

thing. But after about a year and a half they said, "Why don't you take a year off." So I left, and then went back again for another semester, and they said, "Maybe we better part company here permanently."

I worked on power lines for a couple of years, and then started back at school. So when we got married, even though I was a little older than Lynne, she already had her B.A. and master's and was an English instructor at the University of Wyoming. I was still an undergraduate. Eventually I caught up—almost.

**TAE:** Would you recommend a person get real-world experience before going on to college?

**DICK:** I think it depends totally on the individual. I'm reluctant to give other people advice. But certainly if you were to look at my career path in those days, there wasn't anything there to indicate I might some day be successful.

There are lots of valuable experiences in life besides formal education, but formal education is very important, and I wouldn't discourage anybody from doing that. But you clearly learn a lot from work, and there are a few of us who have succeeded—like Bill Gates, who left Harvard early—even though we didn't follow the normal path.

**LYNNE:** In the United States you always get a second chance, sometimes a third or fourth. In other countries, if you don't go lockstep through the prescribed educational system, it's difficult to find another path. That's a great thing about this country.

**DICK:** Yes, it's an open society—for most people. And a meritocracy. One of the great struggles in American history has been making certain it's an open society for everybody, because it has not always been, and isn't today for everyone. But it's better than anywhere else in that regard.

Some people start with advantages others don't have. That's life. Some of us are fortunate in other ways, with people who help us along the way. When I think back about my own career, an awful lot of it focuses upon the tremendous number of people who gave me a hand when I needed it. Not that I was desperate or anything, but those relationships were as important as anything else, and they happened to a kid from Casper, Wyoming, whose dad was a civil servant and who started out with a spotty academic career at best. I could still get ahead in the world.

**TAE:** What ties do you still have to Wyoming?

**DICK:** We've still got a lot of friends there. We own a home in Jackson, where we go when we want to get away from it all. We'll spend a lot more time there once we're no longer both working full time. Lynne's got family there, her brother and sister-in-law.

**LYNNE:** And cousins.

**DICK:** My dad passed away about 18 months ago. He was still living in our old hometown of Casper. I heard today from Joe Meyer. We went to high school together. He dated Lynne at one time. He was a roommate one year in college. We played football together. He was later attorney general; now he's getting ready to run for governor. The current congressional delegation are good friends; I had lunch with Senator Mike Enzi yesterday.

Wyoming will always be home. We spend as much time there as we can.

**TAE:** What sort of man was your father?

**DICK:** Our daughter just gave me for my birthday a map of where my great-grandfather served in the Civil War. He served with the Ohio Regiment in the Civil War and afterwards went west to Nebraska in the 1880s. Dad was born and grew up in a very small town in Nebraska, about 200 people.

His father was a cashier, the only employee in a small-town bank that went belly up during the Depression. His mother was a school teacher. They married late in life. His dad had been married previously and lost his first wife, and so I knew my grandfather, but barely.

During World War II, while Dad was in the Navy, my mother and brother and I went home and lived with my grandparents in a small town in Nebraska. It's one of my earliest memories.

Dad had to leave college to go to work during the Depression because the family needed the money. He worked first with the Veterans Administration for about 90 days and then the Soil Conservation Service back in the '30s. He left for two years, served in the Navy during the war, and then went back for 37 years of federal service. Retired in the mid-1970s.

I'm described as a lot like him in terms of being someone who doesn't talk a lot, who's not very emotional. He was just rock solid, salt of the earth.

**LYNNE:** He made Dick look chatty. (Laughter)

**DICK:** Both my parents grew up in small towns in Nebraska. In terms of values, they were both part of that Depression-era, World War II generation.

After the war we moved back to Nebraska, to Lincoln. Moved into tract housing that was built in about 1946, I guess. We lived in the basement of another house, with a family. It was a period when everybody in the neighborhood was just back from military service.

**LYNNE:** One of the stories about Dick that I like is that when you first moved to Wyoming, you didn't have any friends because you didn't know anybody. So you just went down to the library and started reading history.

**DICK:** Right. I did two things that summer when I was 13. You wouldn't speak to me. (Laughter) Actually, I didn't meet her until later.

We arrived in Wyoming that summer, and I signed up for baseball and then spent the summer in the library and started working my way through World War II histories. Read a lot of military history in those years.

**LYNNE:** It was a Carnegie library, one of those great contributions philanthropists have made. I used to go to the library and read my way through the alphabet. I'm not saying I read every book in the library, but I'd go down the As, and anything I'd ever slightly heard of I would read. This was quite a way to discover *Ulysses*. (Laughter)

**TAE:** Do you both still think of yourselves as Westerners?

**LYNNE:** For sure.

**DICK:** Sure. We talked about this during the campaign. Westerners have a strong sense of self-reliance. You're respectful of other people's space and their privacy. You don't ask personal questions. Those are some of the things we think of as Western virtues.

Also, I don't know if this would be true for someone growing up today, but it was a shock for me to move east from Wyoming. I

could go up on the mountains outside of Casper, which are maybe 8,000 feet high—a big hill by Wyoming standards—and see a hundred miles in the distance. There was this tremendous sense of openness and space and huge horizons—big sky country.

Going East for the first time—to Connecticut, New York, places where there were trees and buildings and people—you just felt hemmed in, crowded. There were just too many things. There wasn't any place where you could go and see for 50 or 60 miles. Those kinds of things affect people's personalities, your culture, the way you interact with other people and look at life.

LYNNE: Isn't it in *Across the Wide Missouri* that Bernard De Voto writes about the people going West, and along about...what, Scott's Bluff?—

DICK: Chimney Rock, as I recall.

LYNNE: —Chimney Rock people would start going mad. They couldn't stand the openness, this feeling of vulnerability and being unprotected. So geography has this peculiar effect.

DICK: In those days, and we're talking the 1840s and '50s, obviously, people didn't pop back and forth. If you went West, you went West for life. It was a months-long experience. Now we take it for granted that you can today be in New York, tomorrow in Casper. But even 50 years ago, when I first went East, there was a dramatic change.

TAE: With the 50-50 tie in the Senate, you are likely to have an active role there. At one point in your career you wondered what it would be like to be Speaker of the House. Are you looking forward to being a different sort of King of the Hill?

DICK: The other day at the House Republicans' retreat I told them, "You know, when I was a member of the House, my highest aspiration was to someday preside over the House, and unfortunately I have to settle for second best and preside over the Senate." (Laughter) The Senate's a very different institution, but it is absolutely fascinating. I'm trying now, as quickly as possible, to learn the traditions and the rules of the Senate and do the right things as the presiding officer. A lot of the members are people I served with in the House—Trent Lott and so forth.

TAE: Only a year ago you were a business executive in Dallas. You don't show any signs of cultural whiplash, but you must feel something like that once in a while?

DICK: No, I think there's probably a bigger change going the other way, going from a 25-year career in politics to the private sector.

TAE: Did running a business teach you anything new about the American economy?

DICK: Yes, it clearly did. I started out already as somebody who's a strong advocate of free markets. But that's a philosophy. When you go over and become the chairman and CEO of a major corporation, all of a sudden it's not just some esoteric theory any more. It's real day-in and day-out decision-making, developing a strategy, being measured by a fairly tough standard.

In the business world, you've got to produce those financial results every quarter. If you don't, penalties are paid in the form of decline in your stock price, angry shareholders, and a board that's unhappy. You're measured on a consistent basis, and everybody knows what the standard is. In politics, you can have a policy train wreck and claim it was a great victory, and then we argue about

whether it was a victory or a failure. That's not really possible in the private sector. In politics, if you're a Senator, you get measured every six years at the polls; a Congressman, every two years. In the business world, it's much more immediate than that.

TAE: Mrs. Cheney, what is your main work going to be over the next few years?

LYNNE: I'm writing a book about why education reform has historically proven to be so difficult. I hope I'll be able to call attention to some of the good things that are going on in our society. And I look forward to following Dick around too. When Dick first decided he wanted to run, I thought it was like jumping off a cliff, and I guess it kind of was. But now that we've come through the rapids and survived, it looks to be a lot of fun.

TAE: Your last book dealt with political correctness. Some people have recently argued that political correctness, relativism, and radical multiculturalism have crested in academe. True?

LYNNE: Well, I haven't been worrying about colleges so much recently; I've been worried more about K-12 education, where a kind of orthodoxy prevails which makes reform difficult. It's not about political correctness so much as about how children should be taught. I think teaching should be very active. All of us should be concerned with passing along knowledge and skills to the next generation. But the prevailing philosophy in schools of education is that children have to discover knowledge for themselves. They have to be in charge of their own learning. That is the rock on which a lot of education reform is foundering.

TAE: Last night you both heard Clarence Thomas's speech to the American Enterprise Institute [see page 44]. He argued that political orthodoxies are now enforced with intimidation. Do you agree?

DICK: Yes, I thought it was a great speech, especially coming from him. If there's anybody who's been attacked and maligned over the years because of his views, it's Clarence. He did an eloquent job of describing a real problem. Oftentimes in this town, and I think it's gotten worse in recent years, there is a tendency to launch personal attacks, to charge people with being racist, for example, because they disagree with certain policy views. Clarence urged people not to be frightened by those kinds of attacks if they've got something to contribute to the debate.

TAE: Did you see Maureen Dowd's column attacking Thomas in this morning's *New York Times*?

DICK: I thought Maureen was out to lunch, as she frequently is.

LYNNE: Oh, Dick!

DICK: I'm sorry. (Laughter)

LYNNE: That was off the record.

DICK: No, it wasn't.

TAE: She put Clarence Thomas on a moral par with Bill Clinton.

DICK: Yes, I think she epitomized exactly what Clarence was talking about. He wasn't offering anything out of self-pity. His speech was a thoughtful, elegant statement of a very important problem, and Maureen Dowd's part of the problem.

TAE: What one thing would you most like to be able to look back on when you leave this office and say, "We did that"?

DICK: Well, that George Bush will have been one of the most successful Presidents in our history. That would make me feel very good.



# New Weapon For A New World Order

## How missile defense makes the entire globe safer

By Richard Perle

**T**he question is not *whether* a ballistic missile with a nuclear or chemical or biological warhead capable of killing hundreds of thousands of Americans will wind up in the hands of a hostile power. The question is *when*.

Pinpointing the exact date is a game played by intelligence agencies, rather like an office pool on the outcome of the Super Bowl. In the Super Bowl, though, you at least know who the players are. When it comes to the acquisition of a ballistic missile or a nuclear warhead, there is no sure way of telling.

That is why it is so urgent we begin now to build a system capable of intercepting the missile that we know is coming. The argument for getting on with it is overwhelming. The arguments against are unconvincing—and drawn mostly from ideas that developed during the Cold War but have been rendered irrelevant by its end.

**T**he best argument in favor of building a missile defense system is a moral one: It will save lives, in large numbers, in other countries as well as our own. It will discourage the proliferation of missiles and warheads of mass destruction. It will make the world stabler and safer.

Consider the following scenario, for example. Imagine a sharp rise in tension between traditional adversaries India and Pakistan, both of which have nuclear weapons and ballistic missiles. Suppose the United States Navy could dispatch an Aegis cruiser to the region with instructions to intercept any ballistic missile fired by either side. Such a capability in American hands would be highly stabilizing, discouraging hair-trigger missile attacks, reducing the likelihood of conflict breaking out in the first place, reassuring both sides.

Nations like Iran, Iraq, and North Korea are trying to acquire long-range missiles. They believe that possessing even a single missile will catapult them into a select class of powers, gaining great leverage because they will be capable of inflicting massive damage on the United States or its friends and allies. And given

time and money, these countries *can* reasonably hope to possess a single missile, or even several.

But suppose we constructed a defense that could intercept all the warheads and decoys carried by 100 or 200 enemy missiles. A Saddam Hussein in Iraq or a Kim Jong Il in North Korea would lose any confidence he could land a missile on New York or Chicago or an allied capital. The relatively easy task of acquiring a missile or two would become the impossible burden of acquiring hundreds.

In that case, even a determined adversary is likely to throw up his hands and conclude that enhancing his power with nuclear long-range missiles is simply too hard. Imagine a meeting of Saddam Hussein with his military advisors. The general in charge of Iraq's armored force pleads for money to buy new tanks and spare parts for old ones, while the general in charge of missile development requests billions of dollars for construction and testing of a new missile. If the United States has the ability to defend itself and its allies against 100 such missiles, how does the general in charge of the missile program answer Saddam's question, "What good is a \$10 billion missile if the Americans can knock it down?"

In short, the best way to protect against missile dangers is to discourage our adversaries from investing in the missiles in the first place. There can be no more powerful disincentive than to have a shield that guarantees their hugely expensive programs will fail. It is that shield, based on our most advanced technology, that will protect America best—not the flotsam of the 1972 Anti-Ballistic Missile Treaty to which the opponents of missile defense cling like shipwrecked sailors.

**S**ome Americans still treat the ABM Treaty with reverence. It remains a primary obstacle to our going forward with missile defense, so a short history lesson is needed to explain

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