DWG: Our guests today are Dr. Dov Zakheim and Roger Zakheim, Senior Defense Advisors to the Romney campaign. Gentlemen, thank you both for coming in as well. We appreciate it.

Governor Romney’s speech at VMI on Tuesday. In the transcript of it that I printed out, Governor Romney spent approximately eight pages talking about the Middle East and approximately half a sentence talking about the Pacific. How do you judge the overall strategic relevance of these two regions right now? And has the Obama administration been playing this wrong?

Roger Zakheim: For that particular speech and given the international security environment Governor Romney did exactly what was needed, to talk in a very deep, sophisticated way about the Middle East. When we look at the events that have unfolded recently in Benghazi with the killing of our Ambassador, the situation in Syria and Iran, it was high time, the Governor wanted to talk about the Middle East.

That’s not to say he doesn’t prioritize or realize the strategic importance of Asia. The Governor does agree the importance of Asia, the so-called administration’s pivot. I think the criticism that he has levied upon them is not so much that they’re trying to emphasize Asia, but actually two things. One, with the military force structure that the administration is putting forward, you’re going to have to choose between the Middle East and Asia, and that’s something he feels is wrong. You basically can’t make that
choice. You shouldn’t have to make that choice. And two, as a result, a by-product is that the so-called pivot is hollow.

So that’s stuff that’s been discussed on the campaign trail, a lot of surrogates including the man to my left has written on behalf of the Governor emphasizing the problems with the administration’s approach towards Asia, but I wouldn’t say that the speech in any way takes away from strategic importance. It was the Governor responding to the very important real issues that are in the headlines today.

Dov Zakheim: I would only add that if you look at the administration’s budget projections, and that’s leaving aside the sequester which clearly the President has sat on his hands over and everybody understands that, the numbers don’t add up in terms of maintaining a presence in the Middle East and maintaining the presence in East Asia. They just don’t add up. Figure out the carrier deployment patterns. Clearly, the issue isn’t that Asia is not important, but when you’ve just had your Ambassador killed in Libya, you’re going to focus on that.

DWG: Thank you. The money question is what many people see as the elephant in the room with the Romney plan. How would you pay for the $2 trillion military bill without [inaudible]? I heard his speech. We’ve seen the white papers. We’re not seeing any details how that’s going to be paid for. Can you talk about how that’s going to be financed? [Inaudible] other government agencies or Medicare? There doesn’t seem to be any money out there.

Dov Zakheim: Let’s start with the $2 trillion. Where did you get the $2 trillion from? We didn’t talk about it.

The $2 trillion is essentially an assumption that we’d go to four percent of GDP from the get-go. The assumption was actually made by a Democratic supporter of Mr. Obama’s. Then it was sort of applied to Mr. Romney. Take it for what it’s worth. That’s number one.

Number two is, you look at where we are today, 4.2 percent of GDP. You look at what Gates’ projections were for FY13 and FY14. These are Mr. Gates’, again the Obama administration. So these are not outrageous numbers and they’re not $2 trillion.

We’ll get to four percent. We’re not necessarily going to go to four percent in FY13. In other words, we’re not going to come in with this massive supplemental. That’s point one.

Point two is you’ve got to look — when you talk about defense spending you’ve got to look at the entire context in which the money is spent. For a start, if you’re talking just about the budget itself and defense approaches 50 percent. If you talk about all spending, other words trust funds Medicare, and so on, defense is closer to 14 percent.

Now let’s look even at the sequester which is $55 billion. That’s a huge chunk out of
defense but that represents approximately 1.4 percent of the entire annual problem which means that if you can find, if you can deal with the other 98.6 percent, you’re going to be able to cover for defense as well. Part of the difficulty on the Democratic side is even the sequester only allows for two percent out of Medicare — that’s it. They don’t want to address entitlements. It’s not a matter of closing down agencies, it’s not a matter of Big Bird, it’s not a matter of school lunches. It is a matter of how you look at the entire gamut of government expenditures. What essentially the Democrats are doing is saying we’re not going to worry about our grandchildren because if you worry about your grandkids, 1.4 percent of the problem doesn’t solve it.

**DWG:** The number, if the $2 trillion is not the correct number, what is the correct number?

**Dov Zakheim:** The correct number is going to depend on a couple of things. It’s going to depend first of all on what the gross domestic product is. So if you believe that Mr. Romney can indeed turn the economy around, GDP is going to grow. Then four percent of that number is going to be bigger. If the GDP grows at a certain pace, say more slowly but still grows, the number will be smaller. If it grows more quickly, the number will be larger.

I can’t predict to you what the denominator is, but I can tell you that four percent of a larger denominator is going to be easier to take, number one. Number two is, we’re over four percent right now if you count the OCO.

**Roger Zakheim:** Gates talked about this in 2007. This is not something that no one with military experience hasn’t called for. It’s just the opposite. President Obama’s own Secretary of Defense called for this. It’s very important to look back at that statement in the context in which he discussed this.

Secretary Gates said that we could get four percent. Are more spending goes down we should find the base budget going up to four percent. Historically that’s about the right place. My father just kind of outlined the rationale for that. I think that’s really what Governor Romney has been talking about. He says first go back to the Gates baseline previously, then we get to four percent. That’s what is in the white papers, not this $2 trillion made-up number. I think that’s very sound rationale coming from military leaders, both civilian and in uniform, and endorsed and talked about.

**DWG:** To what extent does Romney actually focus on defense issues? Have you guys actually met him and sat down with all the advisors and has he burrowed in on this?

**Dov Zakheim:** He has. Everybody knows he’s very close to Jim Talent. The Romney campaign, I’ve been on a bunch of campaigns as you know, Tony, and each campaign has its own style and character. In terms of party, but really in terms of the individual. For instance the Bob Dole campaign which I was on had multiple national security teams, if you recall. The Bush 2000 campaign had a group of seven of us. That was it. Or eight of us. This campaign is kind of a little, sort of a little bit of each but there
clearly are some people who see the Governor, fly with the Governor, ride with the Governor. Jim Talent’s one of them. John Lehman interacted with the Governor. These are guys that their heads are totally around defense.

**DWG:** And the campaign staff.

**Dov Zakheim:** Of course. I’m talking about the senior guys. The guys that really interact with him. Not staff as much as really the closest advisors. He’s got folks around him who are very very — nobody’s going to say John Lehman and Jim Talent are not into defense.

What you’re seeing him talking about is what he cares about. That’s number one. Number two, you’ve got to remember this isn’t somebody who just burst on the scene. Massachusetts, whatever its politics, is one heck of a defense state. Ask Raytheon. So as Governor, he was very — Leave aside the fact that Governors also happen to be commanders-in-chief of their National Guards. But as Governor he interacted with one of our big defense contractors. As you remember, even Ted Kennedy was a big supporter of submarines because so many people who work on Electric Boat live in Massachusetts. So many people who work in Nashua, New Hampshire live in Massachusetts. That’s BAE.

So this is a Governor — he didn’t just discover defense and he does have advisors who know a lot about it.

**Roger Zakheim:** One more point. People look for details, people look for Governor Romney’s position. You look at his book, No Apology came out a while ago. There is significant discussion of national security, foreign policy and defense. We’ll look at treatment of Governor Romney’s positions and we’re wondering why don’t they just go to the source where Governor Romney laid this all out in his book.

**DWG:** You’ve been identified with the NeoCon Movement —

**Dov Zakheim:** Which is so wrong and you know that. The NeoCon’s hate me.

**DWG:** To what extent does a Romney defense team composed of NeoCons who fairly or unfairly would be — [inaudible] Iraq.

**Roger Zakheim:** There is something far more sordid in the Romney defense team — not Zakheims. That’s not the biggest problem.

**DWG:** Seriously though, how much [inaudible] Bolton have, some of the people who ten years ago [inaudible] war so there’s going to be a reflection on —

**Dov Zakheim:** If you had read my book you’ll know that I ain’t a NeoCon. If you haven’t read my book, go out and buy it.
Look, I don’t agree with the NeoCons and they certainly don’t agree with me. But I think the mark of a leader is somebody who listens to lots of different opinions and then makes up his own mind.

I think part of the criticism of this administration is that people are giving the President one plan, there is no alternative, there are no Plan Bs, there are no Plan Cs. That’s not a way to run things. I think what you see in the Governor is somebody who’s going to listen to lots of different people and then make up his mind. If you look at the debate, look at the speeches, this is a guy that you can’t pin down. If you could pin him down as a NeoCon, you would have done it. You can’t pin him down precisely because he takes each issue on its merits.

Again, a lot of the high priests of NeoConism, if you will, are not really closely identified with the campaign. They are not. But there are people who are sort of of that view. I don’t deny it. But again, it’s not so much he chooses NeoCons or realists or whatever, he’s taking a selection of people with different views and then he makes his decisions based on what his judgment is.

**Roger Zakheim:** If you look in the white paper, the original one that came out on foreign policy, absolutely hits this head on. We’re going to have multiple views, people with multiple ideologies, backgrounds, preferences, and he takes them all into account. It will not be a rigid ideological [inaudible] in the decisions for foreign policy.

**Dov Zakheim:** Let me just pile on one more thing. Were it only in the white paper you might just say it’s the white paper. The fact is, he’s acted on it. He’s said it, he’s written about it, and he’s acting on it. What more could you ask for?

**DWG:** Just to clarify something from the Governor’s VMI speech. He mentioned he wanted to have a constant presence of these aircraft carrier task forces in each of the Gulf and in the Mediterranean. To me, a carrier task force is more than one carrier. So that’s four dedicated —

**Dov Zakheim:** No, no, no. A carrier battle group is more than one carrier. A carrier task force is a carrier with escorts. That’s different.

**DWG:** So he wants to dedicate one in each of those —

**Dov Zakheim:** For a start, we have more than one in WESTPAC right now, we have more than one in the IO right now. We barely have one in the Med. So we have to adjust to do that.

Again, this goes back to the problem of this pivot. You guys all know this. You can’t have a carrier in the IO unless you’ve got at least five backing it up. The calculation is about 5.5, give or take. It’s a little easier in WESTPAC because you’ve got one sitting in Yokosuka so the calculation is 1.2. In other words, 1.2 carriers to support one.
In the Med the calculation is roughly 3.75. So do the numbers. There’s no way you can keep cutting the budget and manage anything like that. So what you would have to do, you would have to make some adjustment between the IO, WESTPAC, to get that presence up in the Med.

Some people said oh, you know, he’s talking about putting a carrier in Sigonella or something like that. No, he’s not. It will cost more. I haven’t heard that. If you simply run the numbers, he did not say a carrier battle group which would be multiple carriers. As you know, you can always have planes up there 24x7 and stuff like that. We barely have a carrier in the Eastern Med now, at all. It’s unbelievable when you think about it.

Here we’ve got all these problems with gas in the Eastern Med, you’ve got overlapping claims — Turkey and Egypt and Israel and Lebanon. You’ve got the problem of Iranian missiles that can hit the Eastern Med. And the Navy is the incredibly shrinking Navy. And oh by the way, they keep talking about how the Navy’s gone up. Sure it’s gone up. I gave them the money and it went up. It takes years to build those ships.

**DWG:** Two carrier groups in the Gulf now —

**Roger Zakheim:** Right now, yes.

**Dov Zakheim:** The point is, they can’t sustain it. If he wants to pivot and he wants to cut the budget, it doesn’t add up, Tony. You know that. You cannot sustain them.

**DWG:** The Governor has put the most in terms of his prominent speeches, the most details on Navy shipbuilding. Do you have, would you say that he sees the near term future as more of an emphasis on naval forces, expeditionary forces, rather than land forces?

**Roger Zakheim:** If you look at one of the more eye-opening cuts and outcomes with the Obama approach, you see the Navy, as was just mentioned, the incredible shrinking Navy. It’s a huge problem. You had the buildup over the past ten years because of the conflicts in Afghanistan and Iraq, problems with the land forces. You have an Army of 560,000. Obama’s attempting to cut that by 8,000 active duty. You have similar reductions in the Marine Corps, 202,000 to 178,000 or 180,000 or so. So you have those 20,000 reductions in the Marine Corps; 80,000 planned for the Army; obviously a whole lot more with sequestration. That’s not to say the land forces don’t have those problems and the Governor’s talked a bit on that on the trail, but absolutely the most eye-opening problem particularly because if you talk about a shift in emphasis to Asia, the tyranny of distance that you find in the PACOM theater can be made up with ships and we don’t have them.

So I think that’s why you see the emphasis.

Also it complements the Governor’s overall foreign policy which is you push forward with this diplomacy, but at the same time you can back it up with a strong military
The best forum to do that is by having a Navy in Asia. Particularly that’s respected but also you just mentioned it’s key for the Middle East, too.

I think that’s why you have that emphasis out there. That’s not to say there aren’t significant problems that the land force will be facing or the Air Force. I think after the Governor talks about the nine to fifteen ships he’ll actually talk about the modernization efforts that are absolutely required for the aging airframes, for example, in the Air Force or the reset/recap requirements that the land force, particularly the Army, will face.

**Dov Zakheim:** Let me just say one other thing. I’ve participated, some of you guys know, in some of these debates. One of the things I keep hearing from the Obama side is what a warmonger Mitt Romney is. If you’re a warmonger you don’t use the Navy. The Navy is the strongest military arm in support of diplomacy. Historically the agency that always called first for the Navy was not the Defense Department, it was the State Department. The State Department recognized the importance of naval presence, and naval presence very often deters anything else from happening. I’ll give you a concrete example.

In 1976 when the Israelis rescued their hostages out of Entebbe, they got help from the Kenyans. And Idi Amin started to threaten the Kenyans. We sent the Ranger off the coast of Mombasa, the aircraft carrier Ranger. That was the end of what Idi Amin was trying to do.

Fast forward to this past year when the Iranians were talking about oh, one of their senior generals said we can close the Strait of Hormuz. What did we do? We sent ships. The Iranians backed off.

The best military tool in support of diplomacy is the Navy. So when Mr. Romney focuses on that, it’s exactly the opposite of being a warmonger. It’s using diplomacy and the military in a much more nuanced, sophisticated way than I think our democratic friends comprehend, understand, or know how to use.

**DWG:** Given what you’ve just said, given what Mr. Romney said about the carrier in the Med, is 11 carriers enough? Do you anticipate having —

**Dov Zakheim:** I think, and Roger will correct me if I’m wrong. I think he’s at 11 carriers. The question is how you deploy them and what your deployment cycles are. You can’t go below it.

**Roger Zakheim:** And you have to have the escorts.

**Dov Zakheim:** And of course you need the escorts. That’s the whole other thing. You need the submarines. I guess it was around, correct me if I’m wrong, Tony, but it was around the late ’70s, early ’80s that we started adding submarines to carrier battle groups. It was around then. You need those. That’s why the Governor is talking about three a year. And you need escorts.
And by the way, the littoral combat ships aren’t going to do that for you. They weren’t intended to do that for you. I started funding those.

**Roger Zakheim:** The joint high speed vessel and LCS are just not going to get you there. They’re necessary, but they’re not sufficient to do the types of things —

**Dov Zakheim:** It’s like — that’s one heck of a way to jack up numbers, but that’s about it. It’s like I heard I was in the debate the other day and the Democrat on the other side was saying well, we’re going to have a lot of Air Force platforms. Well yeah, if you count every drone you’ve got a lot of Air Force platforms. But I wouldn’t call a drone equivalent to an F-35, and I wouldn’t call an LCS equivalent to a major escort for a carrier. So we’re still looking at how to get the kinds of fully blown battle groups to support the carriers.

**Roger Zakheim:** The Obama administration —

**Dov Zakheim:** They’re going the other direction.

**Roger Zakheim:** They took out eight cruisers proposed, this fiscal year and next fiscal year combined. That’s the type of power that the Navy needs. It does not need to get rid of. Fortunately the Congress stepped in and said we’re not going to let you get rid of three of those four —

**Dov Zakheim:** But they’re going backwards.

**DWG:** You touched on the Air Force right there. We’ve heard a lot about the Navy. What is, can you preview a little bit of what —

**Roger Zakheim:** The Air Force, there will be emphasis on getting the long range strike, those decisions made. They’ve been sitting on that for four years now. A decision has to be made versus manned/unmanned, nuclear/non-nuclear. [Inaudible] do this because the [inaudible] grandfathers were flying, they’re still being flown today. That’s not how it needs to be.

**Dov Zakheim:** They’re even older than me.

**Roger Zakheim:** F-35. We need to make sure that’s funded and that we get control of the costs of that program. They struggle with that, this administration. The environment with the cuts here is not helping it because every time you cut the buy, you know what’s happening next. The cost per copy goes up.

We have the fighter gap we need to address in the Air Force. Talk about the bombers. We have the tanker program that’s at risk now because of sequestration. Defense News and others have reported about that.
The Air Force needs a lot of stability. We need to get strong leadership in the Air Force, not only on the side but also strong civilian leadership across all the service secretaries and that’s going to be an emphasis going forward. The Air Force, there are a number of issues, but modernization is a key priority.

**DWG:** The Romney campaign is talking about getting up to 15 ships per year, right? How is that realistic? Based on historical precedent, based on we haven’t seen what you just said about how you’d want to buy not only LCSes and [JTIPs] [inaudible]. Also, given the SSBNX is supposed to be so expensive, it’s going to eat up the rest of the shipbuilding account.

**Roger Zakheim:** It’s obviously going to take an increase in the [building diversion] account, SCN account.

**DWG:** Sir, could you say that again?

**Dov Zakheim:** SCN.

**Roger Zakheim:** But it is definitely doable. There is the industrial capacity to do it. We think, for example, there are, on the cost side, competition as the Governor has emphasized as being a key component of how we go ahead and procure within the Department of Defense. So on the submarine side, when you go from two to three you’re going to get cheaper per copy cost and we’re going to get more competition there.

There are other successful programs. DDG-51s we’re looking to buy. I think the types of things we’ve laid out in the shipbuilding plan, you can definitely get there. It will require more money. But I think the efficiencies that you get from within industry will [inaudible].

**Dov Zakheim:** Let me give you some specifics.

When I was in the Reagan administration John Lehman went to Weinberger and said let me build two aircraft carriers in one year. Tony, I know you remember that one. A lot of people said it can’t be done. It makes no sense. It’s a waste of money. I forget how many billions we saved. And of course billions in ’82 or ’83 or whenever it was, are worth a lot more today.

You can save — and that was, by the way, with one builder. That was with Newport News. Basically cutting money off Newport News. It wasn’t even competition with, you know, multiple shipyards which you would have with just about any other ship except an aircraft carrier. That’s number one.

Number two is, it depends on the hull. If you start messing around and making every ship sort of an English tailored, V-spoke tailored ship, then yeah. You can save money. But the whole idea is to have a run on ships like, for instance, the old 963 program. The old Los Angeles Class submarine program. The program that Roger just talked about.
It very much depends on how you manage shipbuilding.

The fact of the matter is that given the circumstances, Shawn Stackley, who by the way is a Republican holdover, has actually done his best to try to manage a very difficult situation but he hasn’t been given enough wherewithal.

**Roger Zakheim:** One more example on that. You talk about how you increase the buys, increase the competition, lower the cost. [Inaudible]. They were trying to do multi-years on the Virginia Class and on the DDG-51, but in ’14 they didn’t have enough money to do it.

**Dov Zakheim:** That’s the problem.

**Roger Zakheim:** So instead of being able to get the savings for ten, they’re only building nine over that period of time. In FY14 you’re only going to get one DDG-51 and one Virginia Class.

So there is an economies of scales piece here which works an advantage in the direction we’re going which gets you to the [15].

**Dov Zakheim:** Yes.

**DWG:** A quick follow-up. The Bush administration had oversight over shipbuilding for [the Reagan] years. You talk about the shrinking fleet. Doesn’t a lot of the responsibility for the size of the fleet rest with the decisions made on your watch?

**Dov Zakheim:** Not on my watch. Look it up.

**DWG:** — 2002 —

**Dov Zakheim:** Every year the number of ships went up while I was Comptroller. Every single year, consistently went up from the previous year. Had that continued, which it didn’t, but that was after my watch, we would be in somewhat better shape than we are today. No question about it. But you can look it up. I remember because I had to sit next to Rumsfeld and he gets this question about shipbuilding and instead of answering it he kicks it to me. Sort of like somebody takes the shot and you’re there getting the rebound and elbowed in the stomach at the same time.

So I had to get the rebound. I had to commit to an increase in number of ships. And we didn’t have LCSes then either. LCS was still a pipe dream. An increasing number of ships year after year, and we did have that. And then what happened is that it declined and it’s continued to decline. What we’re trying to do is reverse it. Which actually brings me to another point here.

This is not about George W. Bush. You can only look backwards so long. The
administration has looked backwards so much it’s got a stiff neck. This is about the future. If they want to keep fighting the past, then let them fight the past. We’re thinking about the future, what to do from here on out.

Roger Zakheim: On their 30 year shipbuilding program which is constantly adjusted, which CBO has come out, [inaudible], hey, even with this more limited defense strategy they don’t have sufficient funds to implement this.

Dov Zakheim: For their own program.

Roger Zakheim: If you take them on their terms, what they say they need to do which we think is deficient, they still can’t get it done.

Dov Zakheim: They can’t hack their own program.

DWG: Two questions. It’s been my experience over my career of about 23 years that the Defense Department doesn’t have a money problem. It’s always had a lot of money, it has a management problem. You look at management over the last 13 years, you can point to the Zumwalt, you can point to a host of failed programs, and we keep talking about the F-35. The F-35 isn’t an F-35.

So the question is, if you keep putting money — it virtually doubled between 2008 and 2001. If you keep throwing money at a place that doesn’t manage the money, where we are now, you don’t have new ships coming on, your best ship is an LCS which really isn’t a warfighter, it’s an aluminum hulled ship. You’re not able to put carriers in some of these places because of the missile proliferations. So the carrier isn’t the answer. So you have like a host of problems on that front. So you’re throwing more money at a place, they have a hole in their pocket, you fix the hole, you put more money in it. So I want to hear an explanation of that.

On the other front, when you’re talking about Iran and Syria, Governor Romney has come out and spoken a lot, very forcefully, about Iran and Syria but I don’t see a discernible difference between his policy and the Obama policy. In fact it seems like the Obama policy seems to be going harder now that we have actual troops in Jordan sort of poised.

So I’m curious to know what, if you can discern for me what I’m missing and the differences there.

Roger Zakheim: On the money problem piece, you’ve seen over the past four years, you’re right. There’s a management piece here. Governor Romney with his background and experience in the private sector will absolutely be focused on making the department more efficient. There’s black letter stuff in the white papers which give more than three words on it. There’s a dedicated discussion.

Dov Zakheim: Page 16.
**Roger Zakheim:** If there's not a money problem — I think what you see in here, there's a money problem with what this administration has handled the Department of Defense which is, if you're going to go ahead and attack DOD and want to make it more efficient, a better managed organization, the way to do it is not across the board cuts and constant [inaudible] returns every year. If you want to focus on the priorities of the Pentagon, national security, both in terms of management priorities and in taking care of just the day-to-day urgent matters in our security, they can't constantly feel that oh gosh, I need $5, another $10 billion, $20, $30, $50, $100 billion to pay the OMB bank, to make sure I'm getting the deficit reduction that the Obama administration has managed and wants to cut out defense. That has been the story in the Pentagon for the past three or four years.

What you're going to get from Governor Romney is a key piece that any manager will tell you. I need some stability. I need predictability in what we're going to be able to spend on. That's what we'll provide. That immediately, like we've discussed on the shipbuilding side, will result in efficiencies on the procurement side and a better managed organization. But they've been unable to do that in this department. In fact there's a strong argument to be made, there's a case to be made that a result of these constant budget turns and cuts that you're actually going to cost the department a lot more because they're not doing this in a particularly intelligent way. If I have to find $50 billion in one fiscal year, I'm going to make some bad decisions. As opposed to saying, how can I reform an organization of this size of the course of three, four, five years, and put them on a course that you're going to see these savings sustained in the long term?

So their approach here, you can argue one, is [inaudible] because it doesn't work now and actually will cost more in the long term.

**DWG:** You guys know the history better than we do. The fact of the matter is, the only way we've ever had reform that worked was actually when you cut their budget and forced them to choose.

**Dov Zakheim:** Wait a minute. I've been through a lot of cut drills and what happens in a cut drill is people cut the programs they don't like and preserve the programs they do. Let me give you a classic case.

Base operating costs. The black hole of the defense budget. Always protected. Think about it. Why are base operating costs so protected and other things go? Because base commanders care about mowing that lawn.

**DWG:** And then there's Congress.

**Dov Zakheim:** There is Congress. Believe me, I'm not exempting Congress from this. It's a bipartisan problem, as you well know. But let me draw your attention to something on that famous page 16 we just talked about. By the way, Mr. Romney uses
some very strong language. He talks about a bloated bureaucracy, and I think that’s an actual quote.

One of the things that has happened, and the Navy’s a good example of that. There are practically as many people in suits as there are in uniforms. If you want to look at where the Defense Department’s really grown, it hasn’t grown with people in uniform. It’s grown with people in suits, with coats and ties.

So at the very same time that the Department has become less and less efficient, and that’s a bipartisan problem, it doesn’t matter who the administration has been, the number of civil servants has grown. You’ve got to ask yourself, is there something to that correlation, and the answer is yes.

So how do you start paring down the civil service with all the problems that involves while building up the military so that you not only are adding money to the defense budget but making the most of the money you already have in the defense budget. Not simple, but he’s talking about that and he wants to do that.

You had a second question.

DWG: Syria and Iran.

Dov Zakheim: I’ll be happy to take that one on and then Roger can correct me.

Let’s start with Syria. The fundamental difference between the two candidates is that President Obama says we don’t know who are the good guys and who are the bad guys in Syria so we can’t provide arms. That to me, maybe I’m just dumb, but I don’t understand how the administration keeps saying we’re providing communications and intelligence support to the Free Syrian Army, so they seem to know who the good guys and bad guys are in that regard, but when it comes to giving arms, they don’t seem to know. So either they’re giving intelligence and communications support and logistics support to people they don’t know, in other words to the bad guys as well, or they know who the good guys are and they just don’t want to provide the arms.

Mr. Romney has said I want to provide armed support. Now whether it will come directly, whether it will come through dollars, there are all kinds of ways to make that happen. But here’s an administration that has talked over and over again about human rights, about free will of the people, and is sitting on its hands while a dictator is killing thousands and thousands. Gadhafi threatened to kill people. This guy’s killing them and nothing is happening because supposedly we don’t know the good guys from the bad guys except when we give them intelligence.

DWG: Well, there is a third thing. If you give them intelligence, they can’t turn around and shoot you with it. So —

Dov Zakheim: Wait a minute. So you want to give the bad guys intelligence so that
they —

**DWG:** You don’t know who you’re giving —

**Dov Zakheim:** Oh, you don’t know who you’re giving it to. What about communications support? What about logistics support? Are you going to say I’m just going to give it to — I don’t know who you are, you may be al-Qaida for all I know, but I’m going to give you that support. If you give logistics support to al-Qaida what you’re doing is training them for doing something to our people somewhere else in the world. It just doesn’t add up. What Mr. Romney is saying is, and it’s very interesting. He doesn’t go and trumpet all this stuff, make all the fancy statements about human rights and the will of the people, he’s just saying let’s do it. So there’s a big difference there on Syria.

On Iran there’s also a difference. As you well know, so much of these sanctions were initiated by the Congress over the dead body of the administration, and you still have 20 countries that somehow are being let off the hook on these sanctions because the argument is well, the Chinese are buying somewhat less oil. Therefore we’ll exempt the Chinese. What do you think the Iranians think when that happens? What message are you sending to some of the shrewdest diplomats in the world who are the Iranians? Same thing with India. What Mr. Romney said is, to use a well-worn phrase. I’m closing the loopholes. So you start with that.

The administration has not closed the loopholes and it won’t close the loopholes for the very simple reason they just opened them a few months ago. So Mr. Romney says no.

Next issue. How do you deal with the Israelis on this? There are two ways to do it. You can dismiss the Prime Minister of Israel and say it’s all so much noise, or complain about him to the President of France; then you know what? No matter how many exercises you have with them you’re not going to convince the Israelis you really have their back. That’s why the polls in Israel consistently show Mr. Obama as being the most unpopular President that Israelis have ever identified, which is pretty good because Jimmy Carter wasn’t exactly popular.

If you don’t want the Israelis to go off half-cocked, and I don’t think there’s anybody in the American National Security community that does, the way to do it is not to create daylight between us and the Israelis. The way to do it is to win their confidence. The way to do it is say okay, you want a red line, let’s work out a red line and then let’s tell the Iranians we have an agreed red line. We have not done that. So what we are essentially doing is saying to the Israelis, trust us. We will in fact know when the Iranians are ready to get their bomb. The same intelligence community that didn’t seem to know, at least now it’s starting to come out that maybe they did, didn’t seem to know what was going to happen in Benghazi, that didn’t seem to know about Arab Spring. That intelligence community is now going to know that the Iranians are just about ready to roll on a bomb? And of course if I were Iran I would do what Saddam Hussein did. I would kick out the IAEA first.
I don’t see how Mr. Obama gives any confidence to the Israelis and when Mr. Obama — and this is I think really of note. When Mr. Obama dismissed Netanyahu as simply so much noise, it was the left wing paper Aratz that criticized him. The left wing paper. The intellectuals who don’t want Israel to attack. This is not the way to manage Iran, and what Mr. Romney says he’s going to do is win Israeli confidence, close the loopholes and the sanctions, and really make it much more realistic that we will not have to attack Iran nor will the Israelis. That’s a heck of a difference.

**DWG:** Do you know what the red line is for Governor Romney?

**Dov Zakheim:** That’s the whole point. The point is, it isn’t Governor Romney’s red line. He has said he doesn’t want to see more enrichment. The administration said no enrichment, and then they kind of backed off. They’ve drawn red lines and then backed off from them. What needs to be done is we need to work out a red line, agreed red line with the Israelis. You then have to determine your strategy. Is this one you want to signal to the Iranians? Do you want to do it publicly? Do you want to do it privately? There are lots of ways to slice this, but that’s how diplomacy really works.

Sometimes privacy works. I’ll tell you an anecdote about this.

We had an incident in the early ‘80s where a Soviet submarine sank in the Atlantic. A private company was hired by them to salvage the sub. And the company was registered with a particular European country and that country said what can we do? It’s a private company. Free world.

I personally called the number two guy in that country’s defense department and said do you want to work with us? You’ve got 24 hours to stop that. Guess what? They stopped it. Nothing public, never came out, nobody embarrassed, it stopped. There are lots of ways to slide this cat and the administration has gone about it all the wrong way.

**DWG:** Two questions. One on the [inaudible]. Right now it seems like [inaudible] quiet with Israel and Iran and the United States. So [inaudible] seem to be an attack from Israel coming any time this year, any time in 2013? The sanctions are certainly working economically. The [inaudible] has collapsed and things are very tough in Tehran. So what would Governor Romney do differently right now? Do you think [inaudible]?

**Roger Zakheim:** I would just say the failure has been that if you look historically where Iran’s nuclear program has gone, over his watch, if you had to look at this from the —

**DWG:** I’m asking right now, if he became President what would he do differently?

**Roger Zakheim:** I just told you the daylight between the Israeli Prime Minister and President Romney would not be played out in the headlines of every major daily
newsreel or in the United States. Assuring our ally is a key piece of the Iran diplomacy which is something that President Obama isn’t doing. It’s unbelievable that the only thing that can come out between the two of them is one gap after another, one public rift after another. And as we’ve just explained, the key here is to have absolute confidence that the two countries are working arm in arm and that the Iranians understand that the red line is something that they have and have agreement on.

If you look at what’s played out in the past few months, you cannot make the argument there’s agreement between Israel and the United States over that very key issue.

**Dov Zakheim:** Let me sort of digress, but just see why I’m digressing. The fundamental problem with the Israelis, and I’ve debated Barak on this and others — Ehud Barak, not Barack Obama. Is that it’s beyond a rational issue. When people think the Israelis are invoking the Holocaust they’re thinking they’re invoking the six million dead. They’re actually thinking about the years before then when the Nazis said take the Jews and nobody took them.

So if I can mix my metaphors, the Israeli attitude is sin fain, ourselves alone. It’s very difficult to get through to people like that who absolutely will not tolerate even an epsilon of a probability that some missile can get through. So what you have to do is have their total confidence.

As I said, the last thing we want is an Israeli attack on Iran. It’s not going to succeed anyway, but it could lead to a regional war. You need their confidence that we’re with them every step of the way. Not to say it publicly in speeches or in debates, but to have it in real terms.

You kind of were looking ahead and said okay, if Romney were President today, Netanyahu’s got an election coming up in February. Just about everybody in this room thinks he’s going to win. Now what happens? If you have a President Obama and you have a Netanyahu that’s just won an election, and he doesn’t trust President Obama, the odds go up that he’s going to try to do something because he said there are seven more months. He basically said I’m not going to mess with this American election. I’m not going to be the source of an October surprise. A lot of people thought an Israeli attack would be an October surprise. He backed off. Clearly backed off. Showing up on American television during the election campaign may have been a little bit overdone. But he backed off. But coming next year, May, June, April, whatever, you’re back where you were.

So the question is, which person in the White House is likely to give this man who’s likely to still be Prime Minister, more confidence that he shouldn’t go and try and do something that could really blow up in a lot of people’s faces? I don’t think it’s Mr. Obama.

**DWG:** But whose fault is that? Netanyahu was saying some very cantankerous things. He was the one who was very publicly challenging U.S. policy, which is unusual, that
Israel would just sort of step out and say —

**Dov Zakheim:** Because they’re terrified that the American policy seems to be we’re going to wait until they’re virtually there with a bomb and then we’ll stop them.

**Roger Zakheim:** It’s not about preventing nuclear weapons for President Romney it’s about preventing nuclear weapons capability.

Second, I think it’s part of the responsibility of any administration, no matter whether it’s political opportunism or in the case of Netanyahu opportunism, or simply his fear and he’s expressing the fears of that country, you have to manage that relationship. He’s failed in managing that relationship. Not from the Israeli security perspective, but from the U.S. perspective.

If the U.S. national security interest is that Israel shouldn’t act alone, that we should operate together, that this needs to be managed in concert with the general community and putting all parties pressuring the Iranians, he’s been unable to achieve that. Irrespective of how one foreign leader chooses to act, that’s the responsibility of the President to manage it.

**Dov Zakheim:** There’s one other thing, too. The more there seems to be a gap between the two sides, and daylight was not a Netanyahu phrase and noise was not a Netanyahu phrase. The more the Iranians think they’re going to be able to get away with it. I think that is the fundamental flaw in the whole Obama approach.

What should have happened before Netanyahu went and lectured Obama and all this sort of thing, were two things. First, Obama should have reached out to Netanyahu and said look, let’s do this privately. We will work out a red line.

The second thing, frankly, and this differs from say Mr. Bush in his first term or Mr. Clinton in his first term. Is that given the gravity of the situation and given the lack of trust amongst the Israeli public — forget about Netanyahu, the Israeli public for Obama. Obama should have visited Israel. He visited Egypt, he visited Turkey, he didn’t visit Israel.

What he should have done, if Sadat could visit Israel, Obama could have visited Israel. Go out there and personally say look, we’re going to work this out. We’re with you. Huge mistake on his part.

**DWG:** You want to keep it at 11 and so to get [inaudible] in the Mediterranean you would just rotate them differently. But can you explain why you need a carrier in the Med? The U.S. has bases all over Europe. There wasn’t a carrier off the coast of Libya when we carried out the —

**Roger Zakheim:** I think actually if you look at the Libya campaign, we were slow on the upstart there because we didn’t have a carrier present. You can talk to people in the
Navy and they’ll tell you it took time to ramp up because we didn’t have the carrier there, so I think there are strong arguments to be made that we’d be better off with a carrier. I think it’s also with the ballistic missile defense and some of the other things we have going on in the Med or because of the Iranian threat, the carrier task force would help a lot.

But you go back and you talk to the 6th Fleet folks. I think they would say we couldn’t ramp up quite fast enough because there wasn’t a carrier, there wasn’t the capacity there.

**DWG:** Okay. I want to draw you out a little bit more on the acquisition issues. How you get these problems solved. People have been trying to solve the bloated bureaucracy problem for a very long time. What exactly, what are the big priorities, and how does Governor Romney solve things or President Romney solve things by resurrecting a program like the F-22?

**Roger Zakheim:** Resurrecting the F-22. I don’t believe he’s advocated resurrecting F-22.

**Dov Zakheim:** He supports F-35.

**DWG:** Yes, he has very publicly talked about —

**Roger Zakheim:** Walk back. He was given a list of things he would do in terms of modernization efforts and got the, he said F-35, I believe, but anyway, overall in the modernization or the acquisition piece — Congress has put forward a bunch of measures to give them the authority to get after, the [Wasara] legislation and some others, but I think what’s really needed is strong civilian leadership to ensure that programs are taking responsibility, this is what’s in the white paper, that we’re not going ahead and doing requirements creep across every program here, that we’re not going to a gee whiz technology but we’re going to take an incremental approach. That frankly has not happened for a long time in the Department of Defense. You have everybody can go ahead and add additional requirements as it’s going through the acquisition process. At the end of the day, not one individual is responsible.

**DWG:** I’m sorry, because we’re so short on time, Secretary Gates started a process of 80 percent solutions under the Obama administration. Really trying to get to that issue, tamping down on requirements. What changes? Do you have to get rid of one arm of the F-35, one of the variants? What do you have to do —

**Roger Zakheim:** I don’t think the solution is getting rid of a variant, but it is, the idea of the F-35 or some of these other things, it takes 22 years in the case of the F-22 to get that program on schedule. Governor Romney’s talked about reducing the length of time before you put out a particular program. I think he’s talking about doing it in four to five years. So reducing the life span, reduces the cost. I think some of the things like Secretary Gates as before, quite frankly, need to be emphasized and applied across the
entire Department of Defense. So strong civilian leadership that takes responsibility, reducing the requirements creep, reducing the life span in terms of building an acquisition program, F-22 being a great example of how long it took, are key components that need to be replicated across the military departments.

Dov Zakheim: Very briefly, a couple of other things that need to be done. As I mentioned earlier, there’s a need to reduce the size of the civil service. The acquisition corps is out of balance. On the one hand it’s too large; on the other hand you don’t have enough oversight. So that needs to be put in balance.

A second thing is that we have a very uneducated consumer. There is nothing that forces somebody who started in the civil service with a master’s in engineering to ever take another course again. If you know how technology changes so quickly, you’re talking about people who haven’t been in school for 30 or 35 years.

The military requires constant professional military education and you can’t be promoted to admiral or general unless you’ve had that. Not the same with the civil service. We have an undereducated acquisition corps. These are just some of the things that are going to have to happen. But you can fix the problem.

Roger Zakheim: And you talked about earlier increasing the competition. That has a direct impact on the cost.

Dov Zakheim: It’s not just the Navy.

Roger Zakheim: I think one of the reasons why this administration has failed at doing that is what we talked about earlier. It’s hard to do this in an environment where you’re constantly doing this budget churn, these steep cuts that are across the board. It’s not a particularly effective way at implementing a lasting reform.

DWG: Yesterday Russia pulled out unilaterally, announced it will not continue its participation in the Cooperative Threat Reduction Program also known as the Nunn-Lugar program. Also known for about a year and a half as the Obama [inaudible] program.

I’m wondering if you can tell us A, what you think this means tangibly for U.S. and international security; and B, what this means intangibly for the success of the Obama administration’s reset policy.

Dov Zakheim: The reset policy has been a complete disaster. Partly because the administration has simply not understood how to deal with Russia.

Russia is essentially pursuing a classic policy that Russia has pursued since at least Peter the Great which is to say if there are vacuums they will fill them. If there are no vacuums and they perceive you to be strong they’ll work with you. They do not perceive us to be strong.
Look at the way they have been acting in support of Syria. Russia is a fundamental problem. It’s a problem with respect to Iran, it’s a problem with respect to Syria which right now are the two biggest problems in the Middle East.

There has to be a different way of working with them, and you can work with them. Look at the Northern Distribution Network. That works. And the same Putin who can be a big problem was the same guy who was the first guy to call Bush after 9/11. So it’s a matter of how you come across to Russia.

This administration, because the Russians perceive it as being weak simply is not in a position to move these guys. So they kick out our AID people, they now are going to back away from the Nunn-Lugar program. They think that by doing this they’ll get a weak administration to eventually back down on missile defense. That’s not how it works. I have been told that the Russians really perceive us in a more negative way than they have in a very very long time. So the whole reset program is a complete flop.

**DWG:** How about some details on Nunn-Lugar?

**Roger Zakheim:** To me it’s — nonproliferation is a key priority for this administration, working multilaterally, bilaterally. To me it’s a departure. You work with the Russians on, the administration [inaudible] START. We’ve been critical of that. [Inaudible] for the Russians. No concessions. The one area we thought we preserved was missile defense, and we lost on that. The Russians [inaudible] pressing on that. This to me is just another natural consequence of how — The Russians only [want to gain fruit] from this relationship and there are compromises to security interests or even the interests of this President — trying to get down to zero and remove WMD from across the world and now he can’t even get the bilateral cooperation that’s been done for years, it’s evaporating amidst his watch.

**Dov Zakheim:** Let me also point out something else. The Russians have said we don’t need Nunn-Lugar because we don’t need the money. The Russian economy actually was doing better four, five, six years ago and they didn’t walk away from Nunn-Lugar. So why did they walk away now? Again, they perceive we’re weak. They perceive that we just have no great strategy or plan or any kind of vision as to what to do about nuclear weapons other than to get down to zero, which by the way, totally ignores the fact that it’s not just Russia that has those weapons. It’s not just China that has those weapons. As you know, Josh, the country that’s building weapons at the fastest clip is Pakistan.

**DWG:** You’ve touched a few times on the sort of tangential piece but I’d like to get your perspective on the value and your side’s perspective on nuclear weapons as a strategic deterrence. During the past administration you spent much more effort in arms control than we have in modernizing, making certain our nuclear arsenal is in fact [diplomatic], strong, that you talked about in terms of [inaudible]. If you could give your perspective on the deterrence.
Roger Zakheim: I think Governor Romney is a strong advocate of the nuclear deterrent. He believes that nuclear weapons work for us every day. Every day that we have nuclear weapons they are working for us in deterring bad actors.

The problem with the START Treaty and the President’s goals here is that it ignores the fact that proliferation is not a bilateral problem, it’s a multilateral problem. It’s happening across the globe. The President’s approach has not in any way addressed that.

Second, President Obama’s policies in terms of actual funding of the nuclear weapons, at this stage he’s even willing to maintain, or he’s willing to put forward the funds to make sure they actually work. So if you look at NSA within Department of Energy, they’ve had some serious problems in ensuring that those nuclear weapons that we have, those strategic weapons, are actually funded properly so we can properly maintain them and make sure they operate in the way that they’re supposed to which is a huge risk, a huge problem. That in its own right makes others question the effectiveness of the deterrent we have.

DWG: I wanted to return to the four percent pledge from the beginning. You pushed back on the $2 trillion figure, but assuming you grow GDP and assuming you get to four percent within eight years of a Romney presidency, it’s still a huge number. It’s somewhere between a trillion and two trillion. I think it’s a fair question, how does this add up within Romney’s larger sort of promises of reducing the deficit, not cutting taxes? And then where does it fit within the debt discussions that are going on on the Hill which are kind of in the complete opposite direction of growing the defense budget?

Roger Zakheim: When you say debt discussions, are you talking about sequestration? Are you talking about debt ceiling?

DWG: I’m talking about the entire thing, whether it’s Simpson-Bowles or the other plans that call for even bigger defense cuts than the $487 billion already on the table.

Roger Zakheim: We’ll start with the last part. Governor Romney has talked about sequestration absolutely needs to be reversed. That sacrificing the military to address the deficit is something he won’t do as Commander-in-Chief. A fundamental disagreement.

The President has a self-fulfilling prophecy. We have a deficit problem, as a result because the economy is declining, the military has to decline. The last words, the last presidential debate, Governor Romney said I will maintain our military strength. The direction that President Obama is proposing is that over the next four or eight years, four years, it’s going to have this significant decline.

DWG: Projected growth will decline.

Roger Zakheim: The projected growth will decline. If you look at anybody — you
look at the cost drivers. You’re not giving up inflation, that’s a cut. Secretary Gates, President Obama’s own Secretary of Defense said unless you have two percent real growth in the department’s budgets, you’re going to be cutting from modernization programs, from procurement, from R&D. That’s key components for maintaining military strength. That’s the first part.

In the out years, as was mentioned earlier, there are two things, kind of the pro-growth approach of Governor Romney is the economy will grow and we have to address the key cost drivers in our budget which is not the 17 percent, the 14-17 percent that’s defense. It’s the rest of it which is driven by entitlements.

So I think if you look down the out years, which is what we’re talking about where you get to the four percent, the combination of the economy growing with reductions and reform of our entitlement programs will give you the space to allow you to do something that historically we’ve done which is a four percent GDP.

Now we would expect during that time the [war spending needs] to go down too which is what was mentioned earlier. We’re essentially spending 4.2 percent today. We’re talking about getting to four percent base when the war funding would go out, which was what Secretary Gates was talking about in 2007.

**DWG:** Would you get there in the first four years of a Romney presidency or would it require reelection for four percent?

**Roger Zakheim:** The Governor has talked about trying to get this done. Obviously the first step is to get to the Gates baseline. And you rightly point out that, as I have a little bit of experience with, the President proposes, the Congress disposes. He’ll come in with his principles as he said in the last debate, to maintain our military strength and put together a strategy and a budget to support that strategy. I imagine that Governor Romney will engage with the Congress to try to get there.

But the first step is to get back to the Gates baseline which is pre-BCA.

**DWG:** Just to correct something, though, the 487 is a fantasy. At this point the saving reduction, CBO came out and said when Congress reversed the personnel, the cuts and the ads to TriCare, basically the fees to TriCare that were added. When they took that out, when they took away the Guard reductions, it became $500 billion more. So you actually were higher, projected out, it’s actually —

**Roger Zakheim:** Some of the FY13 bill?

**DWG:** Yes, FY13 and on, you don’t get the 487.

**Roger Zakheim:** The 487 is not a function of the policy. Right now what keeps the Budget Control Act in place is because there are mandated caps in law. Congress figured out what it wanted to do for FY13 and that’s why you see them hovering about that
number. In FY14, unless there’s some change, they’re going to have to deal with that cap which is why — this whole Budget Control act, actually the sequestration in particular, creates these terrible inefficiencies and you need to have kind of a different approach here.

**Dov Zakheim:** Let me point out one other thing. If you look at the Bipartisan Policy Commission’s report on sequestration, I was on the commission, you’ll see the fastest growing element in all of this is health care. And even if you had sequestration and it hit defense 100 percent, the whole thing is swallowed up within a couple of years.

So what you’ve got to do is get your arms around health care growth. The myth that’s been put out, the people living in Boynton Beach, Florida are going to suffer is not the point. The point is that whether it’s Social Security or Medicare, it’s people who are young today, who aren’t even thinking about this stuff because it’s not going to affect them for 10 or maybe more years, those are the ones who will be affected by this. But by that time, and certainly even before, we hope right now, will recognize this is the right way to keep Social Security and Medicare afloat.

If we go down the path we’re going, forget about defense. Medicare and Social Security and our entire government budget goes down the tubes because you haven’t even mentioned an increase in interest rates. Three percent increase in interest rates wipes out three-quarters of the defense budget, give or take.

So you’ve got to have an economy that’s growing, you have to have your arms around entitlements, and if you do that, then as I said, defense is 1.3, 1.4, 1.6 percent defense cuts of the problem and you can work that. If defense were 50 percent of the problem like the administration likes to show you’ve got a different sort of situation, but then you’re not taking account of everything.

**DWG:** To get development timelines in major defense programs down to something like four years from a historic seven to twenty depending on what you’re building, you probably have to do things like increase concurrency between testing and production. That’s gotten a lot of programs into trouble. You’ll probably have to decrease competition or else you run into more USAF tanker problems where there are bid protests. And you probably have to take technological capacity out of programs like DDX, just to build them in time. Are those the ideas that a Romney campaign is pursuing? Are there new ideas we don’t know about?

**Roger Zakheim:** I’m going to shock you with this answer. Absolutely not. But I think what we’re talking about [inaudible] reducing the time lines to a five year window is you take an incremental approach here. You’re not going to go ahead and try to jump generations of technology in one program.

**DWG:** Skip a generation?

**Roger Zakheim:** Yeah, skip a generation. These things are not going to be proven not
to work. I think the R&D dollars need to be spent in the early phases of R&D, separate, not tied to a particular acquisition program because that’s where — I’ve seen [inaudible] concurrency. A little more discipline on the R&D, making sure the technology is firm and ready to go for production acquisition, and working off the platforms we have now and doing an incremental approach.

There are examples of doing it, the F-16 is one that many point to.

Dov Zakheim: And the Virginia Class.

Roger Zakheim: The Virginia Class is another. So it’s discipline, it’s having business-minded managers overseeing these programs, individuals taking responsibility across the enterprise.

Dov Zakheim: There are a couple of other things. You want your requirements to be tied in with operational needs, to loop back in as programs are developing. Right now the requirements process is almost set off separately which doesn’t make much sense.

Secondly, what you want to do is minimize engineering change proposals. That’s a management issue. What happens is, who makes these ECPs? People down the chain. Because people up the chain aren’t looking. The biggest problem with schedules and costs as you well know are ECPs. If you can get your ECPs down to a bare minimum and make it very difficult to justify an ECP you’re going to have time for testing. You’re not going to be forced into concurrency.

DWG: Is that a function of the administration or is that a function of the Pentagon’s —

Dov Zakheim: It’s a function of management, for goodness’ sake.

DWG: Are you putting the blame for what’s going on with these programs on the Obama administration?

Dov Zakheim: What I’m saying is the Obama administration’s solution to the problem is cutting defense. Our answer is if you want to get the most out of defense focus on efficiency in a much more serious way.

Let me tell you something. Ash Carter’s a friend of mine and I think he’s done whatever he could do. What he doesn’t have, and even what Gates didn’t have, was a focus from the top. It all starts at the top. It’s like in any corporation, big or small. What the CEO does reflects down the chain. The CEO of the United States, the Chief Executive Officer of our country is the President. When you’ve got a President who’s never, probably doesn’t know what a bottom line looks like because he’s never been in business, that is not going to be his primary focus. It’s not his fault.

Roger Zakheim: What has been his focus is simply the large, large cuts. Using defense as a means to deficit reduction.
Think about the times he’s come to the Department of Defense and talked about it. April 2011, he came out and announced, I believe Gates had 24 hours’ notice. Many of you probably wrote these stories, about the $400 billion in cuts. It wasn’t about reforming the Department of Defense, it was about cutting the Department of Defense.

**Dov Zakheim:** Because he doesn’t understand management.

**DWG:** I just wanted to ask quickly about Libya. There was an oversight hearing yesterday, something we haven’t talked about. You mentioned the October surprise being this attack on Iran, but Libya —

**Dov Zakheim:** Libya was an October surprise.

**DWG:** So tell me a little bit about what we might see Romney doing out on the stump in terms of talking about this issue. Also, what will he do to increase the security of our foreign service —

**Dov Zakheim:** Let me start. Look at the debate last week. The first question we got was why the emphasis on the Middle East. That was all about Libya. That was driven by Libya. What could he have done if he were President? Let me give you one example.

We could have pulled security guards out of Paris and London where there’s real dangers. Particularly London. It’s terribly dangerous. Or Ottawa. Terribly dangerous for our people. We could have pulled security guards from other parts of the world and put them into Benghazi and Tripoli. But that involves management, it involves thought, it involves a focus. What you don’t have is either management, focus or thought.

So what you got instead is a lot of smoke. That hearing room yesterday, and I remember, I was on the commission on wartime contracting. We found all kinds of problems with the State Department. When we’d have State Department witnesses come, they would blow so much smoke you had to go out and breathe some fresh air. That’s what you had yesterday. And as we heard in that hearing, it was not that they weren’t warned, it was not that it wasn’t requested.

So instead of saying okay, where in the world can we pull some people out to put them in Libya, the answer was we can’t do it for you. Or we need more resources. This is bureaucracy’s great answer. Any time the mess something up, we need more resources. Not so.

**DWG:** I wish we had more time, but we don’t. Thank you gentlemen. We appreciate it.

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