



China, Iran, and North Korea already have us in their sights, yet President

Clinton denies that there is any threat. It's no surprise that the same people who

once caved in to the Soviets on missile defense now do the same for the Chinese.

KENNETH R. TIMMERMAN

Misleading statements and outright lies about America's vulnerability to missile attack have become standard fare of the Clinton administration. As president, Clinton has said more than 130 times that "no missiles" are currently aimed at the United States, a statement Clinton himself showed was patently false when he negotiated a missile de-targeting agreement with China's Communist leaders during his June 1998 trip to Peking. No less of a threat in this regard are rogue states such as Iran and North Korea, about which the administration has shown itself even more insouciant. "Long-range ballistic missiles are the only category of weapons the U.S. has chosen not to defend itself against," says Heritage Foundation defense expert Baker Spring. The reason for this reckless inaction seems to be blind fealty to an obsolete treaty, and more basically, a self-destructive anti-defense mindset in the grand tradition of Cold War appeasement.

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Just how real is the threat that a potential adversary will be able to develop an intercontinental ballistic missile (ICBM) capable of reaching the American mainland? In 1995 the CIA produced a National Intelligence Estimate concluding that no country would be able to threaten the United States with an "indigenous ICBM" for at least ten years. But dubiety of its assessment prompted Congress last year to appoint a blue ribbon panel headed by former Defense Secretary Donald Rumsfeld to take another look.

The bipartisan Rumsfeld panel handed down its unanimous conclusions on July 15, 1998, and they were devastating. First, they exposed the flaws of the CIA assessment, which ignored Russia and China on grounds that the U.S. had abandoned Reagan-era plans to defend America against a massive Soviet first strike, and that Chinese strategy calls for using ICBMs as retaliatory but not first strike weapons. The CIA had focused only on potential Third World adversaries capable of developing an "indigenous ICBM." But as Rumsfeld told an audience at the Center for Security Policy on October 7: "I don't know of a single nation on earth with an 'indigenous' ballistic missile program. There may not have been a truly indigenous ballistic missile development program since

Robert Goddard," who invented the concept of space flight back in the 1920's. "The countries of interest are helping each other.... Technology transfer is not rare or unusual, it is pervasive."

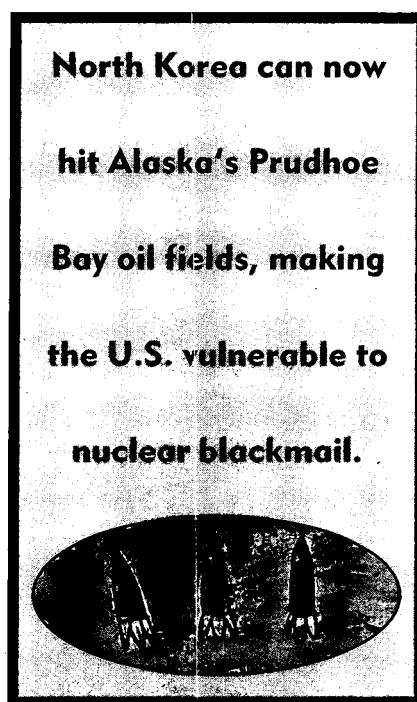
The commission concluded that among the rogue states, Iran was the furthest along, and could develop an ICBM capable of reaching U.S. targets "in an arc extending northeast of a line from Philadelphia, Pennsylvania, to St. Paul, Minnesota," within five years of a decision to build such a missile. After Iran came its partner, North Korea, which could develop missiles "placing at risk western U.S. territory in an arc extending northwest from Phoenix, Arizona, to Madison, Wisconsin." Given the extensive cooperation between Iran and North Korea, which the commission addressed in a classified version of the report handed to Congress, these two irrendentist states pose an extraordinary threat to most of the continental United States.

Added to that, the commission's public report stated, was a "high risk of continued surprise," owing to poor U.S. intelligence and prevailing prejudices among the government arms control community, which has consistently failed to evaluate the missile threat accurately: "The question is not simply whether the U.S. will have warning of an emerging capability, but whether the nature and magnitude of a particular threat will be perceived with sufficient clarity in time to take appropriate action."

The official response by the chairman of the Joint Chiefs of Staff to the Rumsfeld Commission report ironically underscored this point, albeit unintentionally. In an August 24 letter to Sen. James Inhofe (R-Okla.), a member of the Senate Intelligence Committee, General Henry H. Shelton wrote: "The commission points out that through unconventional, high-risk development programs and foreign assistance, rogue nations could acquire an ICBM capability in a short time, and that the Intelligence Community may not detect it. We view this as an unlikely development."

A week later North Korea test-fired a new multi-stage missile over Japan—and over the heads of the U.S. Navy—into the Sea of Japan. Republican aides in Congress voiced surprise at Shelton's comments, given that for several weeks beforehand, the general had been receiving satellite photographs and communications intercepts revealing preparations for the launch.

The test of Taepo Dong 1 showed that North Korea was now capable of hitting the Prudhoe Bay oil fields in Alaska, endangering a critical, multi-billion dollar U.S. infrastructure and making America vulnerable to nuclear blackmail. The CIA's national intelligence officer for strategic and nuclear programs, Robert D. Walpole, offered an explanation for General Shelton's oversight. In a talk before non-proliferation analysts last September, Walpole admitted that no one in the intelligence community had expected North Korea to develop an ICBM capa-



bility so soon. "Although the launch of the Taepo Dong 1 missile was expected for some time, its use as a space launch vehicle with a third stage was not," Walpole said. "The existence of the third stage concerns us. We hadn't anticipated it." Debris from that third stage splashed down some 3,500 miles from the launch site, giving North Korea the ability to target Alaska and possibly America's west coast, Walpole admitted. "Clearly if you can put something into orbit, you get awfully close to ICBM capability." Since the Rumsfeld Commission report, the CIA has beefed up its intelligence gathering and changed its methods of analyzing the missile threat, relying increasingly on "B-Team" experts whose job is to challenge the assumptions and conclusions of Agency analysts, Walpole said.

U.S. intelligence analysts believe that North Korea is developing this and other missiles in joint programs with the Islamic Republic of Iran. TAS has

learned that top-secret intelligence reports, presented to President Clinton shortly after the August 31 Taepo Dong test, warned that an Iranian government delegation had flown an entire plane-load of advanced telemetry equipment to North Korea to monitor the test, flying back to Iran afterwards with the results.

North Korea revealed its intentions in an unusual commentary carried by the official Central News Agency in July. Acknowledging that missile sales, which CIA analysts estimate earn Pyongyang \$1 billion per year, "were aimed at obtaining the foreign money we need at present," the commentary verged on open blackmail: "If the United States really wants to prevent our missile export, it should lift the economic embargo as early as possible and make a compensation for the losses to be caused by discontinued missile exports," the commentary said.

The administration's response to the North Korean test was astonishing. Instead of accelerating the development of missile defense systems, the Pentagon announced it had reduced funding for—and was contemplating the cancellation of—an entire component of the missile defense program, ostensibly because of production problems at a Lockheed Martin facility in Massachusetts. Since then, TAS has learned, intelligence reports delivered to the White House in November documented new deliveries by North Korea of missile components and production gear to Pakistan, Egypt, Yemen, Syria, and, especially, Libya. Intelligence sources tell TAS: "We are seeing a revived effort by Libya, which is receiving assistance from North Korea, China, and now Iran, to build a missile capable of reaching NATO bases in Europe with a nuclear warhead."

CHINA TAKES OFFENSE

China's assistance to Libya may be a new development, but the People's Republic has a long history of selling missiles to

Iran. After breaking every promise made on the subject since 1985, President Jiang Zemin pledged during his U.S. trip in 1997 that China would make no new nuclear sales to the Islamic Republic, and that it would stop the sale to Iran of cruise missiles and ballistic missile technologies. He also pledged that China would join the Missile Technology Control Regime, which requires members to establish an effective export control system to prevent the sale of missile components to countries such as Iran. Despite these promises, TAS has learned, U.S. intelligence agencies detected a massive shipment of Chinese rocket propellant bound for Iran in June 1998, just as President Clinton was arriving in China. These agencies also have evidence of ongoing nuclear cooperation.

On November 12, 1998, Undersecretary of State John Holum and top White House nonproliferation specialist Gary Samore traveled to Peking to discuss China's nuclear and missile technology sales to Iran. But when Holum and Samore broached the subject, the Chinese said they were still studying the issue. Then they hammered the U.S. envoys with demands that the U.S. end its missile defense programs, sources familiar with the negotiations told TAS. A senior arms control official at the Foreign Ministry in Peking told a visiting foreign reporter in November that China felt so strongly on this issue that it would limit its sales to Iran and join the MTCR only if the U.S. agreed not to sell theater missile defense systems to Taiwan and Japan. "I was told that this was not a formal linkage, but that the two were clearly related," said Dr. Raja Mohan, a respected Indian defense analyst and an editor of the *Hindu* daily in Delhi. William Schneider, undersecretary of state in the Reagan administration, puts it more bluntly: "This has become such a big issue that you can't go to a conference on prenatal care in China without hearing a complaint on missile defense. It has become a campaign."

Ambassador Li Changhe made China's concerns public for the first time on August 13, 1998, lashing out at the United States at the United Nations Conference on Disarmament in Geneva. Blaming congressional Republicans for starting "a new arms race" by introducing a national missile defense bill, he said that the U.S. was seeking "absolute strategic superiority and absolute security" for itself and its allies. Mr. Li called for immediate negotiations toward a new international treaty banning *all* missile defense systems, including tactical missiles such as the improved Patriot batteries the U.S. dispatched to Israel and the Persian Gulf recently to defend against Iraqi Scuds. The reason was clear, a top White House official familiar with the negotiations tells TAS: "They're afraid that if Taiwan develops an effective missile defense that would decrease China's ability to intimidate them." China's tactic of choice in its battle to prevent the Taiwanese people from electing pro-independence leaders has been to bracket the island with shorter-range M-9 missiles, as it did during the February 1996 presidential elections. China has built hundreds of these missiles and keeps them aimed on Taiwan, Pentagon intelligence officials say.

The Chinese have become increasingly strident in protesting U.S. missile defense research now that Republicans in Congress have mandated that the U.S. study the feasibility of creating a missile defense umbrella for all of East Asia, includ-

ing Japan and Taiwan, says a top White House official. In accordance with this effort, TAS has learned, the Clinton White House has set in motion an environmental-impact study on two sites in Alaska that could be used as launch sites for ground-based interceptors, seeking to appease Republicans on Capitol Hill by giving the appearance of moving forward on national missile defense. These moves have prompted a heavy-handed lobbying effort on Capitol Hill by the Chinese. One top Republican staffer, Ed Timperlake, who has co-authored a book about China's attempt to influence the 1996 elections, tells TAS that he was taken to lunch recently by a Chinese embassy official, who openly admitted that Peking's "strategic goal was to prevent missile defense for Taiwan."

The subject has become so hot that President Jiang himself berated Clinton during the June 1998 summit over U.S. plans to develop even limited theater missile defenses, which would be incapable of intercepting China's ICBMs. The Chinese were planning to raise the issue with Clinton again at the APEC summit in Malaysia in November, says former Undersecretary of State Schneider, who met with Chinese leaders in Peking just before Clinton canceled that trip because of the Iraq crisis.

Yet as the Chinese protest U.S. work on defensive systems, their own military has been aggressively developing exotic new offensive weapons capable of destroying U.S. satellites and disrupting U.S. military communications, according to a Pentagon report released on November 2, 1998. "China is said to be acquiring a variety of foreign technologies which could be used to develop an anti-satellite (ASAT) capability," the report states. "Beijing also may have acquired high-energy laser equipment and technical assistance which probably could be used in the development of ground-based ASAT weapons." Equally troubling are Chinese efforts to develop radio frequency weapons, high-powered microwave warheads, and directed energy weapons that "would upset or damage electronics in enemy equipment," the report said. "The PLA will attempt to establish Electronic Warfare dominance on the battlefield during the early, critical stages of battle."

The CIA told Congress in September that U.S. technology was now being used by China to improve the accuracy of its ballistic missiles and to develop new delivery systems capable of launching multiple nuclear warheads. Despite these disturbing developments, the Clinton administration has uttered no protest, nor has it attempted to limit sales to China of missile, space, and communications equipment by U.S. companies such as Loral Space Systems, Hughes Electronics, or Motorola (all big contributors to the 1996 Clinton-Gore campaign and to the DNC).

The administration's attitude toward missile defense has roots in its approach to the former Soviet Union. Russia has long objected to U.S. strategic missile defenses, and during the 1980's found sympathetic allies in *Time* magazine correspondent Strobe Talbott (now undersecretary of state) and top Democratic aides on Capitol Hill, who came to power with Bill Clinton opposing missile defenses on ideological grounds. Just three months after taking office in 1993, Clinton axed a Reagan-Bush era plan that would have begun deployment of a national missile defense system, getting the Arms Control and Disarmament Agency to adopt a "narrow" interpretation of the Anti-Ballistic Missile

(ABM) treaty, which was first signed with the USSR in 1972. That interpretation effectively prevented the U.S. from developing space-based, air-based, sea-based, and advanced ground-based theater defenses capable of intercepting ICBMs. The irony, says former ACDA Director Ronald Lehman, is that these moves came after the Soviet Union had ceased to exist and at a time when he and other Bush administration officials were negotiating with President Yeltsin to *share* Strategic Defense Initiative (SDI) technology with Russia, in a joint effort to develop a global missile defense network to protect against rogue states.

The Clintonites' ideological aversion to missile defense has percolated deep into the intelligence community. A top Pentagon analyst specializing in Chinese military programs, interviewed this past summer, explained China's opposition to missile defense in terms almost identical to those used by the White House theologians of arms control, who claim that missile defense is bad because it puts America's potential adversaries at a disadvantage and thus promotes an arms race. "The Chinese will do whatever it takes to maintain a credible second strike capability," the analyst said. "They would prefer it not require them to build 20,000 nuclear warheads. But if they have to build 20,000 warheads in order to maintain a retaliatory capability, I have no doubt they will do it, even though it would divert them from much higher priority things, such as flush toilets and electricity." The Pentagon estimates that the Chinese have fewer than 500 warheads today, although they are actively modernizing them to defeat limited defenses. U.S. deployment of more sophisticated missile defenses "would be seen as a deliberate effort to impoverish the Chinese and keep them in a state of subservience," the analyst said.

ALL SYSTEMS GO...STOP

Alarmed by the recent missile tests, and by the administration's repeated defense cuts, Congress tacked on \$1 billion for missile defense systems in the omnibus budget package signed by President Clinton on October 20. This came in addition to a special \$179 million appropriation for theater missile defense in May, and \$3.45 billion for missile defenses included in the defense appropriation bill.

While that may sound like a lot of money, it is spread across a number of different programs, and represents less than one-third of the annual expenditures on missile defense made during the Bush administration. Some of the surviving programs are cut-and-paste systems such as the Patriot upgrade, which was used to ward off Saddam Hussein's improved Scud missiles with less than stunning success during the 1991 Gulf War. The Pentagon and prime contractor Raytheon say they have made significant improvements since then, and are now using an all-new interceptor designed to "hit and kill" incoming missiles. The U.S. deployed batteries of the upgraded missiles, known as PAC2-GEM, to Israel, Kuwait, and Saudi Arabia in November as the crisis with Iraq deepened.

A more ambitious program using ground-based launchers is known as Theater High-Altitude Area Defense, or THAAD. This system is designed to intercept incoming missiles at higher altitudes than the improved Patriots, thereby providing coverage to a wider area, or combat theater. THAAD was supposed to be

available for emergency deployment by the end of 1998, but a series of test failures prompted the administration to slash funding repeatedly in 1998, until Congress restored funding in October. According to Heritage Foundation analyst Baker Spring, THAAD's problems are directly attributable to the administration's devotion to the ABM treaty, "since it was designed not to the best of our capabilities, but to treaty restrictions."

For several years, the U.S. has contributed funding to Israel's Arrow anti-missile system, which was successfully tested on September 14. Israel is now hoping to deploy three batteries of Arrow missiles starting next year, just as Iran is expected to start deploying its Shahab-3. But THAAD, Patriot, and Arrow all have one major drawback: they intercept incoming missiles over friendly territory. During Desert Storm, some Patriots flew just over Tel Aviv rooftops in search of incoming Iraqi Scuds. And when the Patriots did succeed in coming close to their targets (none scored a direct hit), dozens of Israelis were wounded and scores of houses destroyed by crashing debris.

An Israeli parliamentary delegation visiting Washington in September urged members of Congress to explore new technologies aimed at intercepting missiles in their initial boost phase, when they are most vulnerable, easiest to spot, and still flying over enemy territory. Boost-phase intercept programs were an integral part of President Reagan's SDI, which was headed for early 1990's deployment of satellite sensors and space-based interceptors and lasers before the arms controllers cut it back. Democratic Sen. Sam Nunn of Georgia led the fight against SDI, arguing that it violated the ABM treaty. In 1991, despite major changes in the SDI programs under President Bush that led the Pentagon to begin acquisition of a smaller space-based system, Nunn's opposition forced the administration to walk the program back to a technology demonstrator.

Companies in Israel and the U.S. are working on new, far more modest concepts, involving high-flying aircraft and missile-shooting drones, which for the first time would give the U.S. the ability to destroy enemy warheads packed with biological or nuclear warheads over the heads of the enemies who launched them. Such a capability, said Knesset member Ron Cohen, would be "a powerful deterrent" to rogue states, who have never believed the U.S. or Israel would actually retaliate against a missile attack by targeting them with nuclear weapons. If these boost-phase intercept systems work, the rogues would risk being attacked by their own missiles.

One U.S. Air Force project, known as the air-borne laser, involves a system mounted in a modified Boeing 747-400 airliner, which would be capable of shooting down enemy missiles within seconds of launch with a single laser burst, fired from up to 500 kilometers away. These systems "are intended to operate about 90 kilometers behind the front line of friendly troops but could move forward once air superiority has been established in the theater of operations," according to a 1997 report by the General Accounting Office. The Israeli system involves small, unpiloted aircraft that would loiter over the battlefield carrying high-speed anti-aircraft missiles that would intercept enemy missiles during their relatively slow ascent through the earth's atmosphere. Former Nunn aide Robert Bell, who is

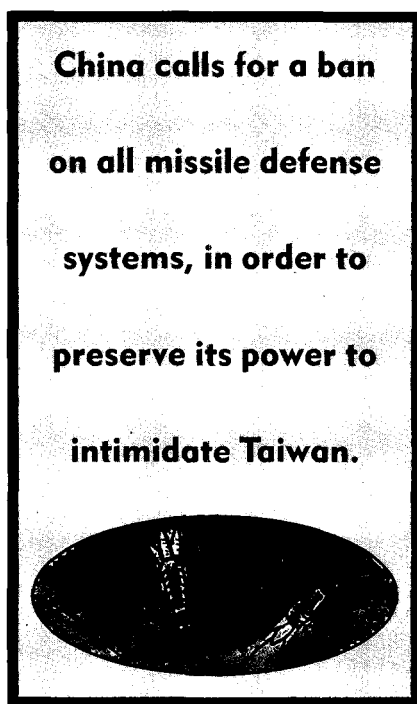
now the chief White House arms negotiator, says these U.S. and Israeli boost-phase intercept programs are permitted under the ABM treaty because they do not include space-based laser interceptors. "There is no restriction on using lasers as an anti-short range or intermediate range system," Bell tells TAS.

Bush administration SDI Organization director Ambassador Henry Cooper accuses Bell of posturing: "The Clinton administration canceled the Raptor-Talon BPI program that I left fully funded in 1993. This program was a UAV-interceptor concept more advanced than the current Israeli program. Had it been continued, I have no doubt the Clinton administration would have imposed ABM treaty hurdles before American engineers—in the same way they are doing with space-based lasers."

Missile defense advocates such as former Reagan administration Pentagon official Frank Gaffney and Sen. John Kyl (R-Ariz.) argue that the U.S. already has a missile defense system capable of protecting the American homeland, but has refused to deploy it for fear of angering the Russians and the Chinese. "The Navy has already invested \$50 billion to build a fleet of Aegis cruisers and destroyers, which contain most of the elements required for a global missile defense network," Gaffney says. "With an additional investment of between \$2 billion to \$3 billion we could have an operational, world-wide missile defense system within one year. Astonishingly, the administration simply refuses to do this." In September, Congress told the administration to increase spending on Aegis from \$190 million to \$310 million in the defense appropriation bill. Aides to Rep. Curt Weldon (R-Penn.), who was instrumental in getting a supplemental \$1 billion appropriation for missile defense in the final budget deal in October, say that \$135 million of that amount could also go for the Aegis system. Even so, it still falls far from the mark. And the administration's Bob Bell says deploying Aegis for national missile defense simply won't happen, because sea-based interceptors are prohibited under the ABM treaty and the administration "has no program to develop one."

The reason there is no program to develop Aegis into a national missile defense, says former SDIO Director Cooper, is very simple: It was canceled in 1993 during the first weeks of the Clinton administration. "Had the Clinton administration continued the program I left in place, the Navy Theater Wide [Aegis] system would be deployed by now, and with the right sensors, that system could defend the United States." The administration canceled the program "because of a slavish commitment to follow a treaty with a country that went away in 1991," Cooper tells TAS.

The Navy's Aegis system was designed to provide an integrated air defense network for our carrier battle groups, and can be rapidly deployed to zones of conflict in an emergency. Long-



range search radar on board the 40 Aegis destroyers and 22 Aegis cruisers track incoming targets and pass targeting information to missiles on board. Optimizing the system to attack incoming ballistic missiles would require a software upgrade for the radar and a new "front end" to the Standard Block 4 missile, known as the Exo-Atmospheric Kill Vehicle (EKV). The Navy conducted a successful intercept using the EKV against a U.S.-built Lance missile in January 1997.

Even without the modifications, existing Aegis cruisers have already demonstrated a capability to track "live" missiles throughout their entire flight. In February 1996, Aegis cruisers off the Taiwan coast tracked Chinese M-9 missiles launched in an effort to intimidate Taiwan, and last August a Japanese Aegis cruiser tracked the Taepo Dong 1 test by North Korea. Despite these successes, the Clinton administration has not only

refused to upgrade Aegis, but has suppressed a Pentagon study requested by Congress last year that recommended the immediate world-wide deployment of Aegis as a missile defense system. Making matters worse, says Sen. Kyl, was a White House decision to "impose very high classification on what was drafted to be—and should remain—a largely unclassified document. Classifying it would, of course, significantly constrain the use that could be made of this study for purposes of public education and debate."

Under current programs, which have been sustained only by congressional insistence, the administration plans to modify the Aegis system for use against short-range missiles, but is preventing its being designed or tested to defend against ICBMs. Said Cooper: "Because of a slavish devotion to this treaty, we are dumbing down that system so we will have the absurd situation sometime in the future where an Aegis cruiser captain sitting in the Sea of Japan will be able to shoot down a missile if it is aimed at Tokyo, but will not be able to shoot it down if it's aimed at Seattle."

SHOOTING DOWN STAR WARS

Missile defense has been a hot-button issue since 1983, when President Reagan proposed creating a national missile defense system to shield America from a massive Soviet first strike. Reagan's Strategic Defense Initiative, derided by liberals as a hugely expensive "star wars" fantasy, would have cost less than \$30 billion stretched over ten years, according to official Pentagon budget figures. Critics argue that the Clinton administration's "dumbed-down" version will wind up costing much more, while delivering much less, than the Reagan-era SDI.

Since the fall of the Berlin Wall in 1989 and the breakup of the Soviet Union two years later, the threat of a massive Russian first strike against America was greatly reduced, even in the eyes of the most hardened Cold Warriors. The threat today is more

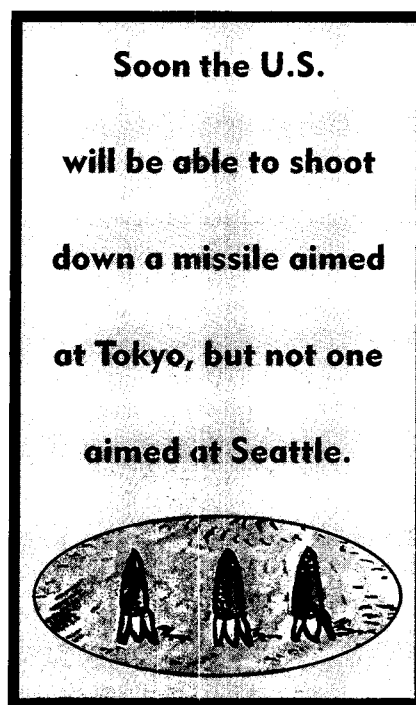
diffuse, and in a way, much more difficult to counter than during the 1980's. Instead of one adversary, the United States must now keep its eyes on a dozen potential adversaries, each pursuing clandestine nuclear and biological weapons programs, and each developing ICBMs that could strike America without warning. As former CIA Director R. James Woolsey likes to put it, instead of facing a single Soviet dragon, as we did during the Cold War, America has now descended into the jungle which is "full of snakes."

Changes in the threat led President Bush in 1989 to dramatically revise the SDI concept into a new doctrine called Global Protection Against Limited Threats. The idea was to couple space-based early warning sensors to a National Missile Defense system in the United States and to theater missile defense batteries that could be rapidly deployed to hot spots around the world.

Much of the technology had already been developed during the Reagan administration and was ready for early deployment. Iraq's success in using modified Scud missiles in the 1991 Persian Gulf War gave a sense of urgency to SDIO director Cooper, who emphasized the need for quickly fielding defenses capable of protecting against a limited strike. That program included theater missile defenses, a constellation of miniature space-based interceptors known as "Brilliant Pebbles," and ground-based interceptors.

Then in 1992, congressional Democrats, led by Bob Bell and his boss, Sen. Nunn, sharply reduced funding for Brilliant Pebbles, which Cooper says was the most promising technology developed during nine years of SDI research and could have been deployed much faster than the more costly ground-based systems. Like orbiting asteroids, these small, low-cost satellites would have been able to track and destroy enemy missiles outside the earth's atmosphere, whether they were aimed at the U.S. homeland or at our friends overseas. Once again, a promising technology was deemed unacceptable because deploying it would be in violation of the ABM treaty.

Within weeks of taking office, Bill Clinton delivered the fatal blow. The man who wrote Clinton's defense platform (in which he pledged to trim \$60 billion from the Pentagon's budget) was John Holum, who has played a major role in administration arms control policy since 1993, first as director of the Arms Control and Disarmament Agency, and more recently as undersecretary of state. "We need to get rid of the Bush administration conception of SDI," Holum told *Defense Daily* during the 1992 campaign. Soon after taking office, Clinton ordered Secretary of Defense Les Aspin to carry out a "Bottoms-Up Review" of Pentagon programs and force structure. While Aspin's review did not lead to dramatic changes beyond those already put in train



by Bush, the one area slated for major hits was missile defense.

"When President Clinton took office, the five-year program for missile defenses called for the expenditure of \$39 billion," writes the Pentagon's Ballistic Missile Defense Organization's official historian, Dr. Donald R. Baucom. "In about a year, the newly-appointed head of BMDO, General Malcolm O'Neill, and his staff had to downsize the program and restructure the organization to fit the \$18 billion Bottoms-Up Review program." Spending on national missile defense systems was slashed from \$1.8 billion in 1993 under the Bush programs, to \$380 million two years later—"taking the stars out of Star Wars," as Aspin liked to say. Conversely, spending on theater missile defenses such as the Patriot upgrade expanded in the wake of Desert Storm. White House arms controller Bell argues that the tech-

nologies "just weren't there," and says there was no point in deploying an inferior system.

Not so, says Cooper: "When I left SDIO at the end of the Bush administration, we had a fully funded program to deploy ground-based interceptors within nine years, that would have cost \$25 billion just for the first site, which could have been built in nine years. Acquisition had been approved through the Pentagon bureaucracy, and contractor bids were sitting in envelopes at Huntsville, Alabama," at SDIO headquarters. "Once the new administration came in, they were given instructions to return the bids to contractors unopened."

Congress wasn't happy with Clinton's Pentagon budget cuts, and in its 1995 defense authorization bill, mandated deployment of a national missile defense system and reauthorized the money to build it. Clinton vetoed that bill on December 28, 1995, leading to the government shut-down that cost Republicans in Congress so heavily. Three months later, the Republicans came charging back, introducing the Defend America Act, which called for the deployment of a national missile defense system by 2003. This led to the famous "three-plus-three" compromise—three more years of research which, if successful, would lead to deployable systems three years later. It was a typical Clinton maneuver, kicking the can down the road. The administration has already blown the initial deadline, which called for a full-up systems integration test of a national missile defense network in 1999 (we're now looking at summer 2000). "Following this test, the United States would be able to field a national missile defense in three more years if the threat warranted such a deployment," BMDO historian Baucom writes. Hence the critical importance to the administration of fudging the National Intelligence Estimate of the threat.

Because the president and the arms control theologians were dead-set against early deployment of a national missile defense

system, the White House gave the CIA a highly qualified order, effectively instructing them to conclude that the U.S. faced no realistic ICBM threat over the next ten years. "Instead of asking what is the missile threat to the United States and when will it materialize," says the Heritage Foundation's Baker Spring, "the White House asked what is the missile threat if you don't count Russia and China, and you don't count Alaska and Hawaii as part of the United States, and if you forget the fact that there is trade and technology sharing among the proliferant states, and if you discount space launchers like the Chinese Long March rockets as possible ICBMs. It's like asking the exterminator if I had termites in the Southeast corner of my house on December 21 four years ago, instead of whether I've got termites. He understands quickly I don't want to pay for an exterminator."

Prodded by Congress, the administration is now pursuing a flawed plan that fits the restrictions of the ABM treaty, which allows the U.S. to build ground-based interceptors in the continental United States that may never lead to successful missile defenses. "That is by far the most expensive way of going about missile defense," says Cooper. "This administration claims it can build a national ground-based system for a third of the price of what we had estimated, and do it in just three years after a decision to do so in 2003. This is simply a fraud."

Clinton was supported in slowing down missile defense spending by none other than the Joint Chiefs of Staff, who felt that scarce budget dollars would be diverted from programs they felt merited a higher priority, and by those whom Cooper calls the "cheap hawks" on Capitol Hill. It didn't help that missile defense systems were spread across the Army, the Navy, and the Air Force. "The Joint Chiefs have historically been against SDI, to protect their organizational rice bowls," argued Baker Spring. "Because no single service was chosen as top dog, missile defense never had a military patron."

According to retired Lt. Gen. Thomas McNerney, president of Business Executives for National Security and a former Air Force assistant chief of staff, missile defenses have not been singled out, but have taken a hit because the whole military budget has been cut. "We have not restructured our defense spending, and must do so to free up dollars for missile defense," he told TAS. "We have a modernization issue, we have a major readiness issue, and we have a force structure issue. Even black [highly classified] programs have been cut for lack of funds." Making matters worse, McNerney said, were the "unfunded things" such as the recent deployments in Iraq and Bosnia, which eat into the overall Pentagon budget. "We're in a budgetary pickle."

SLAVES TO A DEAD TREATY

While tight budgets may explain why the Joint Chiefs are not pushing missile defenses, critics argue that the Clinton administration has gone out of its way to ensure that any defenses that do eventually get built will be "dumbed down" by international treaties. An agreement reached with Russia in September 1997 imposed new limits on the speed and capabilities of U.S. missile interceptors, allowing slower systems capable of intercepting Iraqi Scuds, but prohibiting more capable interceptors that could

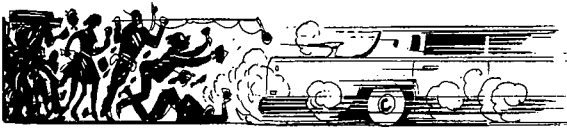
be effective against ICBMs. "We wanted to make it clear to the Department of Defense that they could test for theater defenses without raising treaty compliance issues," State Department arms negotiator Dave Wollan explained.

The new agreements specifically prohibit testing theater missile defense systems capable of intercepting North Korea's Taepo Dong missiles, the State Department said, "because they have a range greater than 3,500 kilometers." It also prohibits tests against target missiles flying faster than 5 kilometers per second, a speed quickly reached by any multi-stage missile. If Congress insists on deploying a national missile defense system, under these new agreements that system cannot be tested under realistic conditions against the type of threat it was conceived to defend against. "National missile defense involves treaty amendment issues," Wollan said. "The U.S. will have to look at the feasibility of the systems, and at the treaty issues, and then make a determination."

Is that any way to build a national missile defense system? Administration critics think not. "Fundamentally, this administration does not believe in missile defense," says Rep. Weldon, who along with Sen. Kyl chairs the joint U.S.-Israeli Inter-Parliamentary Commission on National Security. "They think arms control is the only answer. The problem is, they have the worst record of any administration in this century of enforcing arms control." Besides, said incoming House Speaker Bob Livingston on November 10, the countries most likely to target the U.S. with missiles, such as North Korea, Iran, or Iraq, "don't care what our agreement is with Russia. They could simply unilaterally decide to destroy a major segment of our population, and...there's nothing at all that we could do about it."

The Republican leadership in the Senate sent a stinging letter to President Clinton on September 25, accusing the administration of making illegal modifications to the ABM treaty, falsifying the historical negotiating record, and failing to submit the proposed September 1997 changes to the Senate for advice and consent. (The administration has pledged to submit the new agreements only after the Russian Duma ratifies Start II sometime in 1999, and as part of a package of arms control agreements.) The letter concludes with an unprecedented rebuke: "The Senate's advice and consent powers are not ceremonial or *pro forma*.... [W]e have no choice but to conclude that the ABM treaty did not survive the dissolution of the Soviet Union. Accordingly, it is our position that the ABM treaty has lapsed and is of no force."

In a videotaped interview with the Center for Security Policy last September, the former head of SDI under President Reagan, General James Abrahamson, claims that the U.S. could have deployed national missile defense systems by now if it hadn't been for the ABM treaty. "Even though the Soviet Union is gone and even though there has been a complete transformation for the other [signatory] on the ABM treaty, we have elected to keep that as some shining example of a discarded idea," Abrahamson says. "Treaties don't protect. They can modify behavior. That treaty did not modify the Russians' behavior, only ours." ❖



Wales of a Sex Scandal

The Clinton White House meets Clapham Common.

I yield to few in my admiration for this great Republic, but I was born a subject of the Crown and I hope I'll be forgiven for suggesting that there are still one or two things the old country does better. Sex scandals, for example. As we enter the second year of what Bill Clinton calls "this journey we're on" to get "to the rock-bottom truth of where I am and where we all are," a journey that—like the president—never reaches "completion," I find myself pining for the uncomplicated, quickfire climax of a British sex scandal: On Sunday, you and your paramour(s), the whips and manacles and cross-dressing outfits are plastered all over the *News of the World*. On Monday, your wife is photographed with a rictus grin standing beside you outside your country house pledging her support. And on Tuesday, you're opening the letter from the prime minister regretfully accepting your resignation but understanding your wish to be with your family at this difficult time and assuring you that the nation will long honor you for your sterling work on the Stansted Airport (Parking Facilities Expansion) Bill.

I'd almost forgotten this blissfully unchanging trajectory the other day when I found a message on my answering machine from a British radio station asking me if I wanted to comment on a sex scandal that had ensnared a fellow called Ron Davies. It seems that Ron, a married man, had made a comically inept nocturnal foray to the shrubbery of a South

London park, Clapham Common, in pursuit of some Rastafarian "rough trade." The evening began straightforwardly enough when Ron spotted "Boogie," a respected crack dealer and pimp, and beckoned him over. Boogie inquired whether Ron wanted a woman, but Ron explained that he was in the mood for a young black male. Alas, from there things went sadly awry. Instead of spending the evening in the arms of some muscular hunk, poor Ron found himself relieved of his wallet, and, when Boogie and his chums went through it, they discovered that their hapless client was, in fact, Her Majesty's Secretary of State for Wales.

Anyway, when this radio station alerted me to the cabinet minister's difficulties, I didn't bother getting back to them immediately. What's the hurry? By now, I was sufficiently Americanized to assume I had maybe ten months of lucrative on-air punditry to look forward to. Davies would surely stay put, while subpoenas were issued to his secretary, and other cabinet secretaries protested his innocence, and he went on TV and wagged his finger and said, "I did not have sexual relations with that boyo!" and Welsh Office spin-doctors denounced the vast right-wing conspiracy, and members of the Rastafarian community said that he'd always stood up for their interests, and former sweethearts posed nude for *Hot Stud Monthly*, and DNA tests were run on the foliage of Clapham Common, and more young men turned up, and some of them had been offered high-profile jobs with the Welsh Language Unemployment Benefit Leaflet Translation Office in Llandudno, and Davies insist-

ed that, according to his official Welsh dictionary, it didn't count as sex if no druids were involved, and a Royal Commission had to be appointed under a distinguished former Lord Chancellor, who was promptly reviled as an extreme right-wing sex-crazed religious whacko with links to the fascist National Front, and in the House of Commons Select Committee Labour Members of Parliament attacked the Commission for its unprecedented number of leeks. And through it all Davies would just sit at his desk, venturing out only for starry fundraisers with Welsh celebrities like Anthony Hopkins and, er, Tom Jones and, and, um, well—did I mention Anthony Hopkins?

But instead Ron Davies just...resigned. And, by the time I called back that radio station the following day, they didn't want to know. They'd moved on to Nick Brown, Tony Blair's minister for agriculture, who'd been outed by a fetching young man who'd sold his story to a tabloid. I was stunned. On the TV news, Bill Clinton was preparing to settle with Paula Jones, on the grounds that after four years, what with impeachment and all, he now had too many other scandals to give this one the attention it deserved. And Ron Davies couldn't even make his last a week.

We should not waste tears on the former Welsh secretary who, for most of his time in Parliament, has been a loud-mouthed oaf. In 1996, on BBC Wales, he took a shot at his principality's eponymous prince. "I am a republican," he declared and, as for the Prince of Wales, "anyone who spends his time killing wildlife and instructing nine- or twelve-year-old children in killing wildlife is not fit for anything, let alone to be king." The prince was "an absolute pillock" and, what was more, he was "an adulterer and a deceiver."

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