

# THE CENTER FOR NATIONAL POLICY

## “ASIA AND THE FUTURE OF AMERICAN STRATEGY”

### FEATURED SPEAKERS:

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NATIONAL DEFENSE UNIVERSITY**

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MR. SCOTT BATES: Well, good afternoon everyone. I see some of you still coming in. Come on down. My name is Scott Bates and I'm president here at the Center for National Policy and on behalf of our chairman, Peter Kovler, thank you very much for being here today.

In recent months, the president of the United States has spoken of a major change in American defense and foreign policy and after a decade of almost exclusive focus on two wars in the Middle East, President Obama and his national security team have taken a pivot to the Pacific. Considering that United States has been a Pacific power for a century and that about half of the world's economic capacity is in the Asia-Pacific and almost all of its economic growth is in the Asia-Pacific region, I think that this new focus makes great sense. But while American troops have been in the deserts of Iraq and the hills of Afghanistan and American taxpayers have spent something in the order of a trillion dollars on operations in the Middle East, important developments in Asia have been taking place, often without American attention or participation.

Dozens of free trade deals have been signed between the nations of the Asia-Pacific that have not included the United States. And China has become the number one trading partner of almost every nation in the Asia-Pacific region. And the budget of the armed forces of the People's Republic of China has been growing at a double digit rate for over a decade.

Indeed, at over \$100 billion a year, the Chinese military has developed advanced capabilities that may be able to deny the United States Navy freedom of maneuver in the Western Pacific. This would be a strategic situation that the American military has not experienced since the Battle of Midway.

In 2011, Secretary of Defense Leon Panetta stood up the Air-Sea Battle Office to address this very challenge of how to allow U.S. forces to get to a potential conflict in the Western Pacific and to then operate effectively in the area.

In short, we must develop strategies matched with weapons systems and tactics to maintain our ability to get to the battle and to operate in the battle space and to prevail.

And to make it all even more challenging, to remain militarily predominant in the Pacific, we must find a way to operate in and prevail in five domains: air, sea, space – sorry – air, sea, land, space, and cyber space. And if the United States is to maintain the diplomatic, economic, and security benefits that come to us by being the predominant military power in the Pacific, then we must answer the question how to do get to the battle and how do we prevail in the potential battle space in the Western Pacific. How can we deter potential adversaries, assure allies in the region, and ensure our ability to quickly terminate conflict and prevail?

Well, to help us answer these questions, we have two of America's, I believe, great strategists with us today. Dr. T.X. Hammes, to my right, is a senior research fellow at the Institute for National Security Studies at the National Defense University. He has served 30 years in the United States Marine Corps, primarily in operating force. Dr. Hammes participated in stabilization operations in Somalia and Iraq and trained insurgents in various locations. He holds a B.S. in operations analysis from the U.S. Naval Academy and an M.S.T. and a doctorate in modern history from Oxford University. Dr. Hammes has lectured widely and wildly as well – (laughter) – and published on insurgency, irregular warfare, and the future of conflict. Including his well-regarded book *The Sling and the Stone: On War in the 21<sup>st</sup> Century* and his recent article, “Offshore Control: A Proposed Strategy” that can be found in (present ?).

And to my left is Bryan McGrath. Bryan is the founding director of Delex Consulting, Studies and Analysis Division of Delex Systems. Previously, he served 21 years as a surface warfare officer in the Navy, including command of the USS Bulkeley. In his final short tour before retiring, in 2008, he led the team that produced the 2007 Navy, Marine Corps, Coast Guard maritime strategy known as A Cooperative Strategy for 21<sup>st</sup> Century Seapower, and was the document's primary author.

A graduate of the Naval War College, he is also a 1987 graduate of the University of Virginia and earned an M.A. from the Catholic University of America.

Now, our format today is a little bit different than the usual, and this will be a kind of debate style format. So each speaker will take about 10 minutes to lay out what they think American defense strategy in the Pacific should be. And then they'll each have five minutes for comment and rebuttal on what the other gentleman has to say. Then we're very much looking forward to opening up the floor and taking your questions and comments as well.

So we had a coin flip beforehand and Dr. Hammes won. So T.X., thank you for being here.

MR. T.X. HAMMES: Thanks a lot for the intro and thanks for the opportunity to be here.

As you mentioned, we have just a rebalancing to Asia about the same time we brought up the air-sea battle concept. Air-sea battle has taken all of the options out of the room. There's been no discussion of a strategy if you have a conflict with China.

Now, first off, a conflict with China is extraordinarily unlikely. Let's agree on that. Also agree on the fact that there is no limit to the infinite capacity for stupidity of the human race. So while it's a really bad idea, you have to be prepared in case it happens.

The problem I have with ASB is that it's admittedly just a concept, not a strategy. And authors have said that. The CNOs said that, chief staff of Air Force. The problem is

if you have a concept without a strategy, you end up with blitzkrieg going into the Soviet Union. Well, blitzkrieg was a brilliant operational concept and very effective in France. In absence of strategy, it was against the Soviet Union with disastrous effects. So if I don't like that situation, I have to propose my own strategy, so I wrote a strategy using Eliot Cohen's model, which says you have to list assumptions first, then coherent ends, ways, and means, prioritize them, sequence them, and have a theory of victory, how does this end.

Unfortunately, to evaluate a strategy, you have to compare to something. So I've written a strategy in a vacuum because there's no other strategy that's openly expressed about dealing with China.

Bryan is the first to take up the challenge. He agreed to do that here with CNP, suggested we discussed the strategic level. It's a bit unfair term because both Admiral Greenert and General Schwartz this morning stated categorically that air-sea battle should never be tied to a strategy. So I thought that was a little alarming.

The requests – the requirements for a strategy. A strategy has to do a number things for us, specifically a strategy for Asia. It has to assure access for U.S. forces and trade to the region. It has to assure allies, deter China, and the only way you can do that is when, if it comes to it, preferably without escalation to the nuclear threshold. And finally, it's got to be credible in peace time. You got to be able to demonstrate you can do this.

What are the assumptions? Well, the assumptions are China starts the war. I don't see any real way the United States decided to start a war with China. Frankly, I don't see much way China decides, but we have to have the things start somehow. So say, China starts it and it's – that also puts us at the biggest disadvantage. I think it's a long war. Anybody who postulates a short war between two continental powers is truly delusional or a-historical. History says it's going to be a long war. There will be massive damage to the global economy, starting on day one. Much like when World War I started, the entire international credit market simply ceased up. You couldn't buy a bond. You couldn't sell a bond. In some countries, you couldn't write and pass a check. It's going to be that kind of disaster to start with.

One of the other assumptions is we do not understand China's nuclear release thought process. With the Soviets, we understood there's kind of a 42 step process getting the nuclear release. We have no idea what China's is. We have Chinese military writings, but we don't have what the civilians think about it.

And the last thing is space and cyber are offense dominated. And as long as that is true, any strategy or any operational process relies on those two factors will be inherently escalatory, because if you're coming up on a crisis and you're the advisor, you say, we got to go first because if we don't go first, we're going to knock out our space and cyber and we have to have space and cyber if we're going to win.

So if you build a strategy based on space and cyber, you're inviting escalation on both sides.

So ends, ways, and means coherence. You have to have – accept the fact that we have very limited means, not very limited means. We're still going to spend probably about \$500 billion a year, but Pentagon is whining that's extremely limited means. Recent polls communicate that's going to get better. Most Americans recently polled think \$500 billion is too much. The ways will be restricted because of presence of China's nuclear arsenal means that there're certain things you can't do to that country because they have enormous retaliatory power. That would lead you to modest ends. And my modest ends are a return to the status quo. With the Communist Chinese Party still in power, the strategy does not assume you're trying to get rid of the Communist Party. I think a decisive victory is simply not viable. People will talk about, you're going to go to war and have a decisive victory. They're talking about war between thermonuclear powered nations. Nations with thermonuclear weapons don't fight decisive wars, or it becomes pretty much the last war. So accept that.

If you accept the modest ends, then the ways you accept are also limited in terms of I'm looking for economic strangulation. It means you can strangle China economically with the current existing force structure and some shift in investment in the future force structure, but you don't have to build a lot of new systems to do that.

You've got map one, which should be the one with the first and second island chain. I think on the flip side. You'll see that the operational concept for this would be a layered distant blockade that is also based on defending the allies. You notice the allies run kind of along the first island chain – Taiwan, not formally an ally. We can't formally train with them, et cetera. But it's on that island chain. The approach is to deny China the use or anyone the use of the maritime space inside the first island chain. This is a maritime exclusion zone. It's been present in the history before it's been used.

It's done by submarines, mines, and a limited amount of air over the gaps in the first island chain. That plays to our strengths. We're obviously better at submarine warfare and mines than China is currently.

The next piece is defend the first island chain and that's integrated air-sea defense with those allies who choose to side with us. There is no requirement for the war that we demand that allies sign up to fight China. It's politically very difficult for them. But the other thing, because we are not running any strikes in the Mainland China from anywhere, then we are not asking them to train with us to strike China. So when they are in peacetime, trying to convince their top politicians to train with us, all they're asking is to train to defend their own sea, air, land, space. We will not base forces there that can strike into China.

Convoy operations will be necessary to keep critical supplies going because China will obviously probably attempt for a blockade of their own. And we dominate outside of the first island chain. And if you look at the gaps in the Indonesian

Archipelago, down to Australia, you see Malacca, Sunda, and Lombok straits are the three straits that are usable by major ships. Then you got north of Australia, south of Australia. Those are the areas we do distant blockade. We do not do the blockade in the normal way. We board. You inspect the papers. They say they're not going to Chinese, say, very well, continue. They go outside of the strait. They resell the cargo to China and go to China.

You put a small squad of Marines or Army infantrymen aboard and all they're – (inaudible) – you can trade anywhere in the world, just not China.

We control the 1,500 major post-Panamax ships that are essential to China's trade. Inside the exclusion zone, the submarines will sink those merchantmen who violate that.

The priorities. You defend first because you want to keep the allies in to choose to fight with you. That's your first priority, get forces to defend. Second is to establish the blockade and third is the maritime exclusion zone in the inner area.

By going more slowly on the maritime exclusion zone, you give shipping time to clear that area, so they don't feel they've shot at without warning, have time to clear the area completely, you have a chance to warn any ships attempting to enter the area if there are entering exclusion zone and subject to attack.

Interestingly, sequencing would be driven by the priority, but it's interesting that because of the different forces for the different missions, you can pretty much do them simultaneously.

Air Force and Army and Marine forces are involved in this because the integrated air-sea defense the first island chain can make very good use of missile defense, things like that.

The theory of victory. This is the problem with any contest between two intercontinental powers. If it's not going to be totally destructive, somebody has to decide to quit. China has decided four times in the past to declare victory when they fought the UN in Korea, when they fought the Indians, when they fought the Soviets on the river war, and when they fought the Vietnamese. Some wars, they did well, some not so well. In all four wars, they declared victory, said they had taught the enemy a lesson, and quit. And that's what you want. You want to leave them in a position to say, okay, we can't break this blockade. We can't survive the length of the blockade. We have options to either escalate massively or declare victory. Because if you haven't done significant damage to their homeland, it should be easier for them to declare victory.

This is inherently offensive. Some people attack the concept and say, it's defensive, you're running away from the enemy. It's inherently offensive. The critical element of any nation's strength is its economic capability to generate, particularly in a long war, to generate combat power in a long war. So that – we are attacking their most

important asset. Now, we're doing it on a strategic operational offensive but tactical defensive. And we do that in periods of history where defensive weapons begin to dominate the battlefield and the good commanders stay on the strategic and operational offensive but tactical defensive. Seize a position the enemy must take if they want to get it back and make them come to you. That's the concept.

Get to Chinese responsibility advantages. What will be the advantage of this type? Well, deterrence and assurance are both based on a single concept. What you're going to do has to be seen to work. It's got to be transparent and it's got to be apparent that it can work. The problem I have with anything based on an air-sea battle is most of it's secret. So what we do to the allies is we go, we can protect you. Well, they say how? I can't tell you. Trust us.

They live in the same neighborhood as the Vietnamese, so the whole trust us, we'll protect you, may not go over as well as we think. So we've got, by going to offshore control, everything is transparent. You rehearse with them in peacetime. You practice it. You state it openly. You go on road shows. You talk to them.

What you're trying to do for deterrence is present the Chinese with a problem that while you can possibly overcome our technological superiority, you can't overcome geography. You'll have to build a sea control navy that can reach out to the Straits of Malacca and in fact all the way to the Straits of Hormuz. They know that's an enormous decades-long effort. Sea control is a major difficult problem. There's nothing you can do about that. It offers the way out.

The lower piece on cost to the United States. Nobody's put a price tag on air-sea battle. It's all classified, so we'll probably never know what is going to cost. But we've got a problem with money now. And frankly, we're not doing that well building high technology. The F-35 is not looking that good for cost, the LCS, the same way. The thing that does work and comes in under cost regularly is the Virginia Class boats, the nuclear submarines, the exact strength of this piece. We reverse the cost imposition. If you're going to strike into China, the cost is very high. When you have to penetrate a complex air-sea defense, that's going to be very expensive. Reverse that. Make them come to us. Instead of us sending very few high technology assets and then we're – (inaudible) – Chinese defenses, reverse it. Make them come out to fight us. Take use of the geographic advantage.

If you look at the map, you can see we have an enormous tactical and operational geographic advantage from the first island chain. Displace the U.S. strengths against submarines, et cetera. And if you flip over the map, you'll see that one of the key elements in a long war is that we can rebuild global trade, rebuild global trade routes and then compare the little piece of the map that is the South China Sea and East China Sea, it's pretty obvious the rest of the world can rebuild maritime trade without the South and East China Sea. China cannot. They can attempt to do the Silk Road again, but that's really a loser from any type of economic piece.

In questions and answers, if you want, I can discuss – (inaudible) – impacts, Taiwan scenario, and also a very short discussion on previous scenarios that involve nuclear powers.

Critical continuous research has to be done on this, first in the economic region – can we sustain a long war? Can China sustain a long war? And second, in the fiscal area, how do you sustain this fiscally?

So conclusion, I want this to be the start of a deep and wide-ranging conversation that's full war gaming. It needs other proposed strategies and I thank Bryan for being willing to give that a shot today because it's been a real dearth of that. We got to elevate this from the operational, tactical toys for boys level and get it to a strategic level that talks about the survival of nations.

We might include nukes and escalation implications. One of the problems – I've played an hour and a half a dozen of the war games Pentagon sponsors. We're never allowed to consider nukes. Oh, we don't do nukes in this game. Oh, that's a higher classification. We're not doing nukes. Any fight you're in, you'd better be thinking nuke because they're going to be there all over the battlefield.

Air-sea battle is an entirely appropriate concept for some scenarios. The Straits of Hormuz, you have to be able to reopen the Straits of Hormuz. You're going to need to penetrate. You're going to need to overcome A2AD valid. There's a strategy you can develop that says how that does it and a theory of victory. To take that same thing and apply it to China, where what you're doing is accelerating escalation, that's a really bad idea. You don't want a concept that forces escalation when the other guy has thermonuclear weapons.

Offshore control, release the reliance on space and cyber for the escalatory, stretches the timeline. Space and cyber happen very, very fast. So escalation has to happen in a matter of minutes if not seconds. Blockade takes place over weeks or months. So you stretch the timeline, let the politicians get a handle on it, before you really start banging away at each other. It allows our current resources with the available requirements. We're not going to have a real problem with that. It places forces in favorable tactical situations. I don't think we should make ourselves fight in unfavorable tactical situations. And it allows to accomplish resolutions short of victory or exhaustion.

And I am about 10 percent over, which is not bad for Pentagon projects.  
(Laughter.)

MR. BATES: Thank you very much, Doctor, appreciate it. Bryan.

MR. BRYAN MCGRATH: Thank you, Scott, for your introduction and thanks to the Center for National Policy for hosting this important chat.

Most of you know that air-sea battle has been worked on by the Air Force and the Navy for a few years and that it has been a subject of a lot of controversy, a lot of attack, mostly from land power advocates, and primarily by people who have never read it.

The criticisms generally fall under one or three categories. First is that it's a naked budget grab by the Navy and the Air Force, who have felt neglected after 10-plus years of land war. Second is that it's not a strategy or that it's incomplete as a strategy. The third is the sense that we're never going to fight our banker and dry goods provider, so why are you boys in blue trying to pick a fight. You heard a little bit of that from the vice chairman of the Joint – former vice chairman of the Joint Chiefs yesterday.

The objection that leads us here today is that second one, the question of air-sea battle as strategy. This would ordinarily comprise a legitimate objection, say, for the fact that, as T.X. indicated, no one even remotely associated with air-sea battle thinks it's a strategy.

Where there is confusion, I think, where there is room for a discussion, is the fact that what the Air Force and the Navy proposed to do in order to operate in the anti-access area denial region has caused a bit of a raucous, specifically the notion that the U.S. could and would conduct conventional strikes against Mainland China in order to protect freedom of movement at sea, in space, and in the sky. This notion strikes many as strategically questionable. And some like T.X. have protested the strategic vacuum surrounding air-sea battle. To put it another way, if air-sea battle is not a strategy, is there a strategy into which it can neatly fit? Apparently, the chiefs of staff of the Navy and the Air Force today didn't want to own up to that. That's fine. They don't have to. It doesn't have to tie to any one strategy. The question is more appropriately if you have a strategy is air-sea battle useful in prosecuting that strategy. That's what I'm going to try to give you today as a framework for such a strategy.

T.X. has come up with a military strategy for war in East Asia that he believes assures allies, deters adversaries, and which could provide for conflict termination on acceptable terms, is a strategy built in no small measure as a reaction to his thoughtful reservations about air-sea battle. But in terms of a military strategy for East Asia, as he indicated, it occupies the playing field alone.

Someone sent me a copy of the Orbis article a few weeks ago. I wrote a few email criticisms of it, primarily of the, yes, but has T.X. thought about this variety. They made their way to T.X. and that's why I'm here today. And I'll cover a little bit of that lately.

In order to make things interesting, I took T.X.'s bait. He wanted to challenge somebody to put together a framework for a military strategy that air-sea battle could very comfortably fit in, not one that's tied to it, but one it could fit in. And I got just such a strategy for you today.

I call my strategy framework The War Games Strategy, after the 1983 Matthew Broderick movie. In that movie, the doomsday computer utters the memorable line. I don't know if you remember it. Strange game, the only way to win is not to play, when talking about global thermonuclear war. I feel the same way about a war with China. And after playing a large number of DOD sponsored war games about – against rising continental maritime powers, I've come to conclude that there really aren't a lot of options that allow for a war between the United States and China that can be concluded on acceptable conditions for either side.

Therefore, my strategy is all about keeping that war from ever happening in the first place.

First, a few assumptions. The first assumption is that the United States will remain in the position it is now and that is the leading global nation state for the foreseeable future. And by that, my horizon for this strategy is approximately 15 to 20 years.

I assume the current state of economic malaise and fiscal profligacy can be mitigated. It can be overcome.

Second, I assume 15 years is sufficient time for China's lack of economic and financial and political transparency. Its one-child policy induced demographic train wreck, its tendency to build clusters of modern pyramids in the guise of half empty buildings, and its growing middle class without attendant middle class concerns, its – (inaudible) – to dramatically restrain its economic growth and put pressures on military spending that currently grows without constraint.

Third, I assume that America's network of friends and allies in the region remains strong and I assume that China will continue to call upon the friendship and loyalty of very few nation states.

Fourth, I assume that there will be no technological advance in the next 15 to 20 years that's so startling as to obviate the dependency of modern civilization on fossil fuels.

Fifth, I assume that a conflict occurs in the Asia-Pacific, the U.S. does not start it, just like T.X. does.

Sixth, I assume that a conventional war with China would not – would be fought for limited ends. I say that again. Would be fought for limited ends. And among those ends are not the fall of the PRC or change in its regime, both of which I think T.X. would agree with.

And seventh, I assume that a conventional war with China does not lead to nuclear war with China. There's a lot to unpack in that assumption and it's a big part of T.X.'s approach, so in the Q&A if you wanted me to get into that a little more, I can.

The principles of my strategy are three. The first is that a war between China and the United States would be ruinous and therefore not an obvious first or second choice for either party, especially not for the PRC.

The second and the central organizing principle of this entire approach is the idea that in conjunction with friends and allies, the United States will remain so militarily dominant in the Asia-Pacific that China never recognizes a propitious moment to initiate the conflict.

The third is that this military strategy and in fact the grand strategy from which it could be discerned requires nothing like political or economic containment to be successful.

There are four elements to this strategy and they are familiar to any of you who've studied military strategy. They are presence, deterrence, assurance, and power.

As I stated earlier, the central organizing premise of this approach is that war with China would be ruinous and that America must be so militarily dominant in the Asia-Pacific that China does not seek recourse to conflict. If such a war is avoided long enough, the forces that I mentioned earlier will play themselves out more or less in our favor, resulting in a less powerful and less threatening China.

This strategy will be expensive, though less so than the last 10 years of the war on terror that we pursued in Iraq and Afghanistan. And it will largely feature investments in naval and aerospace power.

So let's move on to a brief discussion of those four elements. First is presence. U.S. military posture in the Asia-Pacific region will be consistent and visible, stressing to nations in the region that we are a Pacific power and we are engaged. Elements of the U.S.'s military power that mirror those of our friends in the region and those that are desired by our friends in the region will be forward deployed, forward employed, and stationed with increased regularity to include land based air missile defense, such that T.X. mentioned, small surface patrol crafts, tactical air, and maritime surveillance.

Presence is that which underpins all of the rest of this approach and it – and this approach correlates a diminishment of U.S. military presence in the Asia-Pacific with an increase in China's adventurism.

Next, we come to the element of deterrence, and by that I mean primarily conventional deterrence. The United States will deploy, forward deploy, forward station, and forward operate sufficient naval and aerospace power to impose operationally relevant sea and aerospace control throughout the Asia-Pacific.

U.S. naval and aerospace forces will focus up to 75 percent of current combat power in the Pacific in the short and medium term and commence a buildup of combat power to reduce risk elsewhere.

The U.S. will continue to refine systems, doctrine, and tactics in a manner that permits our forces to operate inside of opposition – anti-access and area denial networks. Additionally, the U.S. would maintain the capability of conducting other campaigns simultaneously to include distant blockade.

Third element is the assurance of allies. This strategic framework values the confidence friends, partners, and allies discern from a powerful U.S. presence in the region and furthermore recognizes the danger associated with key friends and allies perceiving disengagement by the United States.

United States military posture would be one that features frequent exercises and coordination with others in the region and works towards mutually beneficial and operationally relevant levels of interoperability and even integration.

Finally, there is power. Recognizing that a peaceful Asia is critical to both our economic prosperity and our national security, United States will resource necessary enhancements to both capacity and capability of its naval and aerospace forces and selective elements of its land forces.

The United States will maintain the ability to achieve local air and sea control throughout the Asia-Pacific region.

I'll leave it at this. Clearly what I've laid out today is not a complete strategy, certainly not as complete as T.X. offshore control, but is a framework for the development of a strategy.

I've a great deal of respect for T.X. and his offshore control strategy. I'd like to see it war gamed intensively. It has great potential and it serves as a very serious attempt to put forward a clear military strategy for the region. I have some consequential doubts about it that I'll get to in the rebuttal period and I'd be happy to share them. But that's not what I was asked to do in these first 10 minutes, so I hope I've completed my mission. Thank you.

MR. BATES: Mission accomplished. Thank you. T.X.

MR. HAMMES: First, just in the interest of the sponsor, InfinityJournal.com is where the source article was, the short piece on offshore control. A much longer piece is coming out. It's over at the Pentagon for (qualification ?) review, so I don't know how long that'll take.

I think Bryan was spot on his first six assumptions. I'm a little concerned about any assumption a conventional war does not lead to a nuclear war. That's entirely dependent upon how you conduct the war and how much you threaten.

I would also agree that war between China and U.S. is absolutely ruinous. It doesn't mean it won't happen. France and Germany's economies were more tightly intertwined than America's and China's were and they still went to war. Germany, while already fighting the largest empire in the world, decided it would be a brilliant idea to invade the Soviet Union. Japan decided to take on the United States. All incredible blunders, all ruinous, both from an economic and a military point of view, but they did it. Again, the infinite capacity for human stupidity should never be underestimated.

His second principle that we remain dominant, interestingly, I think OC, offshore control actually reinforces four of the points you make. The first with presence, offshore control is about presence. It's about constantly exercising but only for the defense of the allies. The problem we're going to have as you move to your detour with the ability to operate – your second principle – inside A2AD, you're going to have to explain to them how you do that without striking China.

One of the China's great strategic concepts is to defeat an enemy's alliance. I would go after the minority parties and every one of the allied states and say, why are you letting them practice to strike China from your soil? We don't object you defending your own soil. We do object you permitting them to strike China and try to stir up opposition. If we add that to our problem of trying to exercise with the allies, we'd really raise the degree of difficulty in getting political permission to exercise with the allies. If we say, look, we're bringing nothing that can reach China. We're not interested in striking China. We're here to defend you and that's all we'll do, the air missile batteries and things like that.

I thought all your selection was spot on just that whole point about the A2AD.

Assuring allies, again, the same problem. How do you do the political piece?

Power – I agree, power is deterrence, but it has to be power that's usable. We're basing on military superiority, which is based essentially for us on technology. What if they disagree? What if they think they've got a counter-technology? What if they think what they can do in cyber and space – because we state categorically we rely on cyber and space – is the way to defeat us?

Remember, the Germans convinced in World War I – they convinced their leadership that with 20 U-boats, they could cut off England with unrestricted warfare campaign. Literally, they had a grand total of 20 U-boats and somehow they convinced them that would overcome the Royal Navy and the U.S. Navy combined. That's the problem. When you base something on a technology, then it can be defeated.

If you based it on geography, it's very hard for me as a Chinese strategist to go in and say, boss, I can take care of that Malacca dilemma for you. I can reach out and control the sea all the way to the Straits of Hormuz, even to Europe, so we continue trading. And you go, okay, how? Well, I can't say what I'm going to do is cyber and I can't say what I'm going to do is space because I have to physically put something out there on the surface to control the waters base. Can't do it. Can't do it in a couple of decades. And I absolutely agree with your point that there's about this 15-year window before the dysfunctions in China become a real issue for them.

So the key is the reason I don't like anything that's as aggressive as an A2 – anti – A2AD or an air-sea battle campaign is it relies on tech. There's no test that both sides can see it working, so there's lots of surprise and it's inherently escalatory.

In a crisis and each time we've played this game in a crisis, the two sides, as the crisis builds, they go to war much more rapidly than anybody thought. And we'd walk that dog back. It's always because they had to strike first in space and cyber because are the ways you're disarmed.

If you can set something like OC, it doesn't need space or cyber. You can do long range blockade with HF radio and surface search radar. And then you can rebuild your cyber networks with either tattered assets or airborne assets, but outside the first island chain, where you can defend them. You're not going to be able to rebuild them over China very easily.

So again, OC is a geographic obvious unclassified approach and deterrence comes from the visible ability to do what I say I'm going to do. And if you want to change that, you got to come get me. And I don't think you can do it, certainly not in two decades. You can't build a sea control navy. I'll leave it at that.

MR. MCGRATH: I have seven objections to offshore control. First is, I believe offshore control lacks flexibility and the virtue of reversibility. Specifically, if you implemented my strategy, you could carry out T.X.'s lines of operations if you chose to. If you implement T.X.'s strategy, you couldn't carry out air-sea battle. They're mutually exclusive. So that's one objection.

The second is offshore control assumes that our current economic condition will continue infinitely and it ignores the extent to which defense spending is a choice, right? I mean, how much we spend really on defense as a choice? We don't have to continue to spend \$500 billion and we don't have to continue to spend \$500 billion in the way that we spend it now. So if the concern is the expense associated or expected of air-sea battle, we could spend more. I'm not saying it's necessarily wise or likely, but I think strategically you have to at least consider that that's a possibility.

I don't believe offshore control either deters war ashore. In fact, I think it may even increase instability. Here's why. When I look at the inside the first island chain, during peacetime, we had effectively seeded any claim we have to operate in there with

surface and air forces in a large way. It's international water, but we've pulled back. And what we've done, if I read offshore control correctly, is declare this a maritime exclusion zone. What do you do in the build up to war, while it's still just talk-talk and jaw-jaw? You know, it seems to me that we're left without flexible deterrent options. We're left without much to do if the locus of the conflict is in the South China Sea. It's hard. It's hard to be deterrent and to separate forces and to calm or whatever if you're not there, if all you've got are submarines. Submarines are wonderful once the shooting starts. But my strategy is about keeping the shooting from starting.

The other thing is – is air-sea battle – it's cartoonish to think about air-sea battle as simply a way to fight someone. It's also a way to put in the potential opponent's mind a sense that you can fight them and to cause them to think twice about fighting you.

Fourth, I think offshore control is obsessed with nuclear war. It's probably a good thing to be obsessed about, don't get me wrong, but you have to give conventional war planners the ability to think about how a conventional war could be prosecuted without the intellectually stifling bugaboo of whether it's going to nuke us. You have to at least allow that to play out.

This happened quite successfully in the maritime strategy of the 1980s, where anybody associated with that will tell you that we were told, hey, don't worry about nuclear war. Think about this in conventional terms. If it goes nuclear, all bets are off and those guys in the next room are thinking about that.

So it gives you the space to think about a conventional conflict.

Secondly, as I said earlier, I think offshore control has – would have a tendency to be destabilizing and if it were destabilizing and your fear is nuclear war, it would have a greater capacity to bring on that nuclear because it would bring on a conventional war. Follow my logic. I'm trying to keep the conventional war from starting.

Fifth, I think, offshore control makes questionable target distinctions. Essentially what we're saying in offshore control is on the first day of the war, we will sink your entire navy. We will destroy all of your commercial shipping within the first island chain and we will commence the strangulation of your economy. This is not sufficient to go nuclear? By taking out a few – taking out 15 or 20 coastal missile batteries and coastal radar sites is? I don't know. I think these distinctions are irrelevant.

Sixth, I think offshore control makes some questionable assertions about cyberspace warfare. Quite frankly, I think any conflict with the Chinese is going to go cyber almost from day one and no matter what kind of conflict there is. It's just part of – it says it will be as natural in future warfare as artillery it was in past warfare.

Finally, offshore control's theory of victory appears to me to work through this concept of distant blockade. I'm just not sure how successful this distant blockade has been. I mean fought the Japanese for four long years. We effectively strangled their

economy. We – massive bombing of – conventional bombing of Japan and it too two nuclear weapons or two atomic weapons to bring down the entire Japan.

So those are my – those are my objections to offshore control.

MR. BATES: Thank you very much. What a great conversation.

Please, I'd like to open this up for questions and comments. Here, we have people from many different walks of life who are all going to play a role in this continuing debate here in Washington, so we look forward to your questions. Don't be shy. There we go. Yes, sir, and please – please identify yourself.

Q: My name is – (inaudible) – with Booz Allen, but a former Navy guy, served with Bryan in 51. One of the assumptions that I think, Dr. Hammes, you didn't make is that in order for this offshore blockade to work is that the rest of the world has to agree that China is wrong and the United States is right because in order to affect that basically, we have to get to the United Nations Security Council to agree and to give you authority to do that or we're effectively going on our own to do a blockade of all of your economic. And unfortunately, I think that would turn against United States if we're doing an economic blockade without the approval of the United Nations – (inaudible) – the rest of the countries. So either you're assuming that everybody agrees with us and that we can get the approval or that we're going to do it on our own. And we've all seen that China is really good at lawfare. And it's something that in the military we like to think about, but it's one thing I learned doing four years of maritime security work for the Navy. Lawfare is very important when you start talking about everybody besides the military.

MR. HAMMES: Yes, and exactly, that's one of the things. Historically there has not been agreement on blockade. It has been imposed by the dominant naval power or of course the dominant naval powers. Other countries are in the position of like it or lump it. Not particularly encouraging, but if you think you're going to fight a war with China in some kind of a polite fashion with the rest of the world, if this isn't a global economic disruption on day one, then I think we're deluding ourselves.

The other problem is I have not yet heard a theory of victory. And when you say your whole thing is to deter, well, suppose they don't deter, what's the theory of victory? And that's why I wanted to start the discussion. The theory of victory here is that you can create enough economic pressure on China that they'd just say the gains are not worth it.

The problem is if you don't have that, do you bomb them till they decide it's not working or what's your theory of victory? Do you late trade continue and add bombing to that and hope that that does it? And if that's not provocative – because, again, you have to have a theory of victory and you have to answer the question of what about the nuclear weapons. Those are two fundamental requirements. No strategy that doesn't include fighting – you know – (inaudible) – but if you don't have a theory for how you're going to fight, it's not a military strategy. How you're going to win the actual fight?

And that's been the problem we've had so far. We've discussed operational concepts. We're trying to elevate it. CNP has been the first people willing to step forward and say let's push this up a level. Let's have a strategic discussion. And that is – this has been a great start today.

It's clear to me I have not made some things clear. I don't say we're ceding inside South China Sea. We continue to operate normally in peacetime. And in small steps that's why you have small ships, preferably ships that can take it without having to be abandoned. Now, the \$700 million LCS which gets hit and has a zero rating for damage control is a little embarrassing. But if we were to build ships that could actually stay in a fight and take a hit, small ships, somewhat expandable, they would then do those disputes inside the South China Sea for you. And then if it goes beyond that, then you got a fallback position without having to strike China.

And one of the key aspects Clausewitz recognized the fundamental trinity: passion, chance, and reason. He also recognizes that once a war starts there's a real quick move to passion which tends to overwhelm reason.

You want to avoid feeding that and burning hornets inside the Mainland China do that. There used to be a joke of the Cold War that a nuclear war won't start at sea because you're just killing sailors and who cares. And there's something to that. If you just kill sailors at sea, it doesn't quite have the same impact. Not that I don't like sailors, but – (laughter.)

MR. BATES: Thank you for your question. Yes, sir.

Q: Charlie Hankins (sp), C. Hankins and Associates. Hi, Bryan.

MR. MCGRATH: Hi.

Q: So when I first read the CSBA articles on air-sea battle – (inaudible) – they include the element that you describe as a critical part of an overall – didn't say strategy, but an overall concept – submarine, mining, economic strangulation, and so forth. And I take Bryan's point that – your point, Doctor, the approach – (inaudible) – is a little bit single point failure. I mean if it doesn't work, you're left without any additional guns that you can bring to the battle, and you may have a deterrence that fails in terms of the Chinese going against some of your allies. And you don't have enough fire power to actually help them to hold off the Chinese.

Isn't there something of –

MR. HAMMES: Well, I don't understand it.

Q: So the Chinese can do things to –

MR. HAMMES: Okay, but the point is that in this strategy, you invest in defensive capabilities to protect the first island chain and not offensive capabilities to strike into China.

Q: I understand.

MR. HAMMES: How does that create less defensive capability?

Q: It doesn't create less. I may create inadequate because the Chinese have a heck of a lot of offensive capabilities, so I don't know how many it has –

MR. HAMMES: Do you think you're destroying their offensive capability?

Q: No. No. You're not going to be able to do that, but air-sea battle gives you the ability to counter some of their attack there if they're trying to use air launched, if they're trying to use ground launched and you get right back into the question – (inaudible) –

MR. HAMMES: By striking at the airfields.

Q: Striking at the air, right. So anyway, it's – there's a combination of your two strategies that kind of makes sense to me if we can afford it. I mean, I certainly – (inaudible). So I don't know. I kind of throw that out there.

MR. MCGRATH: I – listen, if you – if you could afford it, and I believe we can, strategy that is heavy upfront on deterrence and assurance, heavy upfront on deterrence and assurance, but that leaves you the capability to fight a war like T.X. lays out in his, it's very attractive to me, very attractive to me because it optimizes both ends of it.

I think – I think T.X. is correct in his criticism of my approach as being weak on the back end, although I – my sense was I didn't need to rehash air-sea battle or distant blockade, which would have been the two main parts of it. But I think his is weak on the front end, the deterrence and assurance, but as a war fighting strategy, it makes a lot of sense. As a hybrid would not be bad.

MR. HAMMES: Put yourself in the place of an ally. When I come to you and say, I've got a strategy to assure you. I won't tell you what it is. In fact, the people I'm working for won't tell me what it is because it's in a SAP program, but trust me. I trust them. Why is that more assuring than an operationally exercise together on a quarterly basis, daily basis, whatever ranges we've got with them that is transparent, that is based on geography, that is based on fundamental facts, the physics that aren't changed that aren't hidden in a SAP program. My problem with assurance is you're telling me to trust you.

MR. MCGRATH: Well, I think –

MR. HAMMES: Now, this is the people who spent \$181 million to get the F-35, \$181 million per copy, and we're at 20 percent of testing. And you're assuring me that your high technology will protect me? You got a 20-year-old aircraft program that can't get through its own dumb down testing. Without continuing to increase in price, you build a class of ships that rusts at the pier. How in the hell do I trust you, people?

MR. MCGRATH: I think that's a – some of that is fair and some of that it's a bit of a cartoon. Let's face it. Because air-sea battle was born in a more of a classified environment and it has some very highly classified programs as part of it does not mean we will ever keep our allies and friends in the dark. We have the capacity to share information. We have the capacity to talk to them. Those programs, I believe, are underway at appropriate levels. I think the initial stages of the rollout were designed in a way to protect information, to get enough out there, so that people could be interested, but to protect a good deal of it.

I don't think we ever have to keep our allies in the dark.

Your criticism of acquisition programs are I think – they're hard to refute. I wish we could do better at that. But no matter how expensive the F-35 is that we put out, it's still going to be better than virtually anything else in the world. The LCSs that are rusting at the pier were – my sense is, is because we did not put the whole system in them that we will in future ones as a way of saving money. But you know, they're – we wrestle with problems in bringing any system out. If you go back and look at the late '70s and early '80s and the press reports of the Aegis cruisers 47, 48, you look at – you look at USS Princeton the first SPY-1B ship and the problems it had getting going, I mean, you can drum these things up to a – (inaudible). Bottom line is you eventually work it out. And I think we'll get there with LCS. We'll get there with F-35.

One of the reasons we had to go to a Virginia class was because the submarine that we're building before, which name escapes me – Seawolf – was a little expensive and maybe a little over specked. Submarine guys said, roger that, we'll go off and we'll do it better. And they did wonderful things. Maybe we need to put a submariner in charge in NAVAIR, but – (laughter) – yes, I think we can get there.

MR. BATES: Thank you. Another question. Yes, sir, in the back.

Q: T.X., I'm a little – little bothered by the – (inaudible) – at the beginning of what you said about assuming that – not only assuming a war starts, but assuming – (inaudible) – good guys and the bad guys started. It seems to me that how hard our countries are going to fight has a whole lot to do with what they're fighting over. And so I think it's important not to skip over that piece and I'd just like to hear your comments on how sensitive you think your strategy is to what actually drives the conflict, whether they're fighting over – (inaudible) – or Taiwan and how that also plays into the theory of victory and the terms – (inaudible).

Just a quick comment on Bryan's report – (inaudible) – and that is very refreshing to bring up right upfront this is going to be expensive. That has to be as much a part of the debate as the military nuts and bolts because we all love to talk about capability, but if we can't afford to buy the numbers and have the capacity, then the capability is not – if you don't have enough to have it there, you may as well not have it all, and that's – that's just a very important part – (inaudible).

MR. HAMMES: I think your last point it's a good one because one of the concerns is, of course, the F-22 is now \$500 million a copy. The F-35 is \$181 on the last two we bought and going up. And again, 20 percent of testing. So what's it going to cost – (inaudible) – how many can you afford.

The question of how a war starts is very, very important.

Q: That's a little unfair. I think you size a program for a certain number of aircraft and then later you terminate the buy, of course, the per copy price is going to go up – (inaudible).

MR. HAMMES: Yes, but even the – even the additional cost keeps going up. And again, we're 20 percent of testing. And the additional cost keeps adding. Every time – every time we discuss this thing on the Hill, they want another X million dollars and this time it'll work. So we're producing airplanes today that we know require millions of dollars to fix this. From the 20 percent of the test we've done, you know the airplanes we're building have to be fixed at cost of millions of dollars apiece. I'm not sure how this makes sense.

But to your question of how war starts, that's absolutely vital and that's why, again, air-sea battle scares me. Crisis starts at South China Sea. We start swapping paint. Maybe we even fire on each other, maybe small ship sunk. This is still a crisis. You've got to give the leadership time to deal with it before there's escalation. And if you look at the two previous nuclear – conflicts between nuclear states, the USSR Chinese river war and the Kargil crisis between India and China – India and Pakistan, in both cases, when the conflict started, everybody was very transparent and moved slowly because they had the luxury. Moving fast didn't change the outcome. It simply accelerated you toward nuclear conflict. You also see the same thing with USSR and U.S. with the Cuban missile crisis. There's a very slow motion dance going on here to buy time for the politicians.

The problem if you introduce a concept of war that relies heavily on cyber and space, it's an acceleration of the conflict – of the crisis. The crisis then accelerates the war, which is where you don't want to go. So if it's a small war and you say, look, no matter how this turns out, all we're going to do is back off and blockade, so you've got months to make your decision, that's a much different thing than if this thing accelerates, we're coming at you. Now, you've got to make your decision now. That's a very, very dangerous position to put yourself in.

I absolutely agree. Any war between U.S. and China will start in cyber and space probably. We've got to make it clear to the Chinese that we don't need it. While it's certainly useful, it's not vital to our strategy, and therefore, you gain enough by destroying space and cyber and all the problems you create around the world economically when you go after space and cyber and all the enemies you bring in by taking that action. Is that worth it?

So again, the concern is if it's a small crisis, you want to keep it a small crisis. Back off on the thing if you can at all. You don't want to have anything that accelerates it. And that's what a direct strike campaign does. It accelerates it. This almost looks like mobilization post – pre-World War I.

MR. MCGRATH: Mike Gerson at CNA has done some great study of the Russian-Chinese, the river war. One of the things that he's come up with was the perception on both sides of that conventional conflict that because they were both nuclear powers, we're not going to go nuclear. It cancelled each other out. That that was part of the decision calculus on both sides in that conflict. So I'm not sure there are great lessons to be learned from that particular one by the work of this one scholar.

If X cancels out X on either side of the equation, then that becomes a conventional fight.

MR. HAMMES: But they neither accelerate, neither – although it's almost a core level fight, they both back down, both had local forces there that they're going to throw into the fight. Initial commanders wanted to throw it into fight and senior decision makers said no. We don't know why they said no. Maybe the Russian papers are now available, but the Chinese papers aren't.

MR. BATES: Other couple of questions. Yes, sir.

Q: Jim Start (sp), served in the Navy and I'm now a consultant for the Navy staff. Bryan, I understood your strategy is one that says in order to win this, we're just going to deter. We'll not have to fight it. Then you went on to say, if we do fight, end up in a conflict and fight it, and the U.S. has to exert sea control all over the world –

MR. MCGRATH: No. I didn't say that.

Q: Or off coast of China –

MR. MCGRATH: I said would impose operational relevant sea control, sea and airspace control.

Q: Does that include within the first island chain?

MR. MCGRATH: Absolutely.

Q: Okay and if you do that, then my understanding is, if you're going to exert sea control within the first island chain, you're going to need to exercise air-sea battle. And then if you do that, you're going to need to take out the Chinese surveillance and targeting networks which then is going to mean strikes against Mainland China, both – not just coastal, but deep inland. And then, how do you control –

MR. MCGRATH: If I chose to exercise air and sea control within the first island chain, I would have to do the things you suggest. I don't necessarily have to. I could exercise local air and sea control outside the first island chain and execute – largely a lot of T.X.'s military lines. What I want is the option to be able to do both. What I want are the peacetime deterrent and assurance values that accrue to making sure the other side knows we can go downtown and making sure our friends in the region know that America is dedicated to going downtown. They're not just going to bug out and head out outside the Lombok Straits when things get hot.

So this is where – I think there's a hybrid here trying to get out that has a –where air-sea battle and all the things that are required to fight inside an A2AD environment continue to go forward, but a military commander who's putting together a campaign plan to fight this war – that's just one tool he has in his box, which I think is why the chiefs of staff today said what they did. It's a tool in the box that a commander can use. He doesn't have to.

MR. HAMMES: But again, it's a tool that has a presence in the crisis and can very well accelerate the crisis. That's one thing I won't accept is that this has – every game we've played now, it's accelerated the crisis. We have to accept that the posture and strategy you take and publicize puts pressure on the decision makers in the crisis period. One thing –

MR. MCGRATH: I'm going to strangle the economy doesn't do that?

MR. HAMMES: It's time, though. It's absolutely escalatory. Any conflict with China is going to be escalatory. The question is the timeframe. If it happens very, very fast, either country have the decision making process that allows for that kind of speed. But if you slow it down, I think any fight with a thermonuclear enemy, rule one is slow the damn thing down. And I would think that's got to be one of the driving things we want to accomplish with whatever strategy. I think the most useful part of this is we're having the discussion now and we're elevating – right now air-sea battle is black box that does something nasty to China when a war starts and it happens right away. I mean, that's the perception in the world. That is not the position I want to be in as a U.S. diplomat trying to diffuse a crisis in the South China Sea because we've sunk of their ships or they've sunk one of our ships.

I want to be able to take a position, look, it was just a ship at sea. It was sailors. That's what we pay them for. Sometimes bad things happen, but there's no reason to destroy the global economy.

MR. MCGRATH: I'm willing concede that my approach is weaker on the back end. Are you willing to concede that yours is weaker on the front end?

MR. HAMMES: No.

MR. MCGRATH: Okay. (Laughter.)

MR. HAMMES: Again, this is the problem with the wicked problem. The definition of a wicked problem is that experts will fundamentally disagree. Given the same set of facts and the same complex interactive relationship, experts will fundamentally disagree about what's right and what's wrong.

MR. BATES: Another question in the back here.

Q: First of all, I am a consultant – (inaudible). Gentlemen, both of you discussed some demographic trends that I think are probably not receiving application in this debate. Every China expert I've ever spoken to says there's one thing that the Chinese Communist Party fears more than SSGNs or CVNs or space warfare. It's their own population. Is there a role for an engagement with the Chinese population before or during hostilities in either of your strategies as a component of a theory of victory or a trump card or anything along those lines based on engagement within the cyber realms, the information realms, and other – (inaudible).

MR. HAMMES: I would want to be very, very cautious about that. A rising China doesn't scare me as much as a faltering China or a Communist Party that thinks it's going out of power. That is a little less predictable. The reason I would be hesitant about it is we keep talking about the rise in Chinese investment in their military. The increase in internal security was greater this year. They're spending more on internal security than external security. That is not a stability relationship we understand well enough to mess with. We do know that when China goes unstable, it's pretty big disaster on an epic scale. And I would just assume not encourage that.

MR. MCGRATH: I think the – I think the quickest way to bring about a strong and lasting love affair between the Chinese people and the Communist Party would be to go to war with China. I think it would unleash nationalist forces that are – they're not even just below surface. They're on the surface right now. So again, another way – I come back to this – we don't – we want to make sure this thing doesn't happen. With some of the – some of the sort of electronic warfare, cyber, some of the things that you're suggesting. I think there's a role for that. I think it's – it will be difficult to execute, but still worth trying. I think there're a lot of nasty little things we can do on China's periphery to keep them busy that perhaps smart people elsewhere are thinking about.

MR. HAMMES: I hope not.

MR. BATES: I think we have time –

MR. HAMMES: Remember the rise of China – the rise of the global economy depends upon the rise of China.

MR. BATES: Let's take one or two more questions. Any from the back here? No. Okay.

Well, anybody already not heard from? Yes, sir.

Q: Timothy Walton with Delex Systems. I have a question for Dr. Hammes – (inaudible). One of your assumptions, I believe, was the nuclear escalatory ladder, that conventional strikes on the Mainland would lead to nuclear escalation. We haven't observed this in any Chinese – (inaudible) – correct –

MR. HAMMES: No, doesn't lead to, increases the probability of.

Q: Increases the probability. And in your rebuttal, I believe you said that it'd be entirely dependent on how you conduct the war. Essentially, that leads me to believe that you're saying that you could conduct a conventional campaign that doesn't target nuclear command and control systems and –

MR. HAMMES: Oh, do you know where they are?

Q: Yes. I personally don't know where they are, but just because it's not a difficult task, it does not mean that can't be conducted. And there's a task that we trained for throughout the Cold War and it's one that can be conducted today. We shouldn't self deter ourselves –

MR. HAMMES: Throughout the Cold War, we understood the decision making process of the Soviet Union pretty clearly because we – (inaudible) – several times, we began to understand it each time more clearly. When I talk to senior Chinese scholars, and maybe there're some experts on the Navy staff or Joint Staff and others better at that – they say we literally do not even understand how they would communicate that decision. So in taking out telephone exchanges that connect air defense systems, we may be striking a strategic communication note. We don't know what the release authority is if a firing battery is out of communication, what is – what's its release authority. How do they even do release authority? Who makes the decision? Not really clear on that.

The reason there's no red phone in China is you have no idea whose desk it goes on. If you don't even understand who makes the decision, I would be really, really hesitant to start striking at other command and control systems.

Q: I think the scenario – (inaudible) – and maybe there is a way to conduct such a campaign.

MR. HAMMES: Okay. What's the benefit?

MR. MCGRATH: I mean are there conventional targets – are there conventional targets that are so obviously not associated with their nuclear complex? Do they exist? Militarily relevant conventional targets that are not nuclear –

MR. HAMMES: But when you say “military relevant,” militarily relevant to do what? We have to force our way inside the South China Sea, so we can conduct landings?

MR. MCGRATH: So we can protect the allies.

MR. HAMMES: You don’t have to go inside the South China Sea to protect allies.

MR. MCGRATH: We may have to.

MR. HAMMES: You can – you do that from an integrated air-sea defense base on them and make them come to you, rather than you going to them.

MR. MCGRATH: It’s one way to do it.

MR. HAMMES: Yes. And despite the air power – (inaudible) – idea if we just strike airfields, if we just strike airfields, we’ll get them. It’s a continental size nation. It doesn’t work. It didn’t work for the Germans against the Brits. It didn’t work for us against the Germans. It didn’t work for us against the Japanese until their economy was completely flattened in the sense they weren’t building any more airplanes.

So – (inaudible) – is apparently alive and well, despite being wrong for 90 years. You cannot create submission out of a nation through an air campaign short of nuclear weapons.

There is I think literally zero evidence, even if you want to claim Kosovo was – Bosnia is an example. It’s a pretty weak example.

MR. BATES: Ladies and gentlemen, I think we should do this again in about six months. What do you think? Listen, this has been a great debate because through each part of it I’ve been agreeing one way and then I go the other. So I don’t know if that’s the same with you. Look, this has been about the fundamental question of how to preserve the peace to avoid war at all cost and prevail in a war if we must to the cost of trillions of dollars that are going to be decided on these decisions. This debate needs to be heard on Capitol Hill. That’s why we did it. We’ll continue to be in this space. Please thank me – join me in thanking our guests today. (Applause.)

We’ll see you on Tuesday, talk about the jobless recovery and on Wednesday, China’s quest for oil. I hope to see you then. Thank you.

(END)