Backgrounder

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The Next Steps for Missile Defense

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On July 4–5, 2006, North Korea test launched a salvo of ballistic missiles.[1] Iran took the same action on November 2, 2006, and January 22, 2007.[2] Clearly, the ballistic missile threat to the United States and its allies is not going away.

Congress and the American people need to understand that while the United States has made progress in putting missile defense systems in the field in recent years, in most respects the U.S. remains vulnerable to this threat. This is no time for the U.S. to slow the pace of developing and deploying effective defenses against ballistic missiles. Indeed, the Bush Administration and Congress need to accelerate the effort by focusing on developing and deploying the systems that offer the greatest capability.

A detailed proposal for proceeding with the most effective systems was issued by the Independent Working Group on missile defense in June 2006.[3] The report specifically refers to space-based and sea-based defenses as the most effective components of the layered missile defense system design advocated by the Bush Administration. While the sea-based systems have continued to make progress in recent years, the effort to develop and deploy space-based interceptors has languished.

Further, the change in party control in Congress has put a number of missile defense skeptics in leadership positions. For example, Senator Carl Levin (D–MI), the new chairman of the Senate Armed Services Committee, has stated that he considers it a mistake to buy missile defense interceptors before they have proven themselves in operational tests.[4] This seem-

Talking Points

The Bush Administration and congressional supporters of effective ballistic missile defense should focus on developing and deploying systems that offer the greatest capability. Specifically, they should:

- Formulate a strategy to protect missile defense programs in defense authorization and appropriations legislation,
- Maintain robust funding for the missile defense program,
- Support the construction of a "space test bed,"
- Rebut charges that testing and fielding missile defense systems would cross a threshold by "weaponizing" space,
- Support the deployment of sea-based defenses to protect U.S. coastal areas against short-range ballistic missiles launched from ships,
- Oppose efforts to deny the military the option of putting developmental missile defense systems on operational alert, and
- Shift responsibility for sea-based missile defense systems from the Missile Defense Agency to the Navy.

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ingly anodyne statement actually reveals his intention to stop many missile defense activities, because the interceptors and other elements of the defense must be purchased and fielded in order to be tested. Missile defenses must be built as an integrated network of systems; it is not like buying a small number of test aircraft and proceeding to procure the fleet following operational testing.

Under these circumstances, the Bush Administration and congressional supporters of missile defense need to take the following steps, which are consistent with the recommendations of the Independent Working Group report:

- **Formulate** a strategy involving missile defense supporters in Congress and President Bush to protect missile defense programs in defense authorization and appropriations legislation,
- **Maintain** robust funding for the missile defense program,
- **Support** the construction of a "space test bed" for missile defense;
- **Rebut** charges that the testing and fielding of missile defense systems will cross a threshold by "weaponizing" space,
- **Support** the deployment of sea-based defenses to protect U.S. coastal areas against short-range ballistic missiles launched from ships,
- **Oppose** efforts to deny the military the option of putting developmental missile defense systems on operational alert, and
- **Shift** responsibility for sea-based missile defense systems from the Missile Defense Agency to the Navy.

Toward Defending America: Progress But Still Vulnerable

The Bush Administration has made significant progress toward fielding an effective defense against ballistic missiles. The greatest advances have come in the policy area. President George W. Bush kicked off the effort to change the Clinton Administration's negative policies toward missile defense with a speech on May 1, 2001, to the faculty and students of the National Defense University.[5] In this speech, the President signaled his intention to put missile defense at the heart of the effort to transform the military and position it to meet the security needs of the 21st century.

President Bush followed up this speech by changing missile defense policy with a dramatic announcement on December 13, 2001, that the U.S. was withdrawing from the 1972 Anti-Ballistic Missile (ABM) Treaty with the former Soviet Union.[6] The ABM Treaty blocked the development, testing, and deployment of effective defenses against ballistic missiles.

On January 9, 2002, the Department of Defense (DOD) announced the findings of the Nuclear Posture Review, a new strategic policy that made defenses a part of a new strategic triad.[7] Under this policy, defenses were paired with offensive conventional and nuclear strike capabilities and a robust technology and industrial base to meet U.S. strategic needs.

Finally, on May 20, 2003, the White House released a description of a presidential directive signed earlier by President Bush that related to his policy for developing and deploying a layered mis-

1. Michael A. Needham, "Responding to North Korea's Missile Provocation," Heritage Foundation *WebMemo* No. 1142, July 5, 2006, at *www.heritage.org/research/AsiaandthePacific/upload/wm_1142.pdf*.
2. Gareth Smyth, "Iran Tests Missiles as Fear of Attack Grows," *Financial Times*, January 22, 2007, at *www.ft.com/cms/s/e8ce4b7c-aa4e-11db-83b0-0000779e2340.html* (March 1, 2007).
3. Independent Working Group, *Missile Defense, the Space Relationship, & the Twenty-First Century: 2007 Report* (Cambridge, Mass.: Institute for Foreign Policy Analysis, 2006), at *www.ifpa.org/pdf/IWGreport.pdf* (September 18, 2006).
4. Jen DiMascio, "New Direction for Iraq Tops Levin's Agenda as Incoming SASC Chairman," Defense Daily Network, November 17, 2006.
5. George W. Bush, "Remarks by the President to Students and Faculty at National Defense University," May 1, 2001, at *www.whitehouse.gov/news/releases/2001/05/20010501-10.html* (April 18, 2007).
6. George W. Bush, "Remarks by the President on National Missile Defense," December 13, 2001, at *www.whitehouse.gov/news/releases/2001/12/20011213-4.html* (April 18, 2007).
7. J. D. Crouch, "Special Briefing on the Nuclear Posture Review," U.S. Department of Defense, January 9, 2002, at *www.defenselink.mil/transcripts/transcript.aspx?transcriptid=1108* (April 18, 2007).

sile defense system as soon as possible to defend the people and territory of the United States, U.S. troops deployed abroad, and U.S. allies and friends.[8] When fielded, this layered defense will be able to intercept ballistic missiles in the boost (ascent), midcourse, and terminal phases of flight.

The Bush Administration has also made significant advances in increasing funding levels for missile defense research, development, and deployment. In fiscal year (FY) 2001, which was the last Clinton Administration budget, funding for the Ballistic Missile Defense Organization was $4.8 billion. This level of funding was achieved only because of aggressive congressional support for ballistic missile defense in the face of a reluctant Clinton Administration. In FY 2002, funding for what is now the Missile Defense Agency was increased to $7.8 billion. The projected expenditure level for FY 2007 is $9.4 billion.[9]

On the other hand, the American people still remain quite vulnerable to ballistic missile attack because missile defense programs have lagged behind advances in policy, funding, and—regrettably—the missile threat. To some extent, this is unavoidable. A policy for deploying effective missile defenses must precede actually fielding the defenses, and the necessary funding must be in place to move the programs forward. However, the American people remain vulnerable because opponents of missile defense have forced the Bush Administration and proponents in Congress to compromise on the most effective options.[10]

The most important of these regrettable compromises regards the failure to revive the technologies necessary to complete the development and ultimately to deploy the Brilliant Pebbles space-based interceptor, pioneered by the Reagan and George H. W. Bush Administrations. Congress weakened this rapidly advancing concept in 1991,[11] and President Bill Clinton killed it in 1993. The current Bush Administration's failure to revive these technologies was noted early on by Ambassador Henry Cooper, former Director of the Strategic Defense Initiative Organization, in a 2001 letter to Lt. General Ronald Kadish, then Missile Defense Agency Director.[12] The Brilliant Pebbles option remains dormant today.

The sea-based systems for countering ballistic missiles have fared better than the space-based programs. The system is based on giving the Aegis weapons system for air defense deployed on Navy cruisers and destroyers a capability to track and intercept ballistic missiles. The interceptors consist of late-model and new-model Standard Missiles.

As of July 2006, 11 Aegis destroyers had been upgraded to track ballistic missiles in flight.[13] While an incorrect system setting blocked a test of the Standard Missile-3 on December 7, 2006, prior to that test, the Standard Missile-3 performed successful intercepts in seven out of eight attempts.[14] At this time, three cruisers and three destroyers are capable of engaging short-range and medium-range ballistic missiles in the midcourse stage of flight with the Standard Missile-3.[15] Finally, the Navy successfully tested the existing Standard Missile-2 Block IV against a short-range target missile in May 2006.[16] During the test, this system destroyed the incoming missile in the terminal phase of flight.

8. The White House, "National Policy on Ballistic Missile Defense Fact Sheet," May 20, 2003, at *www.whitehouse.gov/news/releases/2003/05/20030520-15.html* (April 18, 2007).
9. U.S. Department of Defense, Missile Defense Agency, "Historical Funding for MDA FY85–07," at *www.mda.mil/mdalink/pdf/histfunds.pdf* (January 25, 2007).
10. Baker Spring, "The Still Enduring Features of the Debate Over Missile Defense," Heritage Foundation *Backgrounder* No. 2004, February 6, 2007, at *www.heritage.org/Research/NationalSecurity/upload/bg_2004.pdf* (March 1, 2007).
11. Missile Defense Study Team, *Defending America: A Near- and Long-Term Plan to Deploy Missile Defenses* (Washington, D.C.: The Heritage Foundation, 1995), p. 45.
12. Ambassador Henry F. Cooper, letter to Lt. General Ronald Kadish, July 16, 2001.
13. U.S. Department of Defense, Missile Defense Agency, "Aegis Ballistic Missile Defense," July 2006, at *www.mda.mil/mdalink/pdf/aegis.pdf* (January 31, 2007).
14. U.S. Department of Defense, Missile Defense Agency, "For Your Information," December 7, 2006, at *www.mda.mil/mdalink/pdf/06fyi0090.pdf* (January 31, 2007), and "Aegis Ballistic Missile Defense."
15. U.S. Department of Defense, Missile Defense Agency, "Aegis Ballistic Missile Defense."

Despite the progress with sea-based missile defense systems, they are not as advanced as they could be. An accelerated approach to fielding sea-based ballistic missile defenses was described by Ambassador Cooper and Admiral J. D. Williams in an opinion piece in *Inside Missile Defense* on September 6, 2000.[17] This approach advocated building on the existing Aegis infrastructure by increasing the interceptor missile's velocity to achieve a boost-phase intercept capability. It would also require changing the operational procedures that the Navy is permitted to use to perform missile defense intercepts.

The Bush Administration has taken several steps that have slowed progress on the sea-based option.

First, it canceled the Navy Area Program in 2001.[18] This program consisted largely of the same technology that was successfully demonstrated in the 2006 Navy test of the terminal Standard Missile-2 Block IV. This decision deprived the Navy of a basic building block for evolving more capable sea-based missile defenses.

Second, the Missile Defense Agency initially sought to replace the Standard Missile family of interceptors with a variation of the Kinetic Energy Interceptor (KEI), which is too large to fit in the existing vertical launch system. While the Missile Defense Agency ultimately abandoned the KEI option for near-term sea-based deployment, precious time was lost.

Finally, the Bush Administration continues to insist on applying a firing protocol developed during the Clinton Administration that requires Navy ship commanders to wait until the target missile's rocket motors have burned out before launching the interceptor. This requirement effectively prohibits the sea-based defense from achieving a boost-phase intercept capability.

America's Vulnerability to Missiles: A Failure of Government

The compromises that missile defense proponents in the Bush Administration and Congress have made in deference to the minority of Americans who are opposed to missile defense have resulted in a program that fails to meet the most basic obligation that the Constitution assigns to the federal government: to "provide for the common defence." The American people want to be defended, and if they fully understood how vulnerable they remain to missile attack and that this vulnerability is the result of a tendency to accommodate the unrepresentative minority's demands for a policy that sustains U.S. vulnerability, their confidence in the nation's leadership would be shattered.[19]

This misunderstanding is the result of a widespread acceptance of the rhetoric from political leaders who claim that they are seeking to defend the American people. Regrettably, the American people may come to understand the extent of their vulnerability only after a successful attack.

In general terms, the debate over missile defense has reached a stalemate in which the proponents have won the debate at the rhetorical level and the opponents have prevailed in preventing the rapid fielding of effective defenses. The security implications of this stalemate were demonstrated in 2006 when Israel attempted to respond to the short-range rocket attacks from Lebanon by Hezbollah guerillas. The U.S. and the Israelis opted to forgo deployment of the mobile tactical high energy laser (MTHEL) system for countering short-range rockets because they allowed the promise of more advanced technology to stand in the way of the quicker deployment of effective technology.[20] The result was that Hezbollah held the population of northern Israel hostage to attacks. Deploying MTHEL would not have provided the Israelis with

16. Baker Spring, "Ten Years Later, A Successful Demonstration of a Sea-Based Terminal Defense Against Ballistic Missiles," Heritage Foundation *WebMemo* No. 1125, June 13, 2006, at *www.heritage.org/research/nationalsecurity/upload/wm_1125.pdf* (January 31, 2006).
17. Henry F. Cooper and Admiral J. D. Williams, "The Earliest Deployment Option—Sea-Based Defenses," *Inside Missile Defense*, September 6, 2000.
18. "Aldridge Kills Navy Area Missile Defense Program," *Defense Daily*, December 17, 2001.
19. Missile Defense Advocacy Alliance, "Final Topline as of April 12, 2005," at *www.missiledefenseadvocacy.org/pdf/MDAANationalPoll-TOPLINEFINAL.pdf* (August 22, 2006).

a perfect defense, but it would have blunted the effect of the Hezbollah rocket attacks.

The lesson for the Bush Administration and congressional proponents of missile defense is that rhetorical support is not enough. Support for missile defense must be defined by the willingness to put readily available technologies in the field as quickly as possible. This means that both the Bush Administration and missile defense proponents in Congress need to cooperate in fashioning a missile defense program that will provide an effective defense to the American people, American military forces, and America's friends and allies, and in short order.

Seven Steps for Fielding Effective Missile Defenses

Obtaining a missile defense capability for the U.S. that matches the rhetorical support from the Bush Administration and Congress, particularly given the strengthened position of missile defense opponents in Congress, will require achieving certain programmatic goals. At the outset of the Bush Administration, support for missile defense required changing prevailing national security and arms control policies.

The Administration, with support from Congress, has achieved these important goals. The government is firmly committed to developing and deploying a layered, global missile defense system, and the U.S. is no longer bound by the ABM Treaty. Now the Bush Administration and missile defense supporters in Congress need to take seven specific steps.

Step #1: Formulate a strategy for vigorously opposing legislative proposals to weaken the missile defense program.

Further progress on developing and deploying a truly effective missile defense system starts with a procedural step: President Bush and missile defense supporters in Congress need to work together to vigorously oppose legislative measures that would weaken the missile defense program. This effort should be directed at FY 2008 defense authorization and defense appropriation bills. The cooperative strategy should start with identifying actions by Congress—whether of commission or of omission—that would clearly undermine the federal government's ability to provide the protection against missile attack that the American people are demanding and lead to specific measures for countering these actions.

Step #2: Support adequate funding for the missile defense program.

The missile defense program cannot provide an adequate defense unless it is properly funded. In general terms, this means maintaining the missile defense budget at levels in line with recent years—roughly $10 billion per year. On February 5, 2007, the Bush Administration presented its $9.9 billion missile defense budget to Congress and the public,[21] with the Missile Defense Agency receiving roughly $8.9 billion of that total. Thus, the Administration's FY 2008 budget request is generally in keeping with the $10 billion benchmark.

The question is whether or not the Congress will move to cut funding for the missile defense program. Since some Members of Congress may attempt to cut funding for missile defense by significant amounts, supporters need to be prepared with a blocking strategy. In general terms, this strategy will depend on both President Bush and missile defense supporters going over the heads of opponents in Congress and appealing to the public. This approach can work because the idea of missile defense is reasonably popular with the public.

Step #3: Propose in Congress an effective program for putting missile defense interceptors in space.

The Bush Administration's missile defense budget proposes $10 million in FY 2008 in initial funding to establish a space test bed.[22] Funding for this program is envisioned to reach $124 million in FY 2013. The cumulative funding for FY 2008 through

20. James Jay Carafano, Ph.D., "Congress Should Act on Directed-Energy Defenses That Could Protect Israel from Hezbollah's Short-Range Rockets," Heritage Foundation *WebMemo* No. 1220, September 22, 2006, at *www.heritage.org/Research/NationalSecurity/upload/wm_1220.pdf* (February 1, 2006).
21. U.S. Department of Defense, Missile Defense Agency, "Missile Defense Agency Fiscal Year 2008 (FY08) Budget Estimates," 07–MDA–2175, January 31, 2007, at *www.mda.mil/mdalink/pdf/budgetfy08.pdf* (February 13, 2007).
22. *Ibid.*, pp. 21–22.

FY 2013 is $290 million. The funding proposal is categorized as one of several "capabilities investments" that are designed to address requirements beyond FY 2013.

Even though the Bush Administration's proposal to begin work on establishing a space test bed is very limited and in keeping with a slow, incremental approach, it is likely to generate heated debate in Congress. Arms control advocacy groups and their supporters in Congress will likely insist that the U.S. adopt a position that prohibits it from developing—much less deploying—missile defense interceptors in space under any circumstance and for all time. They will likely argue that denying the $10 million funding request is a necessary part of establishing a policy to "prevent the weaponization of space." In short, a funding request for a program of limited near-term substantive value will carry large symbolic importance.

If Congress intends to have an energetic debate over developing and deploying the most effective missile defense system available—namely space-based interceptors—it ought to debate a truly substantive program. Participants in the Independent Working Group believe that such a substantive program would provide $100 million in FY 2008, $500 million in FY 2009, and $1 billion in FY 2010 to create the space test bed. This approach should yield a capable development test bed in three to four years. The effort should be put in the hands of a small, competent management team and should focus on reviving the demonstrated technologies in the Brilliant Pebbles program. A constellation of space-based missile defense interceptors would provide missile defense to both the U.S. and its friends and allies.

On this basis, missile defense supporters in Congress should propose this alternative approach to the space test bed as amendments to the defense authorization and appropriations bills for FY 2008 and unite behind these amendments. The Bush Administration should accept this alternative approach and move to incorporate it into its own missile defense program.

Step #4: Rebut the charge that U.S. development and deployment of space-based missile defense interceptors would constitute an unprecedented step to weaponize space.

Arms control advocates are currently focused on preventing the weaponization of space. They base their proposals on the assertion that space is not already weaponized,[23] which is valid only if properly defining the term "space weapons" is irrelevant to the exercise of controlling them.[24]

The fact is that space was weaponized when the first ballistic missile was deployed, because ballistic missiles travel through space on their way to their targets. The threat that these weapons pose to U.S. security and the U.S. population is undeniable. The superior effectiveness of space-based interceptors in countering ballistic missiles is based on the fact that ballistic missiles transit space. As a result, space-based interceptors are ideally located to intercept ballistic missiles in the boost phase.

Congress needs to reject the charge that space-based ballistic missile defense interceptors would constitute an unprecedented move by the U.S. to weaponize space. It can do so by adding a preamble to the amendment to provide more robust funding for construction of a space test bed.

This preamble should take the form of a congressional finding that the deployment of ballistic missiles weaponized space and that the government has a fundamental obligation to protect the U.S. population and territory against ballistic missile attack. The preamble should go on to state that space-based interceptors will likely be the most effective defense against ballistic missiles precisely because ballistic missiles are space weapons. The preamble should conclude by stating that the construction of the space test bed and eventual deployment of space-based interceptors is a response to the weaponization of space brought about by the deployment of ballistic missiles.

President Bush and missile defense supporters in Congress should also be prepared to counter proposals in defense authorization and appropriations

23. Jeffrey Lewis, "What If Space Were Weaponized? Possible Consequences for Crisis Scenarios," Center for Defense Information, July 2004, at *www.cdi.org/PDFs/scenarios.pdf* (April 18, 2007).

24. *Ibid.*, p. 12.

bills calling for the U.S. to enter into an international agreement that imposes sweeping prohibitions on space weapons, including by implication all forms of anti-satellite weapons.[25] Such legislation can be expected to avoid defining "space weapons," but enactment of such legislation, by requiring U.S. acceptance of an international agreement banning space weapons, would likely have a devastating impact on U.S. national security and cripple the U.S. missile defense program.

An undefined ban on space weapons could be interpreted as requiring the U.S. to withdraw all satellites that are elements of broader U.S. strike weapons systems, all ballistic missiles and rockets capable of delivering a payload to low-earth orbit or higher, all nuclear weapons that can be mated to such ballistic missiles or rockets, a wide range of electronic jamming capabilities, kinetic kill vehicles capable of space flight, and strike systems capable of destroying satellite ground stations, just to name a few. The missile defense program would be crippled because most missile defense systems have some inherent anti-satellite capability. An undefined ban on space weapons would effectively drive the U.S. military back to the mid-20th century.

Step #5: Field a system to protect U.S. coastal areas from sea-launched shorter-range missiles.

In the near term, lesser missile powers, maybe including terrorist groups, could attack U.S. territory by launching a short-range Scud missile from a container ship off the coast. Congress should express its concern about this threat and direct the Navy to take steps to counter it.

The best near-term capability for the Navy to counter this short-range missile threat was identified in the report of the Independent Working Group and successfully demonstrated by the Navy in 2006.[26] The Navy conducted a test of the existing Standard Missile-2 Block IV as a terminal defense against a short-range missile near Hawaii.[27]

Building on this successful test, Congress could direct the Navy to deploy the existing Standard Missile-2 Block IV interceptors on Aegis-equipped ships to provide a terminal defense against ballistic missiles. Further, it should direct the Navy to develop upgrades to this system so that it can perform boost-phase intercepts. Finally, Congress should provide the necessary funding to the Navy to conduct these development and deployment activities.

Step #6: Move funding and management authority for sea-based missile defense systems from the Missile Defense Agency to the Navy.

It has long been the expectation that mature missile defense systems developed under the management of the Missile Defense Agency would be transferred to the services to manage remaining development and procurement activities. In fact, press reports indicate that Under Secretary of Defense for Acquisition, Technology, and Logistics Kenneth J. Krieg approved a plan in September 2006 to transfer several ground-based ballistic missile defense systems from the Missile Defense Agency to the Army.[28]

Press reports do not clearly indicate whether or not Krieg's plan extends to sea-based systems. As a result, Congress should direct the Defense Department to approve the transfer of these programs to the Navy. The sea-based systems developed by the Missile Defense Agency have matured to the point that such a transfer is warranted, as pointed out and recommended in the Independent Working Group's report.[29] There is no reason to wait any longer. Congress should direct that this transfer give both management authority and the necessary funds to the Navy, but also make it clear to the Navy that it may use the funds only for this purpose.

25. Sebastian Sprenger, "House Dems Eye Legislation to Press Bush on Arms Control for Space," *Inside Missile Defense*, Vol. 13, No. 4 (February 14, 2007), pp. 9–10.
26. Independent Working Group, *Missile Defense, the Space Relationship, & the Twenty-First Century*, p. 26.
27. Baker Spring, "Ten Years Later, a Successful Demonstration of Sea-Based Terminal Defense Against Ballistic Missiles."
28. Ashley Roque, "Krieg Approves Plan to Transfer BMDS Assets to the Services," *Inside Missile Defense*, Vol. 12, No. 26 (December 20, 2006), p. 1.
29. Independent Working Group, *Missile Defense, the Space Relationship, & the Twenty-first Century: 2007 Report*, pp. xi and 20–21.

Step #7: Counter attempts to prohibit the Defense Department from putting developmental missile defense systems on operational alert.

The Department of Defense is using a spiral development process to advance missile defense technology and systems. This means that it is putting developmental systems in the field to improve them incrementally. The spiral development process is not only appropriate for the missile defense program, but also essential because the missile defense "architecture" is a system of systems that must be built first in order to test it. This characteristic also gives developmental missile defense systems an inherent, although limited, operational capability.

The option to put the developmental missile defense on operational alert on at least an interim basis is now at hand.[30] Opponents in Congress, however, may be inclined to use expedient procedural arguments to prevent the use of developmental missile defense systems to defend the American people against attack. They could include a provision in defense authorization or appropriations legislation that would deny the military the option of using the missile defense system until all system components have passed a full slate of operational tests.

Such a proposal will be advertised as just "fly before you buy" common sense. In reality, it will constitute an advertisement of American vulnerability to attack. If a country like North Korea is thinking about launching a missile at the U.S., it makes little sense for Congress to announce that the country can take a free shot at the U.S. because the U.S. will not use its limited missile defense capability.

Adopting such a prohibition would also set the predicate for an effort by missile defense opponents to prohibit the procurement of additional missile defense components until current ones have passed the same slate of operational tests. This will grind the overall missile defense program to a halt because the nature of the system is that it must be built in order to be tested.

Conclusion

Former Secretary of State Henry Kissinger observed in his memoirs that the opponents of strategic defense fashioned a policy during the Cold War that, "[f]or the first time a major country saw an advantage in enhancing its own vulnerability."[31] In the current era, in which there are clear trends in the direction of both missile and nuclear proliferation, the opponents of strategic defense are attempting to take the policy of vulnerability to the next level by enhancing America's vulnerability to any number of powers that obtain nuclear weapons and the ballistic missiles to deliver them, not just its vulnerability to a single superpower rival. Multilateralizing this policy of vulnerability would be profoundly destabilizing and would encourage further missile and nuclear proliferation.[32]

The proponents of the policy of vulnerability are focusing their attention on undermining progress in missile defense programs, paying special attention to those programs that offer the most promise for providing an effective defense. Chief among these is a program for fielding space-based missile defense interceptors.

The end result is that the American people are being deceived. The rhetoric out of Washington would lead the American people to believe that their government is committed to defending them against missile attack. The reality is that they are being provided a very thin defense of limited effectiveness. Congress needs to make good on its promise to field an effective defense against ballistic missiles, and President Bush should insist that Congress fulfill this basic obligation to the American people.

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30. Michael Sirak, "BMD System Nears Important Milestone, Says Operational Commander," Defense Daily Network, August 17, 2006.
31. Henry A. Kissinger, *White House Years* (Boston: Little, Brown and Co., 1979), p. 216.
32. Nuclear Stability Working Group, *Nuclear Games: An Exercise Examining Stability and Defenses in a Proliferated World* (Washington, D.C.: The Heritage Foundation, 2005), at *www.heritage.org/upload/NuclearGames.pdf*.