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CONTENTS
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Ballistic Missile Defense

1. US BMD Test
2. Reactions to BMD Test
3. Commentary on US BMD Test
4. US BMD Program
5. BMD Rationale
6. US Diplomacy
7. US-Russia Diplomacy
8. Japanese Role in BMD

Security

1. Deterrence
2. US Nuclear Posture

Arms Control

1. Bush Administration Perspective

Nonproliferation

1. US Programs in Russia

Announcement

1. Nautilus Institute Report

Ballistic Missile Defense

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1. US BMD Test

Prior to Integrated Test Flight-6, the successfully completed missile defense test this past weekend, a senior official from the US Defense Department conducted a briefing on the test. The links below provide the full text of that briefing as well as the accompanying presentation.
"United States Department of Defense Background Interview on Missile Defense"
"BRIEFING SLIDES: DoD News Briefing, Friday, 13 Jul 2001 - 1:30 pm"

During the test last weekend of the missile defense program's interceptor, an early-warning satellite detected the launch from Vandenberg Air Force Base north of Los Angeles and alerted a missile defense command center where battle managers then cued the prototype radar on Kwajalein Atoll in the Marshall Islands. About 20 minutes later, the kill vehicle, using its own sensors and aided by the radar, hit a Minuteman II intercontinental missile carrying a mock warhead and a decoy balloon. The US Defense Department acknowledged Tuesday that a prototype radar used in this past weekend's missile defense system test falsely reported that the interceptor had missed the dummy warhead, though several other sensors set up to monitor the test showed a hit. Lieutenant Colonel Rick Lehner, a spokesman for the Ballistic Missile Defense Organization, said, "The software they installed just couldn't keep up with the information that was coming out. It wasn't a major problem. We just need to make some modifications." John Pike, a defense policy analyst with GlobalSecurity.org, disagreed, stating, "If you are not able to make a kill assessment, you continue to have interceptors fired at targets that you've already hit." Defense officials contend the radar was too sensitive and tried to track all the debris, overwhelming the computer processing the data.

"Crucial Radar Failed Missile Defense Test"
"Missile Interception Test Was Hit-and-Miss, Pentagon Reports"

James Dao writes in the New York Times that while US Defense Department officials were very positive about the interceptor test of the missile defense system, they also were careful to point out that effective missile defense required significantly more research and development. Critics said the US should use more sophisticated decoys in the future. Enthusiastic with the test's success, US Senator Trent Lott said, "We should put this right at the top of the agenda, not allow it to be pushed aside by Democrats." Democrats are urging the administration to go slow, both in deploying the new technology and in negotiating with Russia to amend or replace the ABM Treaty in order to avoid an unreliable system or an arms race with Russia or the PRC.
"Amid Applause, Caution Urged on Missile Defense"
"Pentagon Officials Report Hit in Missile Defense Test"

Martin Kettle and Richard Norton-Taylor report in the UK's The Guardian that the launch of the Minuteman II missile used in the test was held up by several minutes when Greenpeace protesters managed to get onto the Vandenberg base. The British Foreign Office, which remains opposed to the Bush administration's plans, played down the significance of the test. A Foreign Office official said, "We are a long way from Menwith Hill and Fylingdales," referring to the intelligence and early warning stations in Yorkshire which the US is seeking to upgrade to play key roles in the missile defense system.
"US relief at missile test success"

Return to top

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2. Reactions to BMD Test

Russian Foreign Ministry spokesman Alexander Yakovenko said this past weekend's US test of its missile defense system contributes to a situation "which threatens all international treaties in the sphere of nuclear disarmament and nonproliferation which are based on the 1972 Anti-Ballistic Missile (ABM) Treaty." Yakovenko also said Russia was open to an early dialogue on the ABM and strategic arms reduction treaties.
"Russia Denounces U.S. Missile Defense Test"

Igor Sergeyev, a security adviser to Putin and a former Russian defense minister, said that ground-breaking on a US missile defense test site in Alaska would be considered a breach of the Anti-Ballistic Missile Treaty. The statement could lead to a possible confrontation in the months ahead unless US President George Bush and Russian President Vladimir Putin compromise during the G-8 or in subsequent discussions. Sergeyev said, "The start of construction of the firing range... will be the sign of a violation of the ABM Treaty. Pouring concrete is an irreversible operation, which signals that there is no return." Under the ABM Treaty, each side is permitted one missile defense site, in Moscow for Russia and in North Dakota for the US, as long as it does not protect a country's "entire territory." A US State Department memo this month said that the treaty prohibits "construction of an ABM radar in Alaska," though US Defense Secretary Donald H. Rumsfeld has said the work at Fort Greely would not violate the ABM Treaty this year.
"Russia Says Alaska Test Site Violates ABM Treaty"

A DPRK Foreign Ministry spokesman was quoted as saying by the DPRK's official Korea Central News Agency that the DPRK would take countermeasures in response to last week's missile defense test by the US Defence Department. "The DPRK is compelled to take a counter-action for self-defence by the U.S. deliberate provocation," the spokesman said, "A new global arms race has, therefore, become unavoidable. The DPRK will have nothing to lose even if all the points agreed upon between the DPRK and the U.S. are scrapped."
"North Korea vows countermeasures in reply to U.S. test"

Return to top

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3. Commentary on US BMD Test

An editorial in the New York Times argues that while the missile defense test was termed successful, future tests must take place under more realistic conditions and, during the testing process, the administration should try to negotiate a new understanding with Russia that would modify or supersede the 1972 ABM Treaty to allow deployment of a limited missile defense. The editorial speaks favorably of boost-phase missile defense. The editorial also argues that because it will be years before the US can effectively protect its cities from missile attack, it should not be in a hurry to withdraw from arms control agreements.
"A Missile Shield Road Map"

Michael Kelly, with the Washington Post Writers Group, argues that despite the critiques of missile defense, with the successful test this past weekend, these concerns fall far short of sufficiency to stop the program. He argues, "No one can any longer assert that missile defense is unattainable. And if it is attainable... then why in the world, most people will ask, should we not want to attain it?"
"Developing A Comprehensive Missile Defense System"

An editorial in the Washington Post argues that the threat endemic to the Bush administration's muddled approach to missile defense is the possibility that, in its haste to ready a system, the administration will build and deploy a missile defense without meeting two of the most important conditions for success: that it prove the technology before deployment and that it reach agreements with Russia and other nations that ensure that the defenses will increase rather than detract from global stability. The editorial argues that unilateral action by the Bush administration will antagonize US allies, inspire a weapons buildup by Russia or the PRC, and that these effects are more of a threat than any ballistic missile.
"Missile Defense Rush"

Return to top

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4. US BMD Program

Robert Snyder, executive director of the Ballistic Missile Defense Organization, said the US Defense Department's plan for expanded missile defense research includes the first-ever test of a space-based interceptor by 2005-06, in order to prove that a ballistic missile can be hit early in its flight with a space-launched projectile. Baker Spring, a missile defense expert at the Heritage Foundation, said it would clearly be a violation of the 1972 ABM Treaty if a spaced-based interceptor were deployed, but also that it is debatable whether the experiment itself would violate the Anti-Ballistic Missile treaty.
"Pentagon Revives Reagan-Era Proposal"

According to a Boeing Co. press release, Boeing and SAIC have been selected to participate alongside several European firms in the North Atlantic Treaty Organization (NATO) Active Layered Theatre Ballistic Missile Defense (TBMD) Feasibility Study to develop architecture solutions that fully integrate NATO capabilities into an effective and affordable TMD system. The contract is valued at approximately $13.5 million and will take about 18 months to complete.
"SAIC/Boeing Win NATO Theater Ballistic Missile Defense Feasibility Study Contract"

Return to top

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5. BMD Rationale

The International Herald Tribune adapted testimony to the US Senate Armed Services Committee by Paul Wolfowitz, the US Deputy Secretary of Defense, on July 12. In his testimony, Wolfowitz stated that ten years ago, Iran threatened US troops and allies with attack by ballistic missiles in the Gulf War, and that the US is hardly better prepared to meet the increasing threat from missile attack without increased investment in missile defense.
"Missile Defense: Unprepared for Manifest Peril"

British Prime Minister Tony Blair, after meeting with US President George Bush, said that Bush was wholly right to raise the issue of the proliferation of weapons of mass destruction and to look for "new and imaginative solutions." Blair said that the solution had to encompass defensive and offensive systems, in his clearest statement of support for Bush's missile defense plan, though Bush also acknowledged that it was difficult for Blair and other leaders to definitively support missile defense in admittedly vague, planning stage.
"Blair support for missile defence earns US praise"

Ivan Eland and Daniel Lee of the Cato Institute released a report which states that the Clinton administration underestimated the ability of several of the "rogue" states to develop long-range missiles, though missile threats to the US from any one of those states also depend on the intentions of that state and political developments that might affect those intentions. They argue that positive political developments, such as successful diplomacy with the DPRK and embargoes against Iraq, would allow the Bush administration to slow the development and deployment of a limited land-based national missile defense.
"The Rogue State Doctrine and National Missile Defense"
"Full Report"

Return to top

6. US Diplomacy

BASIC reports that according to a new poll, 70% of British voters agree that: "The development of the US missile defence system will encourage other countries to build more advanced nuclear weapons." The poll also showed that over 60% believe that an international agreement on nuclear disarmament would be harder to achieve in the event the US deploys a missile defense system.
"70% of Britain Fears US-Driven Arms Race"

An essay in The Economist states that there is currently a global poker game underway with the US threatening to proceed on missile defense and withdraw from the 1972 ABM Treaty, and with Russia threatening to end other arms control agreements and strengthen its ties with the PRC (which the US is unconcerned about because of the two countries' divergent interests). The essay states that this is not troubling because US economic and military power lends its threats with credibility. However, as laudable as the goal of self-defense against missiles may be, in order to maintain its international leadership the US still must win the moral argument for missile defense, against the ABM Treaty, and for a new strategic regime. The Economist argues that US President George Bush should explicitly rule out the creation of a full shield protecting the US in favor of a limited shield and the stability of international agreements.
"What are they really for?"

Return to top

7. US-Russia Diplomacy

Russia and the PRC signed a new friendship treaty but said that while they oppose US plans for missile defense, they would make their own decisions on strategic matters. Russian President Vladimir Putin said on that Russia had no plans to act in concert with the PRC should the US abandon the 1972 ABM Treaty in order to deploy a shield against rogue rockets. In the run-up to the upcoming G-8 meeting, at which the US missile defense plans and the Russia-PRC pact are expected to be discussed, Canadian Foreign Minister John Manley urged the US to respect the ABM Treaty, which would have to be altered or re-negotiated if the missile shield takes shape and Russia has sent mixed signals on whether it is willing to renegotiate the treaty.
"Putin Vows No Anti-US Action with China Over ABM"

Igor Sergeyev, a former Russian defense minister and a current aid to President Vladimir Putin, said Russia wanted faster responses from the US on setting up a framework for formal talks on its program to build an anti-missile shield and specifically wants an explanation as to why the US appears intent on scrapping the ABM Treaty. He said, "You can see that consultations are being drawn out." Sergeyev said he hoped for some progress on getting the talks started at the summit of G8 industrialized states in Genoa. Russian Foreign Minister Igor Ivanov said Russia was prepared

for dialogue with the US and that it had already chosen a delegation. He said that once the US did the same, "we are prepared to begin substantive, concrete discussions."
"Putin Adviser Seeks U.S. Decision on Missile Talks"
"Russia Ready for Dialogue on U.S. Missile Plans"

In testimony before the US Senate Armed Services Committee, US Deputy Secretary of Defense Paul Wolfowitz said threats by Congressional Democrats to cut President George Bush's proposed $8.3 billion missile defense budget would undermine Bush's effort to replace the 1972 ABM Treaty with a "strategic framework" allowing limited missile defenses in coming talks with Russia. Senator Carl Levin, chairman of the Senate Armed Services Committee, said, "No one I know is willing to give Russia or anyone else a veto over our actions. But Russian reaction to a unilateral breach of an arms control agreement is relevant to our security and could leave us a lot less secure." However, several Democrats have said they would support a unilateral withdrawal if concerted negotiations with the Russians failed.
"Democrats Are Warned on Missile Stance"

Return to top

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8. Japanese Role in BMD

Howard H. Baker, the new US Ambassador to Japan, said that Japanese participation in the US missile defense system may force it to consider revising the pacifist constitution that restricts its military. He said, "I think the reality of circumstances in the world is going to suggest to the Japanese that they reinterpret or redefine Article 9 of their constitution." Japan's constitution currently renounces the use of force as a means of settling disputes, and has been interpreted as prohibiting Japan from acting to defend another country.
"Japan May Be Forced To Decide On Charter"

Return to top

Security

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1. Deterrence

Robert S. McNamara, former US Secretary of Defense, and Ambassador Thomas Graham Jr., president of the Lawyers Alliance for World Security, argue in an editorial in the New York Times that deterrence and the agreements that frame it must continue to be a factor in US-Russian relations because neither the US nor Russia has committed to the near elimination of their strategic nuclear arsenals. They argue that even if the US and Russia each move forward to cut their arsenals to 1,500 warheads, the reality of mutually assured destruction will not change until the US can build sufficient defenses that can guarantee missiles can not hit the US. Until that time, they argue, maintaining mutual deterrence means preserving the international agreements that establish its framework as otherwise deterrence is a less reliable and considerably more anxious version of the deterrence policy that has kept the peace now for many years.
"Nuclear Arms Still Keep the Peace"

Return to top

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2. US Nuclear Posture

US Admiral Richard W. Mies, chief of the US Strategic Command in Omaha, contradicted President George Bush's promise to reduce the US nuclear forces when he told a Senate subcommittee that it is "naive and mistaken" to believe "that the 'nuclear danger' is directly proportional to the number of nuclear weapons and, accordingly, lower is inevitably better." US Defense Secretary Donald Rumsfeld told Congress in June that Bush's plan to reduce strategic nuclear forces was more complicated than it originally appeared. As a senior congressional expert on defense said, "Mies and others have been dragging their heels and [Rumsfeld] can't go forward without them." Mies told the senators that the Rumsfeld study should follow the advice of a national security adviser from the Clinton administration, whom he quoted the adviser as saying, "Rather than spending our energies on radical cuts in our respective nuclear arsenals, we should be concentrating our efforts on strengthening the security and safety of Russian weapons."
"Nuclear Arms Chief Questions Cut in Warheads"

US Admiral Richard W. Mies, chief of the US Strategic Command in Omaha, writes in a letter to the Washington Post that it had drawn the wrong conclusions from his statements. Mies clarifies, "The defense strategy reviews and the Nuclear Posture Review that the secretary of defense has undertaken provide an opportunity to develop a coherent, strategy-based approach to future defense needs that will achieve the president's objective: a deterrent strategy with lower nuclear salience, reduced warhead numbers and a less adversarial character." He states that, based on actions the military has taken to remove assets from nuclear service, the US military is not resisting US President George Bush's plans for nuclear cuts.
"Cutting the Nukes"

Return to top

Arms Control

1. Bush Administration Perspective

Francine Kiefer writes in The Christian Science Monitor that US President George Bush's use of the terms "framework" and "agreement" rather than "treaty" to describe certain foreign policy goals, reflects the Bush administration's aversion to treaties in general and arms-control treaties in particular. Michael McFaul, a Russia expert at the Carnegie Endowment for International Peace, says, "They don't like to constrain the individual in domestic politics, and here they don't want to constrain the United States." While arms control critics argue that it takes years to put an arms control treaty into effect and that none have been successfully negotiated in a decade, experts also worry that moving away from treaties sends negative signals to other countries, and that Russia is already threatening to build a new generation of multiple-warhead nuclear missiles if the US pulls out of the ABM Treaty.
"Why Bush team is no fan of arms-control treaties"

Return to top

Nonproliferation

1. US Programs in Russia

According to a Bush administration official, an administration's review of some 30 programs, aimed at helping Russia stop the spread of nuclear, chemical and biological weapons, has concluded that most of these programs are vital to US security and should be continued. The review concluded that most of the $420 million US Defense Department Cooperative Threat Reduction programs are "effectively managed" and the administration also intends to expand US State Department programs that help Russian scientists engage in peaceful work through the Moscow-based International

Science and Technology Center and other institutions. The Bush administration will seek to restructure or end two programs also criticized in Congress: a $2.1 billion effort to dispose of hundreds of tons of military plutonium and a program to shrink Russian cities that were devoted to nuclear weapons development.
"U.S. Review on Russia Urges Keeping Most Arms Controls"
"U.S. to Revamp Parts of Russia Arms Control Aid"

Return to top

Announcement

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1. Nautilus Institute Report

The Nautilus Institute has published a CD with a collection of previously highly classified military documents. The new CD contains copies of six nuclear force structure studies and briefings completed by U.S. Strategic Command (STRATCOM) between 1991 and 1996. The documents, partially declassified and released under the Freedom of Information Act between 1996 and 2000, show how STRATCOM nuclear planners developed limits for how deep nuclear arms control could reduce nuclear weapons. STRATCOM's preferred force structures and arms control policy essentially were adopted by the Bush and Clinton administrations, and continue to influence the review of nuclear weapons currently underway under Defense Secretary Donald Rumsfeld. The CD also contains a 23-page summary report entitled "The Matrix of Deterrence."
"US Nuclear Force Structure Studies"
"The Matrix of Deterrence"
"Nautilus Publishes CD With Nuclear FOIA Documents"

Return to top

The NPP Weekly FLASH Update aims to serve as a forum for dialogue and exchange among nuclear weapons policy and security specialists.

We invite you to reply to this report, and we welcome commentary or papers for distribution to the

network.

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