



# NATIONAL SECURITY REPORT

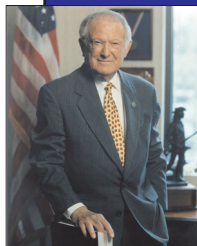
Background and perspective on important national security and defense policy issues.  
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*Henry H. Hyde*

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## FROM THE CHAIRMAN



After 7½ years of opposing the deployment of a National Missile Defense (NMD) to protect Americans against the growing threat of ballistic missile attack, President Clinton has now decided to leave a deployment decision to his successor. This decision will increase the risk to Americans and postpone by at least another year the day when all Americans will be protected against the growing threat of ballistic missile attack.

For the past five years the Congress has sought to move the Clinton Administration toward support for NMD deployment. Congress has added funds to the Administration's NMD budget request each year since 1995. Many in Congress, myself included, decried the Administra-

## Ballistic Missile Threats: *Is the United States prepared?*

tion's misuse of a fatally flawed 1995 intelligence estimate to argue that the United States would not face a long-range ballistic missile threat from rogue states for 15 years. This faulty estimate led the Congress, in the fiscal year 1997 National Defense Authorization Act, to mandate creation of the so-called "Rumsfeld Commission," which was tasked with providing an independent and bipartisan assessment of the ballistic missile threat. The Rumsfeld Commission's unanimous conclusions were sobering – it found the threat to be "broader, more mature and evolving more rapidly" than

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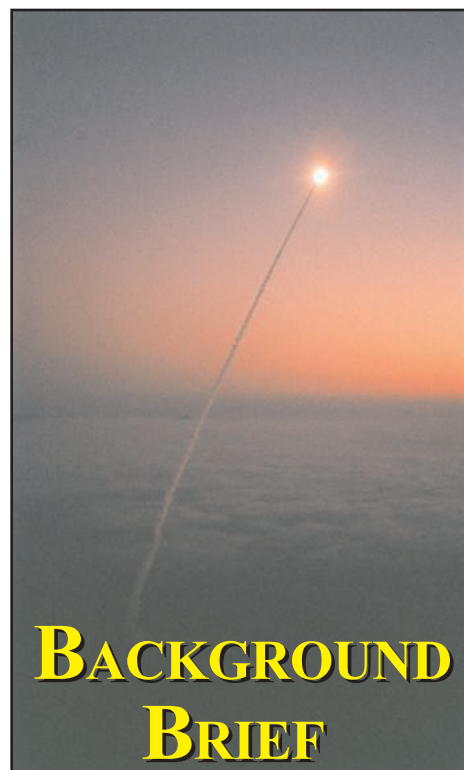
## National Missile Defense: *Countering the ballistic missile threat.*

On September 1, 2000, President Clinton announced that he would not go forward with plans to deploy a National Missile Defense (NMD) system capable of defending the United States against a limited ballistic missile attack. The President stated his view that more time was needed to develop the NMD technology and to work with other countries to enlist their support for NMD. He also expressed his concern that NMD, "would require us either to adjust the [1972 U.S. – Soviet Anti-Ballistic Missile (ABM)] Treaty or to withdraw from it" – a treaty that the Clinton Administration has long considered "a cornerstone of strategic stability."

In the eyes of some analysts, this continuing commitment to the ABM Treaty – a document that codified U.S. vulnerability to ballistic missile attack under the rubric of "mutual assured destruction" – is the largest impediment to the development and deployment of an effective national missile defense against an accidental, unauthorized, or rogue state ballistic missile launch.

### Why National Missile Defense?

The issue of defending the United States against the growing threat posed by the proliferation of ballistic missiles and the weapons of mass destruction they carry remains controversial more than 17 years after former President Ronald Reagan unveiled his "Strategic Defense Initiative." With the dissolution of the Soviet Union, and the use of ballistic missiles against U.S. forces and allies during the Persian Gulf War in 1991, the focus of U.S. missile defense efforts shifted away from defending the country against the prospect of a deliberate and massive nuclear attack on the United States, and toward developing defenses against shorter-range ballistic missiles that threaten U.S. forces and allies overseas. However, according to the U.S. intelligence community, longer-range and more sophisticated ballistic



## BACKGROUND BRIEF

missile threats from rogue states like North Korea, Iran, and Iraq are expected to emerge, and nuclear, chemical, and biological weapons technologies continue to proliferate. The behavior of these regimes has also increased concern that traditional Cold War concepts of nuclear deterrence may not apply in the post-Cold War world.

Contrary to popular belief, the United States today has no defense against a ballistic missile launched against U.S. territory. This is thought by many to be a key reason why ballistic missiles are becoming weapons of choice for those states unable to challenge the United States with conventional forces.

### The Ballistic Missile Threat to the United States

Debate over the nature and magnitude of the missile threat confronting the United

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States was fueled by a 1995 National Intelligence Estimate (NIE) that concluded, “In the next 15 years no country other than the major declared nuclear powers will develop a ballistic missile that could threaten the contiguous 48 states or Canada.” The NIE downplayed North Korea’s ability to threaten the continental United States with an intercontinental-range ballistic missile (ICBM) and asserted that the intelligence community would be able to predict with “high confidence” the indigenous development of a long-range ballistic missile by rogue states “many years before deployment.”

The controversial findings of the 1995 NIE and criticism of its analytical methodology led Congress, in the National Defense Authorization Act for Fiscal Year 1997, to establish an independent and bipartisan “Commission to Assess the Ballistic Missile Threat to the United States.” The commission, chaired by former Defense Secretary Donald Rumsfeld, unanimously concluded in its report to Congress on July 15, 1998 that “The threat to the U.S. posed by... emerging [ICBM] capabilities is broader, more mature and evolving more rapidly than has been reported in estimates and reports by the intelligence community.” The commission also concluded that “the intelligence community’s ability to provide timely and accurate estimates of ballistic missile threats to the U.S. is eroding” and warned that the United States may have “little or no warning” of a ballistic missile threat before it materializes.

The Rumsfeld Commission’s findings had a major influence on the national missile defense debate. The public release of the commission’s report was followed in short order by the launch of a long-range ballistic missile by North Korea and the test launch of a medium-range ballistic missile by Iran. In particular, the capabilities of the North Korean missile were unanticipated by the intelligence community. These events prompted the intelligence community to reassess its earlier estimates of the ballistic missile threat. In September 1999, a new and more sobering NIE was produced that concluded, “During the next 15 years the United States most likely will face ICBM threats from Russia, China, and North Korea, probably from Iran, and possibly from Iraq.” Recent press reports note that a subsequent NIE, produced in July



**According to the Rumsfeld Commission, the threat posed by emerging ballistic missile capabilities is broader, more mature, and evolving more rapidly than anticipated.**

2000, reinforces this judgment. In light of these developments, the Administration is now supporting actions that could lead to the deployment of a limited ground-based NMD system by 2005.

According to published reports, the new NIE echoes the findings of previous estimates that indicate North Korea poses the most serious new missile threat to the United States in the next 15 years. Despite the recent summit meeting between the leaders of the two Koreas and hopes for rapprochement, the North Korean leadership continues to exhibit signs that it will press ahead with development of its ballistic missile capabilities. According to North Korean leader Kim Jong-Il, his reported offer to scrap North Korea’s ballistic missile program in exchange for U.S. assistance in launching satellites, was made “laughingly” during a meeting with Russian President Vladimir Putin in July 2000. Kim reportedly told a group of business executives that “we are selling rockets to Syria and Iran” and that North Korea would continue its missile development program.

### National Missile Defense Technology

The Administration’s approach to National Missile Defense relies on the use of ground-based interceptors and radars, with space-based sensors providing early warning and missile tracking support. The Administration’s plan has been criticized by both NMD opponents who see it as

ineffective and possibly destabilizing, and NMD supporters who see it as insufficiently robust to counter more significant emerging ballistic missile threats.

The technology for a limited ground-based defense has advanced significantly. On October 2, 1999, the United States conducted a successful “hit-to-kill” intercept of a simulated ICBM target warhead, correctly distinguishing it from a decoy target. This test represented a major milestone and has been described as “hitting a bullet with a bullet.” A second intercept test on January 18, 2000 failed to intercept the target because of a minor cooling problem with the interceptor’s sensor. A third system test on July 8, 2000 also failed when the “kill vehicle” did not separate from the booster.

Some critics have pointed to the last two unsuccessful tests as evidence that a missile defense is technologically infeasible. However, although not accomplishing all of their objectives, the tests to date have demonstrated a significant level of technological maturity for systems that may one day comprise the essential elements of an initial national missile defense. Moreover, the problems that prevented actual intercepts in the last two tests involved basic technologies already well-understood and not new or unusually sophisticated cutting-edge technologies. Therefore, they are not considered “show-stoppers” to an effective missile defense.

Critics have suggested that the limited ground-based system envisioned by the



Administration could be easily overwhelmed by countermeasures, which Russia and China have threatened to deploy. However, Lieutenant General John Costello, the head of the Army's Space and Missile Defense Command, stated in May 2000, "I am... confident we have the technology to make the system adaptable to countermeasures." Moreover, the development of countermeasures may involve significant complexities for developing countries. The Department of Defense has long been aware of the countermeasures issue and is working on ensuring the effectiveness of a national missile defense system against some two dozen types of countermeasures.

Some analysts have suggested that the national missile defense task could be performed better and more cost-effectively by basing interceptors at sea on Aegis ships. This sea-based option is being developed primarily for a theater missile defense role, but could be upgraded to serve a national missile defense function. Some critics of NMD, as well as some former senior Administration officials, have advocated deployment of a "boost-phase" or "ascent-phase" defense against enemy missiles, effectively destroying them soon after launch as they rise over hostile territory, rather than waiting until they approach U.S. targets. Russian President Putin also appeared to support this concept in principle when he stated before meeting with President Clinton at the June 2000 Moscow summit that, "we could jointly put up these umbrellas above potential areas of threat [and]... jointly protect all of Europe."

### **The Anti-Ballistic Missile Treaty**

In the eyes of NMD supporters, the constraints of the ABM Treaty stand in the way of timely deployment of any effective national missile defense. The treaty, long considered by arms control advocates to be the "jewel in the crown" of arms control, was negotiated during the height of the Cold War and premised on the belief that both sides should remain vulnerable to a devastating nuclear attack by the other — in this way neither side would have an incentive to strike first and strategic stability would be preserved. While the concept of mutual vulnerability may have enjoyed some legitimacy in an era of superpower nuclear standoff, it has increasingly been called into question as a result of the demise of the Soviet Union, the proliferation of ballistic

missile and weapons of mass destruction technologies, and the emergence of other ballistic missile threats to the United States.

The ABM treaty prohibits the development or deployment of ABM systems that are sea-based, air-based, space-based, or mobile land-based. This precludes the promising Aegis-based system being advocated by a wide range of missile defense experts, as well as space-based interceptors. A 1974 protocol to the treaty also prohibits the parties from deploying more than one ground-based interceptor site. Although the United States decommissioned its sole ABM site in 1975, the Soviet Union continued to modernize and upgrade its ABM capabilities. Today, Russia maintains the world's only operational ABM site.

Despite this asymmetry, Russia strongly opposes any U.S. action that would undercut American adherence to the ABM Treaty in its present form, and has threatened to respond to a U.S. NMD deployment by abandoning its other arms control and nonproliferation commitments. Although the treaty allows a party to withdraw if its "supreme national interests" are jeopardized, several legal analyses have concluded that the treaty is no longer legally binding on the United States, as the United States' treaty partner — the Soviet Union — has ceased to exist.

Arms control advocates see continued U.S. compliance with the ABM Treaty as necessary to assure Russia that the United States does not seek unilateral military advantage. Nevertheless, there is a fundamental dichotomy between a policy that seeks to protect Americans from the real and growing threat of ballistic missile attack and a policy that seeks to perpetuate America's vulnerability to missile attack as a means of assuring "stability" in the U.S.-Russia strategic relationship.

### **Clinton Administration Policy and Congressional Actions**

Since 1995, the Congress has pressed the Clinton Administration to accelerate the development and deployment of a national missile defense. Although Congress has increased NMD funding each year since 1995, the Administration has consistently refused to commit to a policy of NMD deployment.

In May 1999, the Congress overwhelmingly passed the "National Missile Defense Act of

1999," declaring it to be U.S. policy to deploy an effective national missile defense "as soon as is technologically possible." The bill was signed into law by President Clinton on July 23, 1999. In signing the Act, the President stated that any decision to deploy NMD would be based on other factors in addition to technological readiness, including the status of discussions with Russia on possible amendments to the ABM Treaty.

This summer, the Department of Defense conducted a formal Deployment Readiness Review to assess the results of the previous NMD system tests and determine whether the ground-based NMD technology is sufficiently mature to warrant an affirmative deployment decision.

On September 1, 2000, President Clinton announced that the United States would not proceed with actions necessary to support NMD deployment, and that the decision whether to deploy would be left to his successor. In a speech at Georgetown University, the President conceded that, "the ballistic missile threat... is real and growing," but he stated, "we need more tests against more challenging targets... we should use this time to ensure that NMD - if deployed - would actually enhance our overall national security." As a consequence of the President's decision, the 2005 target date for NMD deployment will be postponed by at least one year.

### **Foreign Reactions**

A number of U.S. European allies have suggested that U.S. deployment of NMD might lead to a "Fortress America" mentality among Americans. The European Union's foreign policy head, Javier Solana, stated on May 1, 2000, "If we were not to be defended by the United States, that may risk the beginning of 'decoupling'." However, others note that the United States would be more likely to shoulder the risks of defending its allies if U.S. territory were relatively secure from ballistic missile threats. This view may not be fully appreciated by America's European allies, but it has apparently not been lost on potential U.S. adversaries. For example, although a Chinese military official's 1995 comment that Americans "care a lot more about Los Angeles than Taipei" was interpreted by many analysts as a not-so-veiled nuclear threat against the United States, it also seemed to reflect a recognition by China that as long as the United States feels vulnerable to missile threats, its freedom of

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action in defense of friends and allies will be compromised. Without a missile defense, the United States may be deterred from acting in its own interest. This, NMD advocates argue, is one of the most salient arguments in favor of a national missile defense.

European concern is also heightened by the fact that current missile defense technologies are focused on defending against short- and long-range missile threats, rather than emerging intermediate-range missile threats that may pose the most significant challenges to European security. President Clinton has indicated the United States would be willing to share missile defense technology with “civilized” countries. However, developing defenses designed specifically to counter the kind of intermediate-range missile threats U.S. European allies are expected to confront would be prohibited by the so-called “demarcation” agreement on theater missile defenses, negotiated by the Clinton Administration in 1997.

The importance of allied support for any NMD deployment was emphasized by Secretary of Defense Cohen, who stated in July 2000 that “without their support... it will be impossible to have an effective NMD system, because you need forward-deployed radars.” Without these radars, he stated, “you can’t see the missiles coming.”

In July 2000, the intelligence community completed a National Intelligence Estimate on foreign reactions to a U.S. NMD deployment. In an unusual development, intelligence officials briefed the press on the main findings of the classified NIE weeks before it was completed. Press accounts subsequently reported the NIE’s conclusion that a U.S. NMD system could strain U.S. relations with allies, lead Russia and China to pursue countermeasures, and spur other countries like India and Pakistan to step up their arms race. Both China and Russia, in a joint statement issued July 18, 2000, warned of “the most grave adverse consequences” if the United States deploys a national missile defense.

Critics contend that the NIE presents an incomplete and one-sided assessment of the impact of NMD and suggest that the unorthodox way its classified findings were publicized is designed to undercut support for a national missile defense. China is already

modernizing its nuclear arsenal, they argue, and Russia’s economic situation cannot support NMD system being envisioned would not nullify Russia’s strategic deterrent — a point emphasized to Russian officials in April during an unusually detailed briefing in the Pentagon’s secure conference room known as “the tank.”

### The “Grand Bargain”

Because the single site deployment allowed by the ABM Treaty at Grand Forks would not be optimal for defending against ballistic missile threats from North Korea, the Administration is developing plans to base an initial NMD deployment in Alaska, and to augment it if necessary with additional ground-based sites. The Administration has also been discussing with Russia possible treaty amendments to allow an Alaska deployment. Although President Putin has indicated his support for joint cooperation with the United States on theater missile defenses, he made it clear that Russia remains opposed to the kinds of ABM Treaty modifications the Clinton Administration is proposing. Nevertheless, some observers believe that modifications to the ABM Treaty can be successfully negotiated with Russia, and oppose any unilateral U.S. action to move beyond the original treaty’s limitations without Russian concurrence. Others believe that conditioning a decision to deploy NMD on the progress and expected outcome of the talks grants Russia a virtual veto over NMD deployment.

Administration critics have expressed concern that, in the waning days of his administration, President Clinton would accelerate his efforts to obtain Russia’s agreement to a “grand bargain” involving Russian acceptance of modest ABM Treaty amendments in exchange for U.S. agreement to reduce strategic offensive arms significantly below the levels established by the second Strategic Arms Reduction Treaty (START II). In their eyes, such a “grand bargain” would jeopardize U.S. security by mandating imprudent reductions in the U.S. strategic nuclear deterrent, locking the United States into an inflexible NMD architecture that could not be augmented to deal with more robust ballistic missile threats as they emerge, and re-sanctifying the ABM Treaty. The President’s decision not to authorize deployment of a national missile defense decreases the likelihood that Russia will agree to ABM Treaty modifications in the short run.

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the intelligence community had predicted and warned that future ballistic missile threats to the United States could emerge with “little or no warning.”

Despite this warning, the United States today lacks the ability to defend Americans against even a single ballistic missile launched in our direction. A key reason for this is the Administration’s refusal to commit to a policy of NMD deployment. Instead, the Clinton Administration continues to be guided by the desire to preserve the 28-year old Anti-Ballistic Missile (ABM) Treaty — a treaty signed with a country that no longer exists, in a Cold War strategic environment, and which was designed to perpetuate America’s vulnerability to ballistic missile attack.

Last year, the Congress acted to change that. In passing “The National Missile

### FROM THE CHAIRMAN (CONTINUED)

Defense Act of 1999,” we established a policy to deploy national missile defenses “as soon as is technologically possible.” The President has now decided to disregard the language of the law he signed.

Americans should not continue to remain hostage to missile threats emanating from other countries. A policy that sanctions such an outcome would be morally bankrupt and logically unsupported. The ballistic missile threat is real, and the President’s decision guarantees that Americans will be increasingly at risk from this growing threat.

Although the technology for national missile defense has advanced significantly over the past two decades, the President’s NMD decision will further delay the time when a national missile defense can be deployed. In the meantime, the ballistic missile threat to the United States can be expected to increase as a result of the diffusion of missile technology and the desire of potentially hostile states to obtain ballistic missile capability. The President’s decision will likely fuel the debate over how well the United States will be able to defend its people and its interests in the future from the threat of ballistic missile attack.