

## U.S. Missile Defense Policy and International Security: Implications for East Asia

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### I . Introduction

The relationship among the US, Western Europe and Japan has matured into what some political scientists would describe as a “pluralistic security community.” By this I mean a group of independent nations in which international goals and motivations are so in harmony that war among them has become virtually impossible. Robert Jervis has pointed out that since “(t)hreatening war, preparing for it, and trying to avoid it have permeated all aspects of politics, ... a world in which war among the most developed states is unthinkable would be a new one.”<sup>1</sup> Jervis goes on to state that “given the scale and frequency of war among the great powers in the preceding millennia, this is a change of spectacular proportions, perhaps the single most striking discontinuity that the history of international politics has anywhere provided.”<sup>2</sup> This unprecedented era of peace among the developed nations, however, is not matched by a similar harmony between the developed and the less developed nations. Today in Iraq, South Asia, and the Korean Peninsula, external threats to this community present a range of

dangers.

The response to these threats by the current administration of President George W. Bush is to accelerate development of its own national missile defense system and to recommend similar missile defense systems for other members of the security community. The new defense framework upon which such systems appear to be based assumes that deterrence can be achieved by combining offensive and defensive forces into an international or “alliance” missile defense (AMD), which can eliminate both theater and strategic missile threats from outside the security community.<sup>3</sup>

This US proposal, however, presents an array of questions for further consideration:

- First, is missile defense the right tool where the risk of terrorism from insurgent groups forms the most salient threat?
- Second, is missile defense an effective response given the state of its readiness and the military situations in which we expect to use it?
- Third, does missile defense invite escalation of weapons acquisition into a

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### [Key Words]

East Asian Security, Missile Defense, Deterrence Theory, Bush Administration, Pluralistic Security Community

series of arms races, which are able to ignite already explosive international crises?

- Finally, will missile defense reverse positive momentum in international diplomacy leading to the worsening of existing direct military threats?

Later in this paper I will address each of these questions in turn and draw the connection between each of them and East Asian security. Before I do that, however, I will devote the second section of this paper to a discussion of deterrence theory in light of the current missile defense controversy. Next, in the third section, I will take up the first two of the four questions I have posed: whether missile defense is the right tool at a time when the danger of terrorist attacks seems greater than that of missile attack, and whether missile defense will be an effective deterrent given the state of its readiness. I will do this as I examine current US policy regarding missile defense.

In section four, I will look at the third and fourth questions: whether missile defense may breed a series of arms races, and whether there exists a significant likelihood that missile defense may reverse positive momentum gained through diplomacy through a brief look at the Korean Peninsula. These questions will be addressed, first, by looking at the recent manifestations of the conflict between India and Pakistan over Kashmir, and secondly, by examining the recent ebb and flow of events on the Korean Peninsula. I will further address these questions in section five by discussing the tensions between China and Taiwan. Section six is an evaluation of US missile defense policy and its implications for East Asian security.

This will include a discussion of the relative roles of Japan and the US in peacekeeping with or without missile defense. I will present a brief conclusion in section seven.

## II . Deterrence Theory

In order to critically evaluate the role missile defense might play in preventing future wars, it is necessary to briefly discuss the ways in which wars occur. Wars, as Huth and Russett point out, rarely occur as a result of peacetime conflicts of interest and nonmilitarized disputes between or among nations. Rather, they usually arise from a series of escalating threats and counterthreats which often include expansion in the amounts and types of weaponry along with changing and evolving strategies for their use.<sup>4</sup> Nations and their allies attempt to deter such threats through their own military preparedness, which they communicate to potential adversaries. We may distinguish two types of deterrence: general and immediate. General deterrence focuses on conditions which give rise to military crises between rival nations from a state of affairs in which no crisis exists. Immediate deterrence concerns those factors which determine the outcome of a crisis once it has erupted. Thus, a policy of general deterrence may be said to have failed if a challenger nation demands change in the status quo and then either threatens or initiates military action against its rival through border reinforcements, large-scale mobilization or other action designed to indicate the potential imminence of hostilities. The outcome of the resulting crisis between the two rival nations depends upon the success or failure of various measures designed to achieve immediate

deterrence.<sup>5</sup>

There are two other types of deterrence deserving of mention in this context: direct deterrence and extended deterrence. Direct deterrence describes the situation in which one nation seeks to prevent another from challenging the status quo of the direct deterrence relationship between them. Extended deterrence refers to the case in which the power of one nation creates an umbrella for other nations and provides the principle means for maintaining the status quo among a number of nations in a particular region.<sup>6</sup> In the case of East Asia, both general and immediate deterrence policies occur in the context of extended deterrence in which the US supplies the umbrella for Japan, South Korea, Taiwan, and the Philippines. The important thing about this is that in situations of extended deterrence, such as East Asia, the defender's deterrent threat is much more likely to be challenged than in cases of direct deterrence.

To illustrate let us take the example of the 1993-94 crisis between North Korea and the US over North Korea's withdrawal from the Nuclear Nonproliferation Treaty (NPT) and its refusal to allow the inspection of its nuclear facilities by the International Atomic Energy Agency. This event is an example of a breakdown in a policy of general deterrence within the extended deterrence context of the East Asian region. In that case, the tension between the US and North Korea had reached "crisis" dimensions. The US could not hope to guarantee the security of the Korean Peninsula and simultaneously tolerate a nuclear-armed North Korea. In order to prevent this result, the US had to explore the option of a

preemptive attack against North Korean nuclear facilities. This means that the probability of military conflict — including the possibility of a US attack against North Korean nuclear reactors — could surely have been considered greatly heightened at that time. The crisis continued until late October, 1994 when an agreement, which came to be known as the Agreed Framework, was finally reached establishing a new status quo between the two nations.<sup>7</sup> Under this agreement, North Korea agreed to shut down a 25-megawatt nuclear reactor capable of producing weapons-grade plutonium and to dispose of 25-30 kilograms of plutonium already produced from spent fuel.

The agreement, however, allowed the Pyongyang government substantial delays in fulfilling past promises about inspection of its nuclear weapons program, and permitted the North to keep intact for ten years or more the nuclear fuel enrichment facility it had previously pledged it would not possess under a 1992 agreement with South Korea. Meanwhile, the North continued to possess massive military force, chemical and biological weapons, as well as long-range missiles with which it might challenge the peace of the region in the future. Thus, both the past and current US policies of general deterrence in the region rests on a precarious footing, and the overall danger of the current East Asian situation can be seen somewhat more clearly in the light of this fact.

This scenario of our recent experience calls upon us to review the steps by which both general and immediate deterrence policies can break down in relations among rival regional states. My discussion of this topic is based upon the scheme designed by Huth and Russett

who described the process in five stages:

1. In the first stage, a dominant nation adopts a policy of general deterrence with regard to the balance of power in a particular region respecting its allies and their prospective challengers. This includes providing military assistance to its allies in the region in an attempt to deter another nation from taking steps to alter the status quo.
2. A challenger state (e.g., North Korea) makes some threat to change the status quo, such as development of nuclear or other highly dangerous weapons system. This is a challenge that the general deterrent was intended to prevent, when this occurs, we say that the policy of general deterrence has failed.
3. The defender (e.g., the US) now may decide to strengthen a commitment to an ally or allies in the region (e.g., South Korea and Japan), or it may negotiate an agreeable change in the status quo with the challenger state. It may also now put its military forces on alert. The defender will have considered at this stage whether strengthening its alliances will be provocative, and whether its allies will accept any changes in the status quo which are negotiated. While the defender nation is shoring up its policy of general deterrence through negotiation, it also assumes a policy of immediate deterrence through military readiness in an effort to prevent the crisis from deepening. This is intended to coerce a favorable settlement from the challenger.
4. The challenger then decides not to

retreat or yield to coercion in negotiation, but to press ahead for its desired changes in the status quo despite the immediate deterrent threat of the defender. If at this point, negotiations also fail, then the defender and its allies face a military confrontation.

5. With the arrival of the military confrontation, immediate deterrence has now failed as well, and the defender with its allies must decide whether to engage the challenger militarily.<sup>8</sup>

By our interpretation of these theoretical propositions, when a nation is protected by an alliance, general deterrence will fail only if a rival nation or challenger state is sufficiently motivated to issue a challenge despite — or because of — the alliance. In any event, if we follow a model of deterrence based on rationality, a challenger will be more likely to initiate a militarized dispute if it perceives that the benefits of such a dispute will outweigh the expected costs of armed conflict. In the context of extended deterrence, this calculation must include an estimate of the probability that the nation which extends its umbrella of defense will actually engage in the fighting. Thus a challenger is more likely to question the status quo if it perceives that a protector nation lacks the resolve to commit itself militarily.

Furthermore, when a challenger state embarks upon a course of action which threatens the status quo and could lead to war, it typically expects that the war, if it comes, will result in a fairly quick military victory. Because protracted war is extremely costly and can lead to the destabilization of the challenger's own regime, it is a result that is clearly to be

avoided. Therefore, the challenger's estimate of the probability and cost of victory will be based on the military capabilities each side can bring to bear in the initial months of war. The relative size of standing military forces and preexisting stockpiles of weapons will be among the crucial factors in determining whether a crisis will lead to war, rather than the relative ability of two nations to mobilize their populations or to maximize their industrial capabilities for war. As Robert C. North has put it, "critical elements in an action/reaction process include each actor's capabilities, demands, contingency assertions (explicit or implicit), and applications of leverage."<sup>9</sup>

Missile defense, therefore, if effective, would increase the likelihood that a challenger would be unable to accomplish its purpose of achieving swift military success, thus deterring military adventures. This would have a positive effect on the maintenance of the status quo, of course; but not neglect the fact that negative effects are also likely. In the first place, if a nation deploys an elaborate system of missile defense, it may be perceived as an offensive threat by rival nations. In that case, rival nations may respond with a great buildup of offensive missiles on their side. This creates the conditions necessary for an arms race. In the second place, if such an arms race results, the likelihood of misperception and miscalculation by potential challenger nations increases. Such an arms race if its effects are felt in a particular region of the world may produce a shifting military balance within the region, thus destabilizing the region creating dangers for all regional states. This signals caution in the development of missile defense as a deterrent

strategy and suggests that a successful general deterrence policy must include a willingness to negotiate arms reductions and to employ economic incentives, rather than develop and deploy new weapons systems. In view of the many dangers, especially to close US allies in the Asia Pacific region, this also raises the question of how US missile defense policy has evolved. In order to evaluate missile defense more deeply, therefore, we must turn our attention to the evolution and current status of US missile defense policy.

### **III. US Missile Defense Policy**

#### **1. Is missile defense the right tool?**

The Current Bush Administration is determined to avoid what it views as the mistakes of the past, especially in foreign and military policy. The Persian Gulf War of 1991 between a US-led coalition and the government of Saddam Hussein in Iraq had all the appearances of a smashing success. Iraqi forces were routed in the field relinquishing their own military objective, the occupation of Kuwait. Iraqi offensive missiles, the hastily constructed Scuds, were notoriously ineffective at doing damage to Israel, despite one rather devastating attack against US military barracks in Riyadh, Saudi Arabia. Most of Iraq's military might, amassed over a period of years, were wiped out in a matter of weeks. In the US, meanwhile, the American president, the elder President Bush, father of the current president, attained the highest approval ratings from the American people ever attained by a president since public opinion polling began. At the time, it seemed hard to imagine a more complete victory.

There were, however, a number of shadows across this bright picture. The darkest of these shadows was that of Saddam Hussein himself who, despite the crushing defeat, remained in power alternately rallying his most loyal subjects, repressing all dissent, and taunting the US. Almost equally disconcerting, however, was the fact that the missile system deployed by the US to defend against Iraqi Scuds during the war had proven to be rather ineffective. This missile defense system, the Patriot system, which had originally been designed to defend against aircraft, had trouble locating the Scud warheads amid the debris of the poorly made Scuds, which often broke up in flight. The experience demonstrated that missile defense was a tactic greatly in need of improvement.

The coalition that defeated Saddam Hussein, meanwhile, put in place a policy of containment, which, despite its apparent effectiveness, never fully dispelled suspicions that Saddam was developing weapons of mass destruction which could threaten Israel and several of the capitals of Western Europe. This led to the grim drama of weapons inspections in Iraq, which, it is claimed, actually took more weapons away from Saddam than the war had done. Yet, the weapons inspection regime ended without diminishing the beliefs in the West that Saddam continued to harbor stockpiles of chemical and biological weapons, or that he was on the verge of developing nuclear weapons. Worst of all from the perspective the two presidents named Bush, the American public soon forgot the sweeping victory of the coalition in the Persian Gulf War, turned its attention to domestic concerns, and dramatically lowered its estimate of the first President Bush's performance in

office — so much so that he was defeated for reelection by Bill Clinton in 1992.

The current President Bush has a long memory for these events. Furthermore, he cannot dismiss from his mind the belief that Saddam Hussein had a hand in the terrorist attack that destroyed the World Trade Center on September 11, 2001. This is demonstrated by the President's remarks on the Iraqi threat delivered at Cincinnati, Ohio on October 7, 2002. At that time, Mr. Bush discussed his belief that Iraq possessed and had deployed a large number of chemical and biological weapons for use against the US. He then linked Iraq to Al Qaeda by saying that the two held the US as a common enemy, stating: "We know that Iraq and Al Qaeda have had high level contacts that go back a decade, and that Al Qaeda leaders who fled Afghanistan went to Iraq." He went on to say, "Alliance with terrorists could allow the Iraqi regime to attack America without leaving any fingerprints."<sup>10</sup> Accordingly, Mr. Bush's current military policies center on counteracting any threat from what he perceives as "rogue states" such as Iraq. In this effort, he has placed heavy emphasis on newer more effective missile defenses, which, he argues, will have general applicability in defending members of the security community once they are perfected.

Thus, funding for missile defense in the current US defense budget has received a considerable boost. President Bush had originally requested \$7.6 billion for missile defense, the largest budget ever for that purpose; but the Democrat-controlled Senate had questioned whether such a large budget for missile defense might shortchange anti-

terrorism efforts.<sup>11</sup> As then-Majority Leader Thomas A. Daschle (Democrat, South Dakota) put it, "How could anyone think we are more likely to be the target of a ballistic missile attack than another terrorist incident?"<sup>12</sup>

Yet, the current administration seems undeterred by such qualms. Last June, the Senate approved a measure offered by the Senator Carl Levin (Democrat, Michigan), who is Chairman of the Senate Armed Services Committee, to remove \$814 million from the missile defense budget and use it to protect against terrorism. Senator Levin's proposal placed protection against terrorism as the "top priority" in the use of the funds. Senator John W. Warner (Republican, Virginia), who is the ranking Republican on the Senate Armed Services Committee, however, accepted Senator Levin's proposal on the ground that its language was broad enough to include missile defense and said that he believed the president would spend most of the money on missile defense.<sup>13</sup>

The November, 2002 elections have placed the Republican party in control of the Senate, which in turn places Senator Warner into the position of Chairman and relegates Senator Levin to Senator Warner's previous role as ranking minority member. This assures that the question of whether missile defense is the right tool while terrorism haunts the landscape will not be addressed in any critical way in the foreseeable future.

**2. Is missile defense an effective response given the state of its readiness and the military situations in which we expect to use it?**

At the beginning of 2002, military planners in the Bush Administration had anticipated great success for its new missile defense weapon, the Patriot Advanced Capability-3 (PAC-3). Flight tests from February through May were expected to confirm that the missile interception system worked and that subsequently the Pentagon would decide to go ahead with full production. The reality, however, did not meet expectations. Some interceptors failed to fire out of their launchers; the rest missed as often as they hit.<sup>14</sup> The results proved embarrassing for the Bush Administration at a time when its \$7.6 billion budget proposal for missile defense was still before Congress.

As Bradley Graham of the Washington Post reported last summer, the PAC-3 system had just come out of an eight-year research and development program, which had been plagued by delays and cost overruns. The PAC-3 missile system was designed to replace the Patriot missiles that had been so ineffective against the Scuds in the Persian Gulf War. Unlike the older Patriot missiles that destroyed their targets by blowing up near them and blasting them out of the sky, the PAC-3 interceptors were built without explosives in them, and instead knock out offensive warheads by colliding with them. Military planners think this approach, known as "hit-to-kill," is more reliable against nuclear, biological or chemical warheads than defensive missiles that use explosives to destroy their targets. The problem seems to be that so far the system has not proven itself in any realistic sort of test.<sup>15</sup>

The system performed well in flight tests from 1999 through 2001, but Philip E. Coyle

III, the Pentagon's chief weapons test evaluator during the Clinton Administration, noted that these earlier tests were too simple and should have included more realistic, combat-conditionlike tests.<sup>16</sup> While current program officials acknowledge finding some technical shortcomings as a result of the tests, they believe that in combat the system would have succeeded simply by firing more interceptors. They insist that nothing they have encountered so far indicates a "systemic problem, either in hardware or software, on the missile."<sup>17</sup>

In the period prior to the 2003 War in Iraq, the Pentagon renewed its commitment to the PAC-3 program. Despite the test failures, which might well have added a yearlong delay in any effort to accelerate production on the missile system, aides to Defense Secretary Donald Rumsfeld signaled a desire to increase production without waiting for any further tests. At that time, the US Army had only thirty-eight PAC-3 missiles in its inventory, and expected only another fifteen by the end of 2003. According to unnamed defense industry sources quoted in the *Washington Post*, increased production immediately preceding the start of hostilities would have had little effect on the number of missiles available for combat.<sup>18</sup>

Nevertheless, the Bush Administration appeared to see the PAC-3 as the means by which to wipe out the memory of what is regarded as the US military's greatest failure during the Persian Gulf War, namely its inability to destroy even one mobile Scud missile. At the time the war broke out, military analysts believed that Iraq possessed perhaps twelve to twenty-five such missiles, and it is not clear whether any of them were capable of

being fired. Previously, the US Army kept two Patriot batteries in the Persian Gulf region guarding US military facilities—but none equipped with PAC-3 interceptors. Despite all of the technological problems experienced by the PAC-3 system, President Bush apparently wished to have additional Patriot batteries armed with PAC-3s available in the event Scuds were launched against US forces.<sup>19</sup>

#### **IV. External Threats to the Security Community**

##### **1. India and Pakistan: Does missile defense invite lead to arms races able to ignite already explosive international crises?**

In the period immediately following the attack on the World Trade Center, September 11, 2001, tensions between India and Pakistan over the disputed region of Kashmir reached a crisis stage. India appeared to be taking advantage of the cross-pressured Musharraf government, which had to contend with US demands for strenuous action against suspected Taliban and Al Qaeda terrorists while simultaneously pacifying or suppressing Taliban and Al Qaeda sympathizers with their own borders. Both countries rattled their newly acquired nuclear sabers at each other with little result. As with the US and Iraq, the general deterrence regime failed and the two countries engaged in preparations for war. Troops were mobilized; borders were further reinforced; rhetoric reached a dangerous level of intensity. The necessity of Pakistani cooperation in the war on terrorism encouraged India to stand down and allowed the crisis to simmer down temporarily, but the situation remains critical.

The summer of 2002 brought a new round of concerns as India proposed to purchase the sophisticated Arrow missile defense system from Israel as a counter to Pakistan's Ghauri missile, an offensive, ballistic missile in the Scud family, closely related to the North Korean Nodong missile.<sup>20</sup> Pakistan has long had these offensive missiles, and has even managed to flight test them a few times. Israel's Arrow system, which was built with US assistance, resembles the US Patriot system. India has also inquired about Patriot missiles, and reportedly has received briefings on the system from its US manufacturer, the Raytheon Company.<sup>21</sup>

The issue has uncovered divisions among US policymakers in the State Department and Defense Department. Secretary of State Colin L. Powell indicated his objections to India's proposals on a trip to New Dehli last summer. State Department officials appeared anxious to prevent India and Pakistan from slipping into war and fearful that the sale of the Arrow weapon system would exacerbate friction between the two countries while providing other nations with a justification for selling missile technology. Some in the Pentagon, however, supported the sale citing support for Israel and President Bush's pledge to enlist US allies in missile defense development. These advocates of the proposal say that it could also improve India-US ties and reward the Indian government for its retreat from its recent confrontation with Pakistan over Kashmir.<sup>22</sup>

Other observers warn of the possibility of an arms race. Karl F. Inderfurth, an Assistant Secretary of State in the Clinton Administration is reported to have said, "Were India to proceed with an investment in missile defense,

one thing is certain: Pakistan will respond in some fashion, either by increasing its offensive capability to counter such a defensive shield or by pursuing its own form of missile defense wherever they could obtain it. That is the iron law of the action-reaction cycle in South Asia."<sup>23</sup>

Because of the collaborative US-Israeli effort in developing Arrow, Israel may not sell the technology to other countries without US approval. Israel wishes to sell it not only to India, but to Turkey as well. A spokesman for the Israeli embassy in Washington, D.C. agreed that the sale should not occur while tensions are high, but added that "It's been our position that it makes sense economically and strategically to export to India."<sup>24</sup> The US Senior State Department officials, meanwhile, are united against the sale for both geopolitical and arms control reasons. The sale probably violates the 1987 Missile Technology Control Regime (MTCR), an agreement which seeks to limit the spread of missile technology. Meanwhile, the Bush Administration has sold six C-130 cargo planes to Pakistan to reward it for its cooperation against Al Qaeda and the Taliban.<sup>25</sup>

War between India and Pakistan following the September 11, 2001 terrorist attack upon the US by Al Qaeda was averted after the breakdown of the general deterrence regime only because the US intervened to impose a short term form of immediate deterrence. Since that time, the situation has been unstable and dynamic with the potential influx of new weapons and weapons systems. A new status quo has not been achieved. Until such a condition is obtained, immediate deterrence will be held in place only by an overwhelmingly powerful actor who does not know whether to

pour water or gasoline onto the fire. If the wrong choice is made, the resulting conflagration could spread beyond its current regional boundaries and engulf many innocent bystanders.

**2. The Korean Peninsula: Will missile defense reverse positive momentum in international diplomacy leading to the worsening of existing direct military threats?**

In the early 1980's, North Korea was able to obtain a 300-kilometer range Scud missile from the Soviet Union, copy its design and produce a number of them — some of which were sold to Iran for use against Iraq during the Iran-Iraq war. The North Korean missile program continued to grow after that resulting in a longer range version of the Scud by the late 1980's. They also developed a larger missile called the Nodong with a range of 1,000 to 1,300 kilometers capable of delivering a nuclear warhead. The Nodong is able to target all of Japan, and if sold to such countries as Iran or Libya, could also target Israel.

In 1998, North Korea tested its first multiple stage missile, the Taepo Dong 1, whose infamous flight over Japan caused alarm bells to ring from Tokyo to Washington, D.C. and beyond. It was this flight, and the elaborate missile development program which lay behind it, that gave such great impetus to the issue of national missile defense in the US. North Korea not only demonstrated that it could launch such a missile but also convinced US military planners that it could produce enough of them to be able to sell them to nations whose interests were at odds with those of the US. This led political leaders in the US to label

North Korea and all of the potential recipients of its missile technology as "rogue states". North Korea's ability to engineer missiles of this type suggested that within five years, if it chose to do so, North Korea could develop a missile with sufficient range to reach the US. The response in the US was to increase funding for research and development of a large-scale national missile defense system. Japan began once again to agonize over its role in an increasingly militarized region. North Korea had raised the stakes another time.

US-North Korean relations had previously reached a critical stage in 1993-94 over the withdrawal of North Korea from the Nuclear Nonproliferation Treaty, discussed at page 21. As we have seen, that situation resulted in a new status quo brought about through negotiation. The response of the Clinton Administration to the 1998 crisis was to support increased funding for missile defense at home while engaging in dialogue with North Korea abroad. Through negotiation, President Clinton managed to secure an agreement with North Korea to curtail missile sales and to extend the freeze on its nuclear program, which had been established in 1994, but without significant provision for verification. Once again a new status quo had been achieved.

In addition, North and South Korea stunned the world by taking steps to reduce tensions between their two regimes. South Korea's goodwill policy toward the North produced an historic summit meeting in June, 2000 between the leaders of the two countries, South Korean President Kim Dae Jung and North Korean President Kim Jong Il. Both countries seemed committed to laying a foundation for an

improved peace system on the Korean Peninsula. Subsequent negotiations between the two countries, however, have sometimes led to frustration and stagnation. In November, 2001, for example, talks were held in an effort to reach agreement on the disposition of separated families residing in the two countries. Despite arduous negotiation, no agreement was reached. Yet, there appears to be a desire both in Seoul and in Pyongyang to achieve significant movement toward reunification in the interests of both countries.

One source of frustration for leaders in both Korean capitals has been the discontinuity between the Clinton Administration policy and that of the Bush Administration, which seems intent on doing everything as differently as possible from its predecessor. In the waning days of his administration, President Clinton had sought to negotiate an agreement that would have ended North Korea's production of medium and long-range missiles as well as the export of missile technology. In return, Mr. Clinton had offered to make a presidential trip to Pyongyang and to contribute hundreds of millions of dollars in food aid to that country; but before the deal could be completed, Clinton was out of office.<sup>26</sup>

From the beginning, President Bush demonstrated his disapproval of his predecessor's willingness to seek improved relations with North Korea and irritated Pyongyang by refusing to continue negotiations and by issuing public statements labeling North Korea a producer of biological weapons.<sup>27</sup> By the summer of 2001, the Bush Administration was demanding rigorous verification of North Korea's promised halt of its missile technology

and nuclear weapons development program. The verification scheme sought by President Bush would include "challenge inspections" in which American officials would have access to a range of sites on North Korea at short notice.<sup>28</sup>

North Korea replied by defining the Bush Administration missile defense program as a policy that is destroying peace with a "space missile alliance strategy." It bristled at being labeled a "rogue state," and charged that such rhetoric was a way to avoid confrontation with more meaningful challenges from China and Russia. North Korea also perceived missile defense as a way of altering the Japanese role in East Asia toward a stronger military posture, citing US attempts to get Japan to revise its laws relating to its Self-Defense Force. It warned that Japanese movement toward a more active military role would have a negative impact on its negotiations with Japan over normalization of relations. Finally, and most ominously, North Korea announced its renewed efforts to develop nuclear weapons.

As the year 2002 drew to a close, the Bush Administration quietly opened official talks with North Korea by sending Assistant Secretary of State James A. Kelly to pay a courtesy call on Kim Yong Nam, the president of the Supreme People's Assembly and the second-ranking official in North Korea. Reports indicate, however, that nothing of substance was discussed between the two and that most of Kelly's meetings were with lower-ranking officials.<sup>29</sup> In January, 2003, President Bush characterized the situation with North Korea as a "diplomatic issue, not a military issue," but then accused Kim JongIl as "somebody who starves his own people." In the same statement,

Mr. Bush also expressed his belief that the US was the leading worldwide donor of food supplies to North Korea.<sup>30</sup> In retrospect, this statement now has appearance of a threat by the US to cut off food supplies to North Korea unless the DPRK relented on its nuclear weapons program. In mid-June, 2003, North Korea's response was to tell the US to "mind its own business."<sup>31</sup>

Meanwhile, Japan appeared to be farther down the arduous road toward normalization of relations having held a historic summit meeting between Japanese Prime Minister Junichiro Koizumi and Kim Jong Il in September of 2002. At that meeting, the North Korean leader agreed to freeze testing long-range missiles and reiterated a pledge to permit inspections of the country's nuclear sites.<sup>32</sup> Although Japan-North Korea talks appear to be producing only the most grudging progress on other issues, their bilateral relationship is in better shape and likely to be more productive than that between the US and North Korea at any time in the near future.

During 2003, President Bush held separate talks with South Korean President Roh My Hyun and Japanese Prime Minister Junichiro Koizumi. In each case the talks led to a joint declaration condemning North Korea's nuclear program and threatening "further steps" or "tougher measures" if the North does not back down. By mid-year, however, both Asian leaders find themselves facing political difficulties stemming from their support of the American president. In South Korea, President Roh's support of Bush has brought protests from within his own party from those who say he has betrayed his promise to stand

independent of the US.

## V. China and Taiwan

Relations between the US and China went badly from the start of President Bush's term in office. As Dali L. Yang points out, Bush saw China in a different light than his predecessor, President Bill Clinton, who sought a strategic partnership with China. To Bush, China was a "strategic competitor" towards whom Bush adopted a unilateralist policy on every issue from national missile defense to arms sales with Taiwan.<sup>33</sup> For China's leaders, the Bush Administration's determination to go ahead with NMD threatened to neutralize China's small arsenal of nuclear missiles, while US weapons sales to Taiwan served to encourage Taiwan politicians to hold out against mainland overtures for national reunification.

US weapons sales to Taiwan, however, seem to be a more salient issue than NMD at the moment in US-China relations. President Jiang Zemin suggested during his meeting with President Bush in October 2002 that China could link its deployment of short-range missiles facing Taiwan to US arms sales to the Taiwanese military.<sup>34</sup> The offer seemed to call the US government's bluff on the arms sales issue. For years US officials have used China's substantial and growing missile deployment in Fujian and Zhejiang provinces as the main reason for US arms sales to Taiwan. As recently as March, 2002, an unnamed senior member of the Bush Administration was reported to have said that a decrease in China's missile deployments would be a precondition for any limit on US arms sales to Taiwan.<sup>35</sup>

Chinese officials, however, have recently

expressed frustration at US policymakers who seem to believe that China is now behaving well as a result of the Bush administration's tougher policy toward China and its clearer support of Taiwan. One Chinese official is quoted as having said, referring to arms sales, "China has been making serious efforts to improve its ties with the US. Anti-terrorism is important to the US, and China's support is important on this front. But you can't expect to request us to support you on counterterrorism and then overlook or even hurt our national security on this other issue."<sup>36</sup> It now appears that China has increased, not decreased, its deployment of missiles aimed at Taiwan from an additional fifty missiles per year to seventy-five, and will soon have as many as six hundred such missiles aimed at Taiwan.

The Bush Administration, of course, is likely to take this response as evidence of the need for a missile defense system to defend Taiwan, but such a step would also present a high level of risk. Indeed, it is clear that arms sales to Taiwan coupled with an arrogant, unilateralist approach to bilateral relations have produced a fifty percent increase in the rate of increase of hostile missiles aimed at Taiwan. It seems unlikely that matching these missiles with a missile defense system will produce a reduction in such missiles. More likely, the same pattern will repeat itself, and the deployment of a missile defense system will produce yet another surge in the arms race that is already going on in the region.

## **VI. Evaluation of US Missile Defense Policy and Its Implications for East Asia**

The pluralistic security community that

now embraces the US, Western Europe and Japan reflects the profound reality that we now exist in the unique position in which war among the most developed countries of the world is unthinkable. Yet, that community is threatened from the outside by terrorist groups, "rogue states," and potentially dangerous conflicts either between nations outside the security community or between outsider nations and one or more members of the security community. The overall issue I have addressed in this paper is whether missile defense systems, advocated chiefly by the US, can deter armed conflict with or between nations external to the security community.

Thus, the purpose of this paper has been to evaluate US missile defense policy in light of four questions: 1) Is missile defense the right tool for the current security environment? 2) Is missile defense an effective response given its readiness and potential utility? 3) Does missile defense invite escalation of arms races? 4) Will missile defense reverse positive momentum in international diplomacy leading to the worsening of existing direct military threats?

My analysis of US missile defense policy revealed a commitment to that policy which outweighs other tactical considerations in the war on terrorism. While the US Congress is prepared to allocate significant amounts of money to develop effective countermeasures against terrorism, the Bush Administration appears likely to exercise its option to use that money to step up PAC-3 missile procurement — despite the PAC-3's recent failures in test flights. Those failures highlight our related concern that the most readily available missile system, the "hit-to-kill" PAC-3 system, is not

yet combat ready, nor is it likely to be effective against mobile Scud missiles until more alterations are made in the system over the next few years.

Missile defense also appears to have had a destabilizing effect on the conflict between India and Pakistan over the province of Kashmir, complicated by Pakistan's awkward position in the war against terrorism. India's willingness to purchase the Arrow missile defense system from Israel seems to be leading Pakistan to acquire either offensive or defensive weapons of its own. Meanwhile, on the Korean Peninsula, the rhetoric of missile defense has caused the isolation of North Korea just at the moment when positive progress toward normalization of relations was being noticed. In the former case, missile defense seems to have created a potentially destabilizing arms race. In the latter, it has led to the reversal of forward momentum in negotiations.

My conclusion must be that missile defense, at least in the hasty and forceful manner in which the Bush Administration is pushing it, is not a policy likely to preserve a regime of general deterrence in East Asia. Missile defense tends to disrupt rather than reinforce the status quo, making necessary a perilous and temporary regime of immediate deterrence in which the forces available to resolve conflict peaceably are difficult to measure and control.

But if missile defense is not the answer, then, as member of the security community, what strategy should Japan and the US follow concerning external threats? Part of the answer must be that, even though we find missile defense in its current form inadequate to the current needs of the security community,

we cannot entirely rule out a possible role for it in the future. I do not recommend halting all research and development efforts in this area. However, more resources should be devoted to the development of effective countermeasures against terrorism within each nation of the security community — in other words, a greater emphasis on homeland security. This is more likely to involve international sharing of resources among the nations of the community, not only in the form of shared intelligence but also in the form of stepped up training for local police and firefighters as well as medical and emergency personnel.

In a larger context, however, the external threats to the security community must be handled through firm, straightforward negotiations. No amount of military superiority can guarantee the security of every member of the community unless there is also the willingness to communicate about diverse interests and problems. Labeling the world outside the security community as an "axis of evil" may secure popular votes in one place or another. But it will not improve security in East Asia.

## VII. Conclusion

Deterrence theory teaches us that wars arise from a series of escalating threats and counterthreats, which include expansion in the amounts and types of weaponry available. Military preparedness, which might include missile defense systems, may deter such threats, but may also generate the kind of arms race that will make a challenge to the equilibrium of the system from a hostile external source more likely. I have undertaken

this study of US missile defense policy in order to understand more clearly the likely consequences of that policy.

I have found through my brief explorations of the Pakistan-India conflict, the current crisis on the Korean Peninsula, and the tensions between China and Taiwan that US missile defense policy seems more likely to produce escalation of threats and counterthreats than to deter military challenges to the status quo. My recommendation, in contrast to that of the current Bush Administration, is that the US government should dramatically reduce its emphasis on missile defense both for itself or for its allies. This is especially important for East Asia where much is currently at stake, and where miscalculation and misperception could have particularly disastrous consequences. This may mean that US allies in East Asia, such as Japan and South Korea, will need to seek greater independence from US policy in order to regain their balance in these precarious times.

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## U.S. Missile Defense Policy and International Security: Implications for East Asia

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The emergence of a “pluralistic security community,” embracing the US, Western Europe and Japan, is an event of great historical significance. The fact that war within this community of the world’s most developed nations at present is virtually unthinkable is an unprecedented state of affairs. Although internal threats to this community are virtually non-existent, external threats to its security are many and serious. The current administration of President Bush recommends the development of an elaborate system of missile defenses to deter such threats.

In this paper I proceed from an analysis of deterrence theory to a critique of President Bush’s missile defense policy. I organize my critique under four basic questions: 1) Is missile defense the right tool where the risk of terrorism from insurgent groups forms the most salient threat? 2) Is missile defense an effective response given the state of its readiness and the military situations in which we expect to use it? 3) Would missile defense deployment cause and arms race able to ignite already explosive international crises? And 4) Will missile defense reverse positive momentum in international diplomacy leading to the worsening of existing direct military threats?

In reaching negative answers to the first two questions, I show first of all that the threat of missile attack from challenger states is distinct and separate from the threat of

terrorist attack from insurgent non-state groups, such as Al Qaida. I then point to recent test failures of missile technology in the US and the current rush by the US Congress to fund production of missile defenses for use against Iraq in the event of war on that front. I conclude that missile defense in its current state of development could not defend against the types of terrorist attacks that have recently been observed and are likely to be just as inadequate as those that performed unsatisfactorily in the Persian Gulf War.

With regard to question three, I look at the current crisis between India and Pakistan. The fact that India now seeks to purchase missile defense systems from the Israelis, and Pakistan has responded by initiating an arms build up suggests that the answer to that question is yes.

I also answer yes to question four. The current Korean situation demonstrates that throwing missile defense into a delicate balance can reverse positive diplomatic momentum. The current tension between the US and China over both missile defense and arms sales to Taiwan also illustrates this. I conclude that if the Bush administration continues to press for elaborate national missile defense systems, members of the security community such as Japan will have to pursue more independent diplomatic initiatives in order to maintain international stability and deter external threats.