

# Peace Works Missile Defense Doesn't

## What is Ballistic Missile Defence (BMD)?

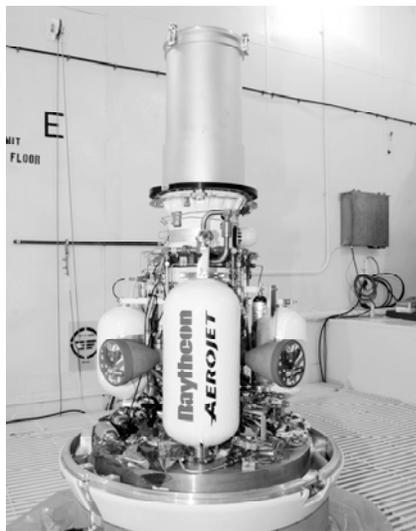
BMD is a system intended to defend U.S. territory from limited attacks of tens of missiles armed with nuclear, chemical, or biological weapons. Phase one is planned to be completed by 2005, and the whole system as early as 2010. Most of the world thinks it's a bad idea. Here are five reasons why:

### 1. BMD will break important treaties and start a new nuclear arms race.

Defence shields like the proposed BMD system can spur an arms race if opposing nations scramble to develop new weapons systems to penetrate the shield. Many countries object strongly that this "Son of Star Wars" program violates the 1972 Anti Ballistic Missile (ABM) treaty between the U.S. and Russia, long regarded as the cornerstone of international security. Both China and Russia have said they will increase their nuclear arsenals if the U.S. goes ahead with NMD, provoking the world's nuclear nations to retain their nuclear weapons on high alert.

### 2. Most of the world doesn't want it.

Russia, China, India, Britain and other European nations have warned that NMD threatens to dissolve the Anti-Ballistic Missile (ABM) treaty, which they consider the anchor of world nuclear stability and, thus, essential to their own military security. The U.S. wants to gain Canadian support to avoid becoming isolated internationally.



**Star Wars Weapon: Exoatmospheric "Kill Vehicle" interceptor, manufactured by Raytheon Corporation.**

### 3. The threat to the U.S. is imaginary.

BMD advocates cite the threat that a "rogue state" like Iran, Libya, or North Korea could launch a nuclear-tipped ballistic missile at the United States as early as 2005. This could be the case, however, such a country would have to be bent on national suicide to contemplate a missile attack against the U.S.

The U.S. has about 2,000 intercontinental ballistic missiles (ICBMs) available for immediate response to any missile attack, and would destroy any aggressor nation many times over. Moreover, any country wanting to launch a terrorist attack on the U.S. can do so more effectively with a weapon hidden in a suitcase, or from a ship in a port.

As former foreign-affairs minister

Lloyd Axworthy has commented, the BMD proposal has been oversold. Even if one accepts that so-called "rogue states" pose a threat, no system could be fully effective against them. Promoting greater arms control and an international treaty regulating the transfer of missile technology are far more viable solutions.

### 4. We must reject the business argument for building this system.

Building new defensive weapons is often less about defense and more about money. U.S. defence contractors have been smarting since the end of the Cold War, but a new BMD system will cost at least U.S. \$60 billion.

To jettison decades of painstaking progress in nuclear-arms control for such a costly, misguided and, so far, unworkable system to protect against remote threats seems like simple madness. But what seems to us like madness is sometimes, in fact, simple business self-interest. Aerospace and defense contractors have issued warnings that "distinctive Canadian policies" would anger the Bush Administration and lead to painful forms of economic punishment. Such fears are being mongered by various Canadian business groups — what they really fear, however, is losing this opportunity to make a buck.

### 5. The world has made much progress on disarmament. Why stop now?

We need to be concerned about BMD's implications for arms control and disarmament agreements. In addition to violating the 1972 ABM Treaty, which forbids the U.S. and Russia from developing a nation-wide BMD systems, the BMD plan would also jeopardize

the 2000 Nuclear Non-Proliferation Treaty (NPT), under which 187 nations including the U.S., pledged themselves to an "unequivocal undertaking by the nuclear weapon states to accomplish the total elimination of their nuclear arsenals." NMD takes us in the opposite direction.

## What Can YOU Do?

1. Learn more about the missile-defence proposals.
2. Let Canada's political leaders know you reject Canadian involvement in the U.S.'s BMD plan.
3. Tell others why missile defence is a dangerous idea.
4. Sign and circulate petitions opposing missile defence.
5. Write a letter to the editor stating the case against Canadian involvement in the U.S.'s BMD plan.

**Lots of information about BMD and campaigns against it are available on the following websites:**

- Canadian Peace Alliance  
[www.acp-cpa.ca/NMDactions.htm](http://www.acp-cpa.ca/NMDactions.htm)
- Project Ploughshares  
[www.ploughshares.ca](http://www.ploughshares.ca)
- Bombs Away  
[www.bombsaway.ca](http://www.bombsaway.ca)
- Greenpeace Stop Star Wars Campaign  
[www.stopstarwars.org](http://www.stopstarwars.org)
- Union of Concerned Scientists  
[www.ucsusa.org/global\\_security/misile\\_defense/index.cfm](http://www.ucsusa.org/global_security/misile_defense/index.cfm)
- Federation of American Scientists  
[www.fas.org/nsp/bmd/index.html](http://www.fas.org/nsp/bmd/index.html)
- Global Network Against Weapons and Nuclear Power in Space  
[www.globenet.free-online.co.uk](http://www.globenet.free-online.co.uk)