Brookings: U.S. shouldn't build ABMs, because the Soviets have them

by Robert Gallagher

The Brookings Institution issued a book called *Ballistic Missile Defense* on Jan. 11 which is presented as the authoritative work on the subject of defense against ballistic missiles. The book's basic argument is that the United States should not defend itself against nuclear attack. It is a compendium of 20-year-old newspeak, originated by the Soviet-controlled Pugwash Conference on Science and World Affairs.

The book was funded by the Ford Foundation, McGeorge Bundy's personal vehicle for sabotaging U.S. foreign and military policy, the same McGeorge Bundy who expressed satisfaction in the *New York Times* on Jan. 6, 1984 over his "crisis-management" of the U.S. backdown in the October 1962 Cuban Missile Crisis. *Ballistic Missile Defense* was also sponsored by the Massachusetts Institute of Technology (MIT), where "staff scientists" such as Kosta Tsipis, George Rathjens, and Jerome Wiesner argue that ABMs "won't work."

EIR founder Lyndon H. LaRouche, Jr. issued a press release on Jan. 19 urging an immediate federal investigation of the Brookings Institution and MIT for "consumer fraud" in connection with their publication for sale of *Ballistic Missile Defense* at a time when the citizens of the NATO member nations need information on how to build a defense against Soviet strategic attack.

The instigators

There is evidence that close to the editors of the book are persons who have violated U.S. national security interests. Richard Burt, Assistant Secretary of State for European Affairs, hired co-editor David N. Schwartz as deputy director of the Office of Policy Analysis of the State Department's Bureau of Politico-Military Affairs, which Burt headed last year. Burt has been accused by five U.S. senators of breaking espionage laws during his Senate confirmation hearing as Assistant Secretary in 1983 (see *EIR*, Jan. 17, 1984). Upon joining State last October Schwartz jumped into a role in Department sponsorship of the 1983 U.S. tour of Petra Kelly, a spokesman for the European "peace movement" and leader of the pro-terrorist, Nazi-contaminated "Green Party" in the Federal Republic of Germany.

Consider the remark of MIT co-editor Ashton Carter:

> For instance, is it worth using BMD [ballistic missile defense] to defend the MX and Minuteman ICBMs from Soviet attack if the surviving missiles thereby assured cannot threaten Soviet targets because those targets are defended by a Soviet BMD? (page 14).

In other words: since the Soviets are able to defend themselves against U.S. missiles, the United States shouldn't bother to defend those U.S. missiles. And:

> The ultimate assessment of any ballistic missile defense must be tentative because, fortunately, no one has ever tested a BMD or an ICBM in a nuclear war—much less a statistically meaningful ensemble of wars.(page 99)

Ballistic Missile Defense repeats every argument used against the deployment of anti-missile missile systems in the 1960s. The arguments are just as invalid as they were 15 years ago. Here's a list culled from the Brookings piece; it compares well with Herbert York's rantings against the Safeguard ABM in testimony before the Senate Armed Services Committee in April 1969.

1) ABM systems are too complicated.
2) ABMs are too expensive.
3) Offensive warheads are cheaper than ABMs. Invest in warheads.
4) It is impossible for the defense to be 100 percent perfect. Therefore no defense is better than some.
5) Don't build an ABM system unless you know it can handle any conceivable offensive threat.
6) If we try to defend ourselves, the enemy might fire more bullets. Therefore, just let him shoot us.
7) Let the Soviets win the arms race. Look at all the money we'll save.

Nowhere do the Brookings and MIT authors acknowledge that directed-energy weapons (such as the x-ray laser) represent a *qualitatively advanced technology over that on which ICBMs are based*. The intercepting beam travels to its target at the speed of light: if you can see your target, it is dead. As a result, directed-energy weapons will confer a qualitative advantage to the defense. Consequently, it

could be argued that the Brookings arguments are simply irrelevant to the changed technology situation that exists today and that the Brookings authors are scientifically incompetent.

However, their systems-analysis arguments have credibility even among informed patriots. Therefore, it is time to refute once and for all the arguments that were used against deployment of the Nike-Zeus, Sentinel and Safeguard ABM systems. Contrary to popular opinion there was never a shred of truth in the claim that anti-missile missile systems "would not work," "would be too complicated," and so forth.

The historical record

At the time of the 1962 Cuban Missile Crisis, the Soviet Union deployed 75 to 100 single-warhead intercontinental ballistic missiles (ICBMs) and a handful of submarine-launchable ballistic missiles (SLBMs) capable of reaching U.S. territory. Had the United States deployed the Nike-Zeus antiballistic-missile system as was proposed in 1960, the Kennedy administration would have had a capability not only to fight and win a nuclear war with our six-times larger ICBM and SLBM force at the time of the October 1962 crisis, but also to defend the United States from any Soviet attack. Had this capability been available to President Kennedy during the crisis, perhaps he would have been able to muster the courage to stand firm against the Soviet missile deployment in Cuba rather than agreeing to a U.S. pullout of intermediate range missiles and strategic bombers from Europe. But because of opposition from the MIT-Pugwash arms-control mafia then led by Jerome Wiesner, the United States did not deploy Nike-Zeus in 1960.

The following year, Pugwash conduits Defense Secretary Robert McNamara and National Security Adviser McGeorge Bundy deferred production and deployment of the system again and reduced it to a mere R&D effort. It is these persons who are responsible for the U.S. backdown in the Cuban Missile Crisis.

In the wake of the Cuban Missile Crisis, the defeated U.S. adopted the doctrine of "Mutually Assured Destruction." The Soviet Union, however, continued to adhere to its policy of developing the capability to fight and win a nuclear war.

Soviet anti-missile defense is rapidly expanding

The table below summarizes the current state of Soviet missile-defense systems for handling an American retaliatory missile attack following a Soviet preemptive strike that destroys roughly 80 percent of U.S. nuclear missiles. Each Soviet anti-missile system handles specific types of attacking U.S. missiles, as shown. Four fixed phased-array radars located around the country provide early warning of attack and battle management.

System	Defends Against	Deployment
SA-5	Bombers; Some ICBMs	Nationwide
SA-10	Low-altitude bombers Cruise Missiles	Nationwide
SA-1	Pershing IIs; SLBMs; some ICBMs	Western Russia Mobile
SH-04; SH-08	ICBMs; SLBMs	Moscow
ABM-3	ICBMs; SLBMs	Mobile nationwide potential

The Soviets have deployed several dual-function systems, one function allowed by the ABM Treaty, the other not. In this way, they have achieved coverage in areas where the United States is completely vulnerable. An example of such a dual-function deployment is the SA-12 anti-tactical ballistic missile (ATBM) system, which can intercept warheads of the Pershing II medium-range ballistic missile deployed in West Germany. The ABM Treaty permits such systems. But since the trajectories of such missiles are similar to those of submarine-launched missiles, it also provides protection against U.S. ballistic-missile submarines; that kind of anti-missile missile system is formally banned by the Treaty.

The principal remaining "hole" in the Soviet missile-defense system today is nationwide defense against ICBM warheads, specifically the Minuteman III Mark 12A warhead with its small radar cross-section. The U.S.S.R. is barred by the 1972 ABM Treaty from plugging this hole. *Aviation Week and Space Technology* magazine reported on Jan. 16 that according to the Central Intelligence Agency, the Soviets have been stockpiling the ABM-X-3 mobile missile defense system (SH-04 and SH-08 interceptor missiles, guidance radars and the mobile ABM-3 phased array radar) for rapid deployment around the country in the event of a confrontation.

In 1969 at the congressional hearings on the Safeguard ABM, Paul Nitze issued a warning that anticipated the current state of affairs:

> In my view a long-term relationship in which the Soviet Union proceeded with successive generations of ABMs and we did not, could well result in an unstable situation with consequent grave dangers not only to the U.S. but to the rest of the world.

The Soviet Union now has a ballistic-missile arsenal capable of reaching the United States which has four times the destructive power of the U.S. missile arsenal capable of reaching the Soviet Union. The accuracy of these Soviet missiles enables them to destroy 90 percent of America's ICBMs, 80 percent of the strategic bomber force, and 70 percent of our SLBMs in a pre-emptive attack, and still retain the bulk of their ICBM and SLBM force and their entire bomber fleet, while the United States has no such capability. It is the traitors who killed the ABM programs of the 1960s and ran the U.S. backdown over Cuba in October 1962 who caused this state of affairs.

How to close the 'window of vulnerability'

This situation makes immediate deployment of some ABM system around the U.S. ICBM fields an urgent priority. The Soviets are confident that a disarming pre-emptive strike would leave the U.S. arsenal capable only of the level of ragged retaliation which they could "manage" with their own nationwide ABM system, with their contemptuous view of human life. The immediate deployment of some form of defense (e.g., small projectiles or Swarmjets) around the Minuteman silos would be the quickest way to slam the "window of vulnerability."

Soviet pre-emptive strike tactics are based on the reliable destruction of the overwhelming bulk of the U.S. nuclear arsenal. An anti-missile missile system makes the effectiveness of a pre-emptive attack essentially unpredictable. The attack must first "fight through" the defense before it can destroy the defended site. By analogy to 18th-century conditions: to kill the army inside a fort, the attacker must first break down the walls. This gives the defended force time to fire back before its defenses are destroyed. Even if in the future the Soviets could deploy enough warheads to try to overwhelm an anti-missile missile defense of our silos, they could never be as confident as they are today of achieving a pre-emptive strike. But the Brookings study asserts that building such an anti-missile system would be "too expensive."

The 'flat earth' argument

The principal Brookings argument against ABM systems is based on "systems analysis," that they are "too complicated." As Pugwasher Herbert York argued in 1969 against the Safeguard ABM system: each component of the system may work with reasonable reliability, but *the probability* of the entire system working effectively on a moment's notice in the event of an attack is too low to make it worth the effort.

It doesn't matter what technology ABM components represent, Ashton Carter writes in *Ballistic Missile Defense*; the Brookings analysis "takes for granted that the individual technological devices within the BMD system would actually work more or less as advertised . . . the crux of the disagreement is the system as a whole. . . . Guessing the chances of a technological breakthrough is thus not as important as seeing how such technologies could fit into a sensible architecture." Therefore, argues Mr. Carter, "the prospect that BMD will thwart the mutual hostage relationship [Mutually Assured Destruction]. . . is so remote as to be of no practical interest."

One way to argue against the capability to build anything is to assert that the universe is not lawful. This is the probabilistic gobbledygook that Ludwig Boltzmann and Bertrand Russell injected into the scientific community.

Any ABM system—whether terminal defense or space-based, or using interceptor missiles or beams—must perform the following functions:

- early warning that hostile ICBMs have been launched;
- detection and assessment of the threat;
- derivation of trajectories and prediction of targets;
- discrimination between actual warheads and decoys;
- targeting of the interceptor missile or beam;
- guidance of the interceptor or beam to its target;
- destruction of the target; and
- verification of target destruction.

None of these functions are independent. A few examples:

1) If a neutron warhead is used on the interceptor rather than a conventional explosive, the kill radius of the warhead is multiplied and the requirements for targeting and guidance are relaxed, so that precision guidance becomes "perfect" relative to the requirements.

2) In directed-energy systems, if the laser output is more powerful, the requirements for focusing it into a narrow beam are relaxed, making target pointing and tracking requirements easier to meet.

3) The better the system can distinguish between decoys and actual warheads, the less the number of targets it must deal with.

One can calculate the probability of failure or of less-than-optimal function for each subsystem, but the probabilities do not result in a lower net probability for the entire system; they are not multiplicative. We are talking about deploying an overkill capability relative to the offensive threat. We can do this in two ways:

The hard way. Pushing existing technology to its limits, enough redundancy and monitoring of components can be achieved in a conventional anti-missile missile system to make it failproof. This is the proven method of the Space Shuttle program—Apollo program technology taken to its limit. If a component may fail, due to the variabilities of microelectronic components, for example, redundancy can be built in. Each Shuttle flight carries three fuel cells; only one is required and one is expected to fail each trip.

The easy way: directed-energy technology. As in the Manhattan Project, if we put the best minds to work on the problem, we will find solutions (such as the x-ray laser) that will enable us to jump over the difficulties of anti-missile missile systems. For example, in an anti-missile missile system the missile intercepts an ICBM warhead at a speed *slower* than the warhead itself. Beam weapons destroy their targets at the speed of light.

Does the ABM Treaty ban directed-energy weapons?

When President Reagan renounced Mutually Assured Destruction in his address to the nation March 23, 1983, the initial response was that deployment of the systems he envisioned, based on laser and particle beam technology, would violate the 1972 treaty banning anti-ballistic missile systems signed by the United States and the Soviet Union. An honest interpretation of the treaty as a legal document must conclude that this is not the case.

Any treaty between nations preceeds the agreed articles and statements with a definition of terms. If the definitions do not cover something, the treaty does not cover it. Article II of the ABM Treaty reads:

> 1) For the purpose of this Treaty an ABM system is a system to counter strategic ballistic missiles or their elements in flight trajectory, currently consisting of:
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> (a) ABM interceptor missiles, which are interceptor missiles constructed and deployed for an ABM role, or of a type tested in an ABM mode;
>
> (b) ABM launchers, which are launchers constructed and deployed for launching ABM interceptor missiles; and
>
> (c) ABM radars, which are radars constructed and deployed for an ABM role, or of a type tested in an ABM role.

By all standards of previous international agreements, when subsequent articles of the Treaty refer to "ABM systems," they refer only to those systems as defined above. Any other interpretation is incompetent. Agreed Statement D of the Treaty clarifies this point:

> The Parties agree that in the event ABM systems based on other physical principles and including components capable of substituting for ABM interceptor missiles, ABM launchers, or ABM radars are created in the future, specific limitations on such systems and their components would be subject to discussion in accordance with Article XIII [which establishes the Standing Consultative Commission] and agreement in accordance with Article XIV of the Treaty [which cover amendment procedures].

In other words, "ABM systems based on other physical principles," such as lasing, are not banned in any form by the 1972 ABM Treaty.

Article V, Statement 1, which reads, "Each Party undertakes not to develop, test, or deploy ABM systems or components which are sea-based, air-based, space-based, or mobile land-based," covers only anti-missile missile systems.