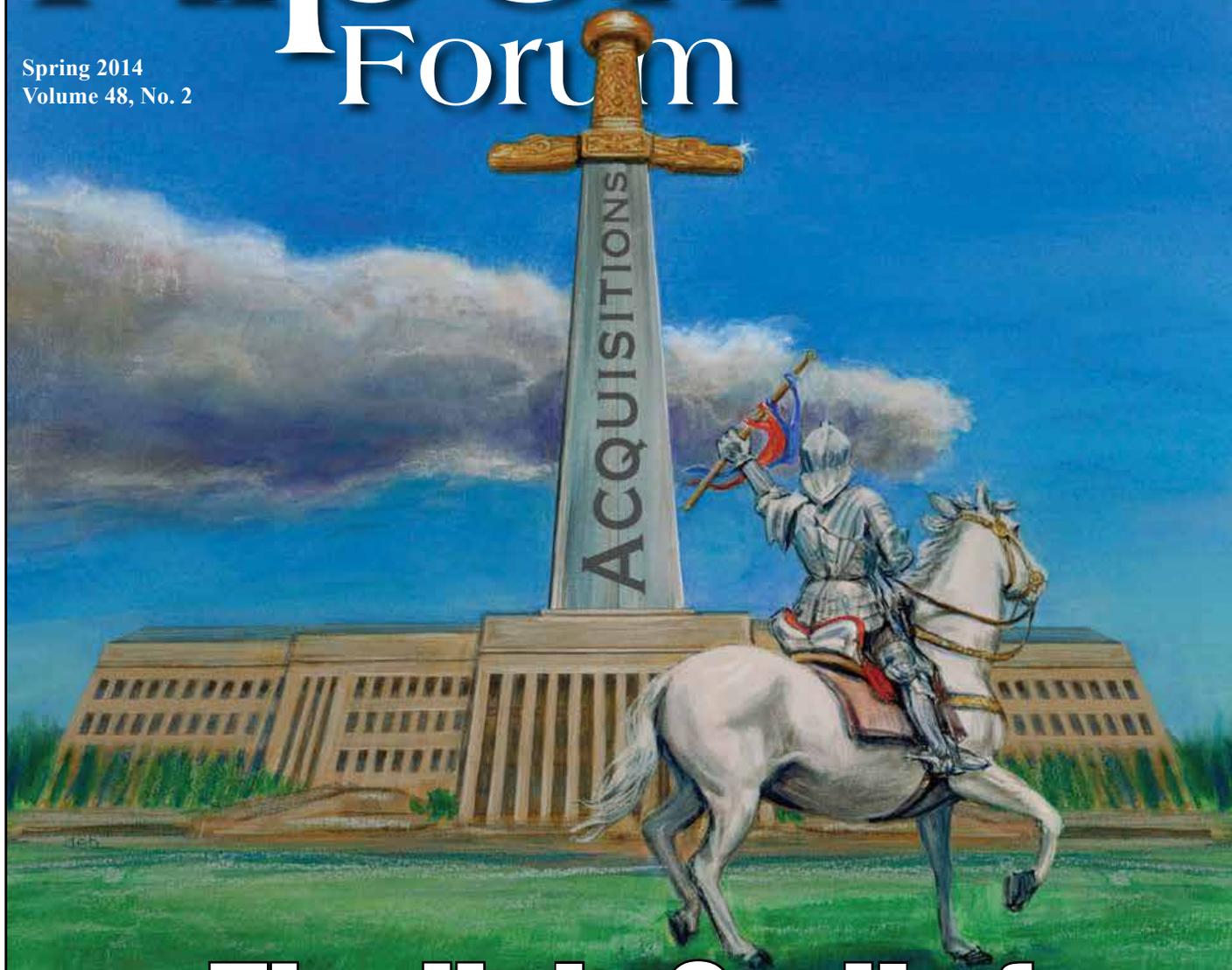


**"We're on the right side of these issues"
Senator Kelly Ayotte discusses
expanding the GOP's base**



The Rippon Forum

Spring 2014
Volume 48, No. 2



The Holy Grail of Defense Reform

**The elusive quest to fix the Pentagon's broken acquisition system
With essays by Dov Zakheim and William Greenwalt**



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Volume 48, Number 2

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In this Edition

One of the storylines in Washington this year has been the inability of Congress and the President to come together on some of the key challenges facing our nation. And yet gridlock is nothing new in our nation's capital.

Change is hard; reform is difficult. This is true not only on high profile issues such as immigration and tax reform that have dominated the headlines in recent months. It is also true on more obscure issues. The issue of fixing the Pentagon's broken acquisition system is a good example.

Politicians have been trying to change and improve upon the way our military gets its equipment and weaponry since the dawn of the republic. During the Civil War, for example, historian James McPherson has written about how President Lincoln "functioned at times as chief of ordnance, ordering the hidebound Brig. Gen. James Ripley, who officially held that position until the president forced his retirement in September 1863, to test new weapons offered by inventors."

More recently, former Defense Secretary Robert Gates has recounted how he had to personally intervene in the effort to build Mine-Resistant Ambush Protected vehicles (MRAPs) because production was too slow and improvised explosive devices were decimating our troops.

According to Business Executives for National Security, 262 reports and studies were published between 1986 and 2009 documenting the many deficiencies in the defense acquisition system. That does not include BENS' own report published that same year.

Authored by former Senators Warren Rudman and Gary Hart and Norman Augustine, the former Chairman of CEO of Lockheed Martin, the BENS report was blunt in its assessment of the challenges facing reformers: "The acquisition process today does not reflect any rational overall design," Rudman, Hart and Augustine wrote. "It is, rather, a collection of band-aids laid over other band-aids, each an incremental measure intended to fix a narrowly defined problem."

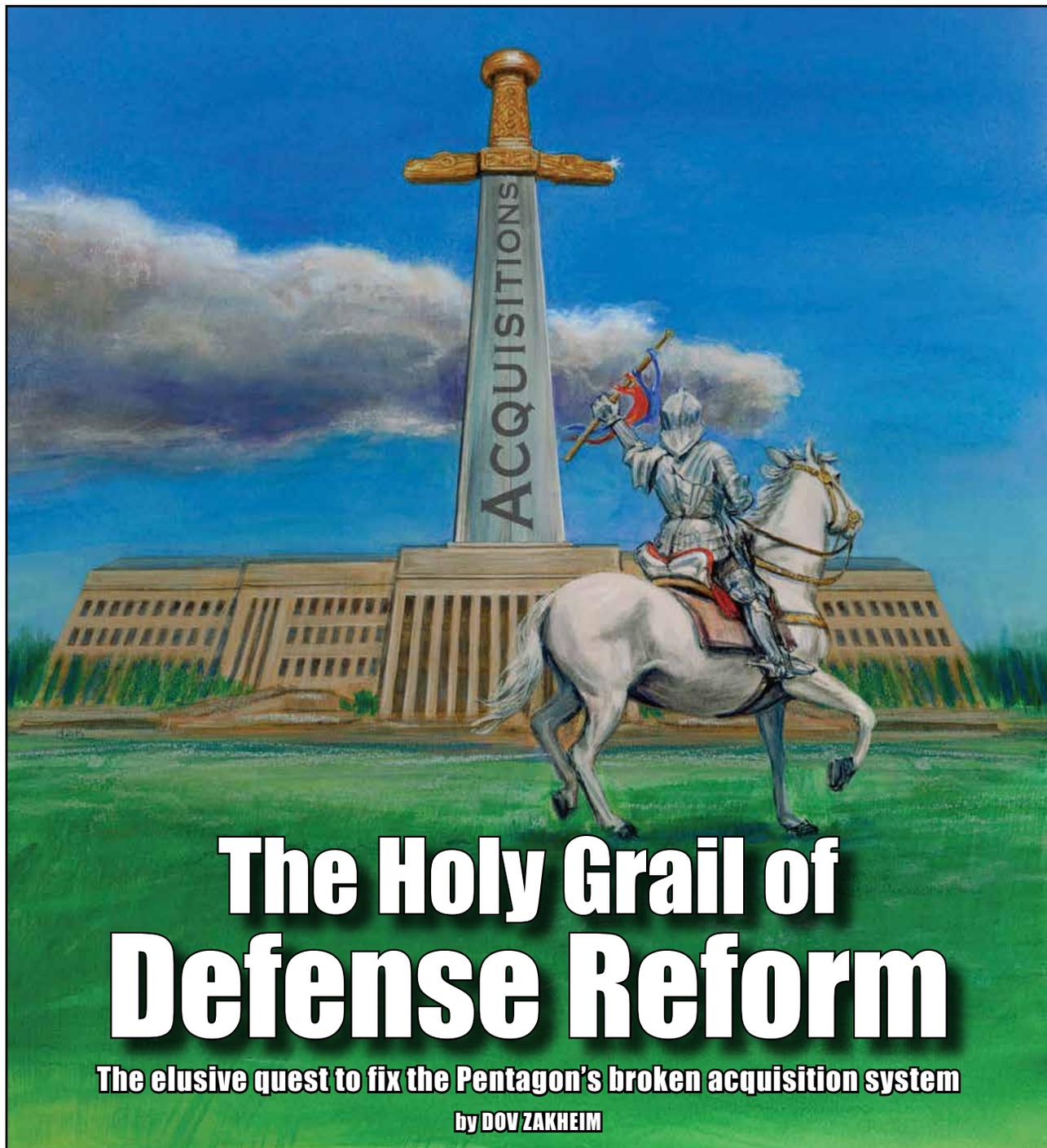
We examine this irrational design and these band-aids in the latest edition of *The Ripon Forum*. Leading off our coverage is an essay by one of the nation's foremost experts on the Department of Defense and national security matters -- former Pentagon Comptroller Dov Zakheim, who looks at the elusive quest for acquisitions reform over the years and, as he puts it, its "long and distinguished record of failure."

We also look at the latest reform effort underway on Capitol Hill to tackle this problem with an essay by William Greenwalt, who served as Deputy Under Secretary of Defense for Industrial Policy and who writes about the scope of the challenge facing today's reformers and some of the roadblocks standing in the way of real change.

In another area of reform facing the Pentagon, former Wyoming Senator Alan Simpson delivers some of his patented straight talk in an essay about military entitlements, which, Senator Simpson writes, have been growing at an unsustainable rate in recent years, and which he warns will consume other important parts of the defense budget if changes are not made.

As always, we hope you enjoy this edition of the *Forum*, and encourage you to contact us with any thoughts or comments you may have.

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The Holy Grail of Defense Reform

The elusive quest to fix the Pentagon's broken acquisition system

by DOV ZAKHEIM

Defense acquisition reform has a long and distinguished record of failure.

Ever since Robert McNamara attempted to reform a system that at the time was yielding cost overruns and schedule delays, successive secretaries and deputy secretaries of defense, legislators, and congressionally-mandated commissions have proposed changes in the nature of DoD's management, its organization, its bureaucracy, its processes, and its contracting methodology. And still programs overrun, and still schedules slip, and still there

are cancellations.

Any effort to list all the attempts at acquisition reform would, at a minimum, call for an extended length article, if not a full length book. What follows is but an exceedingly brief overview of some of the many attempts to reform defense acquisition.

The McNamara Approach

Then-Secretary McNamara centralized defense management, introduced new methods for source selection

and contracting, reformed the management of ongoing acquisition programs, and created new organizations to manage contracts and their costs. His management reforms included the introduction of PPBS -- the Planning Programming and Budgeting System -- which, to McNamara's own amazement, remained virtually unchanged as late as 2001.

McNamara also created an office of systems analysis to evaluate which programs might be the most cost effective, and thereby determine the fate of programs that had badly overrun their cost estimates or fallen short of their performance targets. His introduction of what he expected to be a rigorous source selection process also included contractor performance evaluations, parametric cost estimates, and efforts to produce more rigorously definitive contracts. His innovations in contract management included cost information reports, PERT (program evaluation and review technique) to manage scheduling, and configuration management controls. Finally, McNamara created the Defense Supply Agency, the Defense Contract Administration Service (DCAS) and the Defense Contract Audit Agency (DCAA).

Like PPBS, many of McNamara's innovations have remained part of the DoD acquisition process. Yet beginning with McNamara's own tenure, these changes did not produce desired results. Among McNamara's programmatic failures were the huge overruns on the C-5A tanker and the troubled production of the TFX fighter/bomber, which became the F-111. Moreover, in a pattern that would repeat itself, and would undermine any long term progress in acquisition reform, many of McNamara's innovations were so severely modified as to be virtually unrecognizable from their original form. For example, while the Services -- in line with McNamara's Total Package Procurement (TPP) policy -- adopted fixed price contracts as their primary acquisition vehicle, their frequent use of engineering change proposals, together with their reluctance to implement the policy, rendered the fixed price constraint meaningless. It also did not prevent cost overruns, and led to the Nixon Administration's abandonment of TPP.

Apart from PPBS, only the agencies and organizations that McNamara created survived, though the latter in many cases with different names -- which is a testimony to the

tenaciousness of the bureaucracy when it comes to matters concerning its ongoing existence. Thus, Systems Analysis became Program Analysis and Evaluation (PA&E), which became Cost Assessment and Program Evaluation (CAPE). And while DCAA has retained its name, its record in recent years has not been without blemish. DCAS is now the Defense Contract Management Agency (DCMA), and it too has a record that is spotty at best.

Packard's Management by Objectives

In what would become a half-century pattern of metronomic changes in defense procurement, DoD under then-Secretary Melvin Laird and his deputy David Packard essentially jettisoned McNamara's approach by instituting what they termed "management by objectives." The system was meant to focus on requirements definition, with implementation decentralized to the Services. Packard created a new committee, the Defense Systems Acquisition Review Council (DSARC) which would oversee the new process and certify the readiness of every major program to move to the next stage (termed "milestone") of the acquisition cycle. Packard also pushed for the training of program managers, both military and civilian, which he felt was severely lacking. Finally, Packard favored cost-reimbursement contracts for the development phase of weapons systems, thus reversing in part McNamara's preference for fixed price contracts. Indeed, in a pattern that was to repeat itself over the years and in successive administrations, wherever Packard found that his reforms conflicted with current DOD directives, he had the directives changed to suit his preferences.

Naturally, the Services applauded those elements of Packard's changes that restored their power to manage programs, most of which were also recommended by the 1970 Fitzhugh Commission report. In practice, however, there was far less change than Packard had anticipated. For example, the DSARC, in many ways the centerpiece of Packard's reforms, evolved from what Packard intended as an ad-hoc oversight group into a highly stylized, highly bureaucratized committee. It tended to rubber stamp arrangements that were made elsewhere, usually between the acquisition chief (whose title changed over the years) and the Service managing the program in question.

Similarly, Packard's demands for better training for



Many of McNamara's innovations have remained part of the DoD acquisition process. Yet these changes did not produce desired results.

military program managers in particular were never fully realized. The Services jealously guarded their control over an individual serviceman's education and training life cycle and passively resisted any changes imposed on them by the Office of the Secretary of Defense (OSD). Programs continued to flounder under managers who not only were not fully trained to deal with their increasing complexity, but also focused more on minimizing blatant mistakes so they could move onto their next jobs. Such an approach led to more errors, not fewer, and the overruns and schedule delays, and indeed, cancellations of all or part of programs, continued apace.

Ensuing decades have seen further attempts at reform, including a commission that Packard himself headed in 1976, which, like the Fitzhugh Commission, bemoaned the endemic shortcomings of the acquisition process and recommended a host of changes that, even if introduced, were never fully implemented as the Commission intended. Titles changed -- the Director for Defense Research and Engineering became the Under Secretary for Research and Engineering who became the Under Secretary for Acquisition, who became the Under Secretary for Acquisition, Technology and Logistics. Committees changed their names -- the DSARC, on which this author served in the mid-1980s, became the Defense Acquisition Board (DAB), on which this author served in the early 2000's. But little else changed.

Personal Intervention, from Rickover to Gates

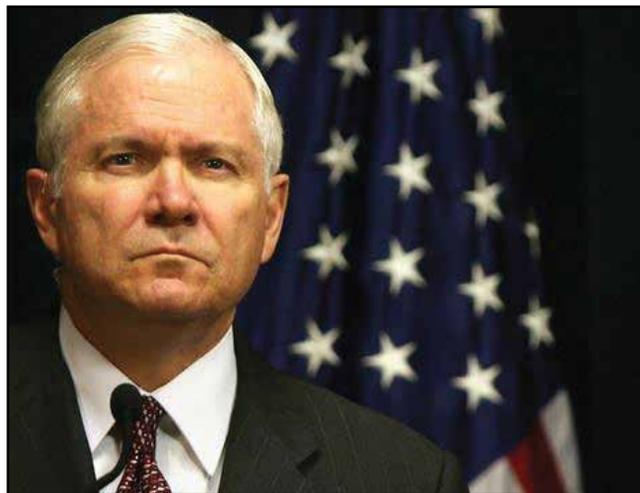
When programs were successfully managed or brought under control or carried out in a timely manner from their inception, they were either the product of sustained long-term management by the same individual, or the result of personal intervention by the Secretary of Defense himself. An example of the former case was, and still is, the Navy's nuclear submarine program, which for three decades beginning in the 1950s remained under the tight control of Hyman Rickover. Rickover led the program from the time he was a captain through a series of promotions, ultimately culminating in his serving as a four-star admiral. The program remains under the

leadership of a four-star admiral whose tenure is set for 10 years, the longest for any program manager.

Another example is that of the Navy's AEGIS combat system, which initially was geared to defend against air attacks and, subsequently, against attacks by ballistic missiles. In 1970, within a year of RCA being awarded a development contract for the system, Captain Wayne Meyer was assigned to manage the new program. His successful tenure as its overseer lasted 13 years; AEGIS is now one of the backbones of the U.S. missile defense program.

The B-1 bomber and the Mine Resistant Ambush Protected (MRAP) programs are two cases where sustained personal intervention by the Secretary of

Defense was the key to their being fielded successfully. The B-1 program, cancelled during the Carter Administration and revived as the B-1b when Ronald Reagan took office, was in deep trouble when Secretary Caspar Weinberger decided to chair regular meetings with his staff and the program manager until the program was re-set on course. At times, those meetings were held weekly. Weinberger took an active role, peppering the Air Force general in charge with questions and demanding detailed



The MRAP program would never have come into being were it not for the personal exertions of Secretary Robert Gates.

updates. Weinberger's intervention saved the program.

The MRAP program would never have come into being were it not for the personal exertions of Secretary Robert Gates. Faced with the devastating effects of increasingly sophisticated improvised explosive device (IED) attacks on American service personnel in Iraq, Gates forced through a program that was initially resisted by the military, incorporated a combination of foreign built parts (normally anathema to the DOD bureaucracy), and drew funds away for other projects. The program proved hugely successful and saved hundreds, if not thousands, of lives in Iraq and Afghanistan.

The lessons of the nuclear submarine, AEGIS, B-1b and MRAP programs is that ultimately, it is personnel competence, management longevity, and sustained leadership from the very top of DOD that

are the key to taming the runaway mess called defense acquisition. Without educated human resources, for management, contracting, and supervision, without long term program leadership, without commitments by successive DOD leaderships, regardless of party, acquisition reform will remain a chimera.

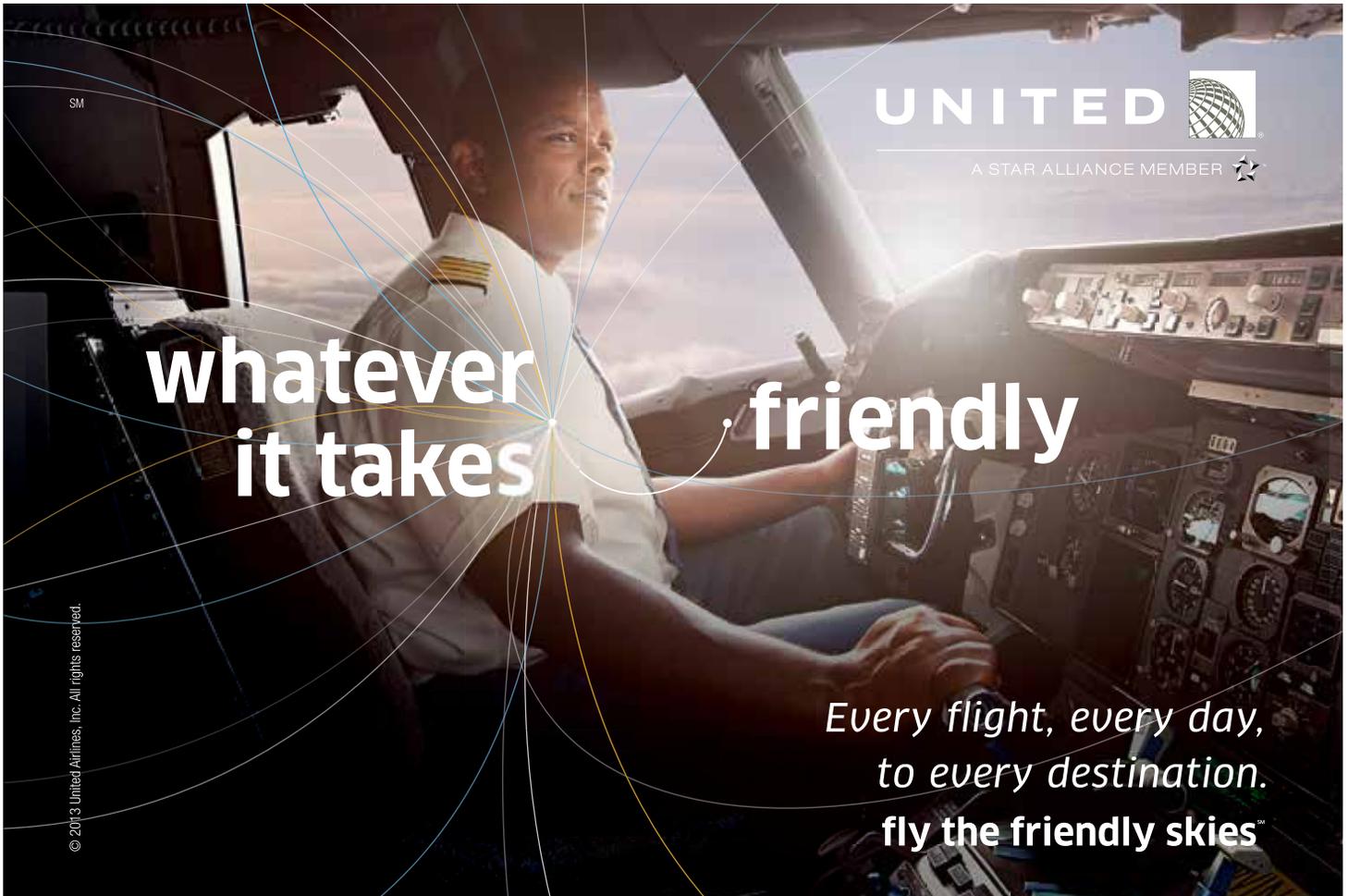
The fact that the current effort by the House Armed Services Committee to reform defense acquisition is a bipartisan undertaking bodes well for the prospect that legislation will be forthcoming. But unless that legislation focuses primarily on training and longevity of management, and on the need for DOD's leadership -- of whatever stripe -- to adhere to the reforms of its predecessors, little will change, even with the best of Congressional will.

For at the end of the day, it is people -- not processes, much less concepts that are all too often converted into mere buzzwords -- that are most in need of reform and

that will be the key to a truly successful overhaul of the defense acquisition system. **RF**

From 2001 to April 2004, Dov Zakheim served as Under Secretary of Defense (Comptroller) and Chief Financial Officer for the Department of Defense, serving as principal advisor to the Secretary of Defense on financial and budgetary matters, leading over 50,000 staff, developing and managing the world's largest budgets, and negotiating five major defense agreements with US allies and partners. He currently is Senior Advisor at the Center for Strategic and International Studies and Senior Fellow at the CNA Corporation, a federally funded think tank. He also serves as a commissioner on the Military Compensation and Retirement Modernization Commission and as a member of the Defense Business Board.

Ultimately, it is personnel competence, management longevity, and sustained leadership from the very top of DOD that are the key to taming the runaway mess called defense acquisition.



The Scope of the Challenge

As Congress launches another effort to reform the Pentagon's acquisition system, a look at the opportunities -- and obstacles -- that lie ahead

WILLIAM GREENWALT

In November 2013, the House Armed Services Committee (HASC) embarked on an effort to reform what is universally recognized as a broken acquisition system within the Department of Defense. Representative Mac Thornberry (R-TX), the HASC Vice Chairman, and Ranking Member Adam Smith (D-WA) were tasked with leading the charge on what will likely be a multi-year reform effort.

The task is daunting and has skewered many previous efforts at improvement. To understand the magnitude of the challenge, it may be helpful to view DOD as first and foremost a people-centric enterprise supporting an economy the size of a small nation. Together, military service members, civilians, and contractors (oftentimes performing interchangeable functions) use an installed capital base of machines, equipment and land to meet the national security missions of the United States. To operate this economy, DOD bought \$308 billion in goods and services in 2013. How contractors are used is critical to the productivity and readiness of the Armed Services that translates into the ability to fight and deter potential enemies abroad.

DOD is the only buyer of many defense unique products like jet fighters and aircraft carriers and, because of this monopsony, is forced into the role of a centralized industrial planner for these markets. Acquisition policy is the predominant tool that determines the rules of the game of how the defense market works. For decades, the acquisition system was successful, if judged by the

degree of innovation and the quality of weapons produced compared to our rivals. But like many centrally planned economies, the system was never a paragon of efficiency. What efficiencies that do reside in the system are oftentimes determined by the quality and extent of the use of commercial market-based incentives and practices.

In the current defense spending downturn, the underlying historical factors that enabled past defense innovation are at risk and call into question many past policies. Acquisition reform must address the reality of DOD's diminished purchasing power and its declining ability to influence commercial technology trends that are now critical to DOD's needs. Potential adversaries may understand the implications of these trends better than DOD does, so the risks are great if we don't get reform right.

The nature of the defense acquisition challenge is how to best use the private sector to meet national security needs within constrained resources. Defense acquisition reform is not just about contracting

procedures; it is about strategy, vision, and the efficient and effective allocation of taxpayer dollars. Acquisition starts with a requirements process informed by a budget process. It encompasses personnel and financial management reforms. It addresses how this country innovates and what kind of industrial base (defense-unique, commercial, integrated or globalized) supports the military.

Acquisition is not just about developing new weapon systems, but also about maintaining, operating and eventually disposing of the old. In addition to feeding,



Acquisition reform must address the reality of DOD's diminished purchasing power and its declining ability to influence commercial technology trends that are now critical to DOD's needs.

clothing, housing and training the troops, it is more and more about advanced engineering services, cyber-security, and telecommunications. Acquisition is about protecting technologies and knowledge from getting in the wrong hands while making it easier to share technologies and operate alongside our allies. If the acquisition system is optimized, it can do all of these things at the least possible cost to the taxpayer. If it is not, it leaves us less secure.

The emphasis of current congressional acquisition reform efforts is yet to be determined. Will it be broad-based or narrowly focused on a few politically doable contracting reforms? Comprehensive reform based on a clear industrial strategy is needed because innovation is being stifled, competition is declining, and costs are rising due to other factors that have crept into the acquisition system over the years.

The roadblocks to reform are many. The acquisition

system is incredibly complicated, making overarching reform difficult to achieve. Each bureaucratic stovepipe believes that its function is more important than all others leading to massive sub-optimization. For arguably noble purposes, a multitude of oversight and social requirements have been placed on the system (each with its own political constituency) that collectively increase costs and are not affordable in today's budget environment. These unique requirements divide the industrial base into a system of haves and have-nots -- between those who understand the system and take advantage of barriers to entry into the market and those who do not and are precluded from participation. A collusion of interests between those in the bureaucracy who want to keep the system the way it is and those who currently benefit from acquisition rules is just one of the barriers to overcome.

Representatives Thornberry and Smith bring a



IN HIS OWN WORDS

“The purpose is to get more defense – more value – out of the dollars we spend.”

Shortly after he was named Co-Chairman of a bipartisan effort to reform the defense acquisition system, House Armed Services Committee Vice Chairman Mac Thornberry delivered a speech at the Center for International and Strategic Studies in which he laid out his vision for the effort and why reform is important to our national security. A portion of Thornberry's remarks are below:

We face this festering problem of getting good value for taxpayers in a timely way within the larger context of two facts:

1) The world is not getting any safer or any less complex. As he retired in July, Deputy CIA Director Morrell said that he didn't "remember a time when there have been so many national security issues on the front burner as there are today." This from a veteran of 33 years in the CIA. Just a brief list of challenges like -- cyber; proliferation; terrorism; Syria, Russia, China, Iran, N. Korea, alliances -- makes the point.

2) Defense budgets will be tight as far as the eye can see. We have dug ourselves a deep hole of debt. We hope the economy improves. We need to reform entitlement programs where most of the spending is. We need to find a way to get our fiscal house in order without further across-the-board cuts in sequestration. We need more stable funding because the disruptions caused by uncertainty are undermining every attempt to improve the system and are costing us dearly.

But if everything works out just the way I want it, it is not enough. I know of no scenario that envisions a return to large yearly increases in the defense budget, short of some catastrophic event that none of us want to see. Even in the best case scenario, we've got to face a dangerous, complicated world with limited resources. And that means we've got to get more defense for the dollar. That's the reason Chairman McKeon has asked me to spearhead an effort on these three interrelated topics, focusing first on how the Pentagon buys goods and services.

To be clear -- our purpose is not to cut defense, or make it easier to cut defense. The purpose is to get more defense -- more value -- out of the dollars we spend.

considerable amount of senior level experience to the table to address many of these challenges and foster real change. Past successful acquisition reform has been bipartisan, so much can be done by these two members working together. One of the most significant advantages they have is the ability to harness a predictable legislative vehicle. Since 1961, the National Defense Authorization Act is the only policy bill that has continued to be enacted into law year in and year out. With that certainty of consideration, defense acquisition reform doesn't have to be a one and done effort. Improvements can be made in each annual bill until collectively significant major reform has been achieved.

There are lessons to be learned from the last major acquisition reform effort conducted in the early 1990s.

These include a need for outside views and assistance and a considerable amount of time allocated for debate and staff work. Members and staff from multiple committees in both the House and Senate devoted several years of effort to prepare the Federal Acquisition Streamlining

Act of 1994 and the Clinger-Cohen Act of 1996. They relied on the work of an independent panel (the section 800 panel) that identified many of the issues and provided proposed specific legislative fixes to begin congressional discussions. While this may not be the same roadmap that is required this time, it is one that worked in the past.

These past efforts required senior level leadership to set the parameters of the debate and to guide bipartisan reform legislation through the process. The commitment of leaders like Representatives Thornberry and Smith will be critical to successful reform this time around. The questions that remain to be answered will be how long this focus can be sustained and what will be the scope of the acquisition problems they intend to address. **RF**

The roadblocks to reform are many ... Each bureaucratic stovepipe believes that its function is more important than all others leading to massive sub-optimization.

William Greenwalt is a visiting fellow at the American Enterprise Institute's Marilyn Ware Center for Security Studies. He previously served as a Deputy Under Secretary of Defense for Industrial Policy.



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Hollow Arguments on Military Entitlements

Will they lead to a hollow force?

ALAN SIMPSON

When Erskine Bowles and I speak to audiences around the country regarding the debt, we tell them that honestly dealing with our debt will require taking on the four mastodons of the budget – Medicare, Medicaid, Social Security solvency, and defense spending.

Zealous defenders of the defense budget will try to tell you that subjecting the defense budget to the same scrutiny and budget discipline as other parts of the budget will result in a hollow military. But the only thing that is hollow is their argument. The reality is that preserving a strong defense and protecting our national security requires us to take a hard look at the defense budget and make tough choices to control spending so that we have the resources to make necessary investments to preserve a powerful defense.

The United States spends more on defense than the next 10 countries combined and nearly six times as much as China, which is second in defense spending. Surely we can reduce that spending and still have the strongest military force in the world.

A part of the defense budget we really need to dig into to find savings is benefits for military retirees. In Fiscal Year 2013, the federal government spent more for military retirement and health care benefits (\$143

billion) than it did for procurement (\$110 billion). Current and former leaders of the Department of Defense, including the current and former Secretary of Defense and the Joint Chiefs of Staff, have warned that growing costs of health and pension benefits for retirees must be addressed before they overwhelm the rest of the budget. Secretary of Defense Chuck

Hagel put it this way: “Without serious attempts to achieve significant savings in this area...we risk becoming an unbalanced force, one that is well-compensated but poorly trained and equipped, with limited readiness and capability.”

Currently, members of the military become eligible for retirement benefits after 20 years of service. Because of the 20 year vesting period for military retirement benefits, four out of five veterans

do not receive such benefits. But those who serve 20 years receive a very generous benefit equal to half of their highest three years pay with full cost of living adjustments every year. Many start receiving retirement benefits as early as their late 30s, and on average they begin collecting by age 42. A military retiree is likely to spend more time collecting retirement than serving in the military; an officer who serves for 20 years beginning at age 22 and living to the average male life expectancy of 79 will have collected nearly 40 years



Preserving a strong defense and protecting our national security requires us to take a hard look at the defense budget and make tough choices to control spending.

of retirement benefits for 20 years of service.

Most Americans – and veterans like me – would agree we should provide generous benefits for those who serve. Yet this level of benefits is unsustainable.

In addition to these pension benefits, the Department of Defense provides hugely subsidized health insurance (TRICARE) for 3.5 million working age retirees. The most popular plan, TRICARE Prime, provides comprehensive health insurance for an annual fee of \$274 (for single coverage) or \$548 (for family coverage). This health benefit for working age retirees also provides an indirect subsidy for defense contractors and other employers who are able to hire well-trained military retirees without having to pay for their health care coverage. An additional 1.6 million military retirees receive TRICARE For Life, which provides free Medigap coverage for all Medicare copayments and deductibles.

Military retirees also benefit from shopping at military commissaries. Taxpayers subsidize these military commissaries that offer savings of 30 percent compared to private markets. That subsidy might be justified to help enlisted men get by on a private's pay, yet roughly half of the customers are military retirees who could afford to pay full price at the local grocery stores with their military pension.

Sure, we must honor the sacrifices of our troops and compensate them accordingly, but we can make targeted changes to control growth of personnel costs with little harmful impact.

House Budget Committee Chairman Paul Ryan made a courageous effort to take a small step in slowing the growth of defense entitlements by including a provision to reduce cost of living adjustments (COLA) for working age retirees by one percent, with a full "catch up" when they reach age 62. This would result in a reduction of about 4 percent in the average lifetime benefits of \$2.4 million for enlisted personnel, and would only come when most retirees are working and earning supplemental income. According to a study by the Rand Corporation, 90% of non-disabled military retirees under age 60 are employed, many for military contractors or as civilians in the Department of Defense, with median household income above \$100,000 for retired officers and \$50,000 to \$75,000 for retired enlisted personnel. But the vast military retiree lobby in Washington stirred up such a firestorm over that reduction that Members of Congress tripped over each other rushing to repeal it.

Most Americans – and veterans like me – would agree we should provide generous benefits for those who serve. Yet this level of benefits is unsustainable.

The Pentagon has proposed responsible increases in health care fees paid by working age military retirees. Additional savings could be achieved through reforms to reduce overutilization of services – especially by dependents – and limit double coverage among working age retirees. None of these proposals would affect active duty service members or low-income or disabled veterans, all of whom would still receive free health care. Such changes continue to be rejected out of hand by Congress.

In the Pentagon budget sent to Congress this year, recommendations were made for modest reforms of the fast-growing military compensation budget, including reducing the subsidies to base commissaries. But Congress is poised to again cower to political pressure by rejecting the Pentagon's recommendations while also supporting a pay raise to service-members beyond even what the Pentagon proposed! Absurd!

Congress should now use the pressure that sequestration has placed on the defense budget as impetus to conduct a thorough review of defense spending and enact reforms to control its senseless growth. Unfortunately, Congress is continuing to duck the tough choices needed to address this growth while sacrificing investments in readiness and equipment. This approach may limit short-term political pain, but it will lead to massive security problems in the future.

Congress will have another chance to address the growth of retirement benefits when a commission charged with making recommendations to reform military compensation – and produce savings – issues its report next spring. If that commission does its job and lays out serious reforms to bring the costs under control, you can make a sure bet it will be met with much wailing and gnashing of teeth.

But sooner or later, Congress will need to have the guts and backbone to stand up to the military retiree lobby and enact reforms to ensure we have the resources necessary to maintain a strong future defense. Hollow arguments will lead to a hollow force. **RF**

Alan Simpson served in the U.S. Senate (R-WY) from January 1979 to 1997, where, among other roles, he served as the Assistant Republican Leader from 1984-1994. In 2010, he was appointed by the President to serve as Co-Chairman of the National Commission on Fiscal Responsibility and Reform.

The Fiscal Fantasy Behind U.S. Defense Strategy

It's time for Congress to wake up and make sure our budgetary resources match our security needs

KORI SCHAKE

Republicans ought to own the issue of responsible defense planning. We are a party that has long stood for a strong national defense, accountability in government, and concern for the nation's fiscal outlook. These issues should come together in developing a defense program that achieves all three of those necessities. We should hold the commanding heights. But we do not.

We do not own the issue of responsible defense planning because we have not embraced a program that brings our spending into line with our revenue. We have shied away from tackling the cause of our deficit spending: entitlements. We cannot cut discretionary spending enough to surmount the obstacle that entitlement spending creates — zeroing out the defense budget in its entirety wouldn't get spending out of the red. In the depths of the Euro crisis, the Prime Minister of Luxembourg summarized a challenge that applies equally to us: "We all know what needs to be done, but we don't know how to get elected after we do it." The American political party that can build consensus around a solution will dominate the political landscape.

The Congress is allowing itself to be painted as the irresponsible party on defense, when in reality it is the Executive branch that deserves the blame. But by refusing even small reductions in the rate of increase in pay and retirement and health benefits to our military, we are making the all-volunteer force unaffordable. If we are going to expect the military to absorb the magnitude of reductions envisioned in current law, we ought to give them the managerial latitude to develop a cohesive defense program. That means allowing them to close bases, retire cost-inefficient platforms, determine the right mix of pay and incentives, and reform the acquisition

process.

The 2011 Budget Control Act reined in discretionary spending and incentivized a broader budget balancing agreement with the threat of sequestration. The inability of the Joint Select Committee on Deficit Reduction to achieve that broader agreement ought to have alerted the Defense Department to the importance of developing a defense

program that would not exceed the BCA top line, since doing so would trigger sequestration and dramatically reduce their leeway in programming their spending.

But the Department of Defense instead has submitted three budgets in excess of the BCA top line. The Office of Management and Budget guidance instructed departments to ignore sequestration in their budgeting, and DOD accepted that politicized guidance. The White House chose to exclude personnel costs (which represent fifty percent of defense spending) from sequestration, forcing all cuts into the procurement and readiness accounts. These are not immutable laws of nature; they are political choices, and they exacerbated the problems.

It needs to be said that the Joint Chiefs of Staff allowed themselves to be enlisted by the White House in the political gamesmanship of sequestration. As a result, they bear some culpability for the tumult in the defense program. General Dempsey developed a defense strategy he claimed could not be carried out with any further reductions; now that further reductions have been taken,

he has not developed a more resilient strategy. The Chiefs decried sequestration's damaging effects without taking responsibility for their part in triggering it or developing alternative strategies and force structures to buffer against its effects.



Kori Schake

By refusing even small reductions in the rate of increase in pay and retirement and health benefits to our military, we are making the all-volunteer force unaffordable.

The 2014 Quadrennial Defense Review ought to have been the vehicle for such exploration. Secretary Hagel claims the QDR “matches our strategy to our resources,” but it doesn’t. The QDR force is unaffordable without \$115 billion more than the top line legislated in 2011 — and that is in addition to the \$80 billion annual fund of war operations and separate from the \$26 billion “Opportunity, Growth, and Security Initiative” submitted as a wish list along with the budget itself. That completely negates the \$113 billion in cuts that the President’s budget “imposes.” So they’re actually cutting nothing. Hagel says “it would have been irresponsible not to request these additional resources.” It was irresponsible not to develop a strategy consistent with available resources. This QDR has failed in its fundamental purpose.

The most important part of the QDR is the Chairman of the Joint Chiefs of Staff’s assessment. U.S. code requires that the QDR identify the budget and force structure required to accomplish them at a “low to moderate level

of risk.” General Dempsey concludes that current strategy can only be achieved at the maximum risk consistent with the legislation. That is significant, even if he is only whispering “fire” during a fire.

Dempsey also cautions that “we must avoid procuring expensive and exquisite systems that can be neutralized by adversaries with far less investment,” but that is the force this Quadrennial Defense Review would produce. Because DOD did not conduct a serious QDR, the responsibility for evaluating how different choices might aggravate or mitigate risk will be left to an independent review panel that Congress wisely wrote into the law. It will fall to them

to try and meet the standard President Eisenhower set out of providing the country both security and solvency. **RF**

Kori Schake is a research fellow at the Hoover Institution. She previously served as Director for Defense Strategy and Requirements on the National Security Council under President George W. Bush.

The Joint Chiefs of Staff allowed themselves to be enlisted by the White House in the political gamesmanship of sequestration. As a result, they bear some culpability for the tumult in the defense program.



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Two Visions, One Reality

Congress, the President, and the role of nuclear weapons in an increasingly unstable world

MICHAELA DODGE

Presidential calls for a world without nuclear weapons are nothing new. After all, these terrible products of human ingenuity can cause a lot of damage and suffering. So what is different about President Barack Obama's call for a world without nuclear weapons this time around?

As a sign of its commitment to nuclear weapons reductions, the Obama Administration negotiated the New Strategic Arms Reduction Treaty (New START). The failed treaty mandates that the United States bears a majority of strategic nuclear weapons reductions, while Russia is allowed to build up its arsenal. The treaty's inadequate verification regime makes it ever more difficult to analyze the makeup and capabilities of the Russian strategic forces. This is important because since the treaty entered into force, Vladimir Putin, Russia's President and the author of its current strategic doctrine, has announced the most extensive program of nuclear weapons modernization since the end of the Cold War.

Oblivious to the stabilizing role that U.S. nuclear weapons have had since their invention at the end of World War II, President Obama released his Nuclear Posture Review (NPR) Implementation Study last year. Driven by a desire to reduce the number of U.S. nuclear weapons and their roles in the national security strategy, the study concluded that it is safe to conduct additional reductions below the 1,550 operationally deployed strategic nuclear warheads permitted under New START.

This stunning conclusion was made possible because the Administration's 2010 NPR maintains that "Russia and the United States are no longer adversaries, and prospects for military confrontation have declined dramatically." Russia's recent aggressive dismemberment of Ukraine, however, called this assumption into question. The Administration

has since modified its position on reducing the number of strategic weapons below the New START levels and says that it no longer intends to make unilateral cuts. Any cuts, Secretary of Defense Chuck Hagel testified on March 6, 2014, "would have to all be, as we have done in every administration, negotiated through treaties."

The President's belief that other nations will follow the U.S. drive to reduce the roles and missions of nuclear weapons in their respective national security strategies is based on fantasy. Historically, new nuclear players have emerged as the U.S. has reduced its capability. South Africa gave up its nuclear weapons while the U.S. was still testing its nuclear weapons and improving its strategic and tactical nuclear weapons arsenal. China's aggressive but opaque military buildup, nuclear and conventional, also calls for increased vigilance when it comes to maintaining flexible and resilient nuclear weapons infrastructure rather than focusing on pursuing unilateral reductions.

As it turns out, some members of Congress are not that excited about the President's drive to U.S. nuclear zero. In House Armed Services Committee Chairman Buck McKeon's mark of the National Defense Authorization bill, one of the few bills that actually becomes law these days, members of the Committee are calling for strengthening America's strategic posture. These calls have a renewed urgency given Russia's aggressive invasion of Ukraine and continued violations of Moscow's arms control obligations, including under the Intermediate-Range Nuclear Forces Treaty. The bill's emphasis on nuclear mission is also reflected in its call for the NATO Center of Excellence on Deterrence and for refocusing military service members' education to cover the



Michaela Dodge

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essentials of nuclear deterrence policy and operations.

Even more important is the Committee's recognition that the President is not providing necessary resources to fund U.S. nuclear weapons infrastructure and sustainment plans. The U.S. is currently not really modernizing its nuclear weapons arsenal, because the President's policy bans the development of any new nuclear weapons and precludes giving the existing ones new military missions or capabilities.

To make matters worse, the President's supposedly enduring November 2010 commitment to U.S. nuclear deterrence is not that enduring after all. His budget requests for the National Nuclear Security Administration (NNSA) weapons activities have steadily failed to meet investments levels that the President deemed necessary to sustain reductions under New START. To that end, the Committee authorized an increase of \$147.7 million in the NNSA's weapons activities program.

The world is not getting any safer. For over 60 years, U.S. nuclear weapons deterred adversaries from conducting large-scale attacks on the U.S. and its allies. They helped to assure governments in Seoul and Tokyo so they wouldn't develop their own nuclear capabilities.

They helped to keep nuclear arsenals of NATO members smaller than would otherwise be the case.

In the fiscal year 2015 NDAA, the Committee advances prudent nuclear weapons policies to counter the President's drive toward a world without U.S. nuclear weapons, which could have profoundly negative

consequences, and is why maintaining a credible, flexible, and resilient nuclear force posture remains one of the most important tasks of U.S. decision-makers. **RF**

Michaela Dodge is a Policy Analyst at the Douglas and Sarah Allison Center for Foreign and National Security Policy at the Heritage Foundation.

In the National Defense Authorization bill, members are calling for strengthening America's strategic posture. These calls have a renewed urgency given Russia's aggressive invasion of Ukraine and continued violations of Moscow's arms control obligations.

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“We have to step away from the notion that there is only one way to best ensure a kid’s success and happiness scholastically.”

A Q&A with Mike Rowe

Mike Rowe spent eight seasons as the host of TV’s *Dirty Jobs*, where he crawled through sewers, worked on farms, and performed other unenviable tasks that most people would rather avoid.

Rowe has used that platform to champion the skills and work ethic of those who do America’s dirty work. In 2009, he established The mikeroweWORKS Foundation to support the skilled trades through various partnerships with organizations, scholarship funds, community colleges and trade schools.

He has been vocal in addressing the skills gap in today’s workforce, and has testified at Congressional hearings about the issue. In the process, he has become a leading advocate in helping to dispel the notion that a good skilled trade job is a “vocational consolation prize.”

This fall, Rowe will host a new show on CNN called, *Somebody’s Gotta Do It*. As he prepares for the program’s launch, *The Forum* spoke with him about the lessons he has learned from our nation’s workers, his appreciation for the skilled trades, and how the definition of what constitutes a “good job” has changed over the years.

RF: You made your name on TV performing various Dirty Jobs. What did these experiences teach you most about America’s workforce?

MR: I guess that the big lesson is that the workforce is divided, and the country is also divided with respect to our relationship with that very specific part of the workforce that keeps the lights on. The big distinction is the difference between blue and white collar. Everyone knows that exists, but the emotional gulf that exists between the two is really wider than it has ever been. And, it’s into that gulf, or that gap, that a lot of great opportunities wind up falling.

RF: Today’s society places great emphasis on the need for high-skilled jobs that require math and science backgrounds. How do you promote blue-collar skills without neglecting the importance of more advanced professions in our country?

MR: You start by acknowledging that blue collar skills are not the opposite of white collar skills. You start

by making the case that they’re two sides of the same coin. Then you suggest that the further that you try to separate those two paths, the bigger the chasm you create in society and in the workforce.

Again, that is the divide – like a black hole out in the universe somewhere that sucks all sorts of great opportunities into it. It’s the perceptions we have and stigmas and the stereotypes around whole categories of jobs that fundamentally keep parents from encouraging their kids to pursue their careers. Likewise, if kids look at those same opportunities with the inertia of their parents’ influence and the pressure of their peers, then it’s not long before you start to look at whole categories of work as vocational consolation prizes – or



Mike Rowe

We have to step away from the notion that there is only one way to best ensure a kid’s success and happiness scholastically.

being subordinate.

That’s why changing that basic perception requires a generational kind of public relations campaign focused specifically on that goal.

RF: As the unofficial spokesman for the working class in this country, what message are you trying to send to policy makers here in Washington?

MR: I guess the short message is that we are going to get the behavior that we reward. If we want to change the way people look at three million jobs currently available, we have to affirmatively change the perceptions that exist around those jobs. We have to challenge the bad advice we talked about before, and we have to challenge guidance counselors, parents, teachers, and a lot of well-intended people who are still telling kids “Look, this path to college, this path to a four-year degree is your best hope.”

We have to challenge the fact that the vast majority of available jobs right now don’t require a four-year degree and the vast majority of four year degrees demand that students go into debt in order to get them. We have to step away from the notion that there is only one way to best ensure a kid’s success and happiness scholastically.

RF: Politicians often times toss around the term “shovel-ready jobs” as a talking point. What are they overlooking about the kind of people who fill these positions?

MR: In general, what I believe a lot of people miss when they talk about that term is the idea that the country – all of us – no longer value the willingness to pick up a shovel. That is where the disconnect is. It’s not so much the people who do the work. It’s the relationship the rest of us have with the work and the people who do it.

When the president in 2009 first floated that expression, I remember a lot of people chuckling because they knew from a recruiting standpoint how hard it was for people to find people willing to pick up a shovel, learn a useful skill, and work very, very hard. On *Dirty Jobs*, while the country was in a recession, and while the headlines always seemed to focus on high unemployment, I saw “help wanted” signs everywhere I went.

Underneath that was the realization that a big chunk of the country didn’t value the kind of work and the kind of jobs that were currently for sale. And that’s the trick around “shovel ready.” The individuals who still pick up the shovel might still be ready to do it, but the country is not in a position to affirmatively encourage or value the shovel-ready worker.

RF: The mikeroweWorks Foundation has a partnership with the SkillsUSA organization to help encourage more students toward pursuing STEM career fields. What has been your biggest success

story so far in this joint venture?

MR: Well, I could tell you dozens of individual stories. Kids in Kentucky, for instance, who have never been in a taxi cab, much less an airplane, suddenly finding themselves involved with SkillsUSA qualifying to go to the National Leadership and Skills Conference and being sent there by The mikeroweWORKS Foundation.

The better answer to the question, however, is a public relations campaign. The fact that my association with SkillsUSA would lead you to ask the question that you just did is the whole point. There are over 400,000 kids in this organization, and they’re doing amazing work. But if you take a poll, you’re looking at two or three percent awareness. The Boy Scouts have something like 100 percent awareness.

So the biggest and best thing I can do for SkillsUSA is talk about them, because more than any other program, those guys have filled in the hole that was created when vo-tech left high school. There’s no better organization making a case for the trades directly to the kids. I love the organization.

RF: You’ve worked hard to challenge the stigmas and stereotypes of alternative education in this country. What role should government play in aiding this effort?

MR: People tend to dismiss the power and importance of good public relations, but they shouldn’t. Part of the reason it

gets dismissed is because much of what passes for public relations and so much of what we see in the way of public service announcements are just terrible. They’re noisy, they all hit the same chord, and at the end of the day, who can tell the difference between 20 or 30 different PSAs all for one squishy cause or another? It all gets very confusing.

The partnerships that work are the ones that are driven by business and engage everyone. The best example I can think of is the Keep America Beautiful campaign. To fundamentally change people’s behavior, they had to change or challenge people’s relationships, they had to make it an ethical issue – “Littering is bad.”

We need to do the same thing with work. I think the government is in a position to encourage that. That is really why I went to the Senate a few years ago and the House recently to say: Look, I get it -- we’re broke. I’m not going to ask you for money. But your rolodex is enormous. Why don’t we get a couple of the Fortune 500 guys together, a couple people in the media, and a couple of agencies in the federal government that would really benefit from challenging these stereotypes in such a way that it reinvigorates the trades and makes it easier for companies who rely on a skilled workforce to recruit?

Let’s engage all of those people in a campaign modeled

around the Keep America Beautiful campaign, that's designed to change the perception around millions of good jobs that are currently available, that no one wants, while also changing the perceptions around community colleges, trade schools, apprenticeship programs and on-the-job training opportunities.

RF: Does the skills gap exist because of a lack of an abundance of proper training, or is it because this generation has a different definition of what classically-romanticized "hard work" really is?

MR: Personally, I believe the latter. But it's a tricky question, because what it does is get right to the heart. It takes a practical problem and forces it into a polemic. This is how things get political, right? When you have 10 million people unemployed, and three million jobs that for whatever reason cannot be filled, it demands an explanation.

I tend to believe the skills gap exists because we do not collectively agree in this country on the definition of a "good job." That definition is changing and morphing every day. I remember a couple of years ago, a Senator or Congressman from New York proposed something called the "Good Jobs Bill." On *Dirty Jobs*, we just laughed at that because the people I worked with would say, "There's no such thing as a good job or a bad job, it's all work." There's nobility in all of it, and if you don't particularly like the flavor of work you currently find yourself involved in, then there may be a thousand different ways to improve your position. None of them are easy, and most of them aren't particularly pleasant, but that was the assumption for generations. That is no longer in play. I don't think anybody on either side of the aisle can argue with that. Our expectations have really changed.

Even with a trillion dollars in student loans, we still cling to the idea that once you get your degree, the doors are going to open and the jobs are going to be there. It's just not the case. It's a different world and we haven't adjusted our expectations, our platitudes, our clichés, or our standards to deal with it. Until we can agree as a country

on general things -- like the value of work and the definition of a good job -- we're going to spend a lot of time spinning our wheels arguing about things like the minimum wage or any one of a hundred symptoms that come out of that basic problem.

Again, I get it. That's why the skills gap is so political. The minute you really dig down and start to talk about its causes, things get rather philosophical. As soon as things get philosophical, you begin to apply the same kind of thinking toward every major issue in the headlines today from immigration to the minimum wage to right on down the list. And once again, you're back in a knife fight in a phone booth.



Rowe testified at a May 2011 Senate hearing on the lack of vocational training in the U.S.

I tend to believe the skills gap exists because we do not collectively agree in this country on the definition of a "good job."

their life to a passion. It could be a vocation. It could also be an avocation. It could be a hobby that got completely out of hand, and it could be the guy building Stonehenge in his backyard because he wants to prove aliens didn't do it and can show you how the ancient people used 20 people to move a rock with nothing but a stick, a rope, and some marbles. He spends a year doing this, and I want to know him. I want to see what makes him tick.

There are a lot of people like this. I've met a lot of them personally, and if everyone sat down and thought about it, they could probably make a list. I want to put them all together once a week and introduce the country to three or four of them at a time.

Whether they're mad scientists or bloody do-gooders, they make me laugh and they give me hope. And I want to meet them.

RF

RF: And finally, what can we expect with your new show called *Somebody's Gotta Do It*?

MR: *Somebody's Gotta Do It* will resemble *Dirty Jobs* in the sense that I'm still me in the real world and unscripted looking for people who I believe are worth meeting. It's different than *Dirty Jobs* in the sense that the last show was marked by the willingness to get dirty.

Here, I'm looking for people who are on a mission, quixotic or not. I'm looking for people who, for reasons known unto them, have dedicated

Republican Reboot

How Lincoln Labs is getting Silicon Valley to think differently about the GOP

GARRETT JOHNSON, AARON GINN
& CHRIS ABRAMS

We founded Lincoln Labs in 2013 to bridge the gap between the technology sector and the conservative political sector. Our mission is to create and support a community of like-minded individuals who desire to advance liberty in the public square with the use of technology.

Since we started, we have hosted hackathons, special events, and had a large presence at the 2014 SXSW Interactive Conference in Austin, Texas. We've created a national database of over 3,000 "conservatarians" technologists, built a community based on issues, and are narrowing the communication gap between conservatives and Silicon Valley. In less than one year, Lincoln Labs has emerged as the preeminent organization mapping and supporting a liberty-based technology community all over the nation.

Despite the narrative peddled by the media or inside the Beltway, the tech sector has a vibrant conservatarians community eager to engage. The relationships we build will better position conservative campaigns and causes to continue to solve problems, not complain about them. We are the only group taking action at this critical intersection.

Through our events, and specifically through our first annual conference this July in San Francisco – which we are calling *Reboot* and will feature keynote addresses by Senator Rand Paul and House GOP Conference Chair Cathy McMorris Rodgers -- we are taking on the exciting challenge of gathering and engaging many of the country's brightest minds to discuss how we bring the best of tech and politics together. The generational gap between the conservative political community and the technology community is vast. But it is not unbridgeable. We are building the connection between policy makers and technology shakers to bring about informed and relevant policy.

If there is one thing we can all agree on, it is that many of our most pressing public policy issues need new and innovative solutions. We only need to look as far as the latest

headlines to know that government, even in the early 21st century, still relies on old ideas, old beliefs and old solutions to solve modern problems.

Think about any large and long-standing government program – Social Security or Medicare – all of which perform poorly, are highly inefficient and rife with waste, fraud and abuse. Technology can and should be a critical component in modernizing some government programs – increasing effectiveness, reducing cost and ultimately making sure they perform as well as possible for citizens and taxpayers.

In the past decade, conservative and libertarian causes have been slow to adopt and develop technology products to communicate with their key constituencies and make their efforts more effective. We desperately need some of the bright young minds available in Silicon Valley and in other tech hubs around the country, to help revitalize our movement and give conservative values a new face and new perspective.

The technology sector – and technologists, be they developers, designers or any of the new roles being created everyday, is a uniquely optimistic environment. It is a solutions-based world in which problems are examined, dismantled and fixed with often simple and elegant solutions.

We hope Lincoln Labs and our efforts are a starting point for what libertarians and conservatives can and should do with technology. Now is the time to address our country's biggest problems and utilize the tech sector to do it.

We are very excited at the prospect of being at the vanguard between conservatarians and Silicon Valley. Our problems may be large and complicated – but utilizing technology to help solve them is key. The solutions we can create are only constrained by the limits of our imagination and the energy we're willing to commit to solving them. **RF**

Garrett Johnson, Aaron Ginn and Chris Abrams are the founders of Lincoln Labs.



Cathy McMorris Rodgers and Rand Paul are scheduled to be the keynote speakers at the *Reboot* policy conference this July in San Francisco.

A Necessary INVESTMENT

ALLISON LEA

Federal investment in basic research has been a key component to our nation's economic success and to our long-standing history as global leader in innovation and discovery. It has led to medical and technological breakthroughs that have improved our quality of life, reduced human suffering, and treated and cured many devastating diseases. None of these achievements would have been possible without funding from federal science agencies like the National Institutes of Health (NIH), the National Science Foundation (NSF), and the U.S. Department of Veterans Affairs (VA).

NIH is the largest source of funding for medical research in the world. Eighty-five percent of the agency's funds are distributed through competitive grants to more than 300,000 scientists employed at universities, medical schools, and other research institutions nation-wide. As a result of discoveries supported by NIH funding, U.S. death rates from heart disease and stroke have decreased by more than 60 percent over the last 50 years. NIH funding has also helped to identify the genes that are responsible for more than half of the 7,000 rare diseases known to affect humans. Future research will give us important insights into how they affect a range of chronic diseases including obesity, diabetes, and heart disease.

The NSF funds basic research across many disciplines and is the only federal research agency dedicated to advancing all fields of fundamental science and engineering. Two-hundred of the U.S. Nobel Laureates in the sciences received NSF funding over the course of their careers, including the 2013 winners in Physiology or Medicine, Chemistry, and Economics. NSF-funded researchers developed a new electron microscope that can detect the movement of atoms and molecules, which allows the observation of the fundamental transformations of matter. This exciting technology has immediate applications in the clean energy industry and the development of nanotechnology.

The VA Medical and Prosthetic Research Program is the primary federal research effort focused on improving healthcare for the nation's veterans. VA-funded research has advanced our basic knowledge of disease mechanisms and detection and has led to the development of new treatments and therapies. For example, a VA-funded clinical trial proved it is possible to use a

tracheostomy collar to wean patients off a ventilator four days faster than the alternative method of slowly decreasing lung air-pressure supply. Because caring for patients on ventilators is expensive and often takes place in specialized hospitals, reducing the number of days a patient is on a ventilator could potentially save long-term health care costs.

However, due to a decade of flat funding and the effects of sequestration, the budgets of the federal science agencies are shrinking. Over the past 11 years, NIH has lost \$5.7 billion, and its purchasing power is now 21 percent less than it was in 2003. This, in turn, translates into fewer available awards. In 2013, NIH awarded 20 percent fewer research project grants than it did in 2003. Even more disconcerting, are the numbers associated with critical R01 grants, which have plummeted from 7,430 awarded in 2003 to 4,902 in 2013, a loss of 34 percent.

NIH Director Francis Collins, MD, PhD, said in a recent *Washington Post* article, "Without sustained investment, many high-priority efforts would move at a substantially slower pace, and years of effectively flat funding for biomedical research have left scientists facing the lowest chances in history of having their research funded by NIH." As a result,

labs are closing, staff are being let go, and critical research is left unfunded and undiscovered.

Meanwhile, as the U.S. falls behind, other countries increase their investment in biomedical research. According to the National Science Board 2012 and 2014 *Science and Engineering Indicators*, between 1995 and 2011, the U.S. share of global Research & Development (R&D) expenditures declined from 43 percent to 36.9 percent, while China's grew from 1.6 percent to 10.9 percent.

Other nations that once strove to emulate

U.S. success in R&D are now well on their way to surpassing us.

Although alternative funding sources such as private donors and industry help further research in the U.S., they are not enough to make up for where the science agencies fall short. Federal investment is critical because it supports research into basic processes that are used by the commercial sector for product development. Translating basic science into practical applications is an expensive, high-risk, and often decades-long process that does not fit the business plans of either industry or philanthropic groups.

Our future depends on the innovation and discovery that derives out of basic research. Congress must act now before further damage is done. Sustainable and increased investment in the basic sciences is the only path forward to continued improvements in global health and our nation's economic competitiveness. **RF**

Allison Lea, MA, is a science writer for the Federation of American Societies for Experimental Biology.

As a result of discoveries supported by NIH funding, U.S. death rates from heart disease and stroke have decreased by more than 60 percent over the last 50 years.

The Risks of Rescue

BRIAN MICHAEL JENKINS

Senator John McCain has said that, if the opportunity arises, the United States should send special operations forces into Nigeria to rescue the 200 school girls held hostage by Boko Haram, whether or not Nigeria's government requests American assistance. But as appealing as a successful mission to free such an innocent group of victims might appear, the use of U.S. military assets to mount a rescue attempt would be a mistake.

In the Hollywood version, America's successful return of all the girls unharmed would be celebrated by relieved parents and a grateful Nigeria — garlands all around. In the more likely outcome, Americans would be denounced for imperialism and arrogance, blamed for any injuries or deaths, and targeted by Boko Haram terrorists. And that's assuming a successful outcome, which is hardly a safe assumption given the history of large-scale hostage rescue missions.

Armed action should never be ruled out completely, but negotiations are the more practical course to bring the girls safely home. This conclusion derives from historical research and personal experience assisting in a number of negotiations to bring about the release of hostages. In real life, negotiating for the lives of kidnap victims is hardly the stuff of movies like 2000's *Proof of Life* in which Russell Crowe's character evolves from skilled negotiator to daring rescuer. Real life talks with kidnapers commonly center on the more sordid details of negotiating cash ransoms and persuading

kidnappers that prolonging captivity will not bring increased offers. Only when they are convinced that they have bargained for the maximum payoff do hostage-takers release their captives.

To be sure, political demands are harder to meet than paying cash ransoms and in the cases I know personally, the sole objective was to save the lives of hostages. Efforts were unconstrained by considerations of government

policy, national prestige or political survival. That would certainly not be the case here.

The armed rescue of hundreds held in one or more jungle camps has no precedent. U.S. special operations capabilities have made extraordinary advances since the failed attempt in 1980 to rescue American hostages held in Tehran, but armed rescues remain risky. Unfairly, their success is judged not by how many hostages are saved but by how many are lost. Russia's 2002 attempt to rescue 800

hostages held by Chechen terrorists at a theater in Moscow left 130 dead. The rescue by Russian forces of 1,100 people, including 777 children, held hostage by Chechens in the North Caucasus region of Russia left more than 300 dead in 2004. A rescue that left 20 or 30 percent of the Nigerian schoolgirls dead would likely be judged a failure.

Israeli commandos rescued 100 hostages at Entebbe in 1976 with only three fatalities among the captives—an extraordinary military achievement. But those hostages were held by a handful of hijackers in an airport terminal.



U.S. special-ops forces swooping in to rescue 200 young women and girls held hostage sounds like an American thing to do, but the risks are too great for both the hostages and for the United States.

The circumstances in Nigeria are quite different, with hostages likely being held by well-armed militants in fortified camps, or dispersed across a wide area. Nigeria, perhaps with American assistance, should start preparing a rescue operation even while negotiations proceed—favorable opportunities might arise or an attempt may have to be made anyway if negotiations fail.

Despite Israel's tough posture, Prime Minister Yitzhak Rabin, who ordered the rescue at Entebbe, told me afterwards that had there been no viable rescue option, he would have negotiated to bring about the release of the hostages—as Israel has controversially done on a number of occasions since.

Hostage situations are political plutonium. A government is torn between accepting a protracted political crisis that may end in the slaughter of innocents, or making humiliating concessions to bring about their release. U.S. policy prohibits making concessions to terrorists holding hostages in the firm belief that yielding to terrorist blackmail will only encourage further kidnappings. This does not preclude families from paying ransoms in criminal kidnappings in the United States or American corporations paying ransoms to win the freedom of executives held abroad. And U.S. policy does not prevent other governments from making concessions to win the

release of American officials held by terrorists. Other governments have met terrorist's demands, but were able to eventually defeat the organizations responsible for the kidnappings.

Negotiations are never unconditional. The Nigerian government can reasonably demand that Boko Haram halt further abductions while negotiations are underway—it cannot be allowed to top off its hostage inventory. The government can demand proof that the hostages are alive, that the negotiation will be for *all* of the hostages, and that the captors can deliver if a deal is made. The logistics of release cannot be left as an afterthought, but must be made a priority matter from the beginning.

U.S. special-ops forces swooping in to rescue 200 young women and girls held hostage by a ruthless band of terrorists certainly sounds like an American thing to do, but the risks are too great for both the hostages and for the United States. The clear-eyed realism that comes with experience and analysis of previous hostage incidents would argue against it. **RF**

Brian Michael Jenkins is senior adviser to the RAND president and the author of "Al Qaeda in Its Third Decade: Irreversible Decline or Imminent Victory?" and the commentary "Generations of Terrorism."

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“The truth is it’s happening in our own backyards.” **Reichert, Paulsen and Noem lead the fight to end human trafficking**

WASHINGTON, DC - The Chairman of the Ways and Means Subcommittee on Human Resources, Rep. Dave Reichert (WA-8), appeared before a breakfast meeting of The Ripon Society on May 1st to discuss the growing epidemic of human trafficking and the effort in Congress to fight this problem here at home. He was joined by fellow Reps. Erik Paulsen (MN-3) and Kristi Noem (SD-AL), who, along with Reichert, are leaders in this fight and members of a new anti-trafficking task force that House Republicans established earlier this year.

The breakfast followed up on the unanimous passage of the *Preventing Sex Trafficking of Youth in Foster Care Act* by the Ways and Means Committee last Tuesday. Reichert, who has over three decades of experience as a law enforcement officer and is the author of the legislation, opened his remarks by explaining why he believes it is so important to protect at-risk children and why it is critical for Congress to pass this bill. “I look at my life as a runaway living on the street,” Reichert stated, recalling his own difficult childhood. “I understand why kids leave and what they’re looking for, how confused they are, and how lonely they are. It’s our responsibility to be the ones to step up and protect these kids.”

According to Reichert, the *Preventing Sex Trafficking of Youth in Foster Care Act* is bipartisan legislation that would ensure States are taking the proper steps to keep foster youth safe, help them lead happy, normal lives and stay off the streets to prevent them from becoming victims of sex trafficking. It would also help identify victims and the services they need to get them out of their situation and successfully rehabilitated into society. The National Center for Missing and Exploited Children reports that 59% of suspected juvenile sex trafficking victims were in foster care or group homes before they ran away. This bill takes important steps to change these troubling statistics and prevent youth victimization.

Paulsen, who also serves with Reichert on the Ways and Means Committee, echoed his colleague’s remarks and explained how hard this problem has hit his home state.

“I spent a little bit of time in Minnesota riding along with the police,” stated Paulsen. “I have four daughters myself, and it quickly became apparent that there’s a real issue with sex trafficking. A lot of people think this is an issue that only happens in far away countries and not in the United States. The truth is it’s happening in our own backyards. It’s happening in the suburbs with recruitment going on in malls and libraries. I’ve had a chance to meet with a lot of victims’ groups and organizations that have provided support for some of these young girls. And they are girls – the average age is 13 years old when they’re thrown in the trafficking system and wind up becoming a prostitute.”

“In Minnesota, we are the number one state per capita for the number of runaways in the country. Fifty percent of runaways become prostitutes, and our law enforcement officials say they are by far the vast majority of people who end up trapped in the sex trafficking system. These are essentially young girls who should be treated as victims, get the services they need, and come back out of the shadows, if



Reps. Paulsen, Noem and Reichert discuss their efforts to end human trafficking at a Ripon Society breakfast discussion on May 1st.

you will ... I think this awareness of sex trafficking and human trafficking is a lot like where domestic violence was decades ago. That’s the level we’re at, and we have the ability to raise the awareness.”

Noem agreed.

“I didn’t realize sex traffickers were targeting kids while they’re at school or in the mall until probably about a year ago,” said Rep. Noem. “I have two teenage daughters. I never realized that, as I sent my daughters out the door every morning, they could potentially be trafficked.” In response to a question after her remarks, Noem stressed the importance of not just raising awareness of human trafficking, but of taking concrete legislative steps to bring this epidemic to an end, as well. “My dad raised me that if you don’t like something, just fix it -- don’t complain about it,” she remarked. “A lot of times, what we do in Washington is we talk. I don’t see the value very much in just talking about this issue. I want to pass bills, throw these people in jail, save the kids, and do all that we can.”

RF

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Ripon Profile

Name: Kelly Ayotte

Occupation: U.S. Senator, New Hampshire

As a former New Hampshire Attorney General and now U.S. Senator, you've had the opportunity to see our crumbling justice system from multiple perspectives. How do Republicans keep the "tough on crime" mantra while addressing critical funding issues and high recidivism rates? For starters, with over \$17 trillion in debt, we need to get our fiscal house in order. Spending on wasteful or duplicative programs diverts money from more urgent priorities. I've worked at the federal level to address a problem that we are seeing all across the country – the fact that our nation's jails are becoming *de facto* mental health facilities. Having worked as a prosecutor and as state attorney general, I know that there are gaps in both our existing mental health and judicial systems – which is why I'm co-sponsoring the **Justice and Mental Health Collaboration Act**. This bipartisan legislation would help ensure law enforcement has the tools they need to identify and respond to mental health issues. It would also continue support for mental health courts and crisis intervention teams – getting defendants the treatment they need and stemming recidivism.

Some credit you as replacing Sen. Lieberman within the "Three Amigos" as the newcomer to this prominent gathering of Senate foreign policy titans. What have you learned from your short time working with Senators McCain and Graham? No one can replace Joe Lieberman! He was one of my designated mentors when I arrived in the Senate, and I benefitted tremendously from his guidance. Senator Lieberman, Senator McCain and Senator Graham are deeply respected on matters relating to national security and foreign affairs. They bring decades of experience to these issues, and they have tremendous credibility. When it comes to our national security, they understand that we're Americans first, and I've admired each of them for their tireless work to keep our country safe.

Most pundits in 2012 pegged you as a potential running mate for Romney due, in part, to help combat the "war on women" notion perpetuated by Democrats. How would you characterize the Republican Party's understanding of women's issues today? The Republican Party cares about issues that matter to *all* Americans – women and men. Contrary to what the Democrats seem to think, women aren't monolithic voters. Among other issues, we care about jobs and the economy, fiscal responsibility, a strong national security, and school choice. These are issues that are a priority for Republicans, and we're on the right side of these issues.

Recently, the Senate passed your bipartisan bill to address military sexual assaults by a unanimous vote, 97-0. What does this rare, but sweeping support suggest about this issue? It shows that Congress rejects the status quo. We passed unprecedented reforms in December, and the legislation I helped author and pass enhances those reforms to further protect and empower victims by increasing reporting and prosecutions, demanding accountability within the chain of command, and assuring victims have a say during the prosecution process. Even one sexual assault is too many, and we're going to hold military commanders accountable for changing the culture.

And finally, what advice would you give to your potential Senate colleague, Scott Brown, as he begins his first attempt to court voters from the Granite State? The same advice I'd give anyone who runs for office in New Hampshire: there's no substitute for grassroots campaigning. Spend as much time as possible in people's communities, neighborhoods, and living rooms.



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