

## **Stop Star Wars**

**Bulletin no. 2, April 2001**

### **Opposition to Star Wars Mounts**

International and US domestic opposition to Star Wars is increasing. In the US, senior Democrats are speaking out against the Bush Administration's confrontational policies. Senator Joseph Biden (senior Democratic member, Senate Foreign Relations Committee): "... If people aren't careful, National Missile Defence could come at the expense of both nuclear non-proliferation and alliance cohesion... All this for a system, that at this point we cannot yet build, at a cost we have no idea of."

Meanwhile, the Greenpeace flagship, Rainbow Warrior, has arrived at the Kwajalein Missile Range, in the Republic of the Marshall Islands, to protest against the forthcoming US Star Wars missile test. Greenpeace is campaigning against Star Wars because it will make conflict more likely and increase the threat of nuclear conflict.

This edition of the *Stop Star Wars Bulletin* includes an editorial from *The Observer*, which reports on the Bush Administration's new thinking on defence – that "*America needs new, long-range nuclear bombers with which to 'fight and win a nuclear war' in the Far East*".

The *Bulletin* also includes:

- Democrats Speak Out Against "lose-lose" Defence Policy
- US Policy Towards North Korea
- US Drops the "N" from NMD
- Missile Defence Programmes: Behind Schedule and Over Budget
- China Becomes US Enemy Number One
- Agence France Presse: "UN disarmament talks wind up with zero progress"
- *The Guardian*: "Why Bush needs the bad guys"

In March in Washington DC, Secretary of State for Defence Geoff Hoon said that the "United Kingdom would want to be helpful when decisions are taken on how the US intends to move forward" on missile defence. Greenpeace believes that the UK must reject proposals from the US for the use of Fylingdales or Menwith Hill as part of a "Star Wars" system and that there should be a full public debate on the implications of UK involvement.

Greenpeace therefore ask Members of Parliament to sign EDM 469 on National Missile Defence calling on Her Majesty's Government "to have a full parliamentary debate on the implications of involving Fylingdales in the NMD programme.

## Democrats Speak Out Against “lose-lose” defence policy

**William Perry**, US Secretary of Defense (1993-1997) and Leon Fuerth, National Security Adviser to Former Vice-President Al Gore are among senior members of the Democrats to publicly criticise Bush’s policies on nuclear weapons and missile defence.

**William Perry**, at the Liu Centre for the Study of Global Issues, Canada, 16 February: “A decision to deploy could...actually increase the threat against us...A major increase in Chinese missile defence deployments could heighten Indian concerns and lead it to increase its nuclear arsenal, which could then trigger a response from Pakistan. Harder to forecast, but at least as worrisome, is how Japan, Korea and Taiwan would react to this increase in regional military threat.”

**Leon Fuerth**, the *Washington Post*, 20 February: “[Bush’s position] appears to be that we will give the Russians an option to sign on to whatever form of defence we decide to build, but if they do not, we will give notice and abandon the ABM Treaty without regret, making it impossible for either side to know how far the other will go in deploying strategic defences. Perhaps the Russians will buy into all of this. If they do, we could have a fatally flawed nuclear relationship, by mutual agreement. ...

On the other hand, if the Russians do not buy in, we will end up with an open field for a new arms race: no arms control agreement to formally confine offensive nuclear weapons; no agreement to regulate defensive systems; and no agreement to prevent renewed testing and diversification of nuclear weapons. That’s not win-win. It’s not even win-lose. It’s lose-lose.”

## US Policy Towards North Korea – an excuse for missile defence?

The Democrat leadership in Congress has written to President Bush, urging him to continue to engage in the peace process between North and South Korea, begun under the Clinton Administration.

The letter from Senators Tom Daschle, Joseph Biden and Carl Levin, along with Representatives Richard Gephardt, Tom Lantos and Ike Skelton reminded Bush that “late last year North Korea suggested it may be ready to permanently address U.S. and allied concerns regarding its nuclear and missile capability - a major destabilising force in East Asia and a principal threat to the security of the U.S. and its allies in the region” and called on him to “thoroughly explore the possibility of reaching agreements that are in our national interest.”

The Bush Administration has announced that it is reviewing policy towards North Korea and has suspended discussions between the two states on issues of ballistic missile testing, development and export policy. In response North Korea has announced that it is reviewing its moratorium

on ballistic missile tests. See also *Guardian editorial* : "Why Bush needs the bad guys"

## US Drops the "N" from NMD

US Secretary of Defense Donald Rumsfeld has ended the distinction between US National Missile Defence (NMD), aimed at defending US territory from ballistic missile attack and Theatre Missile Defence (TMD), intended to protect US allies and forces deployed overseas. Dropping the N from NMD is intended to please US allies, who would be covered by the Bush Administration's plans for a wider missile defence system.

NATO Secretary General George Robertson welcomed the move saying that "instead of seeing a major trans-Atlantic row over 'whether' America should deploy a 'national' missile defence system, we are actually going to see some very serious consultations on 'how' a broader missile defence system and strategy will come into effect."

## Missile Defence Programmes: Behind Schedule and Over Budget

Two US Government reports have revealed problems with key elements of Republican missile defence plans. A report from the US General Accounting Office in February found that the Air Force's missile-tracking satellite programme, Space-Based Infrared System-low (SBIRS-low) is "at a high risk of not delivering the system on time or at cost or with expected performance". The programme is intended to deploy 24 SBIRS low satellites in orbit from 2006-2010, maintaining them in operation until 2022, at a total project cost of \$11.8 billion. (*Defense Acquisitions: Space-Based Infrared System-low at Risk of Missing Initial Deployment Date*, GAO-01-6, February 28, 2001.)

Similarly the Pentagon Director of Operational Test and Evaluation's FY00 Annual Report warns that the Navy Theatre-Wide programme, which many Republican proponents of missile defence favour for a quick deployment, will not be viable for at least five years. According to the report the existing National Missile Defence programme also does not have "the pace of acquisition to support deployment and the test content does not yet address important operational questions." (Department of Defense, *Director of Operational Test and Evaluation's FY00 Annual Report*, March 2001.)

## China Becomes US Enemy Number One

US Defense Secretary Donald Rumsfeld has outlined a reorientation of US defence policy away from Russia and towards China. Rumsfeld is currently leading three Pentagon reviews, including a strategy review and review of nuclear policy and missile defence options, the results of which are expected to be discussed at NATO's summer Ministerial meetings in May and June.

According to the *Washington Post*, Rumsfeld and Andrew W. Marshall the Pentagon official in charge of the strategy review have briefed President Bush that the "Pacific Ocean is the most likely theatre of major US operations, as China becomes more powerful and Russia less so." This would "require an additional emphasis on 'long-range power projection'", including the use of long-range bombers. Missile defences are expected to play a central role in such a strategy.

The Pentagon is also reportedly concerned that the "proliferation of missiles and weapons of mass destruction could cause US allies to limit access to overseas bases". US allies might prefer not to host US bases, fearing that they could become the targets of nuclear, chemical or biological weapons themselves.

In the last month China has announced that it is increasing its defence budget this year by 18% to approximately £12 billion. However, China is believed to spend between twice and five times this amount on defence, with additional hidden spending on research and development and money coming from sales of military equipment overseas.

The focus of the latest increase is Beijing's ongoing confrontation with Taiwan, which is seeking assistance from the US with weapon systems and theatre missile defences. China is also modernising its nuclear forces with the objective of making them capable of surviving a US nuclear first strike and of penetrating a US missile shield.

### **Agence France Presse, 27 March 2001: UN disarmament talks wind up with zero progress**

"GENEVA, 27 March: The UN Conference on Disarmament has wound up nine weeks of talks here without any glimpse of negotiation on any agenda item including the demilitarisation of space. The Conference's 66 members, who will resume talks in May, have been looking for a way to conduct negotiations on a number of tricky questions for three years. As well as the non-military use of space, they also face negotiating a treaty banning fissile material, and general disarmament agreements.

Since the new US administration's arrival in January, Washington has underlined its plans for a national missile defence (NMD) initiative, despite opposition from China, Russia and a number of European states. The plans have effectively held up all other negotiations at the Conference, the international community's sole multilateral negotiating forum on disarmament, despite appeals by the UN Secretary-General Kofi Annan. The Conference is due to resume its work on May 14 until June 29, and will hold a third session from July to September."

### ***The Guardian*, Editorial 12 March 2001: "Why Bush needs the bad guys"**

US presidents have always had a penchant for bogeymen. Such personifications of evil make a complex world easier to explain to

American voters, and they provide moral underpinning for actions subsequently taken in pursuit of US interests. Thus in recent years Iran's Ayatollah Khomeini, Libya's Colonel Gadafy, Panama's Manuel Noriega, Haiti's Raoul Cedras and Serbia's Slobodan Milosevic have all been cast in the role of bad guy. Top of the current bogeyman charts is the ever menacing Saddam Hussein, with a lifetime's achievement award going to Cuba's Fidel Castro.

During the Clinton presidency, the bogey concept broadened to include entire countries, known as "rogue states". Former secretary of state Madeleine Albright, trying to be diplomatic, changed this to "states of concern". But the rogues are back with a vengeance. Twice in the past fortnight President George Bush has highlighted the threat to the US posed by "rogue nations", thereby further expanding the definition to embrace whole peoples and not just their governments. To qualify for such pariah status, a nation must actively support terrorism, be building nuclear or other weapons of mass destruction, or be busy exporting the same to suspicious customers. Top of Mr Bush's list are North Korea, Iran, Libya and, of course, Iraq.

Rogue nations, it is already clear, are the cornerstone of Mr Bush's otherwise still unstable foreign and security edifice. On their shifty shoulders rests the entire raison d'etre of national missile defence (NMD). Dubya may have little or no idea what to do about Ariel Sharon or Japan's economic crisis, but he is absolutely certain of one thing: those missiles are essential to deter the rogues. The distorting effect of this puerile thinking was on display in Washington last week when, to secretary of state Colin Powell's evident discomfiture, Mr Bush told South Korea's President Kim Dae-jung he was ending the policy of engagement and negotiation with the Pyongyang regime pursued by Bill Clinton.

Even though Mr Kim, a key US ally, is desperate to advance the dialogue begun at last year's historic summit with Kim Jong-il, and even though the future of the deprived, half-starved northern population depends on his success, Mr Bush said bluntly he did not trust North Korea and effectively pulled the plug on détente. Pyongyang now warns that it may be forced to resume building nukes and missiles. To which Mr Bush and his hawkish advisers smilingly reply: all the more reason to build NMD!

There is a cynical pattern to be discerned here. While the Clinton administration made tentative gestures towards Iran, Mr Bush's people demonise Tehran as recipient and purveyor of threatening weapons and policies. Iran's internal struggle between reformers and the forces of clerical reaction is ignored; the obvious need of embattled President Mohammad Khatami, facing elections this June, to be able to demonstrate the benefits of his guarded opening to the west goes unrecognised. An opportunity exists to end Iran's isolation that may soon be lost. But what does Mr Bush do? Instead of offering a hand, he cries "mad mullahs!" and demands more missiles.

There is another way, if Mr Bush would only look. Britain and many EU countries are working hard to develop links with North Korea, Iran and Libya. Most also now agree that endless, thoughtless ostracism of the Iraqi nation is no longer a viable policy. So why not stop posturing and start talking? Because Mr Bush wants his missiles. And to get his missiles, the president needs rogues.

***The Observer, Editorial 1 April 2001: "The US is not fit to run the world, we must help Europe take on the job"***

In the nineteenth century, it would have been regarded as the precursor to a declaration of war. If a powerful state said it must reconfigure its defence and weapons structure specifically in order to fight and win a war on the terrain of a second weaker state, the bellicose message would have been unambiguous. If there were no provocation or excuse, its malevolence would have been evident to all.

But this is precisely how George Bush's new government has threatened China. His new Secretary of Defence, Donald Rumsfeld, a Cold War veteran, says America needs new, long-range nuclear bombers with which to 'fight and win a nuclear war' in the Far East, a plain reference to China. In the delusions of Washington right-wing think-tanks, the battle for global supremacy in the twenty-first century will be between China and America, even though China is decades away from having even the nuclear capacity of the UK.

This is the frightening universe inhabited by the key policymakers of the Bush administration and it goes some way to explaining the President's unilateral decision last week to pull out of the Kyoto Protocol on climate change. Not merely does America come first - 'We will do not do anything that harms our economy,' said Mr Bush - but the world in which America is put first is seen through a mist of demagoguery masquerading as the new realism. This now threatens the entire fragile fabric of world affairs.

In the Bushite world-view, concern about climate change is a socialist plot distorting scientific evidence to justify an assault on the American way of life. Communist China is a growing menace. America is so beset by rogue states like North Korea that international treaties governing missile use must be torn up to allow the US to construct a unilateral missile defence system.

Even when the diplomacy of South Korea opens up the possibility of North Korea giving up plans to build missiles in exchange for food and aid, the offer is rejected. It would prejudice the rationale behind the new missile defence system. Mr Rumsfeld has also accused the Russians of being 'a nation of [nuclear] proliferators', disregarding Russia's near exemplary record on proliferation. The Cold War may be over but the Bushites need to ignore Russia's painful path towards democracy and capitalism if it is to remain an arch enemy.

This dangerous distortion of reality results not only from the corruption of the conservative mind. Another cause is no less sinister. The Petroleum Club of Houston, Mr Bush's Texan oil backer, is now central in forging American energy and environmental policy. The defence contractors, also large campaign donors, are agitating successfully for the orders that will flow from the national missile defence system. The Business Round Table, another major campaign contributor, is getting immediate payback from suspension of pro-worker legislation and an astonishingly regressive tax reduction package.

For Britain, this is a decisive moment. Our reflex action is to stand beside our closest ally, to win trust and to attempt to influence from inside. It is a view born of the long-held belief that, in the last resort, America will do the right thing. But the America that is emerging after winning the Cold War is not the America that offered the world enlightened and broadly liberal leadership from the 1930s onwards. It is an America that is reverting to the conservatism and unilateralism of earlier in the last century.

The most urgent task now is to fill the leadership void that the US is creating under its new President. This means a significant new role for the European Union. The EU could offer North Korea the food and aid it requires in exchange for relinquishing its missiles. The EU with Russia, China, India and Japan could forge the climate change convention - without the US. The euro-zone could stabilise the world economy.

If the US wants to play hardball, the EU can play hardball back. And the majority of US citizens who voted for a different President with a different set of political priorities and who are now as alarmed as the international community would know that they have allies abroad. That Britain should pursue a pro-European foreign policy is not now just a matter of national interest - it has become a matter of global interest.

### **Star Wars Calendar**

March-April, Hearings on NMD in the Danish Parliament, Copenhagen  
March - June, next full scale NMD test, Kwajalein Atoll and Vandenberg Air Force Base, California  
14 May - 29 June, next session of the Conference on Disarmament, Geneva  
29-30 May, NATO Foreign Ministers meeting, Budapest  
June, NATO decides winners of Theatre Missile Defence feasibility study contracts, the Hague  
7-8 June, NATO Defence Ministers meeting, Brussels  
14-15 June, US-EU Summit, Stockholm and Goteburg, Sweden  
Mid-June, first visit to Europe by President Bush  
18-22 July, G8 Summit, Genoa  
12-13 November, Missile Proliferation 2001 Conference, Edinburgh