The Newsletter of the Center for Defense Information

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ISSN # 0195-6450 - Volume XXXV, Number 4 - July/August 2006

## Missile Defense: An Expensive Bluff?



Philip E. Coyle, Senior Advisor A version of this article first appeared on NeimanWatchdog.org on July 11, 2006.

North Korea's launch of numerous missiles the first week of July raised serious questions about the capabilities of both the U.S. missile defense system and North Korea's ballistic missile program. CDI Analyst Victoria Samson and Senior Advisor Philip Coyle appeared on numerous radio talk shows and TV news programs nationwide, helping viewers, listeners and readers to understand that the missile defense system being deployed in Alaska and California has no demonstrated capability to defend the United Sates against an enemy attack. Meanwhile the Bush administration is losing precious time. As Coyle points out in the article below, it's time to enter into one-on-one talks with North Korea before Pyongyang improves its short and long range missiles further. The six-party talks are important and necessary, but not sufficient to stop North Korea's missiles. And neither, unfortunately, are U.S. missile defenses.

he standoff between North Korea and the United States is like a game of celebrity poker where both sides are bluffing. North Korea doesn't have a missile that can reach the United States, and the United States doesn't have a reliable missile defense system that could shoot it down if it did.

In an interview on July 6, President George W. Bush appeared on "Larry King Live" on CNN.

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Suggesting we had a missile defense system that could shoot it down, the president replied, "If it headed to the United States we've got a missile defense system that will defend our country."

Later someone must have told the president that our ground-based system in Alaska has no demonstrated capability to defend the United States against an enemy attack. The very next day at his news conference in Chicago, the president was asked the

question again. Here's the exchange that took place:

Q: Yesterday, you said you did not know the trajectory of the long-range missile. Can you now tell us where was it headed? And if it had been headed at the United States, how would our national ballistic missile system have taken it down?

BUSH: "You know, our missile systems are modest. Our anti-ballistic systems are modest. They're new. And so it's hard for me to give you a probability of success. But, nevertheless, the fact that a non-transparent society would be willing to tee up a rocket and fire it without identifying where it was going or what was on it means we need a ballistic missile system."

In a follow up answer the president added, "Yes, I think we had a reasonable chance of

shooting it down. At least that's what the military commanders told me."

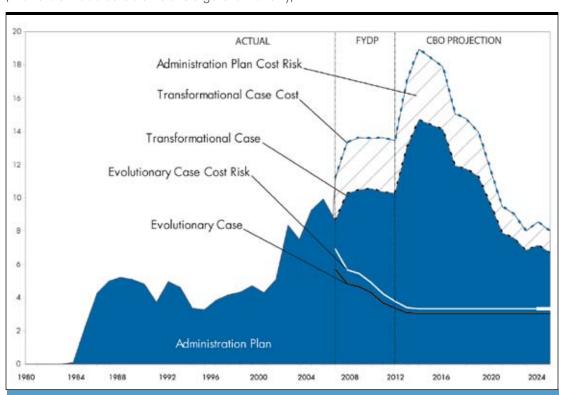
Oops. Someone needs to advise the president again. The ground-based system hasn't had a successful flight intercept test in four years. In the two most recent attempts, the interceptor never got off the ground. And in the only other recent attempt, the kill vehicle – the pointy-end of the interceptor – failed to separate from its booster and missed its target.

A question the press might ask Bush is, "Mr. President, which do you think will take longer: North Korea developing a missile that can reach the United States? Or the United States developing a missile defense we can rely on?"

The answer, whether the president might give it or not, lies in the fact that the United States has been trying to develop a reliable missile defense system for over 45 years.

It's natural for Americans to want to rely on high technology as a silver bullet to avoid dealing with our problems in other ways. But sometimes the technology just isn't there. Playing poker with North Korea while it keeps moving ahead with their missile development is a bluff the United States can't afford.

**CBO's Evolutionary and Transformational Alternatives: Spending for missile defense investment** (in billions of 2006 dollars of Total Obligational Authority)



Congressional Budget Office: The Long-Term Implications of Current Defense Plans and Alternatives: Detailed Update for Fiscal Year 2006. This chart displays CBO's projections of the costs for missile defense investment. The average annual cost for missile defense (excluding cost risk) would be \$10 billion over the period from 2006 to 2024. With cost risk, costs could rise to an average of \$13 billion annually, reaching nearly \$20 billion in 2013. Under the evolutionary alternative, the average annual cost over the 2006-2024 period would be \$3 billion, and DOD would deploy no additional ground-, sea-, air-, or space-based missile defenses beyond those already in place. Continuing efforts would be confined solely to research and testing of missile defense concepts.

# A Readiness Crisis in the Armed Forces?

Serious and deepening readiness problems prompt excuses and seeming inaction

Winslow Wheeler Director, Straus Military Reform Project

ccording to a June 26, 2006, memo prepared by the staff of the House Armed Services Committee's Readiness Subcommittee for a closed-door hearing with uniformed representatives from each of the Armed Forces:

- Active and Reserve Army units in the United States lack the equipment and training to be ready to go to combat and are rated at the lowest possible ratings, known as "C-3" and "C-4."
- Despite claims that Army units actually going into combat in Iraq and Afghanistan are fully combat ready (rated at "C-1"), there may be an unknown number of units that are still "C-3" and "C-4" when they go to war.

"The United States currently spends more per deployed soldier and other per-unit war costs than ever before. Quite literally, increased per capita spending has resulted in lower readiness."

- Because equipment is left in combat theaters for use there, it is unavailable for training in the United States. Thus, units preparing for combat cannot train properly for their core combat missions. There are also shortages of personnel in central military specialties, leading to "cross leveling" specialists from one unit to another as they deploy, thereby undoing one of the most meaningful reforms in the Army. "Unit manning" that enables human "cohesion" in combat units, a key driver of military effectiveness, is being unraveled by treating people as if they were interchangeable mechanical parts.
- Navy aircraft are being retired earlier than projected due to the stress on airframes from high operating tempos, thereby exacerbating modernization and readiness problems. The Navy's response has been, in part, to defer maintenance and underfund day-to-day operations, which would almost certainly worsen problems.
- In the Air Force, high usage rates also means that airframes are "aging" more rapidly and maintenance costs are increasing. The problems are exacerbated by shortages of maintenance personnel. As a result, the Air Force is experiencing readiness levels "at a historic low."

From other reports, such as from the Congressional Research Service, we also know that the United States currently spends more per deployed soldier and other per-unit war costs than ever before. Quite literally, increased per capita spending has resulted in lower readiness. Moreover, the high expense and low readiness result from a conflict that – while highly dramatic in political and personal terms – is actually quite small in terms of deployed forces compared to the conflicts in Vietnam and Korea.

As reported by journalist Elaine Grossman of *Inside the Pentagon*, the response from senior military leadership has been to provide explanations that appear to either ignore or contradict the evidence. To its credit, the Readiness Subcommittee held a closed door hearing on the matter, but it is entirely unclear what, if anything, the subcommittee, or anyone else in Congress, is doing to investigate seriously the dimension of the problem and to redress the apparent crisis.

To read Elaine Grossman's important article, "House Memo: Army Unit Readiness for Iraq, Afghanistan is Lagging," please visit the Straus Military Reform Project website, www.cdi.org/smrp.

The memo of the HASC Readiness Subcommittee, which has been circulating on Capitol Hill, can also be accessed on the Straus Project website.

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## Four Realities & 20 Actions

Gen. (ret.) Anthony Zinni, USMC, Distinguished Military Fellow

The following remarks by Gen. Anthony Zinni, retired from the U.S. Marine Corps and former head of U.S. Central Command, are adapted from a speech to the World Security Institute board of directors and staff at the annual board meeting held on May 17, 2006, in Washington, D.C.

'e have made mistakes in Iraq, but I won't talk about that again – I've done that before this began. It wasn't prescience at all; no one can predict the future. It was just a matter of someone that's been in this region, been involved in the military planning, and saw what was coming. I've offered views on my concerns and prayed that I was wrong. Unfortunately in many cases that didn't happen. So let the mistakes be judged elsewhere and the debate happen elsewhere.

## **FOUR REALITIES**

The first reality is – and I hate to say this – there are no more brilliant strategic options. There are no more brilliant ideas that can fit on a onepage policy paper and get us out of this mess.

The second reality ... which is probably even less acceptable than the first one, is that we aren't pulling out. If you think we're coming home, if you think we can write this off like this is Vietnam, this is Beirut, this is Somalia, and we can just walk away – I say – you can't.

The third reality is recognizing that Iraq is not a one or two-year problem - it's actually a five- to seven-year problem. Iraq may look a little like Lebanon did in the 1980s, maybe a lot like Lebanon did in the



1980s at its worst. If we're lucky it might not look much worse than now, which is pretty bad, but we're in a bad patch and we better think about it in terms of years like five to seven.

And the fourth reality is that [instead of drafting a] brilliant strategic page-and-a-half point paper, we should start burrowing into the detailed actions of what must be done in the political, economic, security, and social areas to reconstruct Iraq. What must happen now to make this succeed is for the institutions in Iraq to stand up to the chaos and instability, but to do this they must be strengthened. The security institutions, the political institutions, the economic institutions, the social institutions and most importantly the people have to be bolstered and made to believe.

## **TWENTY ACTIONS Political Actions**

My first recommendation is to build a set of international advisory groups that have experience, knowledge and understanding of how to structure federations - or maybe more aptly confederations - that understand how to work or formulate revenue sharing, how to distribute and work autonomously, and are aware of local levels of autonomy.

## **Improving Communication**

What's needed now is an information campaign to sell to the Iraqi people why it's in their interest to see this unity government succeed, to see the issues they're going to have to come to grips with work; why it's important to consider yourself an Iraqi – why your history, your pride, the millennia of civilization that you have – is important to you.

## Reconciliation

We need to have a mediation effort with the insurgents and I'm going to talk a little bit later about the five enemies we have here, but I want to focus on the true insurgents because not all the enemies we have here are insurgents such as the disaffected Sunnis, and it seems to me that you can build a line of communication to them that is non-threatening, like a private NGO that does mediation and facilitation work to make contacts and begin dialogue to bring them back into the fold.

## **Improving Security**

We are building a military that - the last I heard today - will have over 300,000 Iraqis. But what kind of military are we building? I think we need to take a hard look at these security forces and [ask] what they need besides the obvious military capabilities. I would recommend two other aspects that should get more emphasis. One is an intelligence capability, a street intelligence capability. [I]f you have the network on the street that connects to the people to know where the bad guys are, things that you do could be more surgical, less intrusive, and wouldn't require as much force. And [the other thing you] need to do is build that intelligence capability on the ground.

There needs to be a humanitarian component to [our presence in Iraq]. As [the military] comes into these areas to operate they should do more work in the medical, dental, veterinarian aspects of this; they should do some civic action projects.

The other thing I would recommend in terms of security is an alternative to the militias. The militias are a fact of life; had we done this right from the beginning we could have laid down the rule that there would be no militias. I believe that we should give them an option of service. Create a territorial guard. The territorial guard means you sign up; you get a decent paycheck; you get specific tasks; you provide security for infrastructure, and for personnel.

I think we need to create regional training and education centers for military leaders, such as a security assistance program where there is a collective place and a system designed for training leadership, and

the Iraqi leadership will participate in this.

## The Economy

On the economic side, I think we need to create a system in the region – supported by us but run by somebody in the region, perhaps Jordanians or others. And we ought to bring together Iraqi[s] that want to establish their businesses with international investors to work out the kinds of businesses that could be promoted and developed, and to ensure and look at the security requirements necessary to make their businesses work. This should happen in the secure provinces where these things can take hold.

### Infrastructure and Health Care

I would also build the plan for a healthcare system within Iraq. I think one of the greatest senses of hope you can give to them is to build a system of healthcare that will be responsive to their needs. Going back to the Saddam era where they had all these problems, including the healthcare system now that has basically collapsed, the idea of setting up clinics and beginning a healthcare system that eventually would become self-sufficient would be more than appreciated.

## The Iraqi People

One of the things that works well – and I've seen this work in many parts of the world – is the creation of a formalized dialogue process. The Saudis for example have created this national dialogue program where King Abdullah wants to talk about reforms and change. What he does is engage the people and they are able on all the public media – TV and radio – to begin at the local level and eventually draw their ideas up to the national level to discuss the issues.

We ought to begin a series of youth programs designed much

along the lines of Seeds of Peace where you bring young Shia, Sunnis, Kurds and some of the other minorities – Chadians and Syrians, Turcomans – together. If you don't win the hearts and minds of the young people there's no future in this place.

There is a brain drain going on; anybody that is a professional or has an education wants to leave Iraq. What I call a reverse brain drain program, ought to be put into place.

## Generate New Ideas

The United States can take some actions. The first thing I would do is create some sort of Blue Ribbon inter-agency committee and calling upon distinguished retired people that represent State, Defense and other places, to sift through the actions. Every alphabet soup think tank, policy wonk in this town has got a set of recommendations, and when you mine through it some of them might actually be good.

## **CONCLUSION**

What we need now is detailed thinking of these realities. What we had better understand - and I believe sincerely in my heart of hearts - is that the key is the Iraqi people. They have to buy into whatever we're doing. You can't just work this by selling a bunch of politicians in Baghdad. You can't work this by simply thinking this is a security problem, by creating more military forces, building them in our image and sending them out to kill, and think that's going to work. I've seen that movie; it was called Vietnam. I lived it; believe me - through two tours and 10 years of my life. It is time now to say that the one element that's holding this together, the Iraqi people, have to be brought into this process, engaged, buy into it, and actions have to be taken to give them some sense of hope for their future.

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## **Conferences**

## China-U.S. Strategic Relations

Conference Highlights Potential Areas of Cooperation

Eric Hagt, WSI China Director

n June 7 and 8, the World Security Institute and the China Arms Control and Disarmament Association co-sponsored the China-U.S. Strategic Relations conference in Washington, D.C.

The "1.5-track" conference was attended by 30 participants, including senior officials on arms control and disarmaments from the Chinese government and the People's Liberation Army, both Chinese and U.S. scholars and former Defense Department officials. This forum provided an invaluable platform for candid dialogue on critical challenges to strategic relations between China and the United States.

The Chinese delegation included a former ambassador for disarmament affairs, three deputy directorsgeneral from the Ministry of Commerce, the National Development and Reform Commission and the Customs Department, a deputy chief for arms control of the Ministry of National Defense and a senior officer

of the General Staff. Participants from the United States included Amb. Chas Freeman and Larry Korb, both former assistant secretaries of defense, Adm. Dennis Blair, the former commander in chief of the Pacific Command, Professor Frank Von Hippel of Princeton University, Jim Holmes of the University of Georgia's Center for International Trade and Security as well as members of the World Security Institute staff.

The conference was organized into four sessions focusing on: (1) challenges and opportunities for Sino-U.S. strategic and security relationships; (2) prospects for international nonproliferation and counterproliferation regimes; (3) U.S. and Chinese perspectives on security in space; and (4) the present and future direction of American foreign policy.

Lively discourse throughout the day revealed a shared optimism in the potential for cooperation and a deep interest for a common cause, sentiments that outweighed a number of troubling divisions and worry-

ing challenges to bilateral relations.

Taiwan was discussed as a potential source of tension, but many were very sanguine about a peaceful resolution of this issue over the long term.

Theoretical physicist Frank von Hippel (ctr.), a professor of public and international affairs at the

Woodrow Wilson School of Princeton University, shares his views on the Fissile Material Cutoff Treaty with a delegation of Chinese government and think tank representatives. Mike Mochizuki, director of the Sigur Center for Asian Studies at George Washington University, is at the left.

> Although the two countries have cooperated in the fields of multilateral arms control, nonproliferation and anti-terrorism, China and the United States remain at odds over implementing counter-proliferation regimes such as the Proliferation Security Initiative.

> Space security remains an area of concern, as the Chinese delegation expressed growing apprehension over U.S. developments in space weaponization. Hope for substantive collaboration in civilian programs seemed distant.

> The conference ended with a breakfast discussion on U.S. unease over China's growing influence and military power. The spotlight also turned on the current administration's foreign policy vision in Iraq and the hurdles in confronting the great challenges of the present, Iran and North Korea. World Security Institute President Bruce Blair hosted a dinner on May 7, which was attended by the Chinese delegation in addition to Zhang Yan, director of the Arms Control Division of the Foreign Ministry, who was in Washington, D.C., conducting talks with the U.S. State Department over Iran.

> For further details of the participants and contents of the conference please visit www.wsichina.org.



Zhou Ruojun expounds on the successes and outstanding challenges facing China's export control regimes. She is the deputy director-general of the Department of Mechanical, Electrical and High-Technological Industries at the Ministry of Commerce.



## Failure at UN Small Arms Conference

Rachel Stohl, Senior Analyst

rom June 26 through July 7, the United Nations held a conference to address the proliferation and misuse of small arms. The meeting was intended to review progress made on implementing the Program of Action (PoA), a voluntary agreement established by all UN member states in 2001, and to clarify and elaborate existing commitments under that agreement.

Global action on small arms is crucial to stamping out the deadly scourge that kills 1,000 people every day. An estimated 640 million small arms and light weapons are already in circulation around the world, but each year another 8 million weapons and 10 billion to 14 billion rounds of ammunition are manufactured – enough weapons to arm one in every 10 people in the world and enough ammunition to shoot every person in the world twice.

Even with the urgent need for action, participants were not able to save the conference. In the final hour of the last day of the meeting, the president of the conference announced that there would be no agreement. No conference document was finalized and no clear plan for UN efforts to implement the PoA was announced.

While some states blamed the

failure of the conference on the lack of time left for negotiations on the most contentious of issues - the link between small arms and development, national regulations, export criteria, and follow-up meetings - others blamed specific countries that continuously blocked discussion or refused to negotiate or compromise, preventing issues from being resolved in a timely manner. The United States, in particular, repeatedly blocked efforts to reach consensus. In its opening speech to the conference, the United States outlined its redlines - issues that would not be open for compromise - including references to development, inclusion of ammunition, a ban on sales of weapons to non-state actors, references to civilian possession, and mandatory follow-up meetings. These positions were drastically different from the positions of the majority of other states, and U.S. intransigence regarding these issues ultimately led to the conference failure.

Although the conference failed to produce tangible results, significant work on small arms will endure at the local, national, regional and global levels. States will continue to implement the 2001 Program of Action and will work to see continued progress made in strengthening its provisions. States that are committed to pursuing other small arms agendas – for example, controlling the

spread of ammunition and developing global guidelines to govern arms transfers - will continue their work at the United Nations and through national, regional, and international fora. The upcoming UN General Assembly session, which begins in October, will likely be an important venue in which to establish new global efforts on small arms and take up the issues that were unfulfilled at this conference. Non-governmental organizations will also continue their work to thwart the suffering caused by small arms proliferation and misuse. Still, the failure of this UN conference is significant for all of these efforts, because, for the time being, the overarching framework for coordinated international small arms action has been stalled.

## **FACT**

Each year 8 million weapons and 10 to 14 billion rounds of ammunition are manufactured – enough weapons to arm one in every 10 people in the world and enough ammunition to shoot every person in the world. Twice.



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