an unclassified version of it—an independent assessment of the proposed deployment of ballistic missile defense system in Europe. This report says that the most cost-effective plan was the one that he just scrapped. I will end with reading a letter that I sent to Secretary Gates, requesting that he make this independent assessment and study available. We hope that he releases it so we can have a robust debate on that.

MISSILE DEFENSE

The SPEAKER pro tempore. Under the Speaker's announced policy of January 6, 2009, the gentleman from Iowa (Mr. KING) is recognized for 60 minutes.

Mr. KING of Iowa. Mr. Speaker, I appreciate being recognized for the privilege and the honor to address you here on the floor of the House of Representatives.

As we wrap up this congressional week and I listened to the gentleman from Ohio, the gentleman from Utah and the gentleman from Arizona talk about missile defense and our national security, what I have heard over this last hour is a technical, tactical, strategic explanation of why America has taken the positions that we have, the decisions that have been made in the previous administrations, and I think a clear and stark analysis of what apparently is a huge diplomatic mistake made by the President of the United States.

I would make the point that those who defend him seem to always revert back to a default position of, The President must have gotten something for it. They speculate that there must be a quid pro quo to pull the rug out from underneath the Eastern Europeans—in particular, the Poles and the Czechs—who in their headlines, as I believe Mr. FRANKS said—the headline in one of those papers said ''Betrayed!'' To betray the Poles and the Czechs, the United States of America, the integrity of our Nation and the confidence in our national security have been diminished in a way that probably can't ever be rebuilt.

But those who defend that decision will argue, Well, the President is a smart negotiator. He is a brilliant man. Therefore, we have to trust his knowledge and his judgment because he must know something that we don't. Yet I haven't heard one of these imaginative characters that can defend anything and advocate for anything come up with a single thing that would be worth doing what the President did. What could possibly be worth giving up the integrity and the credibility of the United States? What could possibly be something that could come out of any negotiations with Iran or Russia that could emerge as a plus on this side that would offset the loss of international credibility, the word of the United States and our commitment to our allies, let alone giving up the strategic position of being able to take out Iranian missiles shortly after they leave the launching pad, instead of leaving this 5-year window, as Mr. TURNER just said?

If your President is so much smarter than you are that he must have gotten something accomplished behind the scenes that's so valuable that even you can't conceive of what it might have been, I don't know if you call that a rational thought or a religion. But, Mr. Speaker, we're in a situation here where the United States and the world is in a very, very dangerous place. This globe is a giant chessboard; it's a giant Monopoly game, and it's a giant Risk game that's going on. It's a giant poker game that's going on. And there are some poker players, chess players, Risk and Monopoly players out there that are really good and really smart, and they spend their time trying to figure out how to outmaneuver the United States. It has taken place ever since the dawn of the Soviet Union, and the Monopoly game here in the United States broke the Soviet Union, and they imploded.

Now we have Putin over there on the chessboard, at the poker table, and he is making moves on this global chessboard that seek to reconstruct what he can of the former Soviet Union. It's been in his interest to cause Iran to be a thorn in our side and for us to think that we could ask Putin to, well, be open and do us a favor and maybe he could talk real nice to the Iranians and they would stop their nuclear endeavor—after all of these years and these billions of dollars spent and the great diplomatic risks that they take?

These people are not going to just simply tip over their king and walk away from this chessboard. For the President to think that dialogue is diplomacy and that you can accomplish things just because you talk about it is an inherently left-wing, myopic European view, and it's something that I've heard from their mouths in the discussions that we have over in that part of the world.

We have with us Mr. BISHOP from Utah who has significant insight into that part of the world, the politics of Western Europe as well as geography of that part of the world—Iran, the Middle East, Eastern Europe and also Western Europe. I have asked the gentleman if he would stick around long enough to impart some of that broader view to explain the forces that are at play in this dynamic, the forces of Russia, the forces of Iran, the Islamic effort that's there, the Israeli position that's there, the threat that comes from Iran threatening to annihilate and wipe Israel off the face of the Earth.

And by the way, this move, in my view, brings it closer and closer that Israel likely will have no choice but to at least attempt to take out the nuclear capability of Iran. Their survival might very well be at stake. So this move that might look like its a move designed to pacify the Russians might