

APPENDIX A: THE ARGUMENTS AGAINST NMD

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The ballistic missile threat is overrated.

With the Soviet Union gone, BMD has shifted to deal more directly with threats from so-called rogue states such as Iran, Iraq and North Korea. However, the possibility of an attack from one of these states is small and the financial outlay does not justify the risk. As Senate Foreign Relations Committee Chairman, Joseph R. Biden, Jr. (D-DE) stated, a strategic missile attack on the United States is “the least likely threat to our national security.” Biden goes on to say, “more realistic threats include regional conflicts, major theater wars, and terrorist attacks at home or abroad.” Building a missile defense system to fight an improbable enemy does not make good strategic sense.

Iran, Iraq and North Korea’s missile programs are years behind the West’s. North Korea has primitive testing facilities and the CIA suggests that North Korea has only one or two missiles. Iran’s missile, the Shahab-3, is a medium-range missile that is incapable of reaching the United States and is highly inaccurate, with only a 50 percent chance of landing within four kilometers of its target. Iraq does not have an ICBM program and it is unlikely that Saddam Hussein will have a functional system any time in the near future—the unreliable Scud missiles are almost impossible to convert to ICBMs.

The notion that rogue states develop ballistic missile programs in order to threaten the United States bears reexamining. There is nothing to be gained by attacking the United States. A strike against the United States would only result in immediate retaliation and the annihilation of the offending state. In light of that fact, it is more likely that rogue states seek to develop a missile program in order to “gain a seat at the table” of international affairs. Pakistan and India’s status bear out this hypothesis.

In the case of Iran, their ballistic missile program is directed at fulfilling regional goals, not at threatening the US homeland. While this may make the case for deploying RMD/FMD, it is not a viable argument for NMD. But Iran has also hinted that if measures were taken to provide security assurances against the threat from Iraq, they might reconsider their ballistic missile strategy. As a matter of fact, US relations with Iran have witnessed a modest improvement over the past few years, due partially to the strengthened political position of domestic reformers.

Recent experience has also shown that diplomatic solutions can be very effective in mitigating the threat from North Korea. South Korean President Kim Dae Jung’s “Sunshine Policy” successfully reduced tensions on the Korean Peninsula, and other diplomatic overtures from the US resulted in an agreement by Pyongyang not to test its Taepo Dong-2 missile while the two parties negotiated a possible end to their missile

exports and long-range missile development programs. But disengagement by the Bush administration during its lengthy policy review process brought to a halt all diplomatic progress in this endeavor, and North Korea escalated its rhetoric following the July 2001 test of a US interceptor rocket.

As far as the threat from terrorist organizations is concerned, it is nearly impossible that they will ever be able to assemble the technological know-how and build a ballistic missile capable of striking the US while at the same time avoiding detection.

The technological barriers of pursuing NMD are too high.

A significant barrier to technological advancement of BMD lies in the lag between missile defense and the missiles themselves. Missiles have gained in range, speed, lethality and accuracy over the past fifty years; BMD systems have not improved along the same line. In the last century, offensive systems have gained an advantage over the defensive that has never been overcome. The litany of failed BMD tests over the past bear witness to the unbalanced edge in favor of the offensive strike.

Early warning and detection systems are not robust enough to allow a missile defense system time to react; the detection systems are too fragile. They rely on an interconnected series of radar systems that are vulnerable to attack from unsophisticated weapons like hand grenades or small arms fire. The destruction of even one installation cripples the entire network. The fragility of the radar systems highlights the difficulties of developing a successful BMD system.

BMD systems like kinetic energy weapons (KEW), lasers, charged particle beams and Directed Energy Weapons (DEW) have yet to progress beyond the laboratory and controlled testing. The Coyle Report notes that BMD testing is woefully behind schedule. Only fifteen tests have been conducted since 1982 and of those, “in only four, or 26 percent, did the anti-missiles actually hit their targets, and none demonstrated the ability to distinguish warheads from realistic decoys.” Clearly, reliability is a long way off.

The financial, political and opportunity costs of NMD outweigh its benefits.

Every presidential administration since the launch of sputnik has sought to build some form of BMD system. Given the fact that the BMD system in its many guises has never worked to any satisfactory degree, it is reasonable to assume that the successful implementation of National Missile Defense is very far off in the future and will exceed even the most generous of estimates.

The BMD system currently proposed by the United States is a multi-layered, multi-force system that will take years to develop in its entirety. The Ballistic Missile Defense Organization states that the production and implementation of just eight of the highest-profile systems will cost approximately \$80 billion. This figure, however, covers only research, not production, and includes only a part of the planned purchases. Furthermore, the Bush administration has proposed a steep increase in the number of tests and quality of testing, and to extend coverage to our allies. This will result in costs even

higher than the initial estimates. Some NMD advocates argue that a price cannot be placed on US national security. But it is far from certain that NMD will increase US security. And since there are a whole range of proven means that can help prevent missile attacks, such as deterrence, nonproliferation programs, arms control frameworks, verification measures and diplomatic efforts, missile defense is an expense that cannot be justified.

Finally, in calculating the cost of national missile defense, opportunity cost and political costs must also be considered. Missile defense competes with other important security programs for the same limited budgetary funds, and moving forward with missile defense will make international political cooperation more difficult, which is more vital than ever following the attacks of September 11.

NMD exacerbates US relations with Russia.

Although the Cold War is over, the US-Russian relationship is far from realizing full normalization. Proceeding with missile defense presents a number of destabilizing factors to the long, hard-fought process of rapprochement. A unilateral withdrawal from the ABM Treaty will be especially damaging. Because Russia, by virtue of the size of their arsenal, remains the source of the greatest missile threat to the US, it would be most prudent to abandon dubious NMD proposals that would irritate relations and instead continue to negotiate cutbacks in offensive nuclear weapons and pursue other cooperative measures that would secure weapons production facilities and materials, minimize the threat of accidental launches and collaborate on nonproliferation measures.

Russia can rapidly deploy MIRVs as well as pursue deployment and further development of a new generation of weapons in response to the threat it sees in a unilateral pursuit of NMD by the US. Although proponents insist that NMD is not directed at Russia and admit that it could easily overwhelm any defense that the US builds, it would be unwise to believe that Russian leaders would not continue to take into account in planning their future forces the first strike capability a deployed NMD could afford the US. They have already tied their own compliance to START II cutbacks in offensive arms to US missile defense policy and the ABM Treaty. A unilateral withdrawal would also set the US up for an eventual confrontation with Russia on the issue of weapons in space. And the US can expect less cooperation on nonproliferation and other issues at a time when the need for international cooperation is greater than ever.

NMD (as well as FMD) exacerbates US relations with China.

Despite repeated US assurances that BMD is directed at the threat from rogue states, terrorists and accidental launches, China interprets NMD as an aggressive act. Even a limited NMD system would threaten its small nuclear arsenal.

US RMD in Japan and Taiwan is also a threat to China's stated interests. Regarding Japan, China continues to resent their refusal to apologize for atrocities committed during World War II and remains deeply suspicious of the nation in general. Even relatively minor displays of Japanese nationalism are met with angry protest in China, as witnessed by the regular uproar surrounding the annual visit of the Japanese Prime Minister to the Yasukuni Shrine to honor the nation's war dead. A missile defense shield over Japan, China says, would encourage Japanese remilitarization and transfer technical knowledge that would allow Japan to develop an arsenal of offensive missiles.

Most alarming to China are the implications that missile defense would have for Taiwan. According to Beijing, under a US missile shield, Taiwan will be more likely to declare its independence. In addition, the implied linkage of Taiwan's military with the US command and control infrastructure, combined with the negation of the Chinese deterrent by Theater and National Missile Defenses make the US more likely to intervene in a crisis. Such concerns have led China to list the provision by the US of missile defense to Taiwan as one of three situations capable of causing a serious crisis in the Taiwan Straits.

Finally, China argues that the interconnection of Taiwan, Japan and the US in a single missile defense system amounts to an alliance whose ultimate goal is to contain China, increasing their anxiety over US regional hegemonism.

NMD would damage US security by straining US relations with its allies.

Our European allies are alarmed with the Administration's "broad vision" for Missile Defense. Along with elevating their unease over what many see as increasingly emboldened American unilateralism, there is serious concern that these plans, along with withdrawal from the ABM Treaty, might torpedo the whole architecture of international arms control agreements with Moscow. They hope that the US can form a new, cooperative relationship with Russia, and are also wary of the implications that proposed US systems will have for space.

As the anti-terrorism campaign following the September 11 attacks has made strikingly evident, coalitions are vital for fulfilling many important US interests. The Bush administration's rejection of a growing list of global initiatives has given the impression that the most powerful nation in an increasingly interdependent world has abandoned multilateral approaches to solving international problems. If US conduct convinces enough of the citizens of our European allies that the US pursues its own interests unilaterally and ignores theirs, forming such coalitions will be impossible. Losing the support of our allies, even after the passing of the current crisis, would

weaken the world's sole superpower much more than would the lack of a shield to guard against a threat that does not yet exist.

NMD deployment would lead to the collapse of international arms control.

The Bush administration's proposals for NMD would violate the ABM Treaty and they have recently announced their intention to withdraw from it unilaterally if Russia does not agree to US demands. Such a move would not only disrupt the deterrence-based stability that successfully prevented a nuclear exchange during the tensest moments of the Cold War, but also could very well lead to the dismantling of the entire international arms control framework. Both Russia and China have no interest in instigating an arms race with the US unprovoked, if for no other reason than they would rather spend their money elsewhere. But both nations have made it clear that unilateral NMD deployment will result in significant increases in the size of their arsenals.

Russia has stated that a US withdrawal from the ABM Treaty would negate the other security agreements that have been reached between the two nations. This includes START I and START II, which involve sharp reductions in ICBM arsenals. President Putin has also said Russia would respond to a unilateral deployment of NMD, which Russia has always believed would provide the US with unilateral military and strategic advantages, by arming its ICBMs with multiple warheads—a move that is currently forbidden under START II.

China has declared that if the US proceeds unilaterally with a NMD deployment it would no longer consider US space assets legally protected, as it says the US would be in violation of the Outer Space Treaty by not be using space for peaceful purposes only. Furthermore, the Chinese government has publicly stated that if the US proceeds with a unilateral NMD deployment, they will consider expanding their arsenal from around 20 to approximately 200. Alarmed by such a development, India could very well increase its stockpile of nuclear weapons, which would certainly elicit a Pakistani response. There is no telling where this cycle of action and reaction would lead.

A missile defense deployment would also carry with it further negative implications for nonproliferation because without the cooperation of both China and Russia, success in this area is impossible. For its part, China sees the export of weapons technology as an effective way to counter US strength.

The benefits that can be attained through multilateral approaches and collective security should not be discarded in favor of a system that might not provide benefits for many years and that would come at the expense of other already well-established and proven concepts of international security.

The terrorist threat can be more effectively countered by other means.

Today's threats come from more intangible and difficult sources than during the Cold War; the attacks of September 11 have made this clear. The National Intelligence

Council's "Global Trends 2015" said of international terror, "between now and 2015 terrorist tactics will become increasingly sophisticated and designed to achieve mass casualties." The biggest security threats to the United States are the low-tech, high-impact assaults from terrorists such as seen on September 11 in New York and Washington. Terror cannot be prevented by a ballistic missile defense system. Terrorists have vast resources but they lack the ability to build or maintain an intercontinental ballistic missile without detection.

There has been discussion of the possibility of terrorist groups seizing hold of nuclear missiles from the former Soviet Union or acquiring Scud-type missiles from Iraq or some other "rogue state." It is better to deal with such events through improved communication and cooperation between intelligence and law enforcement agencies, diplomacy and by sharing threat information.

The greatest threat posed to the United States for the foreseeable future is international terrorism. As such, the substantial resources, military, financial and intellectual, should be allocated to prevent the proliferation of terrorist networks; however, those resources would be ill-used in developing a ballistic missile system with the aim of preventing an attack from a terrorist network.