

Lieutenant General James Kowalski
Major General Sandra Finan
Major General Garrett Harencak

AFA - Air and Space Technology Exposition

"Nuclear Enterprise Panel"

17 September 2013

Lt. Gen. Kowalski: Thanks. I don't know if this is bad for you or bad for them, but I've got 20 minutes of prepared remarks, too, so I'll just take all of them[Laughter].

Let me start off, I know a lot of you are familiar with Simon Sinek who wrote the book, "Start with Why". He's very active, going around to different Air Force organizations. I think that's a good place to start here, rather than diving into the tactical details of the nuke enterprise. Why are we doing this?

Let's go to the next slide.

Back in 1949 the first Soviet nuclear device went off. A lot of you may have heard of Bernard Brodie, and this is what he wrote in 1949.

Slide.

"From now on its chief purpose must to be avert them."

From that came this motto which I think still resonates in our nuclear enterprise.

Next slide.

That's what this remains all about. This remains about a burning conflict. This remains about peace. The challenges that we face today are much different and much more complex than they were back when we were in that ideological death struggle with the Soviet Union.

The Chief was just up here and he talked to, one of his three key points he started with was shape the future. If we're going to shape that future, if we're going to shape what we want the world to be and what we want the Air Force to be in 2023, we have to understand what that is.

The thing about nuclear weapons is the direction for that comes from our civilian leaders. So let's see what the President says.

Next.

This is what he said in Prague in 2009. It was then echoed in the Nuclear Posture Review. "Make no mistake. As long as these

Nuclear Enterprise Panel- AFA - 9/17/13

weapons exist the United States will maintain a safe, secure and effective arsenal to deter adversaries and assure allies."

As long as these weapons exist. The narrative on the nuclear forces of the United States has been very U.S. centric to this point. It's been driven by people that would prefer to get rid of nuclear weapons. We don't get to decide. And if the President is right, then what we have to do is question are they going to continue to exist? Is there a global effort, is there a truly global zero where other nations are getting rid of the weapons and delivery systems?

Next slide.

Let's take a look at this. These are new weapons. Brand new fielded delivery systems and warheads. This is all from unclassified sources.

Take a look first at the two other major nuclear powers -- Russia and China. Very active. Very active in recapitalization. Very active in initial programs, particularly with the Chinese.

Then let's talk about those regional powers. North Korea, India.

Next slide.

These states are new to the nuclear game since the signing of the Non-Proliferation State Treaty. These states, frankly, don't have nuclear weapons because we have nuclear weapons. They have nuclear weapons because they're worried about their neighbors. They have nuclear weapons because they're worried about our conventional weapons. And whether we have nuclear weapons or don't is not going to change the nuclear weapon status of those three states from what I can tell.

Then let's take a look at the Western democracies.

Next slide.

That's it. This slide goes out to five years. I can have this slide go out to ten years and that picture won't change. That is two things for the United States. On the one hand it is possibly not sending the right signal to the rest of the world about our commitment and about our credibility in this mission area.

This is a risk we cannot take. The only capability that other states have that are existential threats to the United States are nuclear weapons. We must continue to be able to deter any adversary and assure any ally. We have to take the time now to think about this future, to think about what a North Korea with 50-75 mobile ICBMs, what kind of challenges that poses to our

Nuclear Enterprise Panel- AFA - 9/17/13

nuclear deterrence? What does a rising China pose to our deterrence? Where is the intersection between space, cyber, missile defense and precision conventional munitions as we try to avoid having a confrontation become a conflict anywhere in the world? Because those things can act in the future in a way that escalates crises.

Next slide.

We do have some programs that are out there. We do want to take advantage of the opportunity we have to recapitalize our forces. There are a lot of head winds out there. The recapitalization that we have is a new bomber that is primarily a conventional platform and our expectation is that it will within two years of becoming IOC conventionally be a nuclear capable, nuclear certified aircraft.

There's a new submarine planned. We have the planning laid out for the new ICBM. The analysis of alternatives on that, we call it the ground based strategic deterrent, has started.

This slide is often shown to try to demonstrate that recapitalizing our nuclear force is too expensive.

I just showed you what the rest of the world was doing. I think this deserves an answer on whether or not it's too expensive.

Let's go to the next slide.

Let's take that small number of years and put that on a larger, as a percent of GDP and let's look back to 1962. That big bow wave disappears. If you recall, most of that bow wave was a new bomber and a new SSBN.

But sometimes slides like this need a reference point. What exactly is Point .015 percent?

Next slide.

That's what we spent in Iraq and Afghanistan from '01 to '11 by year.

I find it incredulous when people tell me that we can't afford to recapitalize the ultimate guarantee of our national sovereignty.

Next slide.

Let's talk about Global Strike Command. What does this command cost? Since we're on the dollar subject. Less than five percent of the Air Force budget; less than one percent of the Department

Nuclear Enterprise Panel- AFA - 9/17/13

of Defense budget. Again, it's useful to have a reference point when you talk dollars.

Next slide.

The Post Office lost \$16 billion in FY12. This is not a slam on the Post Office. Maybe you guys can go out and buy some more stamps, get them to break even. I'm free.

Let me turn it over to the next speaker.

Maj. Gen. Harencak: Thanks, General Kowalski. It's a pleasure to be here today.

I just want to say, three main things I want to point out to you before we get Sandy and we give you the opportunity to ask some questions here.

In A-10, as the new guy on the Air Staff, we've got a lot of challenges. Every day we field challenges in this unique AOR that is Washington, DC, the National Capital Region, but I want to tell you today three things that show the incredible health and vitality and how safe, secure and effective our stockpile is.

First off, let me tell you that we in America's Air Force, your Air Force, does nuclear deterrent ops today in an outstanding manner, each and every day. Superbly is a word that you could use. By every historical context there has not been a time that we have had a safer, more secure nuclear enterprise than we do today.

We also have committed leadership. Committed. High levels of leadership way above my pay grade that are absolutely committed to the nuclear enterprise for today and the future, and it manifests itself in a myriad of ways. From our support of this man and his command's priorities, to the fight for resources, to how we're organized, to how we focus on it. The highest levels. I'm asked all the time, is the United States Air Force, are they really committed? I don't know how to answer it other than look around and take a look at where we've come the past few years in the nuclear enterprise, and you come to the inescapable conclusion that our United States Air Force is completely committed to this enterprise. Today, the short term, and the very long term, to the time, that very happy day, someday, when nuclear weapons might possibly go away.

The next thing is the relevancy of the deterrent and the triad is axiomatic. Now there are people out there who will tell you I don't want it to be relevant. I don't like that it's relevant. I'm sorry about that. The fact of the matter is it is relevant. I answer people who question it with a simple question. If you

Nuclear Enterprise Panel- AFA - 9/17/13

believe it is no longer relevant, why did the entire world report as it reported when two B-52s and two B-2s flew over South Korea a few months ago? The fact of the matter is, it is as relevant today in September of 2013 as it was in September of 1973, 1963, and 1953.

And because of that, we really have no choice. We have no choice but to take a small amount of our treasure, as General Kowalski just pointed out, an incredibly small amount of our TOA and of our defense budget and put it to modernizing the few weapons that we have. Life extending them. Recapitalizing. We have to do it. We have no choice. And the United States Air Force is committed to doing so.

Then of course the two legs that we are responsible for, America, as I said, is doing exactly what the President asked us to do. Maintain a safe, secure and effective stockpile for us and our allies for as long as these weapons exist.

That's our message. That's our message every day. I'll tell you, if you don't believe me, that our weapons are as safe and secure as they've ever been, then don't take my word for it. Do your own research. Go to the library or, those of you who don't know what that is, go to the internet and do your own research and see where we used to be and where we are today. And you're going to come to the inescapable conclusion that your United States Air Force does a tremendous job, a tremendous job, across the spectrum in nuclear deterrent ops.

Thank you.

Maj. Gen. Finan: Thank you.

At the Nuclear Weapon Center we're responsible for delivering those nuclear capabilities that our warfighters use every day to deter and assure.

We have a lot of things going on. As General Kowalski showed, there's a lot of activity in recapitalization of our nuclear systems. So I'd like to take just a second and talk briefly about a couple of things that we have going on.

First is in the ICBM area. We're making a transition to what we call the Future ICBM Sustainment and Acquisition Construct. It's a contract where we're going to start using our ICBM Systems Division as a lead integrator for our ICBM systems. We hadn't done this for 15 years. So we think that that new construct is going to enable us to squeeze every dollar, the value out of every dollar that we can. We will now give out smaller contracts for RVs, RS', guidance, propulsion, all those things will be

Nuclear Enterprise Panel- AFA - 9/17/13

smaller chunks, but it will be all integrated at the ICBM Systems Division at Hill Air Force Base.

We're also going to be looking at moving to a PDM concept, a depot maintenance concept, for our launch facilities and our launch control centers. It will be much like an aircraft. An aircraft goes in for PDM maintenance, it gets overhauled, it comes back out, it's almost like a new aircraft. We have not done that in our ICBM leg as far as the infrastructure -- launch facilities, launch control centers.

So our plan is to use a revitalized [rivet mile] and start that concept in FY17.

Additionally, we are preparing to accomplish the ground based strategic deterrent analysis of alternatives. For the bomber leg we are taking the air launched cruise missile. That cruise missile is undergoing life extension to extend that life to 2030. We're also preparing to begin the long range standoff weapon analysis of alternatives. In the B-61 we're taking four variants and consolidating that into a single variant working very closely with our partners in the NNSA.

As we continue to work on extending the life of our systems, we are working closely with our partners in the Navy. In today's environment, we really need to look at how we can leverage each other so we're working very closely with the Navy in areas such as an interoperable warhead, fusing, capital assets, anything that we can do to share costs, share knowledge with the Navy and make both of us more effective.

So what we're focused on right now is delivering those capabilities to the warfighter and squeezing every bit of value out of every dollar. We're trying to get that into our culture, into everything that we do because we are facing some difficult challenges coming up in the budget world. So we've got to figure out how to deliver for the United States those nuclear capabilities with the resources we are given. So that is our focus at this time, is to try and figure out how we can best use every precious dollar that's put into our care.

Thank you.

Moderator: You can tell that our leaders on the stage certainly are I think excited and also leaning forward in terms of trying to maximize this absolutely essential national capability.

Let me lead off with a question. I think from what we've been talking about certainly over the last day or two here at the convention and conference is the concern of sequestration. I know General Kowalski, you alluded to it a little bit in your

opening remarks. But can you expand a little bit in terms of what you see as the impact, not so much near term, but potentially through 2014 and beyond that sequestration has on not only your major air command but also the two legs of the strategic triad.

Lt. Gen. Kowalksi: First of all from a nuclear perspective, the effects of sequestration are not going to really be felt for a number of years. The reason I say that is because the O&M accounts, the flying hours, the readiness dollars were fenced at the very beginning for overseas operations and for nuclear deterrence operations. So our helicopter crews still flew, our missile field operations were completely sustained, and the B-2 and the B-52 crews that were needed for the nuclear plan for U.S. Strategic Command were kept mission ready.

The impact was primarily on the conventional side, and that's where I talk about sequestration amounts in this year to a payday loan. It's a loan where we got money to get us through this year by selling off readiness. We sold off the readiness of about half of our B-52 crews. We did get some OCO money back. We're climbing out of that pit right now. But the problem we have is we have to pay back that loan in FY14. We have to consume the flying hours to get those crews ready, to get those maintainers back on the step, to get those munitions experts back on the step, in the conventional part of our mission set. And FY14 is going to be a year where our flying hours are cut. So basically you're now paying back your payday loan with a smaller paycheck. That's going to be tough for us and we don't have that quite figured out yet on how we're going to get them back, all on the step.

Longer term, the impact of sequestration will be felt in the nuclear enterprise. It's going to be felt primarily I think in weapon system sustainment funding. It's going to be felt in facility funding. Those of you who are a little bit familiar with our ICBM force knows that it is about missiles, but it's also about infrastructure. It's about buildings. It's about air conditioners. It's about power supplies. It's about roads. It's about all those things that make up both the installation as a garrison and then the fielded force that's out there at our mass.

Moderator: This is a little bit of a follow-up. We'll dive down a little bit. Along those lines, has there been consideration given to updating ICBM operations, training facilities, certainly since the current buildings have been around since the '70s. Can you give a little bit of a sense of -- and why don't we maybe focus on the three ICBM installations, perhaps. What's your plan or what's the state of play from a facilities standpoint certainly at those key installations.

Lt. Gen. Kowalksi: I know that we have, under Space Command and then under Global Strike Command, at least one of those, and I don't remember which one, but at least one of our ICBM ops buildings has been, is brand new within the last two years. But that's part of the problem that we face with sequestration and a challenge the Air Force faces with MilCon in general, is how do you recapitalize your buildings? How do you get that average age of your infrastructure down when your MilCon dollars have largely dried up? At this point it doesn't appear like we're going to have relief from a Base Realignment and Closure.

Moderator: You actually get a kudo out there. It says good decision to align MUNs or munitions the WSAs under I believe the Weapon Center, in this case. Is that correct, Sandy? But any additional nuclear organizational alignments are in the works. I.e., perhaps the Nuclear Weapons Centers and so forth.

Maybe explain what you've done with your realignment perhaps is a better way. And any more reorganization perhaps inside the command or across the nuclear enterprise in that regard.

Maj. Gen. Finan: In the larger context of the Air Force, like the Chief said, looking at what we might do to streamline the Air Force and what the future Air Force would look like, I think the nuclear enterprise is one of the considerations. What the end result of that will be, I don't know, but discussions are ongoing.

I think at this point in time barring those larger discussions, we transferred the nuclear weapon storage areas back to Global Strike about a year and a half ago. Beyond that we don't have any immediate plans to transfer any other missions between the commands.

Moderator: We're nearing the end. I wanted to save this question until the end, but, and particularly from all your three perspectives, and this relates not so much to hardware and ops and maintenance and training, but it really goes to culture. Say over the last five years to perhaps where we are today, give us a sense of where you think we are as an Air Force in terms of the culture that surrounds the nuclear enterprise and so forth. What has changed over the last five years. Give us maybe a status report of where we are right now in terms of Airmen and culture in the nuclear enterprise.

Lt. Gen. Kowalksi: I'll talk to the Global Strike Command piece of this. When we were initially standing up as a provisional command and working with the Chief and the Secretary on how we shape this part of the reinvigoration of the nuclear enterprise, one thing that emerged very early on was a need to reestablish a

culture. Those of you who were in Strategic Air Command I think would recognize this, and that is what we wanted was a culture where every Airman understood, embraced and taught the special trust and responsibility associated with nuclear weapons. They are different. They're different on an order of magnitude from any other weapon that we have. They're different because majors and master sergeants talk about 2000 pound bombs, and Senators and Secretaries of Defense talk about nuclear weapons. They're different because unlike most things in the Air Force, we don't tell an Airman -- In the rest of the Air Force you can tell an Airman to go take a hill and give them commander's intent and let them do it. In the nuclear business what you do and how you do it are equally important. So we don't tell anybody hey, go get the nuclear weapon off the ICBM on Juliet 6. We tell them exactly how to do it. He briefs the wing commander. The MAJCOM commander is aware. There's a convoy associated with it that has X number of weapons in it, that has X number of helicopters, it's done under these weather conditions. Everybody will be certified on PRP, fully briefed before they step.

The how and the what are equally important.

The last thing out there is that these are fielded forces. They're in the U.S., but every day we've got 1100 of them that are chopped to U.S. Strategic Command doing the combatant commander's mission. Now they don't get a whole lot of credit for that in the words of the guy that wrote the book "Black Swan", "Acts of prevention get no reward." But we've had 68 years without a war between great powers, and that's a period of peace that is unmatched in documented human history between major states. And I think they deserve some recognition for that.

I think the culture has been largely reestablished but is not something that we can ever let our guard down on, and that's why that word "teach" special trust and responsibility is in there, because every year 14 percent of the Airmen in Global Strike Command just arrived out of tech school. So after three years, about a third of the force is relatively new. Right now, and this will surprise some of you, there's about 40 percent of Global Strike Command that have never been in an Air Force without Global Strike Command. They don't know it any other way at this point. That's part of what we have to sustain out there.

Maj. Gen. Harencak: I'd just like to add, I'm asked all the time about SAC, going back to the SAC days. Many of you I see out there, a lot of old timers out there have served in SAC. I get it. I served in SAC too. In fact we all did up here. But let's be realistic. SAC was an incredibly great organization that served well, but it wasn't perfect.

We're not perfect today, but I will tell you this, that the Airmen that this man commands, the Airmen that this lady commands, are every bit, and I'd say better than our Strategic Air Command in the past. They are a better quality force. Every single one of them is an all-volunteer. They are committed. They are as effective in your culture and dedication and professionalism is better, is better today than it always has been. And I think someday, someday whenever the final official history of our great Air Force is written, they're going to look at the last decade or so and they're going to say what was done to reinvigorate to this culture for our nuclear deterrent is one of its shining moments.

Your Airmen out there are every bit, and I dare say better, than in the heyday of Strategic Air Command.

Maj. Gen. Finan: I agree. It is amazing to go out and see our Airmen at work, and when I say Airmen, I mean our civilians and our contractors as well. In the Nuke Weapons Center actually about 75 percent of the people who work for me are civilians, plus we contract out a very large percentage of what we do.

But every person working in the nuclear enterprise understands the criticality of what we do. They understand it is about how we do business. It's not just the product that comes out at the end. Because people are watching how we do business every day.

We do demand perfection in the nuclear enterprise. To be honest with you, the nuclear enterprise is not for everybody because you have to be detail oriented; you have to pay attention to everything you do because everything you do matters. There's a reason we have a two-person concept. It's to make sure that the end product, what we produce, is perfect, and that flows through every Airman in our organization, every civilian in our organization, and out to all the contractors who support us in accomplishing this critical national mission.

Moderator: Thank you. Representing some of the old timers I see in the audience, having just transitioned from the Air Force, let me first say thank you for your service and also thank you for making sure that not only our Air Force but this nation keeps their eye on the ball with regard to the nuclear enterprise. It is vital. It is certainly a key part of our nation's defense, but it's also, from hearing your remarks as well, it's just as relevant as it was when we served in the 524th Bomb Squadron at Wurtsmith Air Force Base.

So thank you for your service and thank you for leading our men and women in maintaining that combat edge in the nuclear enterprise. I believe it's vital and it's going to remain vital for a long time. It's your leadership that's going to ensure

Nuclear Enterprise Panel- AFA - 9/17/13

that we can sustain that nuclear enterprise for generations to follow.

Thank you.

#