



# CENTER FOR ARMS CONTROL AND NON-PROLIFERATION

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Open Letter

March 26<sup>th</sup>, 2004

President George W. Bush  
The White House  
1600 Pennsylvania Avenue, NW  
Washington, D.C.

Dear Mr. President:

In December 2002, you ordered the deployment of a ground-based strategic mid-course ballistic missile defense (GMD) capability, now scheduled to become operational before the end of September 2004. You explained that its purpose is to defend our nation against rogue states that may attack us with a single or a limited number of ballistic missiles armed with weapons of mass destruction.

To meet this deployment deadline, the Pentagon has waived the operational testing requirements that are essential to determining whether or not this highly complex system of systems is effective and suitable. The Defense Department's Director of Operational Test and Evaluation stated on March 11, 2004, that operational testing is not in the plan "for the foreseeable future." Moreover, the General Accounting Office pointed out in a recent report that only two of 10 critical technologies of the GMD system components have been verified as workable by adequate developmental testing.

Another important consideration is balancing the high costs of missile defense with funding allocated to other national security programs. Since President Reagan's strategic defense initiative speech in March 1983, a conservative estimate of about \$130 billion, not adjusted upward for inflation, has been spent on missile defense, much of it on GMD. Your Fiscal Year 2005 budget for missile defense is \$10.2 billion, with \$3.7 billion allocated to GMD. Some \$53 billion is programmed for missile defense over the next five years, with much more to follow. Deploying a highly complex weapons system prior to testing it adequately can increase costs significantly.

U.S. technology, already deployed, can pinpoint the source of a ballistic missile launch. It is, therefore, highly unlikely that any state would dare to attack the U.S. or allow a terrorist to do so from its territory with a missile armed with a weapon of mass destruction, thereby risking annihilation from a devastating U.S. retaliatory strike.

As you have said, Mr. President, our highest priority is to prevent terrorists from acquiring and employing weapons of mass destruction. We agree. We therefore recommend, as the militarily responsible course of action, that you postpone operational deployment of the expensive and untested GMD system and transfer the associated funding to accelerated programs to secure the multitude of facilities containing nuclear weapons and materials and to protect our ports and borders against terrorists who may attempt to smuggle weapons of mass destruction into the United States.

Sincerely,

Admiral William J. Crowe (USN, ret.)  
General Alfred G. Hansen (USAF, ret.)  
General Joseph P. Hoar (USMC, ret.)

Lt. General Henry E. Emerson (USA, ret.)  
Lt. General Robert G. Gard, Jr. (USA, ret.)  
Vice Admiral Carl T. Hanson (USN, ret.)  
Lt. General James F. Hollingsworth (USA, ret.)  
Lt. General Arlen D. Jameson (USAF, ret.)  
Lt. General Robert E. Kelley, (USAF, ret.)  
Lt. General John A. Kjellstrom (USA, ret.)  
Lt. General Dennis P. McAuliffe (USA, ret.)  
Lt. General Charles P. Otstott (USA, ret.)  
Lt. General Thomas M. Rienzi (USA, ret.)  
Vice Admiral John J. Shanahan (USN, ret.)  
Lt. General Dewitt C. Smith, Jr.(USA, ret.)  
Lt. General Horace G. Taylor (USA, ret.)  
Lt. General James M. Thompson (USA, ret.)  
Lt. General Alexander M. Weyand (USA. Ret.)

Major General Robert H. Appleby (AUS, ret.)  
Major General James G. Boatner (USA, ret.)  
Major General Jack O. Bradshaw (USA, ret.)  
Major General Morris J. Brady (USA, ret.)  
Major General William F. Burns (USA, ret.)  
Rear Admiral William D. Center (USN, ret.)  
Major General Albert B. Crawford (USA, ret.)  
Major General Maurice O. Edmonds (USA, ret.)  
Rear Admiral Robert C. Elliott, (USN, ret.)  
Major General John C. Faith (USA, ret.)  
Rear Admiral Robert H. Gormley (USN, ret.)  
Major General Richard B. Griffiths (USA, ret.)  
Major Rear Admiral Charles D. Grojean (USN, ret.)  
Major General Raymond E. Haddock (USA, ret.)  
Major General Jack R. Holbein, Jr. (USAF, ret.)  
Major General Stanley H. Hyman (USA, ret.)  
Major General Wayne P. Jackson (USA, ret.)  
Major General Frederick H. Lawson (AUS, ret.)  
Major General Vincent P. Luchsinger, Jr. (USAF, ret.)  
Major General James J. LeCleir (AUS, ret.)  
Major General William F. Willoughby (USAF, ret.)

Brig. General George C. Cannon, Jr. (USAF, ret.)  
Brig. General John J. Costa (USA, ret.)  
Brig. General Alvin E. Cowan (USA, ret.)  
Brig. General Lee Denson (USAF, ret.)  
Brig. General Evelyn P. Foote (USA, ret.)  
Brig. General Leslie R. Forney, Jr. (USA, ret.)  
Brig. General John H. Grubbs (USA, ret.)  
Brig. General James E. Hastings (USA, ret.)  
Brig. General John H. Johns (USA, ret.)  
Brig. General Maurice D. Roush (USA, ret.)