1) EASTERN EUROPE, US GLOBAL MISSILE SHIELD & NATO

During Keep Space for Peace Week in Prague, activists presented letters to the American and Russian embassies as well as to their own government opposing the proposed US Star Wars radar deployment in the Czech Republic.

Regular contentions by US civilian and military officials that the installation of projected interceptor missile facilities in Poland and the Czech Republic are aimed at so-called rogue
states like Iran and North Korea are a geographical, geometrical and geopolitical absurdity. In fact such plans are entirely aggressive in nature and present the potentially most dangerous threat the world has known.

Missile deployments in Poland and the linked missile radar site in the Czech Republic are an integral, indeed the central, component of a global US-dominated system to neutralize targeted nations’ deterrence and retaliation capabilities, both before and after the fact, for uses of blackmail and actual implementation.

As the Russian Novosti agency’s chief military commentator remarked last November: “The strategic importance of these interceptor missiles would increase were the U.S. to deliver a first nuclear strike against Russia. In this scenario, interceptor missiles would have to take on the limited number of missiles surviving the first strike, which would allow the U.S. to hope for success and, for the first time since the 1950s, for a victory in a nuclear war.”

The first addition to the missiles in Poland, even before their deployment, is the US’s commitment to station a Patriot battery with 96 warheads to Poland, within striking distance of Russia’s Kaliningrad enclave and Belarus now that the Pentagon has developed a Patriot Advanced Capability - 3 (PAC-3) system with a range of 120 kilometers.

And all of the above is only a small portion of the integrated full spectrum global and space system the US and its allies are now testing and are preparing to deploy. These systems would permit the destruction of other nations’ missiles in the launch, midcourse and terminal phases and in theory in the silo. The global missile system also includes—in addition to ground-based interceptor missiles—air, sea and space components.

The sea-based element is the Aegis Ballistic Missile Defense System, increasingly being deployed on US and allied NATO ships and what has recently been termed Asian NATO warships. Linked with the Pentagon’s plans for a “1,000-ship navy” and a complementary US/NATO/Asia-Pacific NATO “3,000-ship navy,” this would provide Washington and its military allies the ability to patrol all the world’s waters and shipping lanes with missile killer capacities.

On the general strategy of so-called missile defense, the Russian analyst Yury Rubtsov said last September: “The pending deployment of interceptor missiles in Poland is a link in the system of the global anti-missile shield sweeping from Greenland to Alaska created by the US that does not conceal its plans for setting up a fourth and a fifth position area for its anti-missile shield.

The system that Americans are forming is to include offshore and on-land elements in Alaska, California, Japan, Greenland and a number of European countries.
"The radar in turn will be a component of the integrated system of the anti-missile shield alongside the interceptor missiles deployed in Alaska. More than ten countries are involved in the formation of the US anti-missile shield, including Australia, Britain, Germany, the Czech Republic, Denmark, France, Japan, India, Israel, Italy, the Netherlands, Poland, Taiwan and Ukraine."

All of the above are NATO members or partners except for India and Taiwan - it would be too overt a challenge to China to formalize partnerships with them - but the latter two are also being progressively integrated into the US/NATO international nexus. This past September the Pentagon began its first-ever permanent military deployment in Israel, to staff an X-Band missile radar site with a range of 1,240 miles. This allows the US to operate throughout the Middle East and into Southern Russia.

At the last summit of NATO in Romania in April of last year, all 26 member states endorsed US missile system plans in Poland and the Czech Republic. That support was reiterated at a NATO defense ministers meeting last November and the following month at a meeting of NATO foreign ministers, evoking this response from Russia Defense Minister Anatoly Serdyukov: “The deployment of a U.S. missile shield in central Europe would disrupt the strategic balance among the world’s nuclear powers.”

With the upcoming NATO 60th anniversary summit on April 3-4 of this year, and with the incoming Obama administration naming former Bush administration NATO Supreme Allied Commander Gen. James Jones as its National Security Adviser, all indications are that US and allied missile plans for Europe may expand yet further.

While recently in Prague, California Rep. Ellen Tauscher, chairwoman of the House of Representatives Strategic Forces Subcommittee, was described by the Czech News Agency as having “long been demanding that the system protecting the USA and its allies against possible hostile missiles be fully included in the NATO complex of defence.”

Even more ominously, current NATO Supreme Allied Commander General John Bantz Craddock recently affirmed, "The fact is there is strategic need and advantage for nuclear weapons....The alliance has made the decision to have them. There has been no debate to retrograde them out.”

And in reference to the 400 U.S. B-61 tactical nuclear bombs stored at bases in several NATO countries, including Germany, Italy, Turkey and the United Kingdom, a Pentagon report released on December 8, 2008 stated: “The presence of U.S. nuclear weapons in Europe remains a pillar of NATO unity.”

The combination of US nuclear warheads in Europe and the expansion of the NATO Alliance and US missile interceptor sites encircling Russia on its eastern, southern and western borders is a far more threatening than anything that occurred during the Cold War.
Recent surveys show two-thirds of Czechs opposed to the US missile radar site with 71% demanding a referendum on the issue, and 54% of Poles in opposition to having their nation turned into a potential ground zero in a catastrophic missile war.

Czechs and Poles clearly realize the danger that most of the rest of the world has been oblivious to but can no longer remain indifferent to except at its own peril, perhaps at the risk of its very survival.

Rick Rozoff
Chicago, Illinois

2) WHO IS GENERAL JONES, OBAMA'S NATIONAL SECURITY ADVISER?


Brzezinski, who served as Jimmy Carter’s National Security Adviser, was the chief architect of the US strategy to arm the Taliban in Afghanistan in order to drive the former Soviet Union from that country. Brzezinski was an early supporter of Obama.

One MSNBC reporter recently suggested that Obama’s foreign policy will be similar to that of George H.W. Bush. Correspondent Chuck Todd reported that Gen. Jones is a close buddy of John McCain and was likely picked for his new role because Secretary of Defense (DoD) Robert Gates insisted on having Jones be part of the team if Obama wanted Gates to remain at DoD.

Gen. Jones, since retiring from the Marine Corps where he served as supreme commander of NATO, has been serving on the boards of Chevron oil, Boeing Aerospace, and Cross Match Technologies where they are creating “identity management solutions” including, fingerprint and palm scanners, facial recognition solutions, and iris capture devices.

Gen. Jones should fit in well with Obama’s call for an expanded war in Afghanistan. In an
interview with Sea Power Magazine in November 2002, Jones praised the role of technology and transformation in the advancement of military supremacy: “We will truly be able to accomplish missions like Afghanistan without breaking a sweat,” he said.

In a 2003 speech on the mission of NATO Gen. Jones said, “We want NATO to be expeditionary. The Alliance wishes to be global, and there are some transformational steps that have to be taken to get there. NATO today is not nearly as agile it needs to be.”

According to one peace researcher, Gen. Jones Jones is also an advocate of a “Trans-Sahara Counterterrorism Initiative,” an “interagency plan to combat terrorism in trans-Saharan Africa using a range of political, economic and security tools.”

The bulk of this strategy is aimed at funding, training, and supplying arms to a professional African security force, which will take directions from the U.S. and NATO.

“Africa’s vast potential [natural resources] makes African stability a near term global strategic imperative,” Jones has said. “Development of effective security structures in Africa will establish the foundation for future success.”

Success for whom you might ask?

One of the first tasks for Jones will likely be to find a country on the African continent to host the Pentagon’s new command—Africa Command (AFRICOM). Up to this point most African countries have been reluctant to agree to host the command fully understanding the U.S. has designs on the significant resource base on the continent. But with a black president, with roots in Kenya, it is likely that Obama will lead the U.S. military into greater control of Africa. The Pentagon, during the Bush administration, boldly predicted that, “We will be fighting in Africa 20 years from now.”

Jones will be a key player in the expansion of U.S. military global and space operations. Watch him like a hawk.

Bruce K. Gagnon,
Bath, Maine
3) GORBOCHEV ON OBAMA

The following is a brief report published by Current Concerns international journal on remarks made by the former President of the Soviet Union and current President of the Green Cross, Michail Gorbachev at a recent news conference in Lilienberg, Sweden.

Michail Gorbachev answered various questions from the auditory. Being asked how he, Gorbachev, estimated the new American President Obama and what hopes he had with respect to him, he remained realistic. Three years ago, he had said during an event in the USA that this country needed a perestroika, and the hall applauded. And this was what is needed now. Russia, said Gorbachev, had had to take this path and for the USA the time had come to do the same. The last eight years were very bad, he said: “If Obama pursues the same politics as Bush, this would be a catastrophe. Obama must be careful; he must not deceive his people. This would harm the whole democracy enormously, he mustn’t do this.”

“We must find a new level of cooperation and, to be more precise, by dialogue, no matter how long this will take. Obama must end this new cold war. After 100 days in office, we will remind him,” Gorbachev said with determination. However, he sees a growing and important responsibility coming up for the countries of Europe, for China and Brazil. They also must have to say a word with respect to this new way.

Gorbachev considers the extension of the presidential term for the Russian president to be the right reaction to the threat from abroad. The roots for this reform are to be found in NATO’s breach of promise not to expand further eastward. Where does NATO stand today? Gorbachev left no doubt: Missiles and NATO expansion to the East have nothing to do with Iran. We will have to fight Russia and China, that is the new foreign policy motto of NATO.

Gorbachev added that over 60% of the Czech population is against the missile defense system, but nobody shows any reaction to that. Quintillions of dollars are spent on armament; we see militarization tendencies everywhere, so we do not believe in the official version. The relationship between Europe and Russia was good, “we lived in certain euphoria, and all of a
sudden everything was different.”

4) A TRIP TO THE NORTH

The northern part of Europe, simply called the North, is often overlooked in talks about US quest for space dominance, in spite of the fact that Sweden is far ahead of many other nations in the world both in space technology and industry. Another fact is that Norway and Denmark are deeply involved in the US Missile Defence by hosting the Thule Ballistic Missile Early Warning radar system at Thule Air Base in Greenland and by hosting the Vardo radar base in northern Norway, close to Russia. These two radars are built and meant for US Star Wars systems.

The Swedish Peace Committe therefore took the initiative to invite the Global Network’s Coordinator Bruce Gagnon for a speech tour in these three countries in September 2008.

This coincided with the European Social Forum, in Malmo, in September, where Bruce made a forceful start by giving an inspiring speech in front of the big march through Malmo. At a workshop, together with Jan Tamas (Czech Republic) and Dave Webb (England and chair of the Global Network), he enlightened a lot of people about the militarization of space. After this he visited Copenhagen followed by Stockholm and Kiruna. When in Kiruna with the worlds biggest ground station for satellites - Esrange - a few miles outside the city, we got the explanation why NASA and Esrange have such a close cooperation - the proximity of Russia. This came from one of the students from the Space High School, at the evening meeting in Kiruna, when she disclosed that when volunteering at Esrange she had watched the downloading of pictures of Russia sent to the US. By the way - the meeting was a real success - Bruce at his best and a hall full of dedicated young people.

Next stop was Oslo, capital of Norway, a country sometimes called one of the best-equipped aircraft carriers for the US. Norway on one side of Eurasia, and Japan on the other, serves as installation platforms for US radars and listening posts in control of Russia and the whole land mass. Vardo, already mentioned above, but the new thing we learned at the meeting in Oslo was that Norway in secrecy has let an oilrig be used as a platform for a powerful radar essential for US Missile defence and deployed in the Bering’s Sea near Russia.

The tour underlined what Bruce put forward in his lectures: Every country will have a different role under corporate globalization. All warfare on the planet today is coordinated by space technology. US is moving to militarily encircle Russia because Russia has the worlds largest deposits of natural gas and large supplies of oil. The US wants to spread missile defence programs via NATO through Europe. And we in the North who are active in the Swedish Peace Committe, Women for Peace, and WILPF must start to put the same questions as Bruce did:
Will the line between civilian and military space technology get rubbed out? Will the spaceport launch site at Esrange in Sweden begin to launch military related rockets? Will Andoya Rocket Range in Norway at some point become a launch facility for NATO “missile defence” as the program gets expanded to include member states throughout Europe?

Finally I want to quote Bruce: We must work together, worldwide, to abolish war just like slavery once was abolished.

_Agneta Norberg,
Stockholm, Sweden_

5) GN 2009 SPACE CONFERENCE IN KOREA

The 17th annual Global Network space organizing conference will be held in Seoul, South Korea from April 16-18, 2009. The main topic will be “missile defense and arms race in the Asian-Pacific.”

Korea has been one of the most strategically important outposts of U.S. imperialism. It is the last divided nation in the world mainly due to its heavily geopolitical importance among the powerful countries. The Korean Demilitarized Zone has not only been the most fortified zone in the world but is also called the ‘western corridor’. But one can say the whole county has become a corridor for US militarism and imperialism. Bruce Gagnon used to often quote Hillary Clinton saying in 2005 that it was natural that the USA would have permanent military
bases in Iraq as it had kept them in Korea for more than 50 years.

Since 2002, there has been a significant change of the US military strategy in the Korean peninsula, named “Strategic flexibility” and South Korea has become the pedestal for wars in Iraq and Afghanistan. Korea is unique in the sense that the issue of peace and reunification is very keenly felt here and the condition of peace importantly affects the stabilization of not only Asia-Pacific region but also the world.

I still remember the excitement when I came to know the Global Network in the US in 2003. As I came to learn later, the missile defense issue was one of the hot issues among many South Korean peace activists in 2002. It is amazing that for the first time, we Koreans will welcome the global activists who specialize in the space and missile defense issues here in Korea in 2009.

Wooksik Cheong, of the Peace Network, (the leading member of the Korean Committee being formed by about 10 organizations for hosting the April conference in Seoul) said that a Japanese activist, Satomi Oba, had proposed him to have a GN conference in Korea someday. Satomi, who died of cancer in 2005, was a visionary. I am grateful to her.

Asia is undergoing a significant US strategic buildup boosted by the US space policy. As Wooksik Cheong points out, the military budgets of the U.S., China, Russia, Japan and both North and South Korea accounts for 70% of the entire global military spending. South Korea has become the 5th Aegis Destroyer builder in the world in 2007. It was the fifth arms buyer from the US from 1999 to 2006 and is dreaming of becoming a great arms exporter. Needless to say, it is at the tremendous sacrifice of all the poor in Korea.

It is the responsibility and joy of the Koreans to share its rich struggle stories with our friends from all over the world and resolutely stand together with them for the peace and humanity in the world. I urge many of you to come to Seoul in April and share your vision with the Koreans, especially with the young activists and workers.

You are so welcome to visit some places like Panmunjeom (the symbol of the Korean division), to have a solidarity protest in Pyeongtaek (the new US military hub base for Northeast Asia) and meet the local activists in Ohyun-ri where the people are currently against the expansion of the Mugun-ri military training field near the Korean DMZ.

*Please contact the Global Network office for details of the Korea conference in April.*

*by Sung-Hee Choi*
*Inchon, South Korea*
6) WARSHIPS OR WINDMILLS?

America is anticipating change. Barack Obama promised it; U.S. citizens voted for it. And now, the struggle to influence that change has begun. Take the issue of military spending and jobs, for example.

On the one hand, we have Sen. Susan Collins, a Republican, just re-elected in Maine. She is a strong supporter of Bath Iron Works (BIW), one of two major shipyards in this country that manufactures naval destroyers. The fight in Congress is whether to build the new high-tech $3.3 billion superdestroyer; or to cut costs and build more of the current cheaper [at $1.2 billion] models. In either case, the destroyers built in Bath will be outfitted with “missile defense” systems and used to surround China.

Sen. Collins argues that our naval fleet is at a level lower than it was at the end of the Cold War. She envisions Bath Iron Works making and repairing naval destroyers for the next 10-20 years. That's the only vision she offers for BIW. This is true for her Republican counterpart, Sen. Olympia Snowe. It remains to be seen how our newly elected Democrat Rep. Chellie Pingree votes, but her campaign offered little change to the status quo on militarism.
On the other hand, there is Robert Gates - Bush’s, and now Obama’s choice for Defense Secretary to oversee the Pentagon and its wars. In a Foreign Affairs article (Jan/ Feb 2009) he has this to say: “As much as the U.S. Navy has shrunk since the end of the Cold War, for example, in terms of tonnage, its battle fleet is still larger than the next 13 navies combined - and 11 of those 13 navies are U.S. allies or partners.” He notes that “U.S. air and sea forces have ample untapped striking power should the need arise to deter or punish aggression…”

Gates has made it clear that he has difficulty with a Congress that continues to fund and build weapons systems that the Pentagon does not want. Gates has no interest in decreasing military procurements, but he wants more control over them, and wants to establish different priorities, which include Star Wars.

Somewhere in the middle - at the heart of the jobs issue, are the workers themselves. Enter Peter Woodruff, a maintenance mechanic at BIW who has engaged the issue of economic conversion. Woodruff joined our Bath Economic Conversion Group eighteen months ago, a group that includes some peace activists, a minister, a plumber, and a couple of social workers. We have all become clearer that the permanent war economy is at the root of this country’s fiscal crisis. The fact is that industry producing consumer products has been moved out of this country to locations around the globe; industrial jobs paying union wages in local communities are provided by the one discretionary line item in the federal budget that has dramatically increased in the last decade: the Pentagon. Military contractors can count on elected officials throughout this country to stake their campaigns on keeping military spending afloat. This, in spite of the well-documented fact that military industries are capital intensive - and produce far fewer jobs than if those same tax dollars were spent on other things, like mass transit, home weatherization, health care, and education.

Woodruff is well aware that, at its peak, BIW employed 12,000 people. That number is now down to less than 5,000, and dwindling. Recent newspaper headlines reported that 179 more BIW employees are being laid off. Woodruff understands the problem, and has identified a solution. In the same local newspaper that announced there would be significant layoffs at BIW, Woodruff had an op-ed advocating that the popular vision to put a thousand wind turbines six miles off shore be realized by the workers at BIW. Woodruff and some of his colleagues see the clear need in the 21st Century to build alternative energy systems, and mass transit. They see job security in building the infrastructure this country will need to survive into the next century.

Woodruff is largely motivated by his broken heart as he reflects on the fact that ships built at BIW launched the “shock and awe” attack on Baghdad in 2003. He is haunted by images of innocent civilian lives lost to U.S. military might. He is particularly pained by depleted uranium – used in U.S. missiles – and its long-term impact on both people and nature in the aftermath of a bombing

President Obama has some tough decisions to make. He promises green jobs. But he also
promises to re-build the military, and expand the “right” war in Afghanistan. His position on missile defense is hard to pin down. He says he supports missile defense but won’t deploy systems that don’t work.

So, Peter Woodruff takes the promise of change seriously. He began this New Year with a petition to Maine’s congressional delegation, the governor, and the state legislature. Circulated by him and BIW colleagues, the petition intends to ensure that some of those promised green jobs be at BIW building windmills. Jobs that will stay in our local communities. Jobs that will build our way out of our dependence on fossil fuels.

U.S. workers can relate to a vision for how U.S. industry can make a comeback and build an infrastructure that abandons weapons making and provides the energy infrastructure that carries us into the future. Obama promised change; Woodruff and his colleagues are trying to make change happen.

Mary Beth Sullivan,
Bath, Maine

7) VIEW ON OBAMA FROM UK

With Obama’s victory, suddenly many things seem possible. Great hopes emerge almost overnight - wars may be ended, bases may be closed. Many think these hopes will prove to be utopian. Perhaps so, although personally, I have no doubt that we will see some positive change. But what can we really expect from Obama, and what will he do about key issues for the peace movement, such as nuclear weapons, NATO and US Missile Defence?
Potentially quite a bit. Not least because attitudes towards nuclear disarmament have changed quite significantly in the US over the last few years. A wave of opinion across the political spectrum now favours US initiatives towards global nuclear abolition. The most well known of these comes from Henry Kissinger and George Shultz. In the current issue of the respected US journal Foreign Affairs, Ivo Daalder and Jan Lodal back this approach, advocating what they term, “The Logic of Zero”, stating that “Washington must launch a vigorous diplomatic effort to convince the world of the logic of zero - and of the benefit of taking the difficult steps necessary to get there.”

Both Obama and McCain had expressed support for this vision of a nuclear free world, and it has become surprisingly uncontroversial in the US. Indeed, Obama said quite a bit about nukes during the presidential campaign. For example: “A world without nuclear weapons is profoundly in America’s interest and the world’s interest. It is our responsibility to make the commitment, and to do the hard work to make this vision a reality.”

The big question is how this translates into policies and actions. What concretely will Obama do? During the campaign he has mentioned a number of specific steps that he plans to take, many of which hinge on renewed cooperation with Russia. This is very much in line with the Kissinger-Shultz approach which emphasises US-Russian bilateral reductions as a key stage in working towards abolition. Obama has emphasized, for example, his intention to seek Russia’s agreement to extend the provisions of START I before it expires in December 2009. And he also plans to work with Russia to take US and Russian ballistic missiles off hair-trigger alert.

This is all to the good, but there are currently two major obstacles to improved US/Russia relations, namely NATO expansion and the US so-called missile “defence” system. Not surprisingly, NATO is basically seen as hostile to Russia: its failure to dissolve when the Warsaw Pact did in 1991; its waves of expansion into former Soviet republics; its changed mission statement allowing “out of area activities”; its nuclear armaments; its nuclear first use policy - the list of problems is almost endless. NATO is a Trojan horse for US policy in Europe and is widely recognised as such. Most recently Russia has taken a firmer stand against expansion up to its borders with regard to the Ukraine and Georgia.

So what is Obama’s position? In the summer he said he supports a membership action plan
for Georgia, but currently the process seems to have stalled. He is of course in favour of more NATO troops in Afghanistan, but that may be primarily over concern to ease pressure on US troops rather than any intrinsically pro-NATO position.

But Obama also says that he wants better relations with Russia - and he is not going to get them if he backs NATO expansion in the face of Russian concerns.

Similarly with US Missile Defence. This anti-ballistic missile system, which the US has been hell bent on placing in Europe, would give the US the capacity to attack another country without fear of retaliation. Not surprisingly Russia believes itself to be the target for this, especially as the latest bases for the system are planned for Poland and the Czech Republic.

Indeed, President Medvedev has recently stated that if the system goes ahead he will place Iskander missiles in Kaliningrad. So will Obama go ahead with missile defence? So far he has not opposed it, but the conditions he places on it seem to be almost prohibitive, not least that it has to be “proven to work” - which has not yet happened; and it mustn’t be expensive! I don’t think either of those is happening any time soon.

It is also notable that after Obama spoke with Polish President Kaczynski - following his election success - Kaczynski claimed that Obama said that missile defence would continue. An Obama spokesperson subsequently announced that the President-elect had not made a commitment to it. That’s a start. Surely Obama has the good sense to realise that the agreements he hopes to make with Russia will come to nothing if he continues with the belligerent attitudes of his predecessor. Now is the time for the US to recognise that we live in a multipolar world. If Obama fights against that reality, his dream of change will come crashing down on the rocks of endless war.

Kate Hudson,
Chair CND, England

8) NO US BASES CONFERENCE


There is a sense of relief that many here in the U.S. feel after the presidential election, but we understand this is a time to step up our organizing for peace and economic justice—including the growing movement to close and withdraw the nearly 1,000 U.S. military bases located in foreign nations.
From Okinawa and Guam to Honduras, Germany, Iraq, and beyond people who have suffered from the abuses inherent to foreign military bases have been calling for their withdrawal. People in the U.S. have joined this call, outraged by the damage done by U.S. bases abroad and by their expense, which diverts $138 billion a year from addressing human needs and revitalizing our economy.

A broad coalition of groups from across the US is organizing the conference including the Global Network, Veterans for Peace, FOR, CodePink, AFSC, United for Peace & Justice and Peace Action. Bruce Gagnon and GN affiliate Tim Rinne (Nebraskans for Peace) will be doing a workshop on space issues at the conference.

The conference will feature base opponents from many “host” nations and will include leading activists as keynote speakers, panellists and workshop facilitators. Monday, March 2, will be a lobbying day on Capitol Hill, in which we encourage as many conference attendees as possible to participate. The conference will begin with a protest vigil at the Pentagon on Feb 27 from 4-5 pm at the Pentagon Metro stop (take yellow or blue Metro line to get there).

For more information contact: GGold@afsc.org or (617) 661-6130.

www.projectonmilitarybases.org

9) LOST IN SPACE: NASA AT ITS 50th ANNIVERSARY

The National Aeronautics and Space Administration has been celebrating its 50th anniversary by doing what it does best: public relations puffery.

In recent weeks, the agency issued a slick 215-page publication attributing success after success “benefiting society” to itself. *Spinoff: 50 Years of NASA-Derived Technologies (1958-2008)* blows the NASA horn for purportedly making enormous contributions to: highway safety, “improved” radial tires, land mine removal, memory foam, enriched baby food, portable cordless vacuums, artificial limbs, aircraft anti-icing systems, and on and on. About all NASA doesn’t take credit for is curing the common cold.

But in fact, despite the usual NASA spin, the agency 50 years after its formation is in a huge mess - as is the U.S. space program that it administers.

On the most recent NASA mission, last month’s shuttle trip to the International Space Station, a tool bag containing $100,000 in equipment floated away during a space walk. (How come a NASA tool bag cost $100,000? The grease guns and scrapers were “specialized hardware that had to be fabricated,” claimed a NASA PR person.)
“Lost in Space” was a common headline for the loss.

That sums up NASA now.

The shuttle is about to be “retired”—and for good reason. “In light of the knowledge gained since the loss of Columbia, we believe we have about one chance in 80 of losing a crew on any single shuttle launch,” NASA Administrator Michael D. Griffin admitted in a column he wrote for *Space News* published October 20.

“If we were to conduct 10 additional launches prior to retiring the shuttle, we would incur a risk of about one chance in eight that another shuttle crew would be lost at some point in the sequence,” said Griffin. “These are sobering odds, one reason the Columbia Accident Investigation Board recommended replacing the shuttle as soon as possible.”

The Bush administration and NASA have planned an end to the shuttle program in 2010 and, in 2015, having manned space flights resume with what NASA calls its Constellation program. This consists of a rocket being called the “Ares I Crew Launch Vehicle” and a capsule to sit on top of it in which astronauts would ride being called the “Orion Crew Exploration Vehicle.”

Between 2010 and 2015, at the earliest, the only way U.S. astronauts would be able to go up into space is as paying passengers on Russian rockets going to and from the International Space Station (a $10 billion project which has now ballooned in cost to $100 billion, most of that U.S. tax money).

And as for money, “Over $7 billion in contracts has already been awarded - and nearly $230 billion is estimated to be ultimately spent over the next two decades” on the Constellation program, the Government Accountability Office said in a report on it in April. But whether the Ares I rocket and Orion capsule will fly in 2015, or at all, as currently designed, remains to be seen. “Computer modeling is showing that thrust oscillation within the first stage of the Ares I could cause excessive vibration throughout the Ares I and Orion,” said the GAO report. This “could create a risk of hardware failure and loss of vehicle control.” In other words, there might be violent shaking at liftoff that could doom the spacecraft. Also, said the GAO, the Ares I rocket might not have enough power to reach orbit. In addition, the GAO said NASA
acknowledges that “at this time, existing test facilities are insufficient to adequately test the Ares I and Orion systems.”

GAO said of the Ares I and Orion getting off the ground in 2015: “There are considerable unknowns as to whether NASA’s plans for these vehicles can be executed within schedule goals.”

Compounding this is news reported in October by the *The Orlando Sentinel*—based on it reviewing NASA “documents and internal studies” and interviews with “more than a dozen engineers, technicians and NASA officials involved in the project”—that NASA is concerned that Ares I could crash into the launch tower during liftoff because of “liftoff drift.” *The Orlando Sentinel* said the ignition of the rocket’s solid-fuel motor is seen as making it “jump” sideways on the launch pad.

“Bit by bit, the new rocket ship that is supposed to blast America into the second Space Age and return astronauts to the moon appears to be coming undone,” began the *The Orlando Sentinel* article. It quoted a NASA contractor as saying: “I get the impression that things are quickly going from bad to worse to unrecoverable.”

The article quoted Jeff Finckenor, a NASA engineer who quit the Ares I endeavor in September “in frustration over the way the program is being managed” as saying: “At the highest levels of the agency, there seems to be a belief that you can mandate reality, followed by a refusal to accept any information that runs counter to that mandate.”

That’s an old and consistent criticism of NASA. It was forcefully made by Nobel laureate Richard Feynman as a member of a presidential commission that investigated the disintegration after launch of NASA’s Challenger shuttle in 1986. The Challenger, Feynman stressed, should not have been launched on such a cold morning because the low temperature caused an O-ring to become inflexible—and he demonstrated this by publicly dropping a rubber ring into a glass of cold water.

“Let us make recommendations to ensure that NASA officials deal in a world of reality,” wrote Feynman in the commission’s final report. “NASA owes it to the citizens from whom it asks support to be frank, honest, and informative, so that these citizens can make the wisest
decisions for the use of their limited resources. For a successful technology, reality must take precedence over public relations, for Nature cannot be fooled.”

Seventeen years later, with the loss of another seven astronauts in the break-up of the shuttle Columbia as it tried to return to earth, there was the same kind of criticism of NASA by the Columbia Accident Investigation Board.

“The NASA organizational culture has as much to do with this accident as the foam,” said the board, referring to the chunk of foam that broke off on liftoff causing damage to the thermal protection system on a wing of the shuttle. “For both accidents,” Challenger and Columbia, “there were moments when management definitions of risk might have been reversed were it not for the many missing signals—an absence of trend analysis, imagery data not obtained, concerns not voiced, information overlooked or dropped,” it said. Lessons learned in the aftermath of the Challenger disaster were forgotten or ignored, the board found.

“Based on NASA’s history of ignoring external recommendations,” the report declared, “or making improvements that atrophy with time, the board has no confidence that the space shuttle can be operated safely for more than a few years based solely on renewed post-accident vigilance.”

The plan to go to a rocket now named Ares I was the brainchild of Griffin. As head of the Space Department at Johns Hopkins University’s Applied Physics Laboratory, he “had written a scholarly paper proposing a rocket design similar to the Ares I,” The Orlando Sentinel has noted. In 2005 he was appointed NASA administrator by President George W. Bush and “within months, he organized a study that passed over other proven rockets and chose the Ares I as safe, simple and relatively inexpensive because it used lots of parts from the shuttle.”

Meanwhile, Griffin doesn’t want to take the blame for the at least five-year gap in the U.S. being able to send astronauts into space itself. In an August e-mail to high NASA officials which was leaked, he said: “Exactly as I predicted, events have unfolded in a way that makes it clear how unwise it was for the U.S. to adopt a policy of deliberate dependence upon another power for access to ISS [International Space Station]. In a rational world, we would have been allowed to pick a shuttle retirement date to be consistent with Ares/Orion availability, we would have been asked to deploy Ares/Orion as soon as possible (rather than ‘not later than 2014’) and we would have been provided the necessary budget to make it so.”

“My guess,” he said, “is that there is going to be a lengthy period with no U.S. crew on ISS. No additional money of significance is going to be provided to accelerate Orion/Ares, and even if it were, at this point we can’t get there earlier than 2014.”
He declared: “My own view is about as pessimistic as it is possible to be.”

Also, Griffin has begun fighting with the incoming Obama administration. *The Orlando Sentinel* reported on December 10 that Griffin “is not cooperating with President-elect Barack Obama’s transition team, is obstructing its efforts to get information and has told its leader that she is ‘not qualified’ to judge his rocket program.”

What Obama will do about NASA also remains to be seen. In a campaign stop in March in Wyoming he commented that “NASA has lost focus and is no longer associated with inspiration.” He will most likely name a new NASA administrator.

But in any event there will be major impacts NASA-wide caused by the five-year hiatus and resulting lay-offs and loss of experienced employees.

“The Failure of NASA: And A Way Out” is the title of an essay by former NASA astronaut Philip K. Chapman which appeared in a 2005 *Space Daily* essay. He wrote: “In 1969, we landed on the Moon, but now we cannot leave low Earth Orbit. NASA claimed the shuttle would be fifteen times cheaper to fly (per pounds of payload) than the Saturn vehicles used in Apollo, but it is actually three times more expensive. The average cost of each flight is a staggering $760 million. After a mission, the time required to prepare a shuttle for the next flight was supposed to be less than two weeks, but in practice tens of thousand of technicians spend three to six months rebuilding each ‘reusable’ shuttle after every flight. Worst of all, the shuttle is a needlessly complex, fragile and dangerous vehicle, which has killed fourteen astronauts so far.”
“First of all,” stated Chapman, “we must recognize that NASA has bungled human space flight...The only viable solution is a new federal organization.”

I’ve had my own experiences with NASA. After learning in 1985 of plans to send a plutonium-fueled space probe up on a shuttle—indeed, that was to be Challenger’s next mission in 1986—I attempted to use the Freedom of Information Act to get information on the consequences of an accident in which the plutonium was dispersed. NASA and the U.S. Department of Energy stonewalled for nearly a year, finally providing me with reports claiming the likelihood of a catastrophic shuttle accident was 1-in-100,000—a figure promptly reduced to 1-in-76 after the Challenger exploded.

I wrote two books and did several television documentaries involving NASA and its use of nuclear power in space—encountering a defensive and closed bureaucracy.

Through the years, I have been interviewed numerous times on radio and television about my investigations into NASA and NASA has consistently refused to provide anyone to face me. I found NASA an agency with a culture that at all costs avoids questions and challenges—internal and external.

A leading critic of NASA, Bruce Gagnon, coordinator of the Global Network Against Weapons & Nuclear Power in Space, sees as central to the NASA situation it being controlled by the military since its establishment in 1958. “The civilian side was always a cover,” he charges. “Today NASA readily admits that everything they do, every mission they fly, is ‘dual use,’ meaning they are doing both military and civilian technology development at the same time.” For years NASA has been involved with the military in the development of space weapons “to give the U.S. 'control and domination' of the heavens with our tax dollars. The aerospace industry brags that Star Wars will be the largest industrial project in the history of the planet.”

This has all warped what was supposed to be a civilian agency. “The nation is in a crisis and we can't afford a new arms race in space,” says Gagnon. “When does the Congress stop funneling our hard earned tax dollars into the preparation for war in space?”

Meanwhile, NASA stumbles.

_Karl Grossman,_  
Professor of Journalism  
State University of New York/  
College at Old Westbury

10) KEEP SPACE FOR PEACE WEEK 2008
Each October the Global Network, with active support from WILPF, organizes a week of public activities around the world in order to bring the space issue directly to the public. This past fall about 100 local events were held throughout the US and in a dozen other countries. In 2009 Keep Space for Peace Week will be October 3–10.

The new Northrup Grumman space weapons production facility outside of Baltimore, Maryland drew a spirited protest during space week.
Activists in Nagpur, India gathered in front of the city’s Gandhi statue for a space week photo. Many events were held that week throughout India.

Members of the Campaign for Nuclear Disarmament marched to the front gate of RAF Fylingdales, a US Star Wars radar facility, in northern England.
For many years activists have faithfully gathered at the Lockheed Martin factory in King of Prussia, Pennsylvania.
Maine Veterans for Peace held a Keep Space for Peace Week protest at Bath Iron Works as another Aegis destroyer, outfitted with missile defense systems, was “Christened” at the shipyard.

Sung-Hee Choi in South Korea translated the GN’s Arsenal of Hypocrisy video into Korean and distributed
In New York City a protest was held at the downtown office of L-3 Communications, a large Star Wars contractor.

Mid-western activists held a vigil and a die-in outside a large space warfare conference in Omaha, Nebraska during Keep Space for Peace Week. Eight folks were arrested and some did jail time for the non-violent action.
11) ODDS AND ENDS

INDUSTRIAL EXPORTS

Military and aerospace contractors are the nation’s leading exporters of manufactured goods. They are worried about possible cuts in the new Congress. Thus, the Aerospace Industry Assn. (AIA) recently launched a $1.5 million advertising campaign and concurrent lobbying effort. Aviation Week reports “Of course, a campaign advocating taxpayer spending on weapons programs that is being underwritten by the Pentagon’s top contractors could draw fire from skeptics…perhaps that’s why the AIA campaign avoids mention of specific programs that could face funding pressure such as the F-22 or the Airborne Laser.” A Government Accounting Office analysis in 2008 of 95 major weapons programs found average cost overruns of 26% and schedule delays of 21 months. The US presently spends more on its military than the rest of the world combined—and nearly 10 times more than the No. 2 nation, China.

PRIVATIZE AFGHANISTAN?

The Army is looking for private armed guards to handle security at US bases in Afghanistan, and for a megacontractor to oversee other contractors in that war zone. War Secretary Robert Gates in December, 2008 said the US is making a “sustained commitment” to Afghanistan, one that will last “some protracted period of time.” Gates proposes to spend up to $300 million in construction projects for additional troop housing in Afghanistan. At least 30,000 U.S. troops are likely to join the 31,000 already in Afghanistan in the near future. The US Army projects it will need $40 billion a year above current funding levels in order to handle the expanded force that Obama has said will be needed. With the occupation of Afghanistan mired in crisis, a BBC opinion poll in November 2008 showed that 68% of the British population wants their troops out of Afghanistan.

PENTAGON CUTS?

Corporate military analysts are predicting that Obama will take at least 18 months to “assess the threat environment” before deciding on any Pentagon cuts. In fact they say that the Fiscal 2010 Pentagon budget that Obama will submit to Congress in February 2009 will largely have been developed by the Bush administration. One analyst has predicted that expansion of Democratic majorities in Congress “could embolden liberal lawmakers to raid military funding to pay for increasing spending on social programs.” On Obama’s campaign web site he stated, “We must adapt and make tradeoffs among systems originally designed for the Cold War and those required for current and future challenges. We need greater investment in advanced technology ranging from the revolutionary, like unmanned aerial vehicles and electronic warfare capabilities, to systems like the C-17 cargo and KC-X air refueling aircraft - which may not be glamorous to politicians, but are the backbone of our future ability to extend global power.” Many Wall Street and Washington analysts believe Democrats will be eager to
rely on military spending to bolster the economy during this fiscal crisis. “We would argue that Obama’s victory is probably no worse for the outlook for defense and could even prove to be better than the alternative,” Bank of America analysts told Aviation Week. However, some expensive programs, like the Airborne laser (ABL), could be on the chopping block because of their tremendous expense and dubious capabilities. Regarding missile defense, Obama has said, “I actually believe that we need missile defense because of Iran and North Korea and the potential for them to obtain or to launch nuclear weapons.”

CHINA SPACE

China will build more small satellites for military and other space missions. Space industry media report that China today has only a fraction of the overall space capability of the US and still has major gaps in coverage of every satellite application. Like the US most of China’s new satellites will be “dual use”- meaning they will serve both military and civilian purposes.

EUROPEAN MIL SPACE

European space ministers are happy with recent decisions to expand overall military space spending. Programs like the Situational Space Awareness and the European Data Relay System will see increasing funding levels. European scientists are pushing the European Space Agency (ESA) and individual European governments to reduce Europe’s space-technology dependence on US and Russian suppliers, because it makes it difficult for Europe to pursue its own space ambitions. “With the planned inclusion of the European Defence Agency (EDA) as a partner on space policy issues, the ESA Ministerial Council has broken a new barrier in the process of making space a European defence priority,” says Frank Slijper, author of From Mars to Venus: the European Union’s Steps Towards the Militarisation of Space, a new report from the Transnational Institute and Dutch Campaign Against Arms Trade. The report highlights how projects that are initially presented as civilian initiatives often have “dual” or multiple uses that include a strong military component. It also profiles how the Aerospace and Defence Industries business lobby sets the agenda for European space policy, from which it stands to draw massive financial benefits.

AEROSPACE INDUSTRY HAPPY

In the headline “Obama Picks Encouraging,” aerospace space industry publication Aviation Week expressed happiness with Obama’s decision to keep Secretary of War Robert Gates in the job, and to appoint Gen. James Jones as National Security Adviser. Obama has also chosen Raytheon senior vice president and former Pentagon comptroller William Lynn III to serve as Deputy Defense Secretary. This pick surprised some pundits who thought the position would go to Richard Danzig to prepare him to take over for Gates who was expected to have a short stay at DoD. According to the Washington Independent, “Richard Danzig, a former secretary of the Navy, has been one of President-elect Barack Obama’s chief defense advisers for over a year. His absence hints at a development with great significance for
Obama’s first term: the implicit recognition that Secretary of Defense Robert Gates will not be a placeholder for a Democratic appointee waiting in the wings, as many in the defense community and Democratic politics have presumed.”

MISSILE FEARS

*Aviation Week* reports that missile defense supporters are worried about Obama making some cuts in the $10 billion a year program. They have created a new documentary film at the conservative Heritage Foundation, called *33 Minutes*, to publicize “the need for missile defense in an uncertain world.” The fear-o-drama gets its name from the amount of time it would take for nuclear missiles to reach the US “from Iran and North Korea” (neither country now has nukes capable of hitting the continental US but since when has that stopped the war lords?). Backers of the film hope to “create awareness for missile defense similar to the buzz about climate change” caused by Al Gore’s film.

VENEZUELA’S FIRST SAT

China launched the “Simon Bolivar” telecommunications satellite in late October 2008 for Venezuela. Venezuela said the new satellite would free it and other nations in South America from dependence on capitalist satellite operators and permit the extension of Internet and other telecommunications services to rural areas. President Chavez called it “technology independence” for his country.

INTEL BUDGET GROWS

US intelligence operations are increasingly becoming space-technology oriented and for that reason the cost of operations is growing. The total US intelligence budget for 2008 was $47.5 billion. These budget numbers have traditionally been classified.

FRANCE WANTS MISSILE WARNING

French officials say they are not considering the kind of expensive missile defense system like the US is building. Instead they are proposing an operational missile-alert system that would include one or two geostationary-orbiting satellites and a ground radar for tracking missiles. However, the French Defense Ministry has been unable to persuade other European countries that the system would be a good idea. The Germans are not against the idea and might like to have one of their own in place by 2019-2020.

RAYHEON’S ROOF
Three English protestors camped on the roof of Raytheon’s Bristol office for a couple of weeks last December attempting to drive Raytheon out of the city. Raytheon is the fifth largest military contractor in the world, and the maker of “Bunker Buster” bombs, Tomahawk and Patriot missiles and has received huge contracts in Afghanistan and Iraq. Raytheon was also protested in 2006 by a group of peace activists in Derry, Ireland who were outraged about the corporation’s role in the Israeli bombing of Lebanon. While occupying Raytheon facility the activists “decommissioned” some of the computers that are used to design military software. For this act, the nine faced serious charges under Ireland’s Terrorism Act. In August 2006, a jury accepted that the nine had acted to prevent a war crime, and unanimously declared them innocent. Raytheon also builds the Exoatmospheric Kill Vehicle for the Pentagon’s “bullet-hitting-a-bullet” missile defense system.

SPACE HIGH SCHOOL

Colorado Springs, Colorado is moving to create a space high school so it can further indoctrinate local students in the “Master of Space” ethic. The school would be run by the aerospace industry “US Space Foundation.” Turning troubled public schools into military schools is a growing trend in America. While running the school system in Chicago, Obama’s new Secretary of Education, Arne Duncan, intended as recruitment and indoctrination centers.

SPACE WEAPONS NEVER DIE

Reuters reported that the U.S. Congress approved $5 million for a study of possible space-based interceptor missiles as part of the missile defense program. The study was included in the 2009 defense-spending bill. It is the first seed money for potential space-based interceptors since a Democratic-controlled Congress canceled such work in 1993. A pro space-based missile defense panel estimated that the system could be tested within three years at a cost of $3-5 billion. It recommended deploying 1,000 space-based interceptors at a projected cost of $16.4 billion in 2005 dollars to provide “high confidence” protection against attacks involving up to 200 warheads.

ONE MORE TIME

The UN General Assembly adopted 22 resolutions on nuclear disarmament and non-proliferation issues on December 2, 2008. One resolution called upon “all States, in particular those with major space capabilities, to contribute actively to the objective of the peaceful use of outer space and of the prevention of an arms race in outer space (PAROS) and to refrain from actions contrary to that objective and to the relevant existing treaties in the interest of maintaining international peace and security and promoting international cooperation.” The final vote was 177 in favor, 1 against, and 1 abstention. The US voted no and Israel abstained. Throughout the Clinton and Bush years, the US has continued to refuse to discuss
or negotiate a global treaty to ban weapons in space.

**RUSSIAN COUNTER MOVES**

Russia’s military is planning to upgrade its missiles to allow them to evade American weapons in space and penetrate any prospective missile shield. In comments to the Interfax news agency, Russia’s Strategic Missile Forces chief, Gen. Nikolai Solovtsov, said that Russia’s intercontinental ballistic missiles will be modernized to protect them from space-based components of the U.S. missile defense system. The upgrade will make the missiles’ warheads capable of flying “outside the range” of the space-based system.

**NEW ISRAEL RADAR**

Space War website reports that the US installed a new radar system in Israel in December 2008. The radar system, which has a range of more than 2,000 kilometers, has been installed in the Negev desert in southern Israel. Some 120 US troops were deployed to Israel to set up and operate the system. “The idea here is to help Israel create a layered missile defence capability to protect it from all sorts of threats in the region, near and far,” said a senior Pentagon official. The X-band radar system is a powerful phased array radar that is designed to track ballistic missiles through space and provide ground-based missiles with the targeting data needed to intercept them. The US has deployed a similar system in Japan. It also plans to install a larger one in the Czech Republic. Israel will have no direct access to the data collected by the radar. It will only be fed intelligence second hand, on a need-to-know basis, from the Americans unless the radar picks up an immediate, direct attack on Israel. Some Israeli officials expressed concern that the radar’s installation may anger Moscow, since its range will enable the U.S. to monitor aircraft in the skies over southern Russia.

**FRANKLY SPEAKING**

The Nation magazine reported in November 2008 that Rep. Barney Frank (D-MA) called for a 25 % cut in the military budget. Rep. Frank said, “We don’t need all these fancy new weapons. Much of the reduction will come from ending the war in Iraq and from cutting unneeded weapons systems. I also want to look at drawing down the number of our overseas bases.” Republican House Minority Leader John Boehner called Frank “incredibly irresponsible.” Democrats - especially those on the House Armed Services Committee - didn’t embrace Frank’s target, either. In 2009 over $500 billion went to the Pentagon, and an additional $200 billion for the wars in Iraq and Afghanistan. During the Bush years, the military budget has increased by 50%.

**TECHNICAL DISTORTION IN CZECH REPUBLIC**

In November 2008 noted MIT physics professor Ted Postol, longtime critic of the US missile
defense system, went to the Czech Republic and was alarmed to learn that the Czech public and parliament were receiving distorted information on the proposed Pentagon missile defence radar to be stationed southwest of Prague. Gen. Henry Obering, director of the U.S. Missile Defense Agency, had said the range of the radar was 2100-2500 km oversaw the creation of three Army schools, one Navy school, and one Air Force school. All of the military run schools were put in minority neighborhoods. Critics maintain the schools are when he visited the Czech Republic and said it would be used to protect against Iranian nuclear missiles. Postal said that given its current parameters, the radar cannot have such a range and could not be used to monitor Iran. Postal concluded, according to his calculations, that the radar’s maximal range would be 600-700 km which made it ideal to be used against Russia. The effort to manipulate the political process with the help of untrue information is an extremely dangerous and undemocratic precedent, Postol told opposition party leaders. He said it seemed to him very strange that General Obering was saying quite the opposite of what his own engineers knew to be fact.

EDUCATING STUDENTS IN INDIA

Global Network (GN) board member J. Narayana Rao in Nagpur, India continues to inspire us by his outreach to students in his country on the space issue. In September 2008 he reported to the GN that, “With huge resources at their disposal the space industry is making a serious effort to attract the youth to be supporters of the weaponization of space. For the last two years I am facing this reality, how to reach the youth spread over the whole country? I have decided to approach the students by organising various types of competitions at the National Level. This year I have organized a national essay contest with the subject of “The Impact of Weaponisation of Space on Peace & Development.” I had 131 Students from 48 colleges respond. In my circular I have given reference to various websites where material on the subject can be found. Most of the students relied on these websites. They mentioned names like Karl Grossman, Bruce Gagnon, Carol Urner, Tim Rinne, Global Network, WILPF, Space Treaty, International Protest Week, etc. Almost all recognised the role of US in weaponisation of space and condemned it. I will give prizes to 30 students.” As a follow-up Rao plans continued contact with the students, will hold another essay contest in 2009, will publish materials on space issues for student use, and plans a conference for 150 students on space issues. Sadly, as a retired railroad worker in a poor country, Rao has access to few resources. The GN has been sending him some funds when possible, but not nearly enough to help with his important work. Anyone willing to donate directly to Rao’s efforts should contact the GN for more info.

12. LETTER TO PRESIDENT-ELECT OBAMA

December 3, 2008

Dear President-Elect Obama:
We the undersigned, members and supporters of the Global Network, write to congratulate you on your recent election as President of the U.S. We want to help you in every way possible to promote peace around the world so that our national resources could be used for the tremendous needs we have here at home like health care, education, job creation, dealing with climate change and more.

We specifically write to urge you to reject the Bush administration plan to deploy “missile defense” interceptors in Poland and a Star Wars radar system in the Czech Republic. We know you are aware of Russia’s deep concern that these deployments are really aimed at them in spite of Pentagon assurances they are only directed at Iran.

Respected U.S. scientists George Lewis and Ted Postol recently studied these proposed deployments and wrote an article called “The European missile defense folly” that was printed in the Bulletin of the Atomic Scientists in the May/June issue of 2008. In their report Lewis and Postol state that, “Despite claims to the contrary by both Missile Defense Agency and State Department officials, the interceptors that Washington wants to deploy in Poland are fast enough to catch Russian ICBMs launched from locations west of the Ural Mountains toward the continental United States. The location of the interceptor site in Poland is ideal for this purpose.”

Russia of course has responded that they will be forced to upgrade their offensive nuclear capability if these U.S. weapons are indeed deployed in Central Europe. The people of Poland and the Czech Republic are in large numbers opposed to their countries being used as U.S. bases and we understand that in recent days over 30 mayors from Czech towns near the proposed U.S. radar base wrote you urging the plan be scrapped.

Expanding U.S. military operations near Russia’s borders will only help create a new Cold War and a new arms race that would eventually spread throughout Europe and beyond. Instead of this we hope you will work hard to make nuclear disarmament and a space weapons ban treaty (PAROS) top priorities.

In addition, we do not believe that any president should enact base agreements or treaties (such as these with Poland and the Czech Republic) without the constitutionally required approval of the Senate.

We look forward to hearing from you about how you intend to deal with this important issue. We wish you well and thank you for your attention to this matter of grave concern to us. We pledge to you that we will keep our eyes on the ball.

In peace,

Bruce K. Gagnon,
Coordinator, Global Network Against Weapons & Nuclear Power in Space

Cc: Sen. Hillary Clinton (Secretary of State); Secretary Robert Gates (Secretary of Defense); Sen. Carl Levin (Chair, Senate Armed Services Committee); Rep. Ike Skelton (Chair, House Armed Services Committee)

Additional signers:

- Beth Adams (Greenfield, Massachusetts)
- Joshua Adams (Sacramento, California)
- Michael Adler (Gainesville, Florida)
- Bob Aegerter (Bellingham, Washington)
- Nick Albares (New Orleans, Louisiana)
- Carin Allen (Jamaica Plain, Massachusetts)
- Jim Allen (Lanett, Alabama)
- Pam Allison (Amarillo, Texas)
- Anthony Aman (Penobscot, Maine)
- John Amidon (Albany, New York)
- Monika Apathy (Englewood, Florida)
- Dennis Apel, Guadalupe Catholic Worker (Guadalupe, California)
- Eli Arlen (Brunswick, Maine)
- Randy Atkins (Gainesville, Florida)
- Dick Atlee (Southwest Harbor, Maine)
- Debbie Atwood (Brunswick, Maine)
- Lorri Auer (Columbia, Missouri)
- Shajia Ayobi (West Sacramento, California)
- Clifton Bain, Action Coalition of Taos (Arroyo Hondo, New Mexico)
- Sheila Baker (Paso Robles, California)
- Norman Balabanian (Gainesville, Florida)
- Harry Baltzer (Huron, South Dakota)
- Russ Banner (Bradenton, Florida)
- Karen Barker, Lakes Region Peace & Justice Group (Laconia, New Hampshire)
- Jeanette Bauer (Ankeny, Iowa)
- Betty & Herb Bazur (Leesburg, Florida)
- Moses Beachy (Goshen, Indiana)
- Mavis Belisle (Dallas, Texas)
- Edith Bell, WILPF (Pittsburgh, Pennsylvania)
- John Benson (Beaver Dams, New York)
- Joan Benz (Melvin, Iowa)
- Bea Bergen (Delray Beach, Florida)
- Anne Berner (Murphys, California)
- MJ Berry (Lincoln, Nebraska)
- Lucille Bertuccio (Bloomington, Indiana)
- Jacqueline Betz (Waldo, Florida)
- Bob & Berta Beveridge (Seattle, Washington)
- Pam Beziat (Nashville, Tennessee)
- Sister Kathleen Bierne (Aberdeen, South Dakota)
- Jack Biesek (San Luis Obispo, California)
• Verna Birky (Goshen, Indiana)
• Pat Birnie, WILPF (Tucson, Arizona)
• William Boardman (Woodstock, Vermont)
• Leonard B. Bjorkman (Owego, New York)
• Tim Blanchette (Falmouth, Maine)
• Benay Blend, Stop the War Machine (Albuquerque, New Mexico)
• Rev. Bill Bliss (Bath, Maine)
• Maureen Block (Bath, Maine)
• Jerry Bloomer (Hot Springs, South Dakota)
• Sr. Pegge Boehm, PBVM (Aberdeen, South Dakota)
• Deetje Boler, WILPF (San Francisco, California)
• A. David Bos (Louisville, Kentucky)
• Ronald Bosch, MPH (Greenfield, Massachusetts)
• Jan Boudart (Chicago, Illinois)
• Grace Braley, WILPF (Portland, Maine)
• Ivan Braun (Bronx, New York)
• Cathy Brechtelsbauer (Sioux Falls, South Dakota)
• Sally Breen, Peace Action Maine (Windham, Maine)
• Anne & Steve Bremsers, High Desert Catholic Worker (Apple Valley, California)
• Kate Anne Brennan (Sunnyside, New York)
• Carol Brewster (Manchester, Maine)
• Lee Breyer (Ellenton, Florida)
• Stefani & Evan Bright (Placerville, California)
• Carol Brightman (Walpole, Maine)
• Thomas A. Brindley, Ph.D. (Huntsville, Alabama)
• Yosef Brody (New York, New York)
• Robin Brooks (Topsham, Maine)
• Melissa & Cort Brown (Dallas Center, Iowa)
• Ronald Brown (Longmont, Colorado)
• Hank Brussleback (Dixon, New Mexico)
• Ann Bryan (Asheville, North Carolina)
• Valerie Bryant (Winter Springs, Florida)
• John Buchanan (Ellenville, New York)
• Dave B. Buehrens (Crozet, Virginia)
• Bernice Bulgatz (Delray Beach, Florida)
• Clarence Burley (Paxton, Massachusetts)
• Dr. Vinie Burrows, Women for Racial and Economic Equality (New York, New York)
• Sherrie Burson (McLean, Virginia)
• Jack & Fay Bussell (Portland, Maine)
• Jacqueline Cabasso, Western States Legal Foundation (Oakland, California)
• Jane Cadarette (North Andover, Massachusetts)
• Anna Maria Caldara (Bangor, Pennsylvania)
• Scott Campbell (Oakland, California)
• Bob Campagna (Mt. Vernon, Iowa)
• Michael Canney (Alachua, Florida)
• Teri Maurer-Carter, WILPF (Wilmington, Delaware)
• Mark Scibilia-Carver (Trumansburg, New York)
• Elizabeth Case (Boston, Massachusetts)
• Lorri Case (Billings, Montana)
• Pete Cavanaugh (Portland, Maine)
• Sue Chase (Batesville, Virginia)
Mary T. Chatlos (Provincetown, Massachusetts)
Sushila Cherian (Punta Gorda, Florida)
David W. Chipman, Ph.D. (Harpstown, Maine)
Kathe Chipman, M.S. (Harpstown, Maine)
Bill Christofferson (Madison, Wisconsin)
Br. Walt Chura, Secular Franciscan Order (Albany, New York)
Citizens Democracy Watch (Florence, Oregon)
Lois Clark (South Bend, Indiana)
Howard Classen (Watsonville, California)
Richard & Rita Clement (Pittston, Maine)
CODEPINK (Gainesville, Florida)
Lil K. Cohen, WILPF (West Palm Beach, Florida)
Peter G. Cohen (Santa Barbara, California)
Jack & Felice Cohen-Joppa, The Nuclear Resister (Tucson, Arizona)
Dake Collins (Liberty, Maine)
Judy Collins (Lanett, Alabama)
David Colt (Harpstown, Maine)
Stephen Conn (Point Roberts, Washington)
Connecticut Valley Chapter of WILPF
Joe Conroy (Woolwich, Maine)
Rev. Bill Coop (Brunswick, Maine)
Georgiann Cooper (Freeport, Maine)
Tim Copeland (Biddeford, Maine)
Kathy Corbera (Bronx, New York)
Frank Cordaro, Phil Berrigan Catholic Worker House (Des Moines, Iowa)
Christina Cowger, Stop Torture Now (Raleigh, North Carolina)
Robert S. Crandall, Bidwell Riverside Center (Des Moines, Iowa)
Frances Crowe (Northampton, Massachusetts)
Joanne Cvar (Waldport, Oregon)
Cathey Cyrus (Woolwich, Maine)
Frances & Vasili Czapp (Deford, Michigan)
Katherine Czapp (Ann Arbor, Michigan)
Phyllis Cole-Dai (Brookings, South Dakota)
Donata Daml (Aberdeen, South Dakota)
Gail Daneker (St. Paul, Minnesota)
Marta Daniels (Chester, Connecticut)
Larry Dansinger, Resources for Organizing and Social Change (Monroe, Maine)
Peter J. Davies (Sleepy Hollow, New York)
Walter Davin (St. Petersburg, Florida)
Andy Davis, World Fellowship Center (Albany, New Hampshire)
Linnie Davis (Aberdeen, South Dakota)
Mary Davis, EcoPerspectives (Lexington, Kentucky)
Mickey Davis, Students Beyond War (Des Moines, Iowa)
Ava & Michael Delorenzo (Portland, Maine)
Jesse DeLorenzo (Brooklyn, New York)
Darien De Lu (Sacramento, California)
Lara DeLuz (Orangevale, California)
Peter DeMott (Ithaca, New York)
Isabel Denham (Yarmouth, Maine)
Galina L. DeRoeck (Tucson, Arizona)
Christine DeTroy, WILPF (Brunswick, Maine)
• Mary P. Dewey (Adrian, Michigan)
• David Diamond (Dover, New Hampshire)
• Barbara Dick (Corning, New York)
• Chantal Dothey, MD, Peace Action (Cleveland, Ohio)
• Joan W. Drake, WILPF (Washington DC)
• Mary, Christian & Ron Drew-Bosch (Greenfield, Massachusetts)
• Louise Drlik (Montezuma, New Mexico)
• Madeline Duckles, WILPF (Berkeley, California)
• Terre Dunivant (San Luis Obispo, California)
• Jack Dunn (Omaha, Nebraska)
• Elihu Edelson, Veterans for Peace (Tyler, Texas)
• Marjorie Swann Edwin (Santa Cruz, California)
• Anthony & Elisabeth Ehrlich (Barberville, Florida)
• Paul Eichhorn (Albuquerque, New Mexico)
• Leonard Eiger, United Methodist Church Social Justice Ministry (Snoqualmie, Washington)
• Sylvia Eile, WILPF (West Palm Beach, Florida)
• Lynne H. Einig (East Greenwich, Rhode Island)
• El Dorado Peace & Justice Community (Placerville, California)
• Jenefer Ellingston, Green Party (Washington D.C.)
• Dan Ellis (Brunswick, Maine)
• Embudo Paz (Dixon, New Mexico)
• Ann F. Eno (Westford, Massachusetts)
• Erk Ergner, Ph.d., Community for Peace (Winston Salem, North Carolina)
• Mary Ernst (Falmouth, Massachusetts)
• Renee Espeland, Iowa Peace Network (Des Moines, Iowa)
• Margaret Esslinger (Minneapolis, Minnesota)
• Robert O. Epp (Henderson, Nebraska)
• Jodie Evans, CODEPINK Women for Peace (Los Angeles, California)
• Pamela Murphy Ewers (North Berwick, Maine)
• Clarence Falk (Minneapolis, Minnesota)
• Anne Ferrara (Brooksville, Maine)
• Walter Fircowycz (Houston, Mississippi)
• Candella Foley-Finchem (Glenwood, Iowa)
• Dee Finney (Dixon, New Mexico)
• Cynthia Knuth Fischer (West Chester, Pennsylvania)
• Richard Fischer (Bernard, Iowa)
• John J. Fisher, JustPeace Seminars (Goshen, Indiana)
• Ron Fisher, We The People Now (Falls Church, Virginia)
• Cynthia M. Fisk (Gloucester, Massachusetts)
• Florida Coalition for Peace & Justice
• Ananur Forma (Rockland, Maine)
• Henri André Fourroux III (New Orleans, Louisiana)
• Sandra H. Frank (Toledo, Ohio)
• David & Melissa Frans (Brunswick, Maine)
• Jim Freeman, Native Forest Network (Verona Island, Maine)
• Friday Peace Vigil – 18th year (Concord, Massachusetts)
• Stacey Fritz, No Nukes North (Fairbanks, Alaska)
• Tarah Frost (Sacramento, California)
• Michael Fuller (Windham, Maine)
• Thomas L. Fusco (Brunswick, Maine)
• Gregor Gable, Shundahai Network (Salt Lake City, Utah/Las Vegas, Nevada)
Ms. Lee M. Gagnon (Walpole, Massachusetts)
• Peg Gallagher (Omaha, Nebraska)
• Rosemary Galli (New York, New York)
• Larry & Lenna Mae Gara (Wilmington, Ohio)
• Deborah J. Garretson, WILPF (Bloomington, Indiana)
• Lydia Garvey (Clinon, Oklahoma)
• Beverly Gattis (Amarillo, Texas)
• Wendy Clarissa Geiger (Jacksonville, Florida)
• Paul George, Peninsula Peace and Justice Center (Palo Alto, California)
• Mary Lou Geraets (Aberdeen, South Dakota)
• Ruth Geraets (Aberdeen, South Dakota)
• Matthew Gesner (Lawrence, Kansas)
• Paul S. Giaimo (Freeport, Illinois)
• Anne Gibbons (Bronx, New York)
• Carol Gilbert, O.P., Jonah House Community (Baltimore, Maryland)
• Starr C. Gilmartin (Trenton, Maine)
• Kathy Ging, M.A. (Eugene, Oregon)
• Filson Glanz (Durham, New Hampshire)
• Ted Glick (Bloomfield, New Jersey)
• Ernest Goitein (Atherton, California)
• Raelene Gold (Lake Forest Park, Washington)
• Pearl Goldsmith (Delray Beach, Florida)
• Claire Gosselin, WILPF (Boston, Massachusetts)
• Helen Gourlay, 8th Day Center for Justice (Chicago, Illinois)
• Charity B. Gourley (Santa Barbara, California)
• Ellen Grady (Ithaca, New York)
• Bobbi Graff (Delray Beach, Florida)
• Joseph W. Grant (Lawrence, Kansas)
• Audley Green, WILPF (Boston, Massachusetts)
• Jeanne Green, CODEPINK (Taos, New Mexico)
• Michael Greenman, Citizens Intent on Reforming Corporate Accountability (Westerville, Ohio)
• Matthew Gregory (Lincoln, Nebraska)
• Linda Griffith (Dixon, New Mexico)
• Steve Gude (Des Moines, Iowa)
• Chet Guinn (Des Moines, Iowa)
• Darlene Gutenkauf (Aberdeen, South Dakota)
• Barbara J. Haack (Newbury, Massachusetts)
• Kevin Haake (Lincoln, Nebraska)
• Anne Hablas, Presentation Center (Fargo, North Dakota)
• Cath Haftings (Omaha, Nebraska)
• Elaine Hagedorn, CHM (Des Moines, Iowa)
• Jeanie Hagedorn, CHM (Des Moines, Iowa)
• Cynthia Hale (Corning, New York)
• Kevin & Maggie Hall (Dunedin, Florida)
• Jane Hanna (Santa Fe, New Mexico)
• Clare Hanrahan (Asheville, North Carolina)
• Amy Harlib (New York, New York)
• Mary McDonough Harren (Wichita, Kansas)
• Inez L. Harris (Yankton, South Dakota)
• Ruth M. Harris (Claremont, California)
• Norma J. F. Harrison (Berkeley, California)
• Louisa Hart (Brunswick, Maine)
• Alanna Hartzok, Earth Rights Institute (Fayetteville, Pennsylvania)
• Jeannette Hassberg, War and Law League (San Francisco, California)
• Arielle P. Hawney (Olympia, Washington)
• Linda Haynes (Huntsville, Alabama)
• Aaron Hays (Saint Paul, Minnesota)
• Richard K. Heacock, Jr., Alaska IMPACT (Fairbanks, Alaska)
• Andy Heaslet, Peace Economy Project (St Louis, Missouri)
• Suzanne Hedrick (Nobleboro, Maine)
• Meria Heller (Phoenix, Arizona)
• Dud Hendrick (Deer Isle, Maine)
• Assoc. Professor Jeff Heinle, South Dakota State University (Brookings, South Dakota)
• Valerie Heinonen, O.S.U., Ursulines of Tildonk for Justice & Peace (Long Island, New York)
• Stuart & Joann Henderson (Florence, Oregon)
• Dennis & Tina Henize (Cudjoe Key, Florida)
• Martha Hennessy (Weathersfield, Vermont)
• Jack Hereford (New Haven, Missouri)
• Tensie Hernandez, Guadalupe Catholic Worker (Guadalupe, California)
• Linda Hibbs, People for Peace (Santa Fe, New Mexico)
• Matt Hight (Biddeford, Maine)
• Nancy Hill (Stonington, Maine)
• Sue Hilton (Arcata, California)
• Amanda J. Hoag (Bath, Maine)
• Paul L. Hodel, Friends Peace & Social Outreach Committee (New Haven, Connecticut)
• Russell Hodin (San Luis Obispo, California)
• Bob Hoffman (Batesville, Virginia)
• Herbert J. Hoffman (Ogunquit, Maine)
• Matthew Hogan (Corning, New York)
• Connie Hogarth, Center for Social Action Manhattanville College (Purchase, New York)
• Julian C. Holmes (Wayne, Maine)
• Mary Ann Holtz (St. Petersburg, Florida)
• Rev. Mair Honan (Portland, Maine)
• Stephen P. Horn (Blair, Nebraska)
• Troy W. Horton (Birkenfeld, Oregon)
• Lynn Houston (Satellite Beach, Florida)
• Celeste McCollough Howard (Hillsboro, Oregon)
• Jackie Hudson, O.P. (Bremerton, Washington)
• Mary E. Hunt Ph.D., Women’s Alliance for Theology, Ethics and Ritual (Silver Spring, Maryland)
• Mary Ihli, Pax Christi (Sioux Falls, South Dakota)
• Yoshiko Ikuta (Cleveland, Ohio)
• Conrad Irrgang (Spencer, Massachusetts)
• Island Peace & Justice (Deer Isle, Maine)
• Carolyn Trupti Israel, WILPF (Santa Cruz, California)
• Ithaca Catholic Worker (Ithaca, New York)
• Steve Jacobs (Columbia, Missouri)
• Lee Jankowski (Griggsville, Illinois)
• Fr. Emmett Jarrett, TSSF, St. Francis House (New London, Connecticut)
• Lawrence Jimenez (Los Angeles, California)
• Jennifer Joaquin (South Portland, Maine)
• Andrew Johnson (Silver Spring, Maryland)
• Sister Annrita Johnson (Aberdeen, South Dakota)
• Carol & Merle Johnson-Miller (Estherville, Iowa)
• Chadwick Johnson (Amherst, Massachusetts)
• Elizabeth Johnson (San Luis Obispo, California)
• Merle C. Johnson (Estherville, Iowa)
• Charlene Jones (Sacramento, California)
• Sally Jones, Peace Action New York (Staten Island, New York)
• Ava Jordan, WILPF (St. Louis, Missouri)
• Sr. Mary Jude Jun (St. Louis, Missouri)
• Olga Chyle Jung (Waterloo, Iowa)
• Thomas M. Juntti (Rapid City, South Dakota)
• Dexter Kamilewicz (Orr’s Island, Maine)
• Leah R. Karpen (Asheville, North Carolina)
• Estelle H. Kattelson (New York, New York)
• Nona Keel (Burr, Nebraska)
• Marylia Kelley, Tri-Valley CAREs (Livermore, California)
• Rev. Stephen M. Kelly, S.J., Murray Jesuit Residence (Oakland California)
• Sister Verna Kelly (Aberdeen, South Dakota)
• Joanna Kennedy,比喻National Service of Presbyterian Church (Lincoln, Nebraska)
• Dick Keough (Syracuse, New York)
• Randall Kezar (Kingston, New Hampshire)
• Linda Musmeci Kimball, Citizens for Peace & Justice (Oxford, Ohio)
• Delores Kincaide (Jemez Springs, New Mexico)
• Bob Kinsey, Colorado Coalition for Prevention of Nuclear War (Denver, Colorado)
• Thomas Kircher (Biddeford, Maine)
• Gwyn Kirk (Oakland, California)
• Nicholas Kirkland (Monroe, Louisiana)
• Toby Klein (Sullivan, Maine)
• Max R. Knauer, III (Des Moines, Iowa)
• Norma J. Knigge (Sioux Falls, South Dakota)
• Paige Knight, Hanford Watch (Portland, Oregon)
• Stephen Vincent Kobasa, Trident Information Network (New Haven, Connecticut)
• John Koerferl (New Orleans, Louisiana)
• Doret Kollerer (Occidental, California)
• Theresa P. Koenig (Tarzana, California)
• Coralie Koonce (Fayetteville, Arkansas)
• Maris Stella Korb, Presentation Peace & Justice Center (Fargo, North Dakota)
• Lee Kosow (Corning, New York)
• Jeanne Koster (Watertown, South Dakota)
• Sheri Kotowski (Dixon, New Mexico)
• Jeff Krall (Columbia, Missouri)
• David Krieger, Nuclear Age Peace Foundation (Santa Barbara, California)
• Lorraine Krofchok, Grandmothers for Peace International (Elk Grove, California)
• Judy Kugler (Marietta, Georgia)
• Miriam Kurland (Mansfield, Connecticut)
• Rev. Dr. Damon D. Laaker, Lutheran Metro Ministry (Omaha, Nebraska)
• Barbara & Raúl Laborde (Oakham, Massachusetts)
• Bill Laird (Omaha, Nebraska)
• Sister Denise Laffan, Nipponzan Myohoji-Atlanta Dojo (Atlanta, Georgia)
• Lorene Lamb (Oakland, California)
• Susan Lannen (Boston, Massachusetts)
• Steve Larrick (Lincoln, Nebraska)
• Michael Lawton (Bethlehem, Pennsylvania)
• Isolt Lea (Gainesville, Florida)
• Nydia Leaf (New York, New York)
• Patricia A. Leahan, Peace & Justice Center (Las Vegas, New Mexico)
• Haeng Woo Lee (Princeton Junction, New Jersey)
• Katherine Gaffey Lehman (Sacramento, California)
• Jean Hays, WILPF (Fresno, California)
• Roger Leisner, Radio Free Maine (Augusta, Maine)
• William B. LeMosy (Des Moines, Iowa)
• Ilene Lerner (Cambridge, Massachusetts)
• David W Lewit, Alliance for Democracy (Boston, Massachusetts)
• John E. Lewis, Task Force Against Nuclear Weapons in Space (Traverse City, Michigan)
• Bob Lezer (Freeport, Maine)
• Phyllis Liddiard (Corning, New York)
• Francine Lindberg (El Prado, New Mexico)
• Irene Lipshin (Placerville, California)
• Kay Liss (Jefferson, Maine)
• Ivy Lobato (Belfast, Maine)
• Doris Loder, WILPF (Philadelphia, Pennsylvania)
• Loukie & Stan Lofchie (Brunswick, Maine)
• Yvonne Logan, WILPF (Webster Groves, Missouri)
• Matt Loosigian (Brunswick, Maine)
• Los Angeles Catholic Worker (Los Angeles, California)
• Bonnie Lounsbury (Auburn, Maine)
• Doug Love (Greenbelt, Maryland)
• Lewis Lubka (Fargo, North Dakota)
• Chris Lugo, Nashville Peace Coalition (Nashville, Tennessee)
• Carla L. Rael-Luhman (Portales, New Mexico)
• Sara Luther (Mt. Dora, Florida)
• John W. Lynch (Daytona Beach Shores, Florida)
• Eric A. Lynn (Walpole, Massachusetts)
• Frances MacDonald (Old Orchard Beach, Maine)
• Kate MacKay (Georgetown, Maine)
• Jill Mackie, WILPF (Ashland, Oregon)
• Maine Veterans for Peace, Chapter 001
• Emily Maloney (Santa Cruz, California)
• Colman Manning (South Paris, Maine)
• Alfred L. Marder, US Peace Council (New Haven, Connecticut)
• Ann Marina (Bonita Springs, Florida)
• Jonathan Mark, Flyby News (Wendell Depot, Massachusetts)
• Jerry Markatos, NC Democratic Party Executive Committee (Pittsboro, North Carolina)
• Ted Markow (Brunswick, Maine)
• Daniel Marshall, Catholic Worker (New York, New York)
• Deb Marshall (Little Deer Isle, Maine)
• Patricia Mason (Gainesville, Florida)
• John B. Massen (San Francisco, California)
• Helyne May (Windham, Maine)
• Natasha Mayers (Whitefield, Maine)
• Noah Mayers (Brooklyn, New York)
• Siena Mayers (Lake Worth, Florida)
• Elizabeth McAlister, Jonah House Community (Baltimore, Maryland)
• Charlaine McAnany (Oak Park, Illinois)
• Patricia McCarron (North Andover, Massachusetts)
• Pastor Gary A. McCaslin, First Baptist Church (Painted Post, New York)
• Alex H. MacDonell (Union, New Jersey)
• Michael & Ande McCarthy, Blue Water Pax Christi (Port Huron, Michigan)
• David B. McCoy, Citizen Action (Albuquerque, New Mexico)
• Richard McDonald (Silver City, New Mexico)
• Betty McElhill (Los Osos, California)
• Kathleen McGee, Maine Toxics Action Coalition (Bowdoinham, Maine)
• Francis & Elaine McGillicuddy (Portland, Maine)
• Susan McInroy (Campbell, New York)
• Deb McIntyre (Sioux Falls, South Dakota)
• Gloria McMillan, WILPF (Tucson, Arizona)
• David Meieran (Pittsburgh, Pennsylvania)
• Jane Meisenbach (Harpsworth, Maine)
• Sarah Melici (Red Bank, New Jersey)
• Dave Meserve (Arcata, California)
• Alice Meyer (Brunswick, Maine)
• Bernard Meyer (Olympia, Washington)
• Karl Meyer, Nashville Greenlands (Nashville, Tennessee)
• Sister Michelle Meyers (LeSueur, Minnesota)
• Carol Johnson-Miller (Estherville, Iowa)
• Virginia J. Miller, Department of Peace Initiative (Santa Fe, New Mexico)
• Henry Millstein (Novato, California)
• Gene Mirolli (Brooksville, Maine)
• Joann Monaco (Royal Palm Beach, Florida)
• Daniel Moore (New Castle, Delaware)
• Robert Morgan (Auburn, Maine)
• Claire Mortimer, PhD (Brooklin, Maine)
• Susan Mosely, WILPF (Wellington, Florida)
• Thomas A. Moss, North Alabama Peace Network (Huntsville, Alabama)
• Sha'an Mouliert, WILPF (Lyndonville, Vermont)
• Nancy Munger, WILPF (Cape Cod, Massachusetts)
• Luci Murphy, Gray Panthers of Metropolitan Washington (Washington DC)
• Mary Murphy (Woolwich, Maine)
• Michael Murphy (Omaha, Nebraska)
• Pat Murphy (Bradenton, Florida)
• Mallory Musser (Seattle, Washington)
• Allyson Nakasone (San Luis Obispo, California)
• Nebraska Green Party
• John Neumaier (Mt. Dora, Florida)
• Sue Newlin (Deer Isle, Maine)
• Cheryl Niccoli (Santa Barbara, California)
• North Alabama Peace Network (Huntsville, Alabama)
• North Shore Coalition for Peace and Justice (Evanston, Illinois)
• North Suburban Peace Initiative (Evanston, Illinois)
• Chamomile Nusz (Madison, Wisconsin)
• Nancy & David O’Byrne, Pax Christi Northeast Florida (St. Augustine, Florida)
• Matthew Ochalek (Erie, Pennsylvania)
• Maureen O'Connell (Boynton Beach, Florida)
• Colleen O'Doherty (Des Moines, Iowa)
• Susan Oehler (Asheville, North Carolina)
• Jon Olsen (Jefferson, Maine)
• Andrew Olson (Lincoln, Nebraska)
• Sister Kay O’Neil (LeSueur, Minnesota)
• Thomas Orne (Mankato, Minnesota)
• Janet Wallet-Ortiz (Silver City, New Mexico)
• James R. Palmer (Stetson, Maine)
• Will Park (Altamonte Springs, Florida)
• Jean Parker (Brunswick, Maine)
• Marjorie Parker (Carbondale, Illinois)
• Lewis E. Patrie, MD (Asheville, North Carolina)
• Patricia Patterson (Claremont, California)
• Don Paul (New Orleans, Louisiana)
• Rosalie Tyler Paul (Georgetown, Maine)
• Sara Paulson (Port Chester, New York)
• Professor Terrence E. Paupp, International Association of Educators for World Peace (San Diego, California)
• Pax Christi Palm Beach (Boynton Beach, Florida)
• Pax Christi (Tampa Bay, Florida)
• Pax Christi (Aberdeen, South Dakota)
• Jewel Payne (Davis, California)
• Peace Action Maine (Portland Maine)
• Peace Coalition of Southern Illinois/Fellowship of Reconciliation
• Peninsula Peace & Justice (Blue Hill, Maine)
• Greg Perham (Florence, Massachusetts)
• Frances Petschek, WILPF (Ashland, Oregon)
• Gregory Phelan (Brunswick, Maine)
• Tina Phillips (Brunswick, Maine)
• Western N. C. Physicians for Social Responsibility (Asheville, North Carolina)
• Sister Madonna Pierret (Aberdeen, South Dakota)
• Judy Plank (Remsen, Iowa)
• LaVonne & Dwight Platt (Newton, Kansas)
• Ardeth Platte, O.P., Jonah House Community (Baltimore, Maryland)
• Laray Polk (Dallas, Texas)
• Diane L. Potter (Gardiner, Maine)
• Judi Poulson (Fairmont, Minnesota)
• Bonnie Preston (Blue Hill, Maine)
• Nancy Price, WILPF (Davis, California)
• Carolyn Prinster (Glenwood Springs, Colorado)
• Pat Prunty (Aberdeen, South Dakota)
• Lois Putzier (Tucson, Arizona)
• Rose Quirk (Waterloo, Iowa)
• Joyce Raby (Sarasota, Florida)
• Dorli Rainey (Seattle, Washington)
• Jovelino & Joan Ramos (Cranston, Rhode Island)
• Susan Ravitz (Easton, Pennsylvania)
• Doug Rawlings (Chesterville, Maine)
• Gertrude Reagan (Palo Alto, California)
• Phyllis Reames (Portland, Maine)
• Dennis Redmond, World Without Wars and Violence/USA (New York, New York)
• Barbara H. Reed, WILPF (West Palm Beach, Florida)
• Paul & Katja Rehm (South Westerlo, New York)
• Myra Remly (Aberdeen, South Dakota)
• John Rensenbrink, US Green Party Int’l Committee (Topsham, Maine)
• Barbara Renton (Afton, New York)
• Rik Reynolds (Joyce, Washington)
• Kevin Rice (Indianola, Iowa)
• Charles Richardson (Hastings, Nebraska)
• Stephanie M. Riccobene (Washington DC)
• Megan Rice, Nevada Desert Experience (Las Vegas, Nevada)
• Linda M. Richards (Corvallis, Oregon)
• M. Johanna Rickl (Davenport, Iowa)
• Tim Rinne, Nebraskans for Peace (Lincoln, Nebraska)
• Christine Roane (Springfield, Massachusetts)
• Peter & Judy Robbins (Sedgwick, Maine)
• Judith Rock (Sarasota, Florida)
• Lenore Rodah (South Pasadena, California)
• Tom Roddy (Evanston, Illinois)
• Mark Rogness (Forest City, Iowa)
• Marina Romanova (Ithaca, New York)
• Carol Rose (Woodside, California)
• Laura Roskos, WILPF (Boston, Massachusetts)
• Rick Rozoff, Stop NATO (Chicago, Illinois)
• Molly Rush, Thomas Merton Center (Pittsburgh, Pennsylvania)
• June A. Rusten (Ann Arbor, Michigan)
• Edwin E. Salpeter (Ithaca, New York)
• Judy Salpeter (Berkeley, California)
• Judith Salzman (Tucson, Arizona)
• Mike & Jane Sandsmark (Aberdeen, South Dakota)
• Jane Sanford (Belfast, Maine)
• Francesco Sanfilippo (Portland, Maine)
• Kathryn Sawyer (Oakland, California)
• Susan Sayre (Irvine, California)
• Faye Scandrett, WILPF (University City, Missouri)
• Carolyn Scarr, Ecumenical Peace Institute (Berkeley, California)
• Sister Mary Schmuck, R.S.M. (Nazareth, Kentucky)
• Gladys Schmitz, S.S.N.D. (Mankato, Minnesota)
• Lois Schreur (Union, Nebraska)
• Betty Schroeder, WILPF (Tucson, Arizona)
• June Schumacher (Burien, Washington)
• Mary Jane Schutzius, WILPF (Florissant, Missouri)
• Sister Josita Schwab (Aberdeen, South Dakota)
• Ellen Schwartz, WILPF (Sacramento, California)
• Liz Schwartz, Peace Action (Arroyo Seco, New Mexico)
• David Seaborg (Walnut Creek, California)
• Andy Sekara (San Francisco, California)
• Marian Shaaban, WILPF (Bloomington, Indiana)
• Enid Shames, WILPF (West Palm Beach, Florida)
• Mona Shaw, Des Moines Catholic Worker (Des Moines, Iowa)
• Tom Shea (Snoqualmie, Washington)
• Bonnie Shulman (Poland, Maine)
• Mark Siemens (Eugene, Oregon)
• Leonard Simons (Athol, Massachusetts)
• Christine Sipula (Bloomington, Illinois)
• Elliott Skinner, People for Peace (Santa Fe, New Mexico)
• Alice Slater (New York, New York)
• Marcia Slatkin (Shoreham, New York)
• William H. Slavick, Pax Christi Maine (Portland, Maine)
• Robert M. Smith, Brandywine Peace Community (Swarthmore, Pennsylvania)
• Jean Snyder (Greenbelt, Maryland)
• Louise Lora Somlyo (Portland, Maine)
• Randa Solick, WILPF (Santa Cruz, California)
• Doris Soroko (Barrytown, New York)
• South Dakota Peace and Justice Center
• Jimmy Spearow, Ph.D. (Davis, California)
• Margaret Springer (Eugene, Oregon)
• Dennis Stanton (Framingham, Massachusetts)
• Diana & Rudy Stauffer (Placerville, California)
• Paul Stein (New York, NY)
• Selma Sternlieb (Brunswick, Maine)
• Jean Stewart (Charlotte, North Carolina)
• John and Sheila Stewart (St. Petersburg, Florida)
• Roberta Stewart, Women In Black (Bandon, Oregon)
• R. Stoddard (Lincoln, Nebraska)
• Elizabeth A. Streeter, Peace Action Maine (Portland, Maine)
• Tom Sturtevant, Veterans for Peace (Winthrop, Maine)
• JoAnn Sturzl (Dell Rapids, South Dakota)
• Lynn Goodman-Strauss, Mary House Catholic Worker (Austin, Texas)
• Nancy & Bill Strong (Princeton, New Jersey)
• Mary Beth Sullivan, Global Network Against Weapons & Nuclear Power in Space (Bath, Maine)
• Bill Sulzman, Citizens for Peace in Space (Colorado Springs, Colorado)
• Rita Surdi (Las Vegas, New Mexico)
• David Swanson, After Downing Street (Virginia)
• Boryana A. Tacconi (Andover, Massachusetts)
• Margaret Harrington Tamulonis, WILPF (Burlington, Vermont)
• Gary Michael Tartakov (Amherst, Massachusetts)
• Rev. Arch B. Taylor, Jr., Presbyterian Church USA (Clarksville, Indiana)
• Barb Taylor (Winchester, Virginia)
• Bob Terpstra (Delray Beach, Florida)
• Sandy Thacker, WILPF (Berkeley, California)
• Frances Thomas (Somerset, Massachusetts)
• Patricia Thomas (Melbourne, Florida)
• Vince Thomas, GroWorks (Rock Island, Illinois)
• Mary Thompson (Placerville, California)
• Sally-Alice & Donald Thompson (Albuquerque, New Mexico)
• Mary Todd (Lawrence, Massachusetts)
• Russell Todd (Roslyn Heights, New York)
• Bill Towe, N.C. Peace Action (Cary, North Carolina)
• Vanson Tran (Waterman, Illinois)
• Gay Trachsel (Duluth, Minnesota)
• Helen Travis (Mineola, Iowa)
• Jacque Travis (Eugene, Oregon)
• Betty Traynor, WILPF (San Francisco, California)
Anna Trevorrow (Portland, Maine)
Zimya’ A. Toms-Trend, Mother Courage Productions (Seattle, Washington)
Elaine H. Troy, WILPF (West Palm Beach, Florida)
Paul & Sue Troyano (New Orleans, Louisiana)
Fran Truitt (Blue Hill, Maine)
Edie Tschetter (Freeman, South Dakota)
Gene Turner (Dewitt, New York)
Upper Hudson Peace Action (Albany, New York)
Carol Urner, WILPF (Portland, Oregon)
Brother Gyoshu Utsumi, Nipponzan Myohoji-Atlanta Dojo (Atlanta, Georgia)
Marge Van Cleef, Bryn Mawr Peace Coalition (Bryn Mawr, Pennsylvania)
Barbara & Hendrik van den Berg (Lincoln, Nebraska)
Mary Claire Van der Horst, Wage Peace Inc. (Jacksonville, Florida)
Wendy Vasquez (Des Moines, Iowa)
Catherine Vatterott, WILPF (St. Ann, Missouri)
Cary Vigneri (Omaha, Nebraska)
David Vine, Department of Anthropology, American University (Washington DC)
Martha O. Vinick (Sarasota, Florida)
Estelle Voeller (Medford, Oregon)
Georgii Ginzburg-Voskov (Ann Arbor, Michigan)
Dan Wainberg (Jamaica Plain, Massachusetts)
Karen Wainberg, Addams-Melman House (Bath, Maine)
Laurie Wainberg (Portland, Maine)
Mary Lu Walker (Corning, New York)
Susan Walker (Lake Arrowhead, California)
Andrea Walsh, World Fellowship Center (Albany, New Hampshire)
Sr. Catherine Walsh (Akron, Ohio)
Kenneth G. Walton (Fairfield, Iowa)
Anne Wandrey (Grimes, Iowa)
Rufus Wanning (Orland, Maine)
Levi Wark (Bath, Maine)
Kay Warren (Tucson, Arizona)
Arlene Warrence, WILPF (West Palm Beach, Florida)
Bill Warrick, MD (Gainesville, Florida)
Peter Menard-Warwick (Davis, California)
Dixie Webb (Ankeny, Iowa)
Rosalie Weiss (Delray Beach, Florida)
Margaret N. Weitzmann (Potsdam, New York)
Elaine Wells (Omaha, Nebraska)
Wanda Wendt (Des Moines, Iowa)
Barbara West (Arrowsic, Maine)
Jerry Wharton (Tucson, Arizona)
Joe Whiteman (Las Vegas, New Mexico)
Don Whitmore, Third Millennium Foundation (Auburn, Washington)
Bill Wickersham (Columbia, Missouri)
Barbara & Steve Wickham, Guilderland Neighbors For Peace (Guilderland, New York)
Bill Wieland (Aberdeen, South Dakota)
Leona Wieland (Sioux Falls, South Dakota)
Faith M. Willcox (Westport, Maine)
Gail Williams (Liberty, Maine)
Terri Williams, WILPF (Webster Groves, Missouri)
Will India join the US missile defense system? Will the South Asian nation be placed under a missile shield made possible through its strategic partnership with the superpower?

Recent days have witnessed a flurry of such questions, whether anxious or eagerly anticipatory. President Barack Obama’s silence on the issue has made the suspense all the more agonizing.

The questions may sound less like a conundrum to close observers of the Washington-New Delhi compact in the making for nearly eight years now. The common answer to them all is that the collaboration envisaged in the questions is being attempted and may be advanced with the cooperation of another and more strategic partner of the US - one currently in the world news with the continuing Gaza carnage.

Obama has been quoted as describing India as “a strong democracy and a natural strategic partner for the US in the 21st century.” This was why, he claims, he voted in the Senate for the US-India nuclear deal, about which he had earlier expressed reservations. But he has not made his mind known on joint missile defense with India.
Obama, however, may have made a statement on the subject by naming Robert Gates as his Defense Secretary. Gates, who initiated the proposal of missile defense cooperation with India and has kept it alive.

In February 2008, Gates made many in South Asia and elsewhere sit up by announcing, “The US and India will study the possibility of a joint missile defense system.” He added: “We’re just beginning to talk about perhaps conducting a joint analysis about what India’s needs would be in the realm of missile defense and where cooperation between us might help advance that.”

Up to that point, it was noted then, India’s policy officially envisaged domestic development of its missile shield. The strategic partner’s talk of self-reliance was a sore point with the concerned section of the US military - industrial complex: The Boeing Company, the Lockheed Martin Corporation, the Raytheon Company and the Northrop Grumman Corporation. The major players in the ground, air, sea and space-based missile defense system, then stood to lose multi-billion-dollar contracts.

The Gates statement dispelled the gloom. It soon led to what was hailed as “a breakthrough Indian decision” - to buy Lockheed’s C-130J military transport aircraft. That was a signal for speeding up efforts at the missile defense cooperation.

India was reported to have approached the US afresh for upscaled assistance in its missile defense efforts. India’s Defense Research and Development Organization (DRDO) was seeking American collaboration in critical subsystems such as “hit-to-kill” technology for its interceptor missiles. Simultaneously, India entered into talks with Lockheed Martin, apparently with the aim of seeking collaboration in developing a ballistic missile defense (BMD) system.

On June 1, 2008, a spokesperson of India’s Defense Ministry told the media, “We would be interested in setting up a missile defense system and have agreed to cooperate with the US in missile defense systems.” This followed a series of BMD tests in Pakistan but, as we shall see, this did not mean that the missile shield was being sought only in relation to Pakistan.

It was not all talk. A few weeks before this announcement, a high-level Indian team visited the high-tech simulation center at Colorado Springs. India has also been invited to observe the next series of simulation exercises in which hostile missiles were to be blocked by the defense system. The US had tested the system half a dozen times and it was expected to be fully operational by 2005-06.

The US, of course, may face obstacles to the proposed joint missile defense with India, not least of all from Washington’s West European allies. There are more than mere hints about the plan to get around the problem the same way as the US continued its military relations.
with India despite the official sanctions imposed after the nuclear weapon tests of May 1998 in South Asia - by using Israel as the regional proxy of the superpower.

In February 2003, India’s hopes of acquiring anti-ballistic missile defence capability received a major boost when Tel Aviv asked New Delhi to invest $100 million in the development of the Arrow II weapon system. This was built around the Green Pine Radar System, which is capable of simultaneous tracking of tactical ballistic missiles from a range of over 300 kilometers. The system is designed to intercept as many as 14 incoming missiles at the height of 58 km, at nine times the speed of sound.

The system has been jointly run by the US and Israel The US had, by then, already invested some $628 million in the anti-ballistic missile program. India’s involvement in the Israeli programme would need a go-ahead from the US. The green signal from Washington was forthcoming in May 2003.

The India-Israel cooperation in this particular field has been carried further since then. On January 21, 2008, India successfully launched Israel’s TecSAR satellite, a 300-kg satellite with a resolution of 10 centimeters. The satellite can take pictures through any weather with its synthetic aperture radar and is thought to augment Israel’s ability to monitor Iran’s nuclear program.

The Cartosat-2A satellite, which includes Israeli synthetic aperture radar technology and was launched in April 2008, was supposed to be dedicated for military use. The Indian government has denied this, but without credibility in knowledgeable quarters.

In November 2008, Indian Prime Minister Manmohan Singh’s government was reported to have cleared a two-billion-dollar project with Israel to develop a new-generation surface-to-air missile system, capable of detecting and destroying hostile aircraft and spy drones at a range of 120 km.

The US cooperation with India in the area of missile defense can be expected to continue through this not-so-secret conduit until the time when the strategic partnership can become more transparent on this score.

J. Sri Raman,
Chennai, India
Intelligence sharing between the US and Israel is nothing new. Since the 1960s, the two nations have signed more than 30 intelligence-sharing agreements covering information from satellites, ground stations, and UAVs (unpiloted aerial vehicles, or drone planes). Since mid-2008, the pacts have been expanded to allow Israel access to U.S. X-band radar. What is less certain is how useful the intelligence has been in Israel’s ground invasion of Gaza.

In the first aerial stages of Israel’s recent “Operation Cast Lead,” the most useful supplies from the US were the one-ton Mark-84 Joint Direct Attack Munition bombs, or JDAM bombs, manufactured by Boeing in the US, and guided to their targets by Pentagon Global Positioning System satellites. Dozens of these bombs were used in blowing up suspected Hamas tunnels used for arms [and food] smuggling (and causing horrific “collateral damage” in civilian areas).

Since the ground invasion began, Israel has augmented its own satellite and UAV intelligence with imaging, signals, and radar intelligence from the US, collected by the National Reconnaissance Office (NRO) and National Security Agency (NSA). Since the 1982 Lebanon
invasion, Israel has received direct access to raw US intelligence at a resolution, and in a real-time format, that exceeds anything the US provides to NATO allies, according to Stephen Walt and John Mearshimer, in their book *The Israel Lobby and US Foreign Policy*. Israel Defense Forces officials have boasted that they have not had to use as much US intelligence to maintain the “matrix of control” in the Gaza Strip and West Bank, because of Israel’s own UAVs - the Hermes 450 UAV from Elbit, the Phalcon radar and electronic-intelligence UAV from Israel Aircraft Industries (IAI), and the armed Shoval UAV from IAI. These UAVs have flown hundreds of hours of surveillance missions over Gaza since the invasion, and the Shoval UAV has fired missiles at Hamas sites.

In a front-page *New York Times* story Jan. 11, David Sanger revealed that the Bush administration had turned down an Israeli request to fly over Iraq territory for an air raid on the Iranian nuclear site at Natanz.

Though Dick Cheney was in favor of a joint U.S.-Israeli attack on Iran, Bush did not want such an attack to take place during his final months in office. However, he offered to involve Israel in new US covert efforts to disrupt Iran’s nuclear program by interfering with Iran’s international nuclear supply chain. He also offered to widen Israel’s access to an entire range of new US space-based intelligence, including access to new NSA listening satellites; an expansion of Israel’s access to Defense Support Program satellites to cover the new SBIRS (Space-Based Infrared Satellite); and the provision of ground-based X-band radars.

While this could benefit Israel in its covert efforts against Iran, the intelligence-sharing and UAV-based “zone of control” only helps Israel in its control and dominance of the civilian Palestinian population. It does very little to stop Hamas rocket attacks for the following reason: Hamas to date has used unguided rockets, the Qassam and Katyusha rockets, in targeting Israeli sites. Rocket teams can launch these relatively primitive rockets with no site preparation and very little radio communications. Imaging and radio intelligence does little to help find these rockets, though blanket photo coverage of the area by UAVs can help Israel spot mobile rocket teams. When a nation or subnational group moves to guided missiles, intelligence can help spot the semi-fixed sites from which the missiles are launched, and can pick up the radio and telemetry intelligence used in guiding the missiles. But until such a shift takes place, Israel’s use of its own intelligence and its sharing of intelligence with the US only helps increase the misery of Palestinian civilians on the ground, while doing virtually nothing to stop Hamas rocket attacks.

*Loring Wirbel,
Colorado Springs, Colorado*

**15. SPACE WEAPONIZATION: KILLING THE HUMAN SPIRIT**

“Sit, Jessica: look, how the floor of heaven
Is thick inlaid with patines of bright gold"
Under the soaring dome of the sky, the Big Dipper, the luminescent evening star, the myriad tiny sparkles splashed across the heavens, I am caught up in wonder and awe. We touch eternity and infinity in the vastness of space. Peace, serenity, fear at the smallness and fragility of Earth and life, a sense of realities too huge to be grasped: have such feelings tumbled in on you under the spangled heavens? Canada, land of the north, is lakes and wilderness for escape from cities, where the relentless glow of lights clouds the sky, shrouding its beauty. Remember the enchantment of Northern Lights, the ever-shifting hues a veil of mystery dancing across the heavens? When you were a child, did you lie on hillsides, docks, beaches, or paddle a canoe through dark waters shining with rippled silver pennies from the moon, filled with the wonder and mystery of space stretching as far as eye could see? Then you know where humanity fits -- as part of the web of life, dependent on the wondrous creation that is Earth, in a universe far beyond our ken.

Imagination flies upwards, free as a bird. Space has been the realm of fantasies and dreams, of new imaginings, mystery, and undiscovered possibilities, ever since humans first walked the earth. With accelerating skill the 20th century brought, through space, global interconnection, telecommunications a huge leap forward towards a new, linked human future. The cell phone, the Internet, television, are weaving one human society around the globe. Global positioning technology, another milestone, can change our lives for the better.

But what if the future is the doom and destruction of science fiction? What if the hopes of nations, signed and sealed in the Outer Space Treaty in 1967 -- a covenant to keep space a shared global commons, its exploration and use for peaceful purposes, with weapons of mass destruction, as well as military bases, installations, fortifications, weapons testing, and military maneuvers forbidden -- should prove vain?

The US Space Command’s aim to be Masters of Space would put an end to the human dream of free imaginings and endless possibilities. It plans to fill the heavens with death engines capable of killing anyone anywhere on earth. Fighting from and in space, as it intends to do, is not just another level of human warring, not a mere natural progression as military strategists glibly suggest. Imagine looking up, knowing that at any moment utter destruction might be rained down on you from on high with pushbutton ease. The arsenal set out in the U.S. Air Force Transformation Flight Plan (AFTFP) in November 2003 stirs fears of Armageddon: space-based laser strike weapons, kinetic kill vehicles, tungsten hypervelocity rod bundles -- God’s rods to hurtle down from orbiting platforms. Feel the fear that would never let up, death hovering, waiting, preying. The unseen destroyer of lives, societies, and our futures relentlessly orbiting, orbiting. Or perhaps unseen means -- radiated energy beamed into the ionosphere by the electronic transmitters of HAARP (the US High-Frequency Active Auroral Project) -- will transit the heavens to manipulate weather, triggering violent storms, volcanic eruptions, or earthquakes for us, on Earth.
USSPACCOM’s project -- to fight wars in and through space, wielding space force for global dominance, to protect US interests in the face of the unruliness of regions and people made poor by the greed of the affluent -- is utterly malevolent. Can anyone with a shred of humanity read its Vision for 2020 without gasping in horror and disbelief at the evil it proposes? The vision persists not only in its subsequent Long Range Plan and AFTFP, but is taking visible shape through budget support for US Missile Defense Agency R and D.

The military might of many nations in the 20th Century devastated Earth and snuffed out 110 million human souls, three times as many as were killed in all the wars from the year 1 AD. The environmental impacts of war and militarization, as set out in the recent study undertaken by Physicians for Global Survival, are vast, grave, unremedied, even irremediable (depleted uranium particles lasting, toxic, forever). Having rampaged over Earth, degrading our habitat with barbarous violence, why would we tolerate the proposition that such violence be exported to defile the heavens?

Horror and shock: feel it! It is an intolerable outrage to propose recreating in space what has ruined life in so many places at so many times on Earth. Has history taught us nothing? War and weapons destroy. Weapons make war possible. The evil genius of technology brought us from the machine guns invented in World War I to today’s nuclear weapons so devastating they make those that turned Hiroshima and Nagasaki into a living hell on Earth look like firecrackers. Far from ending strife and war, they now stand, on launch-on-warning, in both the US and Russia, ready to trigger omnicide. Peace and human flourishing will never come through weapons -- not on Earth, and even more certainly, not in space, where the processes of launching by supercomputers would be subject to the rule that all technology eventually fails.

In the name of reason, cry out “Stop!” Einstein, confronting in 1955 the possibility that everything achieved by civilization might be wiped out by the unleashed power of nuclear weapons, pleaded, “Remember your humanity and forget the rest.” There is nothing inevitable in space weapons except the certainty that they will pinion the human spirit and body with force that none should propose or seek who care about human flourishing, freedom, and rights. A perpetual shadow of violence and destruction hovering over all the Earth: this is no future for tomorrow’s children. We must take responsibility now for keeping Earth and the web of life from the curse of space weaponization. We must achieve an enforceable treaty ban on space weapons, a ban that every nation in the world - save the United States, Israel, and the Federated States of Micronesia - has shown, at the United Nations, it supports. “Another world is possible”: the other superpower - people around the globe - can and must create it.

Phyllis Creighton,  
Toronto, Canada
16. NOW MORE THAN EVER

Even though we now have a new president (thank goodness Bush is gone at last) there is still much to do.

I recall when Bill Clinton replaced the last President Bush. One of the first things he did was shut down the Reagan-Bush Star Wars program (SDI), or at least people thought he did. Clinton ceremoniously announced that SDI, at that time getting about $3.5 billion a year, was finished.

What people didn’t know though was that Clinton then quietly created BMDO - the Ballistic Missile Defense Organization - and moved the $3.5 billion from SDI into BMDO. Star Wars research and development (R & D) went on pretty much just like before.

As Bush II leaves office the Missile Defense Agency (as it is now called) is getting $10 billion a year for R & D. And things are a lot farther along - missile deployments have been made in Alaska and California and upgrades to the Space Command’s string of Star Wars radar bases have been made. New space weapons technologies are being built and tested at aerospace industry facilities spread out all over the US and around the world. Many “jobs” have been created in congressional districts of both Republicans and Democrats who are eager to see these programs stay on track.

Cutting these space technology systems from future budgets will not be easy. We might get lucky and knock a few out but others are likely to stay in the pipeline.

None of us can get complacent about things now that we have a Democrat for president and a Democratic party controlled Congress. The pressure needs to be sustained on this space issue just like it must be on Guantanamo, Iraq, Iran, Afghanistan and more.

We hope you will continue to help us build this international movement to keep space for peace. Our work is more important than ever.
Thanks for your efforts.

Bruce K. Gagnon,
Coordinator, Global Network

17) MEMBERSHIP & RESOURCES

MEMBERSHIP

The Global Network relies on the support of our individual members and group affiliates to fund our important work to build a global consciousness about space.

Our membership is based on a sliding scale between $10-$100 (pay what you can best afford within that range.)

Details here

RESOURCES

You can order:

- a Space Organizers’ Packet;
- bumper stickers for your car;
- a signed copy of Bruce Ganon's book Come Together Right Now;
- the GN video Arsenal of Hypocrisy: The Space Program and the Military Industrial Complex;
- our T-shirt Free the Sky of Nukes & Weapons;
- the No Star Wars music CD;

Here

Let us build for the sake of the future generations. Let us prevail in our quest to fund human needs rather than space war technologies. The waste of our precious resources, so needed
by humanity today, is truly a sin.

We thank you for your support and solidarity.

Newsprint versions of Space Alert! can be ordered from:

Bruce K. Gagnon  
Coordinator  
PO Box 652  
Brunswick, ME 04011  
(207) 729-0517  
(352) 871-7554 (Cell phone)  
globalnet@mindspring.com

The contents herein are Copyright 2007, Global Network/Bruce Gagnon, the article may be reproduced for non-profit purposes as long as the source is recognised, otherwise reproduction can be arranged through the Global Network.