

## **From the Activist's Notebook: Thinking Geopolitically: NMD, Star Wars, and Control of the Heavens and Earth Below**

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The horrible terrorist attacks on the World Trade Center and Pentagon will ensure that George W. Bush gets all the money he wants in 2002 for military expansion and Star Wars.

In opinion polls the day after the Sept. 11 tragedy, Americans by a margin of 9-1 were saying they were prepared for war to bring revenge on those responsible for the attacks. Though delayed it may be, a dangerous cycle of bloodletting is likely to follow, bringing even more reprisals.

But this is an article that challenges readers to question what the government has said as it pushes ahead with missile defense plans; it also asks readers to think geopolitically, for military expansion and the development of space-based weaponry may ultimately do more harm internationally than good.

By way of background, during his presidential campaign George W. Bush called for the creation of a “21st Century” military capability. He was speaking about the development of new weapons systems like the space-based laser (SBL). Since then it has been widely reported that he has asked Congress for \$8.3 billion in 2002 for research and development (R&D) to bring these systems into reality. It has not been widely reported however that the Space Command’s planning document Vision for 2020 and the recent Rumsfeld Commission report call for U. S. “control and domination” of space.

The controversial reports call on the United States to develop the weapons capability to “deny” other countries access to space. The Bush Administration and its aerospace corporation allies understand they cannot say the United States will “control and dominate” space. By selling the new Star Wars program as “missile defense,” Bush hopes to disguise U.S. intentions to move the arms race into the heavens.

### Missile Defense is a Trojan Horse

The appointment by Bush of General Richard Meyers as chairman of the Joint Chiefs of Staff is an indication of the direction the Pentagon is heading. Gen. Meyers, former head of the U.S. Space Command, will be responsible for consolidating support for the nuclearization and weaponization of space within the military and selling it to Congress and the public.

But missile defense is a Trojan horse, an image that should cause readers to pause. For years the Pentagon has told the American people, and the rest of the world, that it wants to protect them from attack by a so-called rogue state that might send a nuclear weapon toward the United States. Unfortunately the tragedy of Sept. 11 has made it easier for the Bush Administration to sell this argument.

Remembering that the number one industrial export of the United States today is weapons, it is clear that the aerospace industry stands to make historic profits if Americans can be convinced to spend their hard earned tax dollars on Star Wars. It is possible to conclude that before it is finished, the new Star Wars program will cost many hundreds of billions of dollars. (Already over \$120 billion has been spent on space weapons development since the Eisenhower Administration began work on the technologies with the help of ex-Nazi rocket scientists following WW II.)

Knowing that recent tax cuts will eat up the national budget surplus, it is easy to see that further funding for Star Wars will be paid for with money from human needs programs such as Social Security, health care, family farm subsidies, education, day care, and the like. Funding for the enforcement of the Endangered Species Act struggles to survive with a meager \$6 million annual appropriation while Star Wars rages on.

## Managing China

When weapons are a country's number one industrial export, global marketing opportunities clearly benefit from regional instability. Today the United States sells arms to all sides in the Middle East and is now moving to expand U.S. military operations in the Asian-Pacific region where it is selling weapons to South Korea, Japan, Taiwan, Singapore, Indonesia, and Australia among others.

The Washington Post, in a May 26, 2000 article, stated that the United States will now begin to "manage China." Today the United States is widening and lengthening the runways on Guam and Wake Island in the Pacific to handle the B-1 and B-2 bombers. Cruise missiles are being prepositioned on Guam and a new program, Theatre Missile Defense (TMD), is being planned for deployment surrounding China.

China has 20 nuclear missiles capable of hitting the continental United States while the United States has 7,500 that could "hit" China back. Unlike Russia, which is now under the control of the IMF and World Bank and virtually surrounded by an expanding NATO, China remains the one independent actor in the world today not under U.S. corporate control.

TMD systems would be forward deployed in the air, on land, and sea and would allow the United States to virtually surround the coastal regions of China. TMD systems are designed to immediately hit missiles that are launched in what is called their "boost phase." Deploying TMD systems around China will force them to decide if they should respond by increasing their own military capability thus giving the U.S. weapons industry the ideal gift for larger markets — a new enemy and a justification for a new arms race.

The United States is also working with Israel and Turkey to introduce TMD systems into the Middle East, which will also provoke other regional powers to expand their capability to counter the TMD systems. All TMD systems will be coordinated via satellite technology in space.

Last January, the U.S. Space Command held a simulated computer warfare "game" set in the year 2017. The "Blues" (United States) went to war against the "Reds" (China). The Blue team launched a preemptive first-strike attack on China, using the military space plane, the planned successor to NASA's space shuttle. The space-based laser was used as the second military tool to destroy the Reds.

With current talk from the Bush Administration of launching a long-term war of reprisals against Osama bin Laden and Afghanistan, it is possible to speculate even further on this new strategy of the Pentagon. Afghanistan (which has large deposits of natural gas and coal) is bordered on the north by Turkmenistan (natural gas), Uzbekistan (world's largest single gold mine, oil, natural gas, coal and uranium), and Tajikistan (uranium). It is not hard to imagine the United States and NATO setting up "permanent bases" in the region to wipe out "terrorism" that would in the end give the United States control of these resources. Looking at a map of the region, one can see the proximity of this region to the borders of China and Russia.

## Lasers in Space

The SBL is a resurrected technology from Ronald Reagan's Star Wars vision: an orbiting battle station whose laser would knock out other countries' satellites in space and hit targets on the Earth below. Last December the Pentagon announced the start of the SBL testing program at NASA's Stennis Missile Center in southwest Mississippi. By the year 2012 they hope to deploy the first operational SBL to be eventually followed by a constellation of 18-48 of the weapons orbiting the planet. Power for the SBL would be provided by on-board nuclear reactors. The Pentagon estimates the SBL testing program will cost over \$30 billion.

Lockheed Martin, TRW, Boeing, and Raytheon are the top four Star Wars contractors. Their campaign contributions to Republicans and Democrats alike have paved the road for nearly unchallenged appropriations for R&D funding to pay for the many different space technologies now under way.

Today we hear many leading Democrats say they are opposed to deployment of National Missile Defense (NMD), the system designed to protect the continental United States from attack by hitting a bullet with a bullet while the "offending" missile is high above in deep space. (Interestingly, the Democrats voted overwhelmingly in support of deployment of missile defense in April, 1999. The House voted 345-71 and the Senate 97-3.) While Democrats routinely claim opposition to deployment of NMD, they strongly support deployment of Theatre Missile Defense systems, and some are pushing the "robust" R&D program for the whole Star Wars system.

### Global Corporate Threat

The political consensus that TMD should be deployed in the Middle East and Asia has to be linked to global corporate interventionist policies that both political parties endorse. Calling TMD "a way to protect our troops and our ships," Washington views TMD as the shield to protect United States forces that currently enable unfettered U.S. access to oil.

The underlying issue at hand is U.S. corporate global control. The United States Space Command can be seen as the new military arm of corporate globalization. The Vision for 2020 states that due to current economic realities the gap between "haves and have nots" will be widening in coming years. As a result, the Space Command suggests that there will be more regional instability as workers organize to oppose slave labor working conditions and a loss of democratic rights. By developing the new 21st Century program of "control and domination" from space, the Pentagon intends to suppress instability in "regional" hot spots without having to commit major troop deployments.

Plan Columbia today is coordinated by U.S. military space satellites (also at the cost of hundreds of billions of dollars) that are able to identify movements of fighters on the ground and direct attacks against them. All warfare on the earth is now coordinated from space. Those who control space will be in a position to control the earth — thus the Space Command's motto "Master of Space."

The Global network Against Weapons & Nuclear Power in Space has been working since 1992 to create a new consciousness about space and how it is being used for U.S. military control of the earth. When we look up at the moon on a clear night we must remember that for centuries humanity has marveled at the mysteries of the heavens. We must create a global movement that says we shall not move the bad seed of war into space. We must keep space for peace.

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*Space. The Vietnam-era veteran coordinated the Florida Coalition for Peace & Justice for 15 years and organized the Cancel Cassini Campaign to oppose the launch of plutonium into space.*

Resources The following resources may be obtained from the Global network:

Space Organizers Packet - \$5 (includes a copy of Vision for 2020) Karl Grossman's new book entitled Weapons in Space - \$8

Bruce Gagnon's video of his Keep Space for Peace presentation - \$18

Check the Global network website at: [www.space4peace.org](http://www.space4peace.org) Global network Against Weapons & Nuclear Power in Space PO Box 90083, Gainesville, FL. 32607

Economists for Peace and Security  
<http://www.epsusa.org>