

# LECTURE

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## The Common Defense: What It Means to Conservatives

*The Honorable Trent Franks, Kim R. Holmes, PhD,  
The Honorable Ken Blackwell, and Stuart M. Butler, PhD*

### Abstract

*The Preamble of the Constitution gives paramount importance to the federal government to “provide for the common defence.” Yet there is a troubling misconception that all federal spending is more or less equal. The Founders recognized that, as George Washington famously said, “To be prepared for war is one of the most effective means of preserving peace.” Fielding a first-rate military and exercising principled American leadership in the world depends on a robust economy. America is facing a budget crisis and a crisis of confidence. Washington has saddled Americans with such debt that it wants to cut defense to pay for burgeoning entitlements, but we should not be forced to surrender either security or our desire for liberty to fund government largesse.*

This paper, in its entirety, can be found at <http://report.heritage.org/h1216>

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**KIM R. HOLMES:** This is the final event in our 2012 Protect America Month. We have held this month-long series for four years now to highlight the importance of national defense to the country. We’ve held a lot of good events both across the country and here at The Heritage Foundation.

My colleagues and I at Heritage believe in Ronald Reagan’s idea of fusionism—that there are basically three pillars to the conservative movement: social conservatives who advance conservative values, fiscal conservatives, and national security conservatives who promote a strong national defense. We frequently need to be reminded of this. Particularly on the issue of national security, conservatives have been concerned about the number of threats we face.

There is, of course, the ongoing debate about cutting the defense budget. There is the issue of sequestration, which, if it goes through in January, will have a disproportionately negative effect on our ability to defend ourselves as it drastically cuts the budget of the Department of Defense.

There is, as we look around the country, some confusion about how much we actually spend on defense. There are people who, if you look at

### KEY POINTS

- There is a tendency, even among conservatives, to see defense as just another government program, no different from any other either historically or constitutionally or, for that matter, morally.
- Defense is a constitutional duty of our federal government, not a false choice between guns and butter. Let the government provide the guns for the national defense, and Americans’ own enterprise will provide the butter in abundance.
- People often think the wrong way around on defense: How much money do we have, and therefore how much security can we purchase? But if we don’t look at our security needs first, we can’t plan to have the resources down the road to meet them.
- Former Defense Secretary Donald Rumsfeld warned that weakness is provocative. I would suggest to you that the terrorist world is looking not just at our capacity, but they’re actually examining our intent and our commitment.

the polls, think we spend more on defense than we actually do. And there are people who believe that if you cut defense spending, you can somehow resolve the debt crisis. If you look closely at the numbers, however, you find that it is runaway entitlement spending that is feeding and will continue to feed the debt crisis, not defense spending.

Frankly, even among conservatives, there is some confusion about the place of the common defense in the U.S. Constitution. There is a tendency to see that providing “for the common defence,” as the phrase is used in the Constitution, is no different from any other responsibility of the federal government, since it is basically a budget item for the Pentagon. The Department of Defense is just another government program, no different from any other either historically or constitutionally or, for that matter, morally. Therefore, the phrase you hear so often today is, “defense has to be on the table.”

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**IF YOU LOOK AT THE ENUMERATED POWERS OF THE CONSTITUTION, IT DOES MENTION PROVIDING FOR THE COMMON DEFENSE, BUT YOU WOULD BE HARD PUT TO FIND ANYTHING IN THERE ABOUT PROVIDING FOR HEALTH AND HUMAN SERVICES. IT'S IMPORTANT TO MAKE THAT DISTINCTION.**

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Conservatives know there is a difference. If you look at the enumerated powers of the Constitution, it does mention providing for the common defense, but you would be hard put to find anything in there about providing for health and human services. So if you consider yourself a

good constitutional conservative, it's important to make that distinction.

Today, to discuss this issue of how conservatives think about “the common defense,” we have two very distinguished gentlemen—Ambassador Ken Blackwell and Dr. Stuart Butler—with us, and we'll be joined shortly by Congressman Trent Franks. We are concerned not only about the debate about defense that is taking place among conservatives, but also about what's happening to the defense budget. I want to thank our distinguished panelists and our guests here today for joining us to try to get a better handle on the problem.

I especially thank Ken Blackwell and my colleague Stuart Butler for joining us to discuss this critical issue. Ken Blackwell, who will be speaking first, is currently Senior Fellow for Family Empowerment at the Family Research Council and a visiting fellow at the American Civil Rights Union and serves on the Board of Directors of the Club for Growth and the National Taxpayers Union. Twenty-two years ago, he worked at The Heritage Foundation as an analyst. Since then, he's had a distinguished career serving as the Mayor of Cincinnati, Treasurer and Secretary of State for the great state of Ohio, Undersecretary at the U.S. Department of Housing and Urban Development, and a U.S. Ambassador to the United Nations Commission on Human Rights, to name just a few of his many noteworthy positions.

Ken Blackwell received the U.S. Department of State Superior Honor Award for his work on human rights for Presidents George Herbert Walker Bush and Bill Clinton. He is currently a contributing editor and columnist for TownHall.com and a public affairs commentator for the Salem radio network. We have asked

him to address what “providing for the common defence” means to social conservatives, and we are very pleased to have him here today.

Our second speaker, Stuart Butler, is Director of the Center for Policy Innovation at The Heritage Foundation. He will discuss the importance of the common defense from a fiscal conservative point of view. Stuart has been pivotal in forming and guiding Heritage domestic policy research for more than 30 years. When he was Vice President of Domestic and Economic Policy Studies at Heritage, he shaped the debate on health care, Social Security, welfare reform, and tax relief. In his new role as Director of CPI, Stuart is leading a team with the goal of developing innovative solutions to some of the toughest policy challenges facing Americans today, and we are glad to have him here to speak as well.

—*Kim R. Holmes, PhD, is Vice President, Foreign and Defense Policy Studies, and Director, The Kathryn and Shelby Cullom Davis Institute for International Studies, at The Heritage Foundation and author of Liberty's Best Hope: American Leadership for the 21st Century (2008).*

**THE HONORABLE KEN BLACKWELL:** The current situation in foreign affairs is not unlike after World War I: Americans are disillusioned, beset by high unemployment and other economic challenges. Budget cutters in Washington look to economize by stripping U.S. defenses. They radically scaled back the Navy, even converting battleships to razor blades, and reduced the draft army to the point where it was smaller than Romania's.

As a result, when Hitler marched into the Rhineland in 1936, there

was no way for the U.S. to back up France's call for strong military action. We lost the last best chance to stop Hitler in his march to war, and when war came, 11,000 American and Filipino soldiers were forced to surrender to the Japanese because of heedless economies in defense.

The common defense is a constitutional duty of our federal government. It is not a false choice between guns and butter. Let the government provide the guns for the national defense, and Americans' own enterprise will provide the butter in abundance. The main reason we find ourselves in this hole is because of unwarranted and very possibly unconstitutional spending on social programs that do not work. More Americans are on food stamps now than ever before in our history; with a 41 percent out-of-wedlock birthrate, we face the prospect of most of our American children becoming eligible for Medicaid.

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**THE COMMON DEFENSE IS A CONSTITUTIONAL DUTY OF OUR FEDERAL GOVERNMENT. IT IS NOT A FALSE CHOICE BETWEEN GUNS AND BUTTER. LET THE GOVERNMENT PROVIDE THE GUNS FOR THE NATIONAL DEFENSE, AND AMERICANS' OWN ENTERPRISE WILL PROVIDE THE BUTTER IN ABUNDANCE.**

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The Administration's answer is the fictional Julia, the unfortunate young woman who spends her entire life being cared for and tended to by the state. This brazen bid for support from single mothers is what is driving our politics and our deficits. I believe that social

issues—specifically, the strength of the American family—drive success or failure over the long term of our common defense. These social issues are not the environmentalism of the Right; they are core issues on which our society will rise or fall.

The most significant threat to our national security is the debt. So said former Chairman of the Joint Chiefs of Staff Michael Mullen.

First, why is there this debt, and why is there deficit spending? Here is the macro picture: a \$15 trillion gross domestic product (GDP); \$3.5 trillion in federal spending, nearly 25 percent of GDP; \$2 trillion in revenue. Therefore, the deficit is about 10 percent of GDP. Two trillion goes to entitlements now; therefore, entitlement spending is all of revenue now. Resources are finite: \$3.5 trillion in federal outlays is already almost 25 percent of all U.S. market activity. Entitlements compete with defense spending. Entitlements are mandatory spending, so all defense spending at this point is now on borrowed money. So Mullen is right.

Second question: Why are there entitlements? In short, to have the government cover what the family used to be responsible for. The family was responsible for the care of the elderly; we did that intergenerationally. When the family stepped aside, government stepped in. Social Security and Medicare were born, and Medicaid and welfare. The head of the household used to be the driver and the provider of the care for the family. We don't have that today, and heads of households are replaced by the government.

All of the social data suggest that when the head of household is intact and families are together through marriage, the families work more effectively than the government in

providing for the human capital future of America. Let me underscore something: The most important contributor to economic growth is human capital. This is not a controversial point. Men and women and their skills, capacities, and know-how continue to contribute about two-thirds of all economic growth. We will have 2 percent growth per year from here out, and that is because of a demographic weakness, and that's even if you assume that we will continue an immigration rate that we experienced in the 1990s and the first 10 years of the 2000s.

Human capital at the present time is weak. Let me underscore another point about the condition. If you look at the retirement of the baby boomer generation and its replacement by a generation that is inadequate in size and human capital, you begin to see that we have an intergenerational challenge. And so once again, families and the birth of children and the rearing of children is a challenge in modern-day America.

My conclusion is that human capital is weak when we are not properly formed early on between the ages of 6 and 10, by parents. All the academic and social data support this.

I was taken by a notion put forth by David Armor, who was the Assistant Secretary of Defense for Force Management. He basically said married families taking care of children best help those children develop the cognitive skills necessary for an effective military force.

So entitlements will grow at about 3 percent per year; the threat to our national security will only increase when you look at the budgetary demand that will come about as a consequence of that growth. I think that, without question, there is a very clear link between social policy,

families, the birth and rearing of children, our economic situation, and our national defense.

In closing, let me say that we have a deficit; we have a debt problem. We have a debt problem that is three dimensional. It is three dimensional in that it's a moral crisis because of the intergenerational theft that we are witnessing, the robbing of our children and our grandchildren. It is an economic crisis, as I've tried to demonstrate by the numbers, in terms of the anemic economic growth that we are realizing. And it is a national security crisis because 47 percent of our debt is held by foreign interests, the lion's share of that by China.

Kim is right: We cannot fragment our approach to dealing with this problem. In the end, only a coherent conservative constitutional approach can get us to a point where we have adequate national security, abundant and accelerated economic growth, and a moral foundation that has contributed to American exceptionalism.

**STUART M. BUTLER:** As Kim said, my role at Heritage throughout most of my career here was running the Domestic Research Department. It was actually looking at economic policy, and particularly budget policy, with regard to how we can promote growth, how we can exercise fiscal control and so on.

Also during my tenure here, I've been involved in debating budget control and how we look at budget cuts around the country. For about three years, I took part in something called the Fiscal Wakeup Tour. We even came to Cincinnati. That was composed of Heritage and people from the Brookings Institution and Dave Walker, who was at that time head of the General Accounting (now Government Accountability) Office,

and we would go around talking to large audiences about the fiscal situation facing the country, the debt and deficit, and what could we do about it.

So we had a lot of interaction with ordinary Americans about where we need to make savings. As you might expect, a lot of ordinary Americans tended to focus on concerns about things that affected them immediately—things like whether they were going to get their Social Security check, whether they could go see a doctor, and so on. So we have a lot of experience looking at how ordinary Americans think about the options for dealing with fiscal problems.

I've also been, as others at Heritage have been, engaged in the debate among the various think tanks and research organizations and politicians about where you make savings in the federal government to deal with the issues that Ken brought up in terms of the yawning gap on an annual basis of deficits and the long-term debt that is burdening future generations.

One of the things we discover in all these situations, whether it be talking about analysts at The Heritage Foundation or going around the country or talking to people in other groups, is that there's a big inclination to see reducing defense as the easiest option to deal with the challenge of federal spending.

I remember being in charge of lots of budget analysts, including a lot of libertarian analysts, in the early days of The Heritage Foundation, when all our analysts were on the same floor and we didn't have separate offices. There was always banter between the economists and the defense analysts. The economists would say things like, "You guys on the defense side want more bombs all the time; why don't you just use up the ones you have first instead of coming and asking

for more?" I always thought the best response to that was an analyst called Tom Ascik, who was a former Marine. He said, "If it wasn't for us, you'd all be writing your papers in Russian."

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**THERE IS AN INSIDIOUS ARGUMENT THAT WHEN YOU LOOK AT DIFFERENT PARTS OF THE FEDERAL GOVERNMENT AND YOU NEED TO MAKE CHANGES, IT'S SURELY APPROPRIATE TO SHARE THE BURDEN, TO MAKE SIMILAR PERCENTAGE CUTS ACROSS THE BOARD.**

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There's always been a tension within the conservative side on these sorts of issues. When you go around and talk to ordinary Americans, as I said, very often people will say, "I understand philosophically about the need for defense and support that, but when it comes down to it, the immediate need I face should not be touched. So perhaps we can reduce spending there and it won't affect me in the same way that reducing Medicare will, for example."

We used to joke that the only difference between taking on the Pentagon about defense and AARP about Medicare is that AARP shoots back. If you're a politician, it really is the feeling that you have. It's very difficult to be a politician in this area.

In the debate within Washington itself around the think tank community, you get sort of an insidious argument that when you look at different parts of the federal government and you need to make changes, it's surely appropriate to share the burden, to make similar percentage cuts across the board. These are the terms that you often hear, even among some Republican Congressmen: It's only fair to share the burden in an equal

way, not just because there's a seemingly inherent fairness about it, but it's easier politically to do that.

I say all this because I think, when you look at how particularly economic conservatives look at defense and the environment of the debate, there's enormous pressure, even among those who have no argument about the need for defense, to say it's easier if we just squeeze that area: We can afford to do it, we can do it without risk, and so on. That's the prevailing view among a lot of people.

As a serious economist, and like a lot of serious economists who look at the defense issue within the context of economic policy and fiscal policy, I know that's not the way to think about defense. The way to think about defense as an economist is as insurance. You think about it as protection in the way that we think of other forms of insurance, and when economists look at insurance, there are some very important things to understand about levels of insurance and why insurance is important.

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**THE WAY TO THINK ABOUT  
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INSURANCE.**

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Number one, for most people, on a day-to-day basis insurance is a waste of money. You don't get anything tangible from insurance until you need it. You don't get anything from your car insurance until you have an accident. You don't get anything from

your life insurance until you die and your kids could be destitute.

I just the other day was looking through my bills, and here's my bill for my umbrella insurance for my home and car. Umbrella insurance is the add-on insurance you get just in case the worst things happen. I've paid this for years, and I've never collected a dime from that insurance. But when we think of insurance, we have to think of insurance first of all in that way.

Secondly, when you think about insurance, percentage risk of things going wrong is not the way to evaluate the needs for either umbrella insurance or defense. The issue is not the percentage probability of something happening, but the downside risk if it does happen. I live in Northwest Washington; every other neighbor I have is a lawyer. I have very high umbrella insurance for people who may fall down in my front yard and break something, because I know that lawyers will take every penny I have. Therefore, I buy umbrella insurance because of the nature of the risk and the downside effect.

That is precisely the same when we talk about defense. I meet so many people from other institutions or economists who say, "We're looking at risk; what's the probability?" You've got to look at what the downside effect is going to be, and that's why there's a huge difference in risk associated with different parts of federal spending. If you look at something like NASA's deep space probes, for example, if you cut back in certain areas, there could be maybe a 2 or 3 percent risk of loss of that vehicle because of the savings

that you make. People say, you look at defense, what's the probability?" Maybe it's 2 or 3 percent that something will go wrong.

I was recently in Israel, and I can assure you, when people in Israel hear about American analysts saying there's only a small percentage risk that a nuclear weapon in Iran could pose a threat, if you live in Israel, it is an existential risk. It is something where the downside is oblivion. That's why focusing on defense as an analyst, looking at this as an economist, is different by degree from looking at other impacts of reductions in federal spending. It's not a question of across-the-board-similar reductions when you look at downside risk associated with things going wrong.

Thirdly, all sensible economists recognize that security is not just necessary in terms of the physical protection of our population and our allies; it is absolutely necessary for industry, for commerce, for economic growth itself. We recognize this generally. The idea of security of contract is very important and is critical to a market operating. Our annual *Index of Economic Freedom* looks at these kinds of issues, for example.<sup>1</sup> If you don't have security of contract, then you don't have high growth. If you don't have rule of law, predictability of action, predictability of government decision-making, you cannot have a thriving economy. Security and protection of people and institutions and buildings and so on is equally important and critical to growth.

So there is a direct connection between the two, not necessarily because there will be destruction,

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1. For the most recent edition, see Terry Miller, Kim R. Holmes, and Edwin J. Feulner, 2012 *Index of Economic Freedom* (Washington: The Heritage Foundation and Dow Jones & Company, Inc., 2012), <http://www.heritage.org/index/default>.

but people will not risk investments, they will not hire, they will not take the risk necessary in a market economy if there isn't security. That's why people are willing to pay for security in Cincinnati and elsewhere; they see this as necessary to assure an environment that is conducive to economic development, and the same is exactly true with regard to defense and the ability to have growth.

Serious conservative economists looking at defense see it in that context as well. They know that security is critical to economics. It's not an either/or; it's not that you can have high growth and low security; they must go together. We know that is critical. We also know it's critical for our international trade and our investments abroad for precisely the same reason. Our ability to have secure imports, to have security in terms of delivery of exports, our raw materials from energy to other areas—security in defense is critical to that and therefore goes hand in hand with a strong, growing economy.

We also know that when we look at our long-term interests in the United States, just like when we look at the climate for business over time and we think about investments of a commercial nature for the long term, we have to make sure that we can have a world where there is protection and security—American security—to ensure that our longer-term interests are protected for commercial economic reasons as well as political and pure security reasons.

So when we look at the defense issue, it's important to start by saying, "What are our security needs, and what are our security obligations?" but also to ask, "What are our long-term and short-term security

needs?" And how we answer that drives the budget.

What we see today so often happening is that people get the whole thing the wrong way around. They think, how much money do we have, and therefore how much security can we purchase? That is not the way to think about it, nor is it the way the Founding Fathers thought about it, and it's not the way the Constitution talks about it. Our security needs precede how we think about what part of our national treasure should be devoted to that, because if you don't see it as preceding it, you will not have the resources down the road, and you won't have the growth that is necessary.

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**YOU HAVE TO INVEST TO GET THE CAPABILITIES YOU NEED FAR INTO THE FUTURE, WHICH IS WHY WE'VE WORRIED, WITH GOOD REASON, ABOUT THE HOLLOWING OUT OF THE MILITARY.**

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Now, that said, just like when I start looking at my umbrella insurance, I want to get the best way of reaching those security objectives and these defense objectives at the least cost. Nobody in their right mind really wants to spend more on defense than is critical and necessary and most efficient to reach those objectives. We'd rather spend the money on iPads and going to the movies and taking vacations in Cincinnati. That's what we'd all prefer to do, and that's how Heritage looks at the defense area in the context that I outlined.

We look at how we can obtain the capabilities that we need, the certainty of those capabilities in

the future, in the most efficient way. We know, because we've worked in Washington for so long, that just because a bureaucrat wears a uniform and has stars and so on doesn't mean they're still not a bureaucrat. There is an inherent tendency to waste in all departments of the federal government, including the Defense Department, so it's very important to look for efficiencies and improvements in that area.

That's why Heritage, for all the time that I've been here, has focused, for example, on defense procurement: How can we set up the best procedures to enable us to reach our defense needs in the most effective, efficient way, just like we would want to do in any other area of the federal government?

It's why we also look at not just the short term, but the long term. Again, borrowing from all our understanding of economic growth and economics in general, you have to invest to get the capabilities you need far into the future, which is why we've worried incessantly here, with good reason, about the hollowing out of the military. It's so easy to put off necessary investments where you don't see the tangible product for many years when there's a lot of pressure. So there's always a tendency to do that, which we've always strongly opposed and always focused on at The Heritage Foundation.

It's also why, when we look at getting efficient, effective defense, we have focused a lot on how to look at the structure of compensation within the military. There's a very good paper done recently by Baker Spring looking at the structure of compensation, health care, retirement benefits for the military and what would be the right way to do that to

be efficient but also to have the quality and quantity of personnel that we need in the defense area.<sup>2</sup> If you overcompensate, for example, with retirement benefits, you tend to get people staying in the military long after they've frightened the enemy because they can do well. And often you can lose the very fighting people you need who just retire early or quit if you don't get that mix right.

So we are very focused on how to get the personnel compensation mix right. That is a sensible strategy, bearing in mind the need for defense, to get the right capabilities and the right quality of personnel as efficiently as possible.

When we look at the long-term fiscal problem that Ken talked about, the long-term debt and long-term deficit, we have, like a lot of other competing organizations, laid out our long-term plan to do it. We call it *Saving the American Dream*.<sup>3</sup> You will see that what we do in that is to say, what are the capabilities that we must have to meet the threats to our national security and to our economic base in the U.S.? Let's figure out how to do that as efficiently as we can, and then that leads us to the amount of money we feel within the federal budget is appropriate for defense. We estimate it at around 4 percent of GDP, but that number is derived from the needs and capabilities and efficiencies that we can reach.

That's how we look at this, and if you're an economic conservative, as

I am, when you look at these issues you can—and we do—look at it in that context of what is the need and the requirement for defense as insurance, how it links to growth itself and the prosperity of the American economy in terms of the protections that are needed, what capabilities do you have to have both now and well into the future, how do you design that most efficiently. As I've said, that means examining the defense budget in detail to figure out exactly how to do that.

For Republicans or Democrats to look at defense as an expendable item because it's easy to get through a town hall meeting if you don't talk about Medicare but you talk about getting out of Afghanistan or cutting defense, that is not only the wrong way to look at it, but really is not the way to present to the American people the real choices and the tough decisions that we have to make to get our budget back under control and our federal government back under control.

**KIM R. HOLMES:** Congressman Franks should be joining us here in a few minutes. I would like to add a few points.

Your presentations sparked a number of thoughts. I'm a defense guy, and a lot of your points I had not heard before, particularly the idea of insurance that Stuart has developed. It's an innovative way of thinking about this issue, but it reminded me

of something else. If you think about the different social perceptions of or tolerance for what a society can risk, you realize how little we are willing to risk. For example, we get very upset about asbestos; we make sure that people who are riding bikes and motorcycles wear helmets; and we want to make sure our toys don't harm our children.

These are all laudable things, but they also have a huge cost attached to them, and very few people really talk about the cost in terms of what are in many cases the larger consequences. You could, of course, endanger people's lives, but compare that to what happened on 9/11 or what would happen if we had an electromagnetic pulse attack and the entire electrical infrastructure of the U.S. was shut down. Or compare that to a nuclear attack where literally tens of millions of people are killed in very short order.

If you compare the risk between the two, one is bad but not catastrophic; the other is truly catastrophic. Very often, we don't think about risks in the same way.

Stuart talked about investments, and Ken mentioned what happened after World War I. We demobilized our armed forces; we pulled back; we went into a period of quasi-isolationism. The arguments were very similar to what we hear today: that if we just pull back from the world and don't anger people, we can be safe in a fortress America. That was

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2. See Baker Spring, "Centralizing Management of the Military Health System," Heritage Foundation *Issue Brief* No. 3611, May 22, 2012, [http://thf\\_media.s3.amazonaws.com/2012/pdf/ib3611.pdf](http://thf_media.s3.amazonaws.com/2012/pdf/ib3611.pdf). See also Baker Spring, "Improving Health Care and Retirement for Military Service Members and Their Families," Heritage Foundation *Background* No. 2621, November 17, 2011, [http://thf\\_media.s3.amazonaws.com/2012/pdf/bg2621.pdf](http://thf_media.s3.amazonaws.com/2012/pdf/bg2621.pdf); "Time to Meet the Challenge of Updating the Military Retirement System," Heritage Foundation *WebMemo* No. 3378, September 29, 2011, [http://thf\\_media.s3.amazonaws.com/2011/pdf/wm3378.pdf](http://thf_media.s3.amazonaws.com/2011/pdf/wm3378.pdf); "Heritage Fiscal Plan Saves American Dream for America's Veterans," Heritage Foundation *WebMemo* No. 3377, September 29, 2011; and "Building a Better Military Health Care System," Heritage Foundation *WebMemo* No. 3375, September 29, 2011, [http://thf\\_media.s3.amazonaws.com/2011/pdf/wm3375.pdf](http://thf_media.s3.amazonaws.com/2011/pdf/wm3375.pdf).
3. See Stuart M. Butler, Alison Acosta Fraser, and William W. Beach, eds., *Saving the American Dream: The Heritage Plan to Fix the Debt, Cut Spending, and Restore Prosperity* (Washington: The Heritage Foundation, 2011), <http://savingthedream.org/>.
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the reigning idea in the 1920s and for much of the 1930s as well, and we saw what happened: Not only did it not stop Hitler; it didn't stop Japan either, and it led to a Second World War that was far more deadly and far more costly than the first one.

We also saw that we had demobilized our forces. You've probably seen the photographs when we were preparing for World War II, when some of the soldiers were preparing with sticks to be mobilized into Asia and to Europe. The rapid buildup of our forces in 1940 and 41 was far costlier than if we had maintained a smaller force as a deterrent all along.

That is a lesson we learned from that period in history, and after World War II, we decided that we're not going to make that mistake again. It is one of the reasons why we became a world leader. We learned that you need to be prepared for war to avoid it.

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**IT TAKES DECADES TO BUILD UP THE PERSONNEL AND THE TRAINED SOLDIERS AND SAILORS TO BE AS GOOD AS THEY ARE. IT TAKES DECADES TO BUILD UP AN INFRASTRUCTURE. IT TAKES SOMETIMES LONGER THAN 30 YEARS TO GET A WEAPONS SYSTEM ONLINE.**

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The lesson is that it takes decades to build up the personnel and the trained soldiers and sailors to be as good as they are. It takes decades to build up an infrastructure. It takes sometimes longer than 30 years to get a weapons system online.

A President or a Congress can come in and cut that budget overnight,

and all that investment we've made is lost. If you need the capability again, it's going to cost you twice or three times as much to get it in short order when you really need it. It would have been a lot more cost-effective to keep the capability online not only to deter war in the first place, but in order not to pay more for it when somebody attacks you and you need to get your forces up more quickly.

Stuart talks about savings. Coincidentally, Jim Carafano works with Baker Spring and a lot of other people at Heritage to try and define savings in the military. We've looked at health care, personnel savings, logistics efficiencies, and we have identified billions of dollars in efficiencies that we believe can be taken and that money plowed back into the defense budget.

Stuart is absolutely right. Being strong on national defense is not about writing blank checks for inefficiencies. We need to find the best return on our dollars we possibly can. But it's also being realistic about what you need to deter war and also make sure we have the best force in the entire world.

Some people say Americans spend 14 times what the rest of the world combined spends for defense, which is a completely meaningless point. We're a world power. We have allies and interests all over the globe. Holland doesn't. China is a regional power. It's growing, but we don't want China to be spending as much as we are and be off the coast of the U.S. The military superiority of the United States is a force for peace and stability. We must never, ever forget that—for our own security and for our own freedom.

Now let's get the discussion going until the Congressman arrives.

**QUESTION:** Listening to the discussion about defense spending, like some of you guys old enough to remember the '72 campaign, where McGovern's people were arguing that if you have too much defense capability, it gets used, it seemed like that's where the debate has to be. It reminds me that Congress can't control itself, so it makes a committee so that the executive branch can't control itself, so the way to control it is to limit the size of the military so they can't invade Syria or whatever they want to do.

It seems like we skip over the strategic arguments of how much defense or how much capability we want. Are we willing to invade Syria? Do we care? It seems like we don't ever want to attack the hard issue, which is strategic: How much force do we want to be able to project in the world?

**KIM R. HOLMES:** That is the central question. It's not the question that I was asking these two gentlemen to address. We deal with that on other panels and papers all the time. I really wanted to get a fresh perspective on an issue we haven't talked about: how conservatives see "the common defense."

How much force we need is a critical question. We did a study about a year and a half ago called "A Strong National Defense,"<sup>4</sup> in which we talk about what our strategic interests are, why they are our interests. We don't just assert it; we explain why we care about what happens in the Middle East, why we care about what

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4. See The Heritage Foundation, "A Strong National Defense: The Armed Forces America Needs and What They Will Cost," Heritage Foundation *Special Report* No. 90, April 5, 2011, [http://thf\\_media.s3.amazonaws.com/2011/pdf/sr0090.pdf](http://thf_media.s3.amazonaws.com/2011/pdf/sr0090.pdf).



happens with China and Asia, why we care about what happens with Russia and Georgia, why we care about what happens in the Baltic states and Europe. Then we estimate what kind of forces we need to defend our interests in those regions and how much they will cost.

To answer your question, there's an analysis online where we did precisely that. You're right, though. Basically, what you're getting at is this ongoing debate about military intervention, which is a stand-in for a debate over what our national interests are. Given the fact that we're now at the end of a decade of war in Iraq and Afghanistan, there's clearly fatigue in the country with respect to military interventions. So people are more predisposed to think about that question. I think that's certainly a legitimate question.

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**THE ONGOING DEBATE ABOUT  
MILITARY INTERVENTION IS A  
STAND-IN FOR A DEBATE OVER WHAT  
OUR NATIONAL INTERESTS ARE.**

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We have to remember two points. One, there are a lot of people on the left wing of the political spectrum, liberal internationalists—and I think our President is in this camp—who are skeptical about America's role in the world. They certainly are skeptical about the use of American power. They believe that our interventions are useless and shouldn't have been done. I think President Obama came into office thinking that one of the reasons why the Iranians and people in the Middle East hated us so much is because we're over there, so if we just pull back, they will not hate us as much as they did before.

With the Iranians, he's discovered that's not the case. He pulled back, and they hate us just as much

as they did before. Same attitude about the Russians on the reset: If we reach out to the Russians, maybe they'll pull back. We pulled back, and they moved forward. That's the logic of geopolitics. It's not sentiment; it's just the logic of the way nations—particularly those kinds of nations—operate. So you have to be very unsentimental about it. It's about power. It's not about what we want them to do, but what they do regardless of what we do.

So when you ask a question, should we intervene here or not intervene here, the answer should be, let's do a clear-eyed analysis of what our interests are, whether or not we should do it, whether it's feasible, and whether or not we can be successful. We don't do that enough.

Frankly, our media are terrible at it—both sides, conservative and liberal. The liberal media think the only time you want to use force is for humanitarian purposes. If a lot of innocent people are being killed, then they get all up in arms. It's all about Bosnia, Somalia. The same thing is now happening in Syria, and on the other side, you've got the hard-core realists who are saying we don't really have interests there, and besides, how do we do it? We don't know if it'll be successful.

That's where the debate is.

**QUESTION:** You have to tie in how much force protection you want to be able to do. How much is enough?

**KIM R. HOLMES:** I think there are some people in Congress and around the President who believe that since we were overextended, the best way to make sure we don't engage in these wars is just don't have the capability to do it. If we can't do it, even the military will

have to say, "We can't do it, Mr. President, because we don't have the capability."

That works for certain ideological people who don't want to do those kinds of interventions, but what happens if you really have to do something? What happens if we have to gut infrastructure in order to reopen the Strait of Hormuz, for example, and keep the flow of oil going? It's the same capability; it's the same infrastructure you would need to intervene in Syria. You may say, "I don't want to do Syria," but then, if you don't build the infrastructure, you can't do anything anywhere. That's the danger.

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**THE HONORABLE KEN**

**BLACKWELL:** Stuart made a point. Let me do this from a former mayor's point of view.

I always thought that my first obligation as mayor of Cincinnati was to create a secure environment for families to rear children, educate those children successfully, where capital felt that the environment was secure enough for adequate investment. That didn't mean that we didn't look at the preparation of our police officers, our firefighters, that we didn't look at the most efficient way that we could expend those precious finite resources to provide them with the best, most effective technology available. So they didn't get a pass on fiscal scrutiny.

The same is the case for national defense as we promote national security. The Defense Department needs to be scrutinized to see if it's, as Stuart indicated, doing things most effectively.

I think the answer to your question is that we tend to look at it wrong. I want sufficient superiority in terms of our human resources, our human capital, and our technology

that even the most idiotic of the despots out there would not think about attacking our country or moving on our interests. I am concerned that from a national security standpoint, we have moved into unconstitutional waters with the way we disperse and expend our resources.

I was telling Kim that in 1996, Walter Williams, Steve Forbes, John Fund, and I were on a panel right here at Heritage, and when I was asked to make comments today, I was reminded of what Walter Williams said back then, and I went and pulled up his lecture. What he said was that Article I, Section 8 of our Constitution is very relevant to our discussion. Article I, Section 8 begins by granting Congress authority to lay and collect taxes. In the passage that follows, if you read carefully, Article I, Section 8 enumerates a broad range of about 19 activities for which Congress can use its taxing authorities, chief among them a common defense.

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**WE NEED TO LOOK AT WHAT HAS CAUSED US TO VENTURE INTO PERHAPS UNCONSTITUTIONAL EXPENDITURES THAT DIVERT THE FEDERAL GOVERNMENT'S ATTENTION FROM THOSE POWERS AND ACTIVITIES ENUMERATED FOR IT.**

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I know it's going to be very difficult to walk back to those 19 activities, but at least it should jump-start the discussion. It should suggest to us that we need to look at what has caused us to venture into these

perhaps unconstitutional expenditures that divert the federal government's attention from those powers and activities enumerated for it.

I think the whole issue of human capital and the breakdown of the family is very, very important, because if you look at the tremendous expenditures we have in terms of educating our population with diminishing returns on that investment, if we don't begin to look at the root of our problem—and that is the breakdown of the American family—then we're going to find ourselves in a situation that is untenable as we go forth in our third century.

The other point that I wanted to underscore is that at the end of the day, this fight is cultural. We are rapidly becoming a culture where earning money doesn't entitle you to it, but wanting money does. That is the creed of the redistributionists. And so we have a fundamental clash of world views that demonstrates itself not only in the breakdown of the family, but in our capacity to provide a sound common defense to our citizens and our interests.

**STUART M. BUTLER:** I totally agree with everything Ken just said. Let me just elaborate one little bit on this issue of security.

The corollary to recognizing the downside risk of failure is to have a margin of error and a margin of safety. When people often look at the Defense Department, they say, "Well, we have all these capabilities; do we really need them?" The rational approach, in order to avoid a high downside risk, is to have margins of

safety and redundancy, and that's true even in the commercial world.

When you look at successful businesses, it's very rare to have a very well run, successful business where everything is dependent on one person, maybe because they have a particular skill or something. You build in capabilities to deal with what happens if that one person gets the flu or leaves the business. The idea of building in reserve capabilities is absolutely critical to the idea of defense insurance or risk management, and it's a very important feature to understand because people will often look at things and say we've never needed this, we've got more than we need, and so on. But you have to look at it in that form.

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**THE IDEA OF BUILDING IN RESERVE CAPABILITIES IS ABSOLUTELY CRITICAL TO THE IDEA OF DEFENSE INSURANCE OR RISK MANAGEMENT.**

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The last thing I'll say related is that, as Ken said, you cannot overstate the importance of risk to people. For example, there was a big analysis done of the school choice program here in the Washington, D.C., area, and they asked parents, "What was the reason that you wanted your child to go to a school?" The number one thing was safety. Everything else followed. When safety was assured, then grades mattered and so on. That is generally true of how people look at things, and it's quite logical. I think that's part of how we really need to look at the defense area.

**KIM R. HOLMES:** And now, ladies and gentlemen, please welcome the Honorable Trent Franks. He has represented Arizona's Second District since 2003. He serves on the House Armed Services Committee and also on the Strategic Forces Subcommittee that oversees our nuclear arsenal, our missile defenses, and U.S. military assets in space. He also serves on the Readiness Subcommittee that ensures all of our troops are fully equipped. In addition, he is a member of the Judiciary Committee and is the Chairman of the Constitution Subcommittee.

He is also a former member of the Arizona House of Representatives. While there, he served as Vice Chairman of the House Commerce Committee and Chairman of the House Subcommittee on Child Protection and Family Preservation.

**THE HONORABLE TRENT FRANKS:** I am always so grateful to be among all of you. I think Heritage is one of the most vital organizations in our country. I know of no group out there that has the comprehensive inside impact on Congress as does Heritage, and I appreciate you very, very much. I've got a lot of good friends here. Ken Blackwell is somebody that I hold to be a hero in this republic.

I had the wonderful privilege of leading Rolling Thunder into Washington here on Sunday. They said there were 500,000 motorcycles. It was very touching to me because it's not just a motorcycle gang; this was a group of people dedicated to remembering those who gave everything they had for us. I think their mantra was, "We offer honor to those who paid the toll, so you remember them when you hear the thunder roll."

To pull several things together here and try to make it sound

compelling, the challenge before the free world today is to render terrorism a universally hated evil and a completely ineffective means of achieving political goals. To do this, I think we have to recognize that there are two components to every security threat, every terrorist threat we face, and that's intent and capacity: First, what is the intent of the enemy we face, and second, what is the enemy's capacity to materialize that intent?

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**IT'S IMPORTANT TO UNDERSTAND THAT GLOBAL JIHAD IS TAKING PLACE ON TWO VERY DIFFERENT FRONTS: WARFARE ON THE BATTLEFIELD AND WHAT HAS NOW BECOME KNOWN AS "LAWFARE" IN THE JUDICIAL SYSTEM TO IMPOSE SHARIA LAW UPON ALL OF HUMANITY.**

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Thus far, we've primarily focused on achieving tactical success against the enemy's capacity while missing the overall battle that's being waged, and that is its ideology or intent. Dr. Sebastian Gorka said it this way:

Although we have proven our capacity in the last 10 years to kinetically engage our enemy at the operational and tactical level with unsurpassed effectiveness, we have not even begun to take the war to al-Qaeda and other terrorists on the strategic level of counter-ideology.

One of the reasons we failed in that regard, according to Dr. Gorka, is the misguided belief that the religious character of the enemy's ideology should not be discussed—this despite the fact that all those who've brought death to our shores, al-Qaeda operatives, have done so not so

much out of purely political conviction, but clearly as a result of the fact that they feel transcendently justified.

I would submit to you that we have failed to bankrupt jihadist terrorism at its most insidious point, and that's its narrative of a global religious war. It's time for all of us to directly confront the ideology of global jihadism itself and expose it for what it is: It is the utter, continual, and heartless disregard for innocent human life in the name of a distorted religious perspective that denies the God of life of Himself, and it's evil.

It's important to understand that global jihad is taking place on two very different fronts: warfare on the battlefield and what has now become known as "lawfare" in the judicial system to impose Sharia law upon all of humanity. There's no more favorable arena for Sharia law advocates or lawfare than the U.S. and international court system. The world has to understand that Sharia is not simply a set of rules governing criminal or religious behavior; it is the primary doctrinal and legal impetus for terrorism in the name of Islam. It cannot coexist with freedom and liberty, and we must be as vigilant against this stealth jihad as we are against the military capabilities of violent jihad.

"Death to America." Terrorists are never afraid to say that. It's not a slogan. According to Sheikh Hassan Nasrallah, "Death to America" is a policy, a strategy, and a vision. Iran has called for Israel to be wiped off the map and for the utter annihilation of the Jewish state.

On June 2, 2008, Mahmoud Ahmadinejad made clear where he stands. He stated that Muslims should uproot satanic powers and declared that Israel is about to die and will soon be erased from

the world and geographical scene. Ahmadinejad also said anybody who recognizes Israel will burn in the fire of the Islamic nation's fury. These jihadists talk like they know something that at least they think the rest of us don't, and history reminds us to take such madmen seriously.

I know most of you are familiar with what Jewish author Primo Levi said. He was once asked what he had learned from the Holocaust, and you know his answer. He said, "When a man with a gun says he's going to kill you, believe him."

We have to understand the intent of our enemy. That's vitally important, and I think we probably understand the intent of terrorists more than we ever have. I think this ideological impulse is almost more dangerous than we faced with the Nazis. As evil as they were, the fact that they cared about no human life of any kind except their own at least gave us leverage to threaten *their* lives, but the jihadists will blow their children to pieces to blow you to pieces. That's a different intent.

That brings me to the second component of every terrorist and security threat we face, and that's the enemy's capacity to carry out its intent. As everyone in this room is very likely already aware, the Iranian regime is moving closer than ever before to developing nuclear weapons. The Iranian nation now possesses enough low-enriched uranium that, if enriched further, could in a very short period of time produce enough weapons-grade fissile material to create several nuclear warheads.

Back in 2005, I happened to be the first Member of Congress to call on the floor of the House for Iran to be

referred to the U.N. Security Council. Some said it was really premature, because at the time, Iran only had 167 known centrifuges, and they reminded us that it takes 3,000 centrifuges to have a credible and fully capable nuclear enrichment program. Today, the Iranian program includes over 9,000 centrifuges. They are closer than ever before.

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**WE ARE NOT READY FOR A NUCLEAR IRAN. IF IRAN GAINS NUCLEAR CAPABILITY, THEY WILL GIVE IT TO TERRORISTS THE WORLD OVER, AND THE ENTIRE HUMAN FAMILY WILL STEP INTO THE SHADOW OF NUCLEAR TERRORISM.**

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There is strong reason to conclude that Iran is pursuing what could be their ultimate asymmetric weapon, a nuclear high-altitude electromagnetic pulse weapon, or an EMP capability. An EMP attack on America would consist of a nuclear blast detonated at exo-atmospheric altitude, which would instantly generate an electromagnetic pulse over the homeland with what could be potentially devastating effect. It's possible that only one such weapon, properly designed and delivered, could destroy or disable America's electric grid and effectively return our society to the horse-and-buggy days without the horse and buggy.

In such a scenario, Dr. William Graham, chairman of America's EMP Commission, estimates that 70 to 90 percent of the stricken nation's population would be unsustainable. It's hard for me to wrap my mind around that figure, but I have three-year-old twins, so I'm forced to try.

We are now 65 years into the nuclear age, and the ominous intersection of jihadist terrorism and nuclear proliferation has been inexorably rolling towards humanity and the free world for decades. But when we add the dimension of asymmetric electromagnetic pulse attacks to the equation, we face a menace that may represent the gravest short-term threat to peace and security of the entire human family perhaps in the world today.

For that reason, I've introduced what's known as the SHIELD Act.<sup>5</sup> It requires automated hardware-based solutions to deal with any such electromagnetic pulse, whether it comes from nuclear or geomagnetic disturbance. It's fine to have all of the processes in place, but it's very important that we harden our grid for two very specific reasons. One, the terrorist world knows that this is a way to turn America off. This is an invitation for them to exploit a weakness, and all throughout history, when an enemy was determined to hurt a country, they always exploited that weakness. This is not something that we can say probably won't happen; they are certainly trying to make it happen. We have it in writings of Iran's own military journals already.

So as important as I believe missile defense is—and I'm the chairman of the Missile Defense Caucus, so I believe it's very, very important—we have to harden our grid, because we invite some sort of an EMP attack if we don't, and there are even scenarios where potentially, if we had to engage a nuclear incoming mid-range and medium-range missile at lower altitude, we could even precipitate an EMP attack on ourselves if they fused the warhead.

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5. See H.R. 668, Secure High-voltage Infrastructure for Electricity from Lethal Damage Act, 112th Cong., 1st Sess., February 11, 2011, <http://www.gpo.gov/fdsys/pkg/BILLS-112hr668ih/pdf/BILLS-112hr668ih.pdf> (accessed July 12, 2012).

We are not ready for a nuclear Iran. If Iran gains nuclear capability, they will give it to terrorists the world over, and the entire human family will step into the shadow of nuclear terrorism. Any sense or concept of peace we have ever known could be completely changed in a blinding flash. I think we will need a new calendar if Iran gains nuclear weapons.

It's very difficult for me to tell you how bewildering it is to me to hear our own President expressing more outrage toward Israel for building homes in its own capital city than he has expressed toward a madman like Mahmoud Ahmadinejad for building nuclear weapons with which to threaten the peace of the entire human family. It's hard for me to understand that.

The Administration announced that it would resume contacts with the Muslim Brotherhood now that the Arab Spring is in full bloom. Washington is interested in dealing with parties with "non-violent politics." Maybe the State Department or Mr. Obama missed the Muslim Brotherhood's Supreme Guide's memo last year when he declared holy war against America and Israel and stated that the U.S.A. is experiencing the beginning of its end and went on to castigate the Muslim world for not doing more to effect that end.

Let me just say that I think the Obama Administration simply doesn't understand some of the threats that we face in that regard. I think it's reflected in the budget. I think it's reflected in the threat to veto anything that would alter or change the sequestration process that's in place right now. I was one of the few conservatives that voted against creating this mechanism. There was a lot of pressure for us to do that, but I thought this

is something the liberals will try to exploit, and certainly they have.

I'm reminded of Winston Churchill's words in a situation like this. Defense Secretary Don Rumsfeld said weakness is provocative. It always seems to bring more danger than any of the diplomacy elements seem to prevent. Winston Churchill was trying to warn the world how dangerous the Nazi ideology was, and they were always saying, "Oh, you're overdoing it." In *The Gathering Storm*, the first volume in his six-volume history of World War II, he said:

If you will not fight for the right when you can easily win without bloodshed; if you will not fight when your victory will be sure and not too costly; you may come to the moment when you will have to fight with all the odds against you and only a precarious chance of survival. There may even be a worse case. You may have to fight when there is no hope of victory, because it is still better to perish than to live as slaves.

I would suggest to you that the terrorist world is looking not just at our capacity—they know that we have the capacity to engage them on any level—but they're actually examining what our intent and our commitment is, and right now I think that the person in the White House does not serve us well in that regard. I think the most important thing we can do for national security in this country is to change Presidents. I don't know of anything that's more vital to our country's future on a host of different levels, but certainly with respect to national security, than that.

I'm reminded that sometimes, when we have faced challenges in the

past, we didn't respond soon enough. Certainly in World War II, as Churchill's comments so profoundly came true, we saw the devastating result of not responding soon enough, because we could have. The Nazis were one time just a bunch of idiots in brown shirts riding across France in bicycles. They didn't have any capacity to hurt anybody, but they had this hellish ideology that they had a superior race and were willing to vanquish all others to try to gain its ascendancy.

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**IT'S IMPORTANT TO UNDERSTAND THAT GLOBAL JIHAD IS TAKING PLACE ON TWO VERY DIFFERENT FRONTS: WARFARE ON THE BATTLEFIELD AND WHAT HAS NOW BECOME KNOWN AS "LAWFARE" IN THE JUDICIAL SYSTEM TO IMPOSE SHARIA LAW UPON ALL OF HUMANITY.**

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I'm also reminded that those who survived the Holocaust achieved their revenge in a sense through simply living. Rather than allowing their faith and their hope to be crushed by atrocities, they chose to dry their tears and look up again and begin building. And, indeed, they did build a future and a family and a community and a nation. The God of Jacob honored their courage, and the threat of the Nazis is now no more.

One day, I believe, this threat of global jihad will be no more. But if that day is to be hastened, we must be very vigilant in the immediate years ahead, and most importantly, we must remember that it is not just a military threat that is our greatest danger: It's the water on the *inside* of the ship that sinks it. We have to understand that this is a destiny year for America in our electoral politics. What we do this year will set the format for the future

of my three-year-old twins and a lot of people that you love.

I'm going to leave you with a quote that they cited in a recent film in America that depicted an event in 1588 when Queen Elizabeth rode out to her army when they were facing a holy war from King Philip's massive ocean-borne armada that came in superior force, and it looked like it was the end of England. Had that battle gone the other way, you and I would not be sitting here discussing the issue at all. But she gave a speech that inspired them to one of England's greatest victories in history. She said:

My loving people. We see the sails of the enemy approaching. We hear the Spanish guns over the water. Soon now, we will meet them face-to-face. I am resolved, in the midst and heat of the battle, to live or die with you. While we stand together, no invader will pass. Let them come with the armies of Hell; they will not pass. And when this day of battle is ended, we meet again, in heaven or on the field of victory.

I believe, in a sense, that's our situation today. I'm hoping we will meet again in a room like this in about a year on the field of victory, and I leave it all to you to do the best you can to that end. Thank you for what Heritage means, for what Heritage does for national security, and on behalf of my three-year-old twins, let me just say to you that I pray that if we do our job, they and their contemporaries will walk in the sunlight of freedom as you and I have been able to do.

**QUESTION:** Congressman, because a lot of people don't understand what EMP stands for or how it works or why it's such a great danger, could you unpack that?

### **THE HONORABLE TRENT**

**FRANKS:** EMP stands for electromagnetic pulse, and it's a massive rush of charged ions rushing toward the Earth that can build an electronic load in the leads going into transformers and literally cause them to overload and burn themselves up. That's one side of it. But it also overloads a lot of these little circuits.

For a long time, we were not very vulnerable to EMP because some of our circuits and some of our relays were very robust. Now we have these little scatter control systems. We've kind of outsmarted ourselves in that we've integrated the grid to the extent that if one part of it goes down, it can cascade and cause problems with the other. Some of these little circuits that we use today in computer controls are 30 molecules wide; they don't even make a good flashbulb.

Of course, the liberals were willing for awhile to say yes, there is such a thing as EMP because we know that the sun can cause that. We call it the Carrington Effect. We're kind of due for one of those, as you know, but they wanted to avoid the nuclear EMP issue.

I don't want to overanswer this question, but I had the world summit on this issue. We just held our third annual summit in England, and our own Defense Department said we know this is very real. One of the first things we do in a nuclear exchange protocol is do an EMP lay down to try to blind our enemy and let them know what's happening. One of the

first things we did when we went into Iraq was do an EMP lay down so that we could take out as much of the enemy's command and control in their electric grid as we could.

The military understands. In fact, one official said this is one of the few threats that can defeat us. The reality is, our military depends on the civilian grid for 99 percent of its electricity needs. It can't do its job without that. It doesn't have any control over our civilian grid. It's already said that without that, their whole mission is threatened. We spend billions of dollars hardening our military apparatus—our missile defense capability, our nuclear triad—and yet the civilian grid is as delicate as a butterfly wing to EMP. There's a real weakness there that an enemy will exploit if they get the chance.

With the SHIELD Act, we'll prevent that, and I'm just hoping as much as possible that Heritage and other groups will make that issue known. I hope you'll look at the SHIELD Act. We have only one issue now, and that is if Mr. Upton<sup>6</sup> will allow it to come to the floor; the leadership is ready to do it.

**QUESTION:** I'm here with Oxbridge. I don't doubt that these threats are very real and are a real security threat to the U.S. I was just wondering, because you give very little attention to globalization and new times and the importance of negotiations and creating platforms for peaceful dialogue around these issues.

### **THE HONORABLE TRENT**

**FRANKS:** First of all, and I say this with the utmost respect, I'm a Sunday school teacher for one- and

6. Representative Fred Upton (R-MI).

two-year-olds; I don't want to hurt anybody. I want to make sure that we try to talk and are as kind to each other as we can be. But I think one of the great dangers that we face as a society, if we count only on diplomacy without the backup of a capability, then enemies like Mahmoud Ahmadinejad don't take it seriously. I think it actually weakens our diplomacy pretty profoundly.

I believe in talking with people and doing everything we can to express a peaceful intent with everyone. I am convinced that America tries to do that, but one great danger for diplomacy is in misreading a potential enemy's intent to the extent where diplomacy to them is simply a tactic rather than a means to an end. I'm afraid that's what we're facing now with Iran. I'm afraid that they're doing diplomacy to buy time. Remember: Once Iran has a nuclear weapons capability, the equation changes as profoundly as I know how to articulate. That happened with North Korea; they're a different country now

because they have nuclear weapons capability.

Yes, any effort on our part to interdict that on the part of Iran is steeped with great dangers, but it will pale into insignificance compared to dealing with Iran after they gain nuclear weapons. So I believe in diplomacy. I really do. But I think that true diplomacy and effective diplomacy has the ability to back up with capability anything that it expresses.

**KIM R. HOLMES:** In closing, I would just add that sometimes the mistake the other side makes is that it posits as if diplomacy or international peace negotiations is one thing, and the use of military force is another. These are seen as two separate things, and they're almost two worldviews—separate answers to whatever the problem is.

As anyone who studies history and diplomacy knows, that's completely and simplistically wrong, as you pointed out, Congressman. If we're going to have effective

diplomacy, particularly as a great power, we've got to have power behind it.

The leaders of the European Union in particular are great believers in negotiating with the Iranians, for example, on nuclear weapons. But even they have realized that having the U.S. as a hard power to back them up gives them a credibility they would not have by themselves with the Iranians. Certainly the Iranians understand this. The North Koreans understand it.

The fact is that when you're talking about war and peace, most of the bad actors like the Iranians and North Koreans and others don't share our values of peace. They operate under a different set of rules and logic in which, as the Congressman says, diplomacy is a means to an end. It's a tactic to try to gain some advantage or to preserve some bit of their power, and we would be foolish not to realize that's their logic, that they don't share our logic, and we should be careful not to mirror-image our values on them; they don't share them.