

Stop Star Wars

www.stopstarwars.org

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Star Wars "is like building a \$100 billion lock for the back door when there's no wall on the back of your house." *Owen Cote, Massachusetts Institute of Technology*

Star Wars tests in early 2002 to break ABM treaty?

Behind the smiles and handshakes in Crawford, Texas, at the summit between Presidents Bush and Putin, a much mooted amendment to the ABM treaty failed to materialise. This leaves the U.S. administration with a major problem. Defence Secretary Rumsfeld has indicated that missile tests involving the AEGIS radar system, now scheduled for February 2002 risk breaking the 1972 agreement as does proposed construction work at Fort Greely, Alaska, in the spring/ summer of next year. Many in the Russian administration, and elsewhere, continue to see the ABM treaty as the "cornerstone" of the existing arms control regime.

The summit did produce an announcement from Bush of cuts to the current U.S. nuclear arsenal – down to a level of around 2000 over the next decade. Whilst Greenpeace welcomes any cuts in nuclear weapons there is every danger that any cuts made will be completely undermined by the destabilising effects of the U.S.'s continued development of Star Wars. Further, the cuts announced are not verifiable or binding through international agreements and there is no information as yet as to the impact on "tactical" nuclear weapons. The cuts should also be seen in the context of the current development of so-called "bunker buster" nuclear weapons and U.S. failure to ratify the Comprehensive Test Ban Treaty – or even to attend ongoing negotiations for its ratification in New York from November 11-13th

Greenpeace Star Wars trial delayed until January 2002

The trial of 15 Greenpeace activists and two freelance journalists for a protest against the most recent Star Wars test in July of this year has now been delayed after negotiations with the court until January 8th 2002. Thank you to those of you who contacted the US Ambassador and Tony Blair on this matter – for more details please see October's bulletin – available at www.greenpeace.org.uk

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In the interest of national security we urge you to deny funding for any program, project or activity that is inconsistent with the Anti-Ballistic Missile (ABM) treaty. The tragic events of September 11 eliminated any doubt that America faces security needs far more substantial than a technically improbable defence against a strategically improbable Third World ballistic missile attack.

Regarding the probable threat, the September 11 attacks have dramatised what has been obvious for years: A primitive ICBM, with its dubious accuracy and reliability and bearing a clear return address, is unattractive to a terrorist and a most improbable delivery system for a terrorist weapon. Devoting massive effort and expense to countering the least probable and least effective threat would be unwise.

Regarding the technology, while "hitting a bullet with a bullet" under laboratory conditions is feasible, it is far more difficult to design a system that can survive and provide effective protection against a surprise attack that employs varying countermeasures, some of which may surprise the defence. The inherent advantages of the offence exceed the inherent advantages of superior American technology, particularly if the offence is a rogue state that needs only to succeed with one among many weapons to accomplish its purpose.

Previous attempts at a national missile defence have collapsed as it became evident that performance was much lower and cost much higher than advertised. We see no evidence systems currently being put forward will meet or merit a different fate.

Our nation can gain more effective protection against a weapon of mass destruction on a ballistic missile by keeping such weapons from proliferating into the hands of hostile entities. Abrogation of the ABM treaty, added to recently expressed hostility toward other arms control agreements, would also undermine non-proliferation. It would also undermine as well co-operation with Russia and China on reducing nuclear dangers. We therefore urge that the ABM treaty remain in force.

The Bush/ Putin summit – a selection of commentary.

Los Angeles Times, November 16, 2001

"The United States should not be wasting increasingly scarce resources on the 21st century's version of the Maginot Line. Instead, it should spend a little more to help Russia keep track of and decommission its nuclear stockpile; last month Congress rejected spending an additional \$131 million to help accomplish that. Putin clearly wants to move from a lingering Cold War mentality to alliance with the West. One of the most important changes is a willingness to work with NATO on common policies against terrorism and weapons proliferation. This is an amazing contrast with the threatening noises Russia was making until recently about NATO and its expansion into the Baltic states. Bush's aim should be to lock in Russian co-operation as quickly as possible so that Putin's successors cannot reverse any changes. Missile defence is a mirage. Effective co-operation with Russia is not."

The Minneapolis Star Tribune, November 16, 2001

"...Don't expect the United States to make a new push to ratify the Comprehensive Test Ban Treaty; this administration does not believe in it. But without the CTBT, non-proliferation is dead in the water, along with the broader notion of arms control. The United States could not send a clearer signal to the world: America will look after itself; other nations should do the same. If that involves developing and deploying nuclear weapons, that's their choice. The United States will, in the meantime, work hard to develop a national missile defence so it need not worry no matter how many nations go nuclear.

Maybe this new strategic orientation is a good idea. We don't think so, but perhaps we are wrong. The way to find out would be to have a national discussion on it, especially a congressional discussion eliciting the views of experts from many disciplines. But since Bush proposes no treaty with Russia, Congress will have no opportunity to examine the thinking behind these cuts and the implications for the arms-control future. Nor will the American people have that opportunity. In a breathtaking move, a small group within the Bush administration will have turned U.S. nuclear policy very close to 180 degrees from where it has been for many decades, under both Republican and Democratic administrations. There will be no consultations and no effort to build national consensus. That is an infuriating and scary prospect. Congress is left with one power to exercise: the power of the purse. Democrats in the Senate especially should use that power to compel a full and public debate over the U-turn President Bush proposes in America's nuclear strategy..."

USA Today, November 16, 2001

"...While Bush and Putin failed to strike a deal on the issue that has divided them the most-U.S. plans for a national missile defence-they avoided letting it become a point of confrontation that could undermine everything else. The question now is whether hard-liners in Moscow and Washington can shake their Cold War mentality and be smart enough to accept a good thing when they see it. Since September 11, Putin has in myriad ways signalled that he sees Russia's future as part of the West. If helping him out-and kicking the missile- defence can down the road a bit-helps keep that goal on track, this summit will have been an important success for both countries..."

Newsday, November 20 - Ivo H Daalder and James M Lindsay (the Brookings Institute)

Bush is " actually proposing only slightly deeper cuts than the 2,000 to 2,500 range that Bill Clinton proposed four years ago. Even then, Bush got his lower numbers only by changing the standard rules for counting nuclear weapons. The Clinton Pentagon generated its numbers based on the belief that the United States needed to retain a robust force capable of destroying Russia's economic and military infrastructure. But if, as Bush said last week, "Russia is no

longer our enemy", why should that presumption continue to drive U.S. nuclear weapons planning?

" While Bush said yet again last week that the Cold War is over, his approach to nuclear strategy remains mired in Cold War thinking. It saddles us with far more nuclear weapons than we need, fails to find creative solutions to our disagreements with Moscow on missile defence, and underestimates that threat posed by terrorists looking to get weapons of mass destruction."

Star Wars Weapons Jeopardise the War on Terrorism, by Robert M. Bowman, Lt. Col., USAF, ret. (excerpt)

The World Trade Centre is gone. The Pentagon is damaged. Thousands of Americans have died. We desperately need to find a way to make the American people secure from terrorist attack. And what are the president and Congress doing? Authorising over eight billion dollars [*during 2002*] for "Star Wars" - an unworkable solution to a non-existent problem.

In March I went to Washington, D.C., and met with members of Congress. Our purpose was to plan a strategy for dealing with Bush's resurrection of a Reaganesque "Star Wars" system. The ICBM "threats" justifying the system are totally phoney. The only real threat to the American people is terrorism, something "Star Wars" cannot help with (even if it works). No terrorist is going to use such a high-tech, costly, complex, visible, traceable means of delivery. The real threat, I maintained, was from airplanes, ships, trucks, cargo containers, and suitcases. I asked them to withhold funding from "Star Wars" until the Administration can show that they're doing something about the real threat to the people of this country. A valiant few have tried, but alas ... too few. "Star Wars" marches on, and the coming budget-busting war on terrorism is too much, too late.

The great irony is that, while "Star Wars" weapons are useless against terrorists (in fact useless as a defence of any kind), by increasing apparent U.S. military superiority and invulnerability, these weapons actually increase the fear and hatred of people in the developing nations toward our government and therefore increase the terrorist threat.

Only one thing has ever ended a terror campaign - denying the terrorist organisation the support of the larger community it represents. And the only way to do that is to listen to and alleviate the legitimate grievances of the people. This will require a foreign policy less obnoxious to the people of the region and less dangerous to the American people. This does not mean abandoning Israel. But it may mean withholding financial and military support until they withdraw from settlements in occupied territory and return to 1967 borders.

It also means getting serious about conservation, efficiency, and renewable energy so that we are less dependent on oil sheikhs. Then let Arab countries have leaders of their own choosing, not handpicked, CIA-installed dictators willing to cooperate with Western oil companies. Institute a Marshall Plan for development of the region. It would be less costly than the war currently being

planned, and certainly less costly than the events of September 11. It would also be cheaper than "Star Wars" weapons, and would actually contribute to the security of the American people rather than jeopardising it.

Providing security against terrorism will be neither easy nor cheap. But it will be much easier and less expensive if we return "Star Wars" to a quiet research program such as I directed in the 1970s. The battle against terror must be waged with intelligence and realism, not jingoism and anger. The American people deserve real security. Let's get on with it.

Dr. Bowman directed the "Star Wars" programs under Presidents Ford and Carter and flew 101 combat missions in Vietnam. He is President of the Institute for Space and Security Studies.

The Biggest Threat to International Agreements? George W Bush.

In the wake of the tragedies of September 11 and the building of an "international coalition" against terrorism many commentators speculated about US "re-engagement" with the international community.

Such speculation has proven naive in the extreme. The Kyoto protocol has recently been signed, minus the presence of the world's biggest polluter, objections to the international criminal court have been re-asserted by the Bush administration and a vacant chair confirmed the lack of US interest in the Comprehensive Test Ban Treaty (CTBT) negotiations in New York. Prior to this meeting the US had forced a vote on whether the CTBT should even be on the agenda of the UN General Assembly, as "the United States does not support the CTBT." They lost the vote by 140-1.

On 19th November the latest review conference for the Biological Weapons Convention began. After seven years and 1,500 redrafts the US announced in July of this year that they did not support the current protocol, as it threatened US business interests through risks of industrial espionage. At this round of negotiations the US has proposed its own draft of the treaty – preferring "voluntary" verification procedures to the previous plans to establish an international implementing body. Speaking before the review conference in Geneva, John Bolton, The US Under Secretary of State for Arms Control stated that "The draft protocol that was under negotiation for the past seven years is dead in our view. Dead, and it is not going to be resurrected. It has proven to be a blind alley,"

Asked about the chances of progress at the review conference in Geneva, one European official concluded "I think its going to be a very difficult review conference. Whether we get agreement or not, I wouldn't recommend you to rush out and put your life savings on it"

Information and resource on the BWC available at - www.armscontrol.org and <http://www.acronym.org.uk>

**Missile Shield Program still Costly, Tom Raum, November 13th,
Associated Press**

The fate of President Bush's missile defence plan may depend more on money and science than on any deal with Russia.

The technology to fulfil former President Reagan's 1980s vision of being able to blast enemy missiles out of the sky – often likened to hitting bullets with other bullets – remains unsure. Congress, caught between a distressed economy and multibillion-dollar demands for the war on terrorism, is showing second thoughts about forking over what its analysts say could amount to \$60 billion over the next 15 years.

Just last week, in fact, a House Appropriations subcommittee recommended the cancellation of an expensive infrared satellite radar system that the Pentagon considers an integral part of the missile defence plan.

Even within the Bush administration, divisions persist between hard-liners who want to ditch the 1972 Anti-Ballistic Missile treaty – which prohibits national missile defences – and moderates who would like it rewritten or replaced with a new arms-control pact. Bush wants the pact scrapped. Putin contends it is a cornerstone of strategic stability and should remain in place. “The position of Russia remains unchanged,” Putin said Tuesday at a news conference with Bush at the White House. Still, Putin signalled flexibility, saying he and Bush would “continue dialogue and consultations” on the subject at the Bush ranch in Crawford, Texas.

The Bush administration wants to move to the next phase of building a limited national missile defence: construction next spring at Fort Greely, Alaska – near Fairbanks – of five silos for interceptor missiles and a command-and-control testing centre. U.S. officials believe that Putin is ready to agree to allow testing and construction of the Alaska site to proceed, but would oppose any move toward deployment. The ABM treaty does permit some testing on missile defence systems.

The worst terrorist attack on American soil came not from a warhead on a missile – but from hijacked passenger airliners. Missile-defence critics say that reinforces their position that money spent on missile defence is wasted. But defenders argued that the September 11 attacks emphasised the vulnerability of the U.S. homeland, regardless of the source of the attack. Kurt Campbell, of the private Centre for Strategic and International Studies, said it's too early to say whether the terror attacks will build – or lessen – support for missile defence. “More likely are significant budget problems. We don't have the money to do everything right now,” he said.

Critics suggest missile-defence construction will fuel a new arms race while providing dubious protection for Americans. They claim the Fort Greely project is mainly designed to fulfil a Bush campaign pledge to deploy a rudimentary system before the end of his first term. “The science has not been shown to be feasible,” said Stephen Young of the Union of Concerned Scientists. In fact,

Young suggested that the program's well-documented problems may have helped persuade Putin that a missile-defence system is not a near-term threat to Russia.

The Pentagon has had mixed results so far on four interceptor tests over the Pacific, with two failures and two successes since 1999. The most recent success came in July. A fifth test that had been scheduled for October was postponed because of mechanical difficulties. The administration is weighing various options, all scaled-back versions of Reagan's original concept of a space-based missile shield, derided by Democrats as "Star Wars." Since Reagan's proposals for a Strategic Defence Initiative, the Pentagon has spent about \$80 billion on various missile-defence programs.

But even proponents agree deployment of an effective system remains years away, perhaps 2007 at the earliest. Despite the costs and the obstacles, missile-defence backer Rep. Curt Weldon, R-PA, a member of the House Armed Services Committee, says the consequences of not building such a system could be huge. "We saw two buildings taken down. Imagine if that had been all of Manhattan," Weldon said. "If one missile, either deliberately or accidentally, hits one of our major cities, in that context, the cost is not an issue. It's a defence we do not now have."

For more information on the Greenpeace campaign against Star Wars please contact Andy Tait andy.tait@uk.greenpeace.org.uk. These bulletins are also available by email.