

US Decision Making on Missile Defense

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The world entered the nuclear age in 1945 when the United States first acquired nuclear capability. The United States enjoyed a strategic monopoly but only for a couple of years until the Soviet Union tested its nuclear device in 1949. Since then, the United Kingdom, France, and China joined the exclusive nuclear club, and the threat of nuclear weapons has become one of the most daunting challenges of the world. Almost immediately after the United States developed nuclear weapons in the 1940s, it began to explore a way to destroy an incoming nuclear warhead before it reached its target in the United States in order to negate the dangers of nuclear weapons.

Smaller scale threats coming from the Third World or rogue states and possibly terrorist organizations are serious factors to be reckoned with, but the nuclear threat from the Soviets was the backbone of US strategic thinking after WWII and until the late 1980s and early 1990s. During the long history of missile defense, the strategic environment experienced fundamental shifts, the most significant being the end of the Cold War. Nevertheless, the United States has shown rather consistent support for missile defense. Missile defense policy changes were seen but they did not coincide with the rise or fall of the Soviet threat. This is the central research question of this study: how has US missile defense policy been able to survive for decades despite fundamental changes in the security environment?

The main interest of this study is the decision making process. Essentially, this study attempts to discover the central force behind US missile defense policy. In this effort, this study proposes three competing perspectives: the security perspective, the bureaucratic politics

perspective, and the congressional perspective. Was it the external security factor? Was it the executive branch of the US government? Or was it Congress that brought about the policy decisions? This study argues that new strategic developments play an extremely important role in triggering policy changes, but Congress was instrumental in materializing missile defense policy changes.

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PREFACE

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LIST OF ABBREVIATIONS

ABM	Antiballistic Missile
ACDA	Arms Control and Disarmament Agency
AEC	Atomic Energy Commission
BMD	Ballistic Missile Defense
BMDO	Ballistic Missile Defense Organization
BSTS	Boost Surveillance and Tracking System
BUR	Bottom Up Review
CBO	Congressional Budget Office
CIA	Central Intelligence Agency
DOD	Department of Defense
DOE	Department of Energy
DPRC	Defense Program Review Committee
GAO	General Accounting Office (later renamed the General Accountability Office)
GBI	Ground-Based Interceptor
GBR	Ground-Based Radar

GOP	Grand Old Party
GPALS	Global Protection Against Limited Strikes
GSTS	Ground-based Surveillance and Tracking System
HASC	House Armed Services Committee
IAEA	International Atomic Energy Agency
ICBM	Intercontinental Ballistic Missile
JCS	Joint Chiefs of Staff
MAD	Mutual Assured Destruction
MAS	Mutual Assured Survival
MIRV	Multiple Independently Targetable Reentry Vehicle
MX	Missile Experimental
NASA	National Aeronautics and Space Administration
NCA	National Command Authority
NIC	National Intelligence Council
NIE	National Intelligence Estimate
NMD	National Missile Defense
NORAD	North American Aerospace Defense Command
NPT	Nuclear Nonproliferation Treaty
NSC	National Security Council
NSDD	National Security Decision Directive
NSDM	National Security Decision Memoranda

NSSM	National Security Study Memoranda
NTW	Navy Theater Wide
OTA	Office of Technology Assessment
QDR	Quadrennial Defense Review
SALT	Strategic Arms Limitation Talks
SASC	Senate Armed Services Committee
SBI	Space-Based Interceptor
SDI	Strategic Defense Initiative
SDIO	Strategic Defense Initiative Organization
SLBM	Submarine Launched Ballistic Missile
SSTS	Space Surveillance and Tracking System
START	Strategic Arms Reduction Treaty
THAAD	Theater High Altitude Area Defense
TMD	Theater Missile Defense
UOES	User Operational Evaluation System
WMD	Weapons of Mass Destruction

1.0 INTRODUCTION

US missile defense policy has survived for over fifty years, weathering seemingly impossible conditions at times. Throughout this period, the names, goals and specific systems associated with missile defense have changed on multiple occasions. For example, between the late 1940s when the idea of missile defense was first conceived and the early 1980s, antiballistic missile defense (ABM) was the common nomenclature for the concept. After President Reagan proposed a new vision, the Strategic Defense Initiative (SDI) became the name for the next-generation ABM. During President Clinton's term, national missile defense was widely used to contrast it with theater missile defense. The strategic goals and technologies that were pursued changed along with the names. Until the introduction of SDI in the 1980s, missile defense was intended to protect US territory from Intercontinental Ballistic Missiles (ICBMs) equipped with nuclear warheads. The strategic objectives shifted back and forth between defending the US population and US second strike capability forces and total population protection and light protection against limited-scale threats. President Reagan's SDI pioneered a space-based system and new technologies such as laser-beam instead of nuclear detonation. The end of the Cold War coupled with the Persian Gulf War in 1991 broadened the definition of missile defense. It included protecting battlefield troops from missiles equipped with chemical or biological as well as nuclear weapons.

This study defines missile defense as any measure to negate enemy missile attacks on US soil. US missile defense policy denotes a course of action the US government pursued in order to defend US territories against incoming missiles. It includes both population and point protection in terms of its goals, all types of technologies and components such as land-, sea-, space-based or airborne, objectives ranging from research and development to deployment, and commitment of resources at different levels. However, the focus of this study is nationwide

missile defense, not theater missile defense policy since the larger scale national missile defense¹ bears more significance in its policy and political implications.

1.1 RESEARCH QUESTIONS AND CASE SELECTION

Throughout its history, missile defense policy has been contentious on many fronts. The technology required for the implementation of missile defense has been one of the most controversial aspects of the issue. Even in the twenty-first century, technical feasibility is very much in dispute and it was certainly deemed extremely challenging in the 1940s when the idea was first introduced. Another tension was over strategic merits. Many opposed missile defense believing that it could set off an arms race and undermine nuclear stability. The high price tag further intensified debates over missile defense. The United States had spent over \$122 billion between the mid-1950s and 2000. Since the mid-1980s, annual funding for missile defense has been hovering around \$3 billion to \$4 billion, becoming the largest research and development (R&D) project of the Department of Defense.²

The objective of this study is to put forth plausible answers to two central research questions. First, what contributed to the longevity of the Ballistic Missile Defense (BMD) program despite deep disagreements over its technology, costs, and strategic implications? Since the inception of the idea of protecting the United States from incoming missiles, the strategic environment has significantly altered. The earlier decades of missile defense policy addressed concerns over the Soviet threat. With the end of the Cold War and emergence of new threats from terrorism and the Third World, the strategic environment caused missile defense to be refocused. The domestic situation varied considerably as well. Missile defense debates went through periods of both Republican and Democratic dominance in government as well as strong and weak economies. The mounting Vietnam War costs in the late 1960s and early 1970s or the

¹ National missile defense (NMD) was contrasted with theater missile defense (TMD) during the Clinton administration, and the demarcation became an important line for proponents and opponents of missile defense. This study defines missile defense, ballistic missile defense (BMD), and NMD in the same way: protection of US territory from an incoming missile as opposed to defending US military personnel or facility in a theater.

² Stephen Schwartz, "Sunday Focus: The Folly of U.S. Nuclear Diplomacy," *Newsday*, May 7, 2000, B5.

record high budget deficit during the Reagan administration could well have diminished the missile defense programs. Notwithstanding the unfavorable circumstances that threatened to curtail the missile defense program, R&D efforts have never been discontinued and the budget was no less than one billion dollars even after the signing of the ABM Treaty, an accord that once limited missile defense efforts. This observation prompted the core question of this study: what made it possible for the missile defense program to overcome external and domestic challenges and continue to be a major defense program?

The second question pays attention to the fluctuations in missile defense policy. During its long history surviving numerous challenges, missile defense experienced ebbs and flows. Five decisions are salient to this question, and these landmark decisions are cases to be tested for different explanations. A common attribute for all five cases was that they marked a dramatic policy shift under the same leadership. Policy goals changed from mere R&D efforts to deployment decisions (President Johnson's decision to deploy Sentinel, President Reagan's launching of SDI, the two pieces of missile defense legislation in 1991 and 1999) or from a deployment decision to a large R&D effort (ABM Treaty under President Nixon). In essence, what caused these fluctuations in missile defense policy?

These policy turns constitute mini-puzzles rousing the following sub-questions. (1) Why did President Johnson decide to deploy Sentinel, an antiballistic missile system after his earlier opposition? (2) Why did President Nixon sign the ABM Treaty despite his skepticism on arms control and forgo his original plans to pursue deployment of the Safeguard ABM systems? (3) Why did President Reagan launch an ambitious missile defense program after inaction during his first two years of presidency? (4) Why did President Bush enact the Missile Defense Act of 1991 shifting his reservations on missile defense? (5) Similarly, why did President Clinton sign the National Missile Defense Act of 1999 despite his earlier opposition?

1.2 IMPORTANCE OF THIS STUDY

The study of BMD policy is important for both theory and policy reasons. This dissertation seeks to make a theoretical contribution to the study of decision making as well as nuclear

strategy. There is a large volume of literature discussing various aspects of missile defense. Much of the literature concerning this subject is dedicated to putting forth arguments to support or oppose missile defense policy, to delineate the history of missile defense, or to understand missile defense in the context of explaining nuclear strategies. There has been a dearth of study applying decision making theories to missile defense. While the strategic context of missile defense is important and is an interest of this study, understanding the US decision making process on missile defense is a main purpose of this study.

A traditional international security approach argues that foreign policy or defense policy is an outcome of an external environment. It is worth investigating if this conventional tenet of security studies holds for a major security policy such as missile defense policy. In this pursuit, this study proposes and tests two competing domestic approaches in addition to the strategic approach in explaining key decisions over US missile defense policy.

In the policy arena, many speculated that US missile defense policy would be put on the backburner in the aftermath of the September 11, 2001 terrorist attacks on the World Trade Centers in New York City and the Pentagon in Washington, D.C. Contrary to this prediction, the new security threat to the United States did not deprive resources, attention, or commitment from missile defense. The United States withdrew from the ABM Treaty in 2001, freeing itself from any restraints imposed by what some considered the cornerstone of arms control and others an impediment to maximizing the national security of the United States. The new security environment and the new kind of threat, terrorism, to the United States did not mollify the intense debates between the supporters and opponents of missile defense. The missile defense budget during the Bush administration grew in the vicinity of \$10 billion annually. Meanwhile, the value of this spending was put in question by its technological uncertainty. There have been ongoing debates over its technology within the scientific community. The Union of Concerned Scientists is one of the leading opponent groups that believe the technology is not realistic. Some Nobel laureates also cast their skepticism on missile defense.³ A large number of

³ Darryl Brown and Tricia Gates, "The Fallacy of Missile Defense: national missile defense; Mutually Assured Destruction," *Christianity Today* 44 no.12 (October 23, 2000); John Isaacs, "Not Ready for Prime Time: missile defense system repeatedly fails tests," *Bulletin of the Atomic Scientists* 56 no.5 (September 2000). Willie Schatz, "All sizzle and no steak?: Strategic Defense Initiative and the computer industry," *Datamation* 32 (August 15, 1986).

individuals and organizations in government, advocacy groups, security experts, and politicians have engaged in passionate debates over the issue.

1.3 METHODOLOGY OF THIS STUDY

Social scientists conduct studies to generalize a social phenomenon or confirm an existing theory. In this effort, researchers often employ a cross-sectional or time series analysis using an extensive data set. These methods are highly regarded in social science for their rigorous research design and modeling process. The large N study uses statistical analysis methods to represent the universe with specific probabilities, and therefore it is considered more suitable than the case study method for generalization.

However, social scientists often encounter a subject with lack of consistent data. Among alternative methods for such a situation is the case study approach in which researchers explore, describe, or explain a case and provide detailed accounts for the topic examined.⁴ A single case lacks “representativeness” since a case testing a hypothesis could be an aberration to an otherwise coherent theory capable or incapable of explaining other events.⁵ This problem can be ameliorated by analyzing “mini” cases within a case study. This dissertation deals with a single case, missile defense, but by examining five different “mini” cases, it tries to overcome a potential lack of “representativeness.” Case study methodology is more than an inferior alternative complementing a statistical analysis. It has its own virtues by offering “explanatory richness” that time series or cross-sectional studies do not.⁶ The case study provides a context for the research topic explaining why and how an event unfolded the way it is observed. Case study can be quite helpful when it is used to corroborate a theory in the real-life context, as Robert Yin suggests.⁷ Case study is also a practical method to examine a unique social

⁴ Janet B. Johnson and Richard A. Joslyn, “Research Design,” in *Political Science Research Methods*, 3rd ed. (Washington, DC: CQ Press, 1995), 143–147.

⁵ Alexander George and Andrew Bennett, “Method of Structured, Focused Comparison,” in *Case Studies and Theory Development in Social Sciences* (Cambridge: MIT Press, 2005), 30–32.

⁶ Ibid., p31.

⁷ Johnson, 143–147.

phenomenon. When a social occurrence is rare but too significant to be unaccounted for, a case study can be employed to explain the incidence.

This dissertation is intended to offer credible answers to the research questions. Its goal is to discover a general pattern from assembling the five cases, but it is not designed to put forth a new theory. The purpose of this study is to find out why missile defense policy has sustained for so long and what prompted the rise and fall of the policy. This goal can be properly served only by an in-depth account and case study analysis due to the long history and complexity of the issues revolving around missile defense.

For the mini-puzzles, the method of structured, focused comparison is applied. This method was developed by Alexander George, a respected scholar in foreign policy research design. The case study method had been refuted for what James Rosenau encapsulated as lacking “scientific consciousness” since the individual case studies were mere isolated explanations failing to be advanced as accumulations to weave a theory. Comparative politics has also faced a similar critique. Roy Macridis and Bernard Brown criticized that cases used in comparative politics were essentially incomparable.⁸ Alexander George took into consideration these predicaments of the case study method and advanced the “structured and focused comparison” in an effort to surmount the shortcomings of a single case study. What, then, is the structured, focused comparison?

The method is “structured” in that the researcher writes general questions that reflect the research objective and that these questions are asked of each case under study to guide and standardize data collection, thereby making systematic comparison and cumulation of the findings of the cases possible. The method is “focused” in that it deals only with certain aspects of the historical cases examined. The requirements for structure and focus apply equally to individual cases since they may later be joined by additional cases.⁹

Adopting Alexander’s approach, this study develops a set of questions for each of the five cases under a general direction. The specific questions for the five cases are not identical since they were under distinct domestic and international circumstances, but the questions are standardized enough to make reasonable comparisons.

⁸ George and Bennett, *Case Studies*, 67–69.

⁹ *Ibid.*, 67.

1.4 CAPSULE HISTORY OF MISSILE DEFENSE

After the Second World War, the United States initiated Project Thumper and Wizard in 1946 to explore the technological feasibility of developing interceptor missiles that could destroy moving missiles. In 1955 Bell Telephone Laboratories simulated intercepts of ballistic missile targets using computers and concluded that hitting a missile with another missile was possible.¹⁰

In the 1950s, the Army began to develop the Nike Zeus system and the Air Force had responsibility for the BMD surveillance system. In the early 1960s, spending on the Nike Zeus program was temporarily put on hold because of technical uncertainties, as well as political and economic considerations. Later, its second phase began to merge the Forward Acquisition Radar (FAR) and Local Acquisition Radar (LAR) into one Zeus Acquisition Radar (ZAR). The Nike Zeus program had its setbacks, but the first six years of the BMD system development stayed on schedule throughout its R&D, testing and evaluation phases.¹¹

Although the Zeus program showed improvements in its development, there was skepticism over Nike Zeus's capability for deployment, and the upgraded Nike-X succeeded it in 1962. Nike-X was designed to employ two types of missiles: the Nike Zeus for long-range interception and Sprint missile for short-range interception.

Secretary of Defense Robert McNamara had supported the research and development of Nike but was against procurement or deployment, arguing that it would spur an arms race. However, in 1967 President Johnson pledged to take action on antiballistic missile deployment. His Defense Secretary McNamara announced the decision to deploy a "light deployment system" named "Sentinel" on the basis of four "marginal grounds." Those four grounds were: (1) it would be relatively inexpensive, (2) it would be used as an indication to deter China's nuclear blackmail, (3) it would improve the survivability of the US offensive missile force and lessen its expansion and (4) it would protect major US cities. A thin Nike-X system was to be developed in late 1967.¹²

¹⁰ Ballistic Missile Defense Organization (BMDO), *Missile Defense Milestones 1944-2000*, <http://www.acq.osd.mil/bmdo/bmdolink/html/milestone.html>, downloaded on March 31, 2001. BMDO was renamed the Missile Defense Agency (MDA) in 2002.

¹¹ Benson D. Adams, *Ballistic Missile Defense* (New York: American Elsevier Publishing Company, 1971), 32–39.

¹² Daniel S. Papp, "From Project Thumper to SDI: The Role of Ballistic Missile Defense in US Security Policy," <http://www.airpower.maxwell.af.mil/airchronicles/apj/apj87/papp.html>.

President Nixon reoriented the Sentinel system to “Safeguard.”¹³ Whereas Sentinel was primarily designed to protect cities, Nixon’s Safeguard had as its higher priority to protect two Minuteman sites and later, Strategic Air Command (SAC) bomber bases.¹⁴ The entire Safeguard system was to have 12 sites and to cost \$7 billion when completed. Congress tried to delete the program but several attempts failed and \$1.5 billion was funded for the year 1970. Meanwhile, it was revealed that the Soviets were deploying ICBMs faster than expected. As a reaction to this, the Nixon administration required one more Minuteman site to be defended.

By the mid-1970s, the United States and the Soviet Union were making progress with the Strategic Arms Limitation Talks (SALT). The two nations finally concluded the talks and signed the ABM Treaty in 1972.¹⁵ The treaty banned a nationwide missile defense system and allowed each side two deployment sites limited to 100 interceptors at each location.¹⁶

SALT was considered a cornerstone of arms control, and the United States showed little interest in aggressively pursuing missile defense. A drastic step was taken three years after Reagan became president, however, as he reinvigorated missile defense policy. In 1983, President Reagan announced his ambition to make “nuclear weapons impotent and obsolete” through renewed missile defense efforts that had been overlooked since the ABM Treaty. Two studies were conducted following the announcement in 1983; one was a technical study and the other a strategic study. The technology study was led by James Fletcher, former head of the National Aeronautics and Space Administration (NASA) and the strategic study was by Fred Hoffman, director of the Pan Heuristics think tank.¹⁷ About six months later, both the Hoffman Report and the Fletcher Report were completed. The Hoffman Report stated that SDI could enhance deterrence and an anti-tactical ballistic missile system could be a stepping stone to a national missile defense system. The Fletcher Report outlined two models for SDI and recommended a program consisting of five research areas: systems, surveillance, acquisition, tracking, and kill assessment.

¹³ BMDO, *Missile Defense Milestones*.

¹⁴ Adams, 198–200.

¹⁵ Papp.

¹⁶ Daniel Smith, “A Brief History of ‘Missiles’ and Ballistic Missile Defense,” in *National Missile Defense: What Does It All Mean?* (Washington, DC: Center for Defense Information 2000), 3.

¹⁷ Keith B. Payne, *Strategic Defense: Star Wars in Perspective*, foreword by Zbigniew Brzezinski (Lanham, MD: Hamilton Press, 1986), 19.

SDI was evolving with the creation of its new organization, the Strategic Defense Initiative Organization (SDIO), in 1984 and continued various tests. The Army had a successful test to demonstrate the hit-to-kill interceptor technology.¹⁸ A simulation test to destroy a Titan rocket booster with an infrared advanced chemical laser was a success as well. However, the technical challenge to develop the space-interceptor system of SDI turned out to be daunting. As an alternative, the SDIO came to support the idea of “Brilliant Pebbles” in 1989. Brilliant Pebbles would consist of multiple interceptors independently operating against any object coming in its field of vision. The space-based Brilliant Pebbles idea was again technically challenged and replaced the next year with the Global Protection Against Limited Strikes (GPALS), which emphasized protection against long-range missiles. The Missile Defense Act of 1991 endorsed the GPALS and mandated the Department of Defense to deploy the land-based GPALS system.

In 1993, Bill Clinton was inaugurated as the new president, becoming the first Democratic president since the ABM Treaty was signed. He quickly reorganized the SDIO with a new name, the Ballistic Missile Defense Organization (BMDO). Clinton’s defense strategy blueprint, the Bottom Up Review, emphasized Theater Missile Defense (TMD), which was to receive \$12 billion for the next five fiscal years. National Missile Defense (NMD) was to receive \$3 billion for the same period, one-fourth of the amount allocated for TMD, showing a significant setback for the ambitions envisioned by the two previous Republican presidents.¹⁹ However, during the Clinton administration, the National Missile Defense Act was legislated in 1999, reversing the administration’s unenthusiastic stance on NMD.

1.5 ORGANIZATION OF THIS STUDY

This dissertation is composed of five chapters, beginning with the introduction, which offers the definition, background and a brief history of missile defense. From the history of missile defense, five informative cases were observed. The five milestone policy turns found in these

¹⁸ BMDO, *Missile Defense Milestones*.

¹⁹ *Ibid.*

cases, as well as the longevity of the missile defense program, raised the two main research questions—why did missile defense policy continue despite the significant changes in international politics and what caused fluctuations in the program? Three perspectives, the security perspective, the bureaucratic politics perspective, and the congressional perspective, are presented as competing explanations for these questions, and their central arguments and hypotheses are outlined in the introduction.

Chapter two tests the security perspective against the five cases. It begins with a brief reminder of the central argument of the security perspective and key questions. The five case studies each begin with background on the policy turn, followed by original stances on the five administrations' missile defense policy, technological, budgetary, and threat developments to explain policy changes. The conclusion of the chapter section summarizes the findings.

Chapter three tests the effectiveness of the bureaucratic politics perspective. Similar to chapter two, chapter three reiterates hypotheses and subset questions for this model. All five cases analyze the Department of Defense, the Department of State, and the National Security Council (NSC), focusing on the heads of these organizations. The case study examining the inception of the Strategic Defense Initiative (SDI) under President Reagan also includes “outsiders” and “vice president,” in addition to the typical players within the executive branch. The last actor every case investigates is the president. Under the heading *Interplay*, this study encapsulates the findings of each case.

Chapter four, the last main chapter of this study, first reintroduces the central proposition of the congressional perspective, and research questions. Following is the congressional reaction to the administrations' initial policy choices, along with congressional debates on the technological, budgetary, and security developments. Similar to the security perspective, the congressional perspective ends each case study by summarizing findings from the five cases in a conclusion section at the end for the whole.

The conclusion in chapter five summarizes how each of the three perspectives fared for the five cases. In addition, this chapter offers a comparison of the three perspectives, attempting to learn which of the three perspectives was the strongest in answering the central research questions, and under what conditions it was the case. Finally, chapter five addresses briefly the George W. Bush administration and the future of missile defense as well as the limitations of this study and future research areas.

1.6 COMPETING EXPLANATIONS – THREE PERSPECTIVES

The goal of this dissertation is to offer explanations for the longevity and fluctuations of US missile defense policy. In this attempt, the study developed and tested three different perspectives: the security perspective, bureaucratic politics perspective, and congressional perspective. The security perspective highlights the rationality of decision makers whereas the other two emphasize the domestic political components of the decision making process.

Accounts of the three perspectives are given below. They begin by introducing the central claims of each perspective, followed by an overview of the theoretical foundations and an outline of the general predictions and expectations associated with them. Subsequently, common questions are asked and more individualized questions are presented in order to guide the direction of research and analysis.

1.6.1 Security Perspective

The first perspective this study puts forth is the security perspective. This approach considers that the ultimate goal of a state is to ensure its survival and maximum security, and that the way of choosing a policy alternative to materialize that goal is through a rational decision making process. Policy makers place that goal of national survival ahead of their organizational or personal interests and choose an action plan in view of the eventual policy goal.

The security perspective closely follows the realist tradition of international relations in looking at the behavior of and interactions among nation states. The primary concern of policy makers is assuring security by properly managing threats and opportunities emerging in the international strategic environment. The course of action is characterized by rationality as decision makers try to reach the most effective and efficient alternative by developing different action plans, weighing the outcomes of each plan and selecting a value-maximizing option.²⁰

²⁰ Graham T. Allison and Philip Zelikow, “Model I: The Rational Actor,” in *Essence of Decision: Explaining the Cuban Missile Crisis*, 2nd. ed. (New York: Longman 1999), 23–26.

Central Argument

The security perspective argues that a policy decision is a response to the external strategic environment and a result of two other variables, technical feasibility (or the prospect of it, to be more precise) and affordability. Threat is the most important factor in deciding missile defense policy. Determining the existence and scope of a threat are integral parts of the decision making process. The other two factors, technical feasibility and cost, are particularly important to deployment decisions. This is because unlike decisions made at the research and development stage, the actual deployment decision hinges on whether the system is operational or not, and also whether the United States has the necessary resources to finance deployment.

Theoretical Foundations

This section explains the theoretical bases on which the security perspective is constructed in this study. The emphasis of the security perspective is partly extracted from Graham Allison's rational choice model. His model posits that a problem arises from an external situation and sees the ensuing decision making action as a rational choice. The security perspective accepts these tenets of the rational choice model and considers the strategic goal in place of political gains as the core principle of actors. Defined in this way, the policy option is a result of the strategic environment.

With regard to the decision making "action," Allison identifies four components: objective, alternative, consequence, and choice. According to this approach, government has "one set of preferences, one set of perceived choices, and a single estimate of the consequences that follow from each alternative."²¹ The security perspective concurs with the first two suppositions. This implies in concrete terms that national survival and minimizing casualties are the agreed-upon preferences of states, and decision makers are presented with a limited number of alternatives they can choose from. However, the security perspective departs from the rational choice model's premise that actors are unitary and that decision makers agree to "a single estimate of the consequences." Instead, the security perspective recognizes multiple players within the government and argues that estimates of the consequences diverge depending on decision makers' views, philosophies, and assumptions from which strategic calculations are

²¹Ibid.

derived. This acknowledgment of multiple players and distinct views is critical in explaining why contrasting policy options can satisfy the key attributes of the security perspective—their primary goal is maximizing the security of the United States and their course of action is rational—yet come to opposite conclusions in determining an optimal alternative.

The failure to forge a consensus on the assessment of policy outcomes is due to the normative nature of the missile defense debates. As Alexander George and Richard Smoke point out, a normative theory “inescapably possesses some philosophical dimension; and invariably it is deeply concerned with values.”²² Nuclear theories, often the foundations for missile defense debates, may well fall into the category of normative theory. They are constructed to assess and forecast the outlook of the international environment, to propose adequate strategies in the circumstance, and to specify policy prescriptions to best accommodate the situation based on a number of assumptions. The assumptions reflect the decision maker’s philosophy on humanity and worldview. Proponents and opponents of rival strategies frequently accuse each other of immoral stances since they evaluate the other’s claims through the lenses of their predisposed assumptions. For instance, one of the challenges to the Mutual Assured Destruction (MAD) doctrine is the morality of holding human lives in hostage. Conversely, MAD proponents contend that what matters is to save human lives at the end by preventing a disastrous war, even if that means taking human lives hostage.

Nuclear Strategies

Since the strategic implication of missile defense can be properly understood only within the context of the overall nuclear strategy, the subject merits further discussion. This section introduces strategies often cited by proponents and opponents of missile defense, describes how they exploit complex theories to buttress their own positions, and clarifies some of the confusion over the role of missile defense in nuclear strategy. This section is not meant to offer an exhaustive overview of nuclear strategy but to explain the concepts behind the nuclear strategies frequently used or misused in the debates over missile defense, such as deterrence, MAD, and war-fighting strategy.

²² Alexander George and Richard Smoke, “Appendix: Theory for Policy in International Relations,” in *Deterrence in American Foreign Policy: Theory and Practice* (New York: Columbia University Press, 1974), 617–618.

Deterrence has been one of the most important topics in missile defense debates both for its theoretical and policy implications. Deterrence defined by Patrick Morgan is “the use of threats of harm to prevent someone from doing something you do not want him to.”²³ Deterrence can employ a variety of threats, such as cutting off foreign aid or economic sanctions, but the policy context in the nuclear age typically limits its meaning to threats of military force, particularly nuclear force, to prevent the enemy from undertaking military action.²⁴

Deterrence is similar to MAD in that both intend to dissuade the other side from beginning a war, especially a nuclear war, by inciting the enemy’s fear of retaliation. In fact, some pundits and policy makers interchangeably use the two. However, deterrence is a broader concept than MAD for a couple of reasons. The former describes a situation as well as a policy, whereas MAD is a policy statement. Roy E. Jones clarifies the two aspects of deterrence.

A policy of deterrence is a calculated attempt to induce an adversary to do something, or refrain from doing something, by threatening a penalty for non-compliance. A deterrence situation, or system, is one where conflict is contained within a boundary of threats which are neither executed nor tested.²⁵

In contrast, MAD is a policy goal adopted by the United States in the 1960s and 1970s. The conceptual underpinning of MAD is balance of terror. The balance of terror theory posits that two nations’ nuclear capabilities in approximate parity would prevent the countries from starting a nuclear war. The theory requires three conditions. First, each side should possess a second strike capability, i.e., a nuclear capability large enough to survive the enemy’s initial nuclear attack and strike back in retaliation. The second requirement is the psychological factor. The two parties must recognize that the other party has a second strike capability and the will to use it. Therefore, each should fear retaliation, which results in an unacceptable level of damage. The last attribute of the theory is the rationality of the actors. The two parties should realize that there is no benefit in launching a nuclear attack because nothing will be left after a full-scale

²³ Patrick Morgan, “The Subject,” in *Deterrence: A Conceptual Analysis* (Beverly Hills: SAGE Publications, Inc., 1977), 17.

²⁴ *Ibid.*, 20.

²⁵ Roy E. Jones, *Nuclear Deterrence, A Short Political Analysis* (London: Routledge and Kegan Paul, 1968), 1 quoted in Morgan, 18.

nuclear exchange. Thus, the two are inclined to deter themselves from initiating nuclear hostilities to avert the destructive results.²⁶

Another difference between MAD and deterrence is in force design. MAD requires parity to obtain mutual vulnerability as a mechanism to prevent a nuclear war. Deterrence can be achieved through any of the force capabilities—superiority, parity or inferiority—and missile defense is only one element constituting the overall capability. Although superiority is more effective than parity, and parity is more effective than inferiority, one of the key components of deterrence is “threat,” and the value of deterrence partially relies on this psychological as well as physical element.²⁷ If a small state acquires a single nuclear weapon, it bestows on that small state an exponentially increased deterrent effect against even a much more powerful country’s attempt to invade the small country, since the nuclear response to the attacker is grave enough to give the attacker pause.²⁸

Superiority in force design is discouraged for MAD because acquiring dominance would eliminate mutual vulnerability for the leading power. This is not the case with deterrence and war fighting scenarios since, as was just mentioned, deterrence can be achieved through any force design. Advocates of deterrence through superiority (as opposed to parity or minimum nuclear force) and war-fighting strategists both desire higher military capabilities, although unlike deterrence, war-fighting strategy considers the possibility of the outbreak of a nuclear conflict in a more serious way. While deterrence or MAD believers focus on the prevention of conflict, war-fighting strategists aim to minimize damage to the people and economy in case war occurs, and seek a plan according to this goal which typically involves achieving an advantage in nuclear forces.²⁹

Deterrence-only and war-fighting strategists differ on what improves chances to avert the outbreak of a nuclear conflict. Deterrence has been a mainstream policy of the US government since the Soviet Union first caught up with the United States’ strategic capabilities in numeric terms, and even war-fighting strategists do not advocate completely replacing deterrence with a

²⁶ Albert Wohlstetter, “The Delicate Balance of Terror,” *Foreign Affairs* 37, no. 2 (January, 1958), 213.

²⁷ Morgan, 22.

²⁸ Bernard Brodie, “The Anatomy of Deterrence,” in *Strategy in the Missile Age* (Princeton, NJ: Princeton University Press, 1959), 274–275.

²⁹ Herman Kahn, “On Escalation: Metaphors and Scenarios,” Hudson Institute Series on National Security and International Order, No.1 (New York: Frederick A. Praeger Publishers, 1965), 284–291.

war-fighting plan in hopes that deterrence would be effective. However, war-fighting strategists prefer a contingency war plan to provide a hedge against a failure of deterrence, and they believe deterrence can be improved by having a missile defense capability. From the war-fighters' perspective, enemies would be more dissuaded if they thought that their attack on the United States would be blocked by a missile defense system. Also, the deterrence-only strategy is too risky since it assumes that the enemy would restrain itself. If the enemy decides to do otherwise, the United States would experience an unacceptable level of damage incurred by the enemy's first strike.

Therefore, war-fighting strategists would much prefer strategic superiority to maintaining strategic parity or relying on mutual vulnerability. Bringing forth a counterargument, MAD advocates and deterrence-only theorists repudiate the war-fighting plan since such planning itself reveals a lack of confidence in deterrence and undermines the delicate balance of terror. For this reason, Herman Kahn has depicted deterrence-only strategy as an opposite approach to war-fighting strategy in force planning.³⁰

One legacy of the missile defense debate is that, over time, both MAD and deterrence have been equated with rejecting missile defense. Conversely, war-fighting strategy became a synonym for missile defense deployment. Such simplification is reasonable to a certain degree because MAD emphasizes mutual vulnerability, and missile defense, if successful, undermines the most important premise of that doctrine. However, neither MAD nor war-fighting strategy innately rejects or encourages missile defense because missile defense is not the whole but only part of the entire nuclear posture. Under this logic, as long as missile defense is an element of parity, deploying missile defense systems should not be a breach of the MAD doctrine. In the same context, if the United States possesses superiority even without a missile defense capability, war-fighting strategists do not need to insist on missile defense purely for the purpose of achieving or maintaining superiority. War-fighting strategists are keen on maximizing military strength, and in this regard, they prefer deploying a missile defense capability as yet another way toward increasing military capability.

³⁰ Ibid.

Operationalization – Case for Missile Defense

This section puts forth expectations drawn from the security perspective and maps out questions to test its explanatory power. As discussed, proponents and opponents of missile defense build their arguments on a different set of assumptions. Given this predicament, how should the rationality of a decision be evaluated? It is not an interest of this study to determine which set of assumptions and logic flow represent a valid approach. Rather, the goal of this study is to test whether the decision makers changed policy based on circumstances without undercutting the very foundations on which they developed their logic. Therefore, absence or occurrence of a change in the strategic environment, such as the emergence of a new threat, deepening of existing threat, or decrease in the threat level preceding the five policy turns, is a critical piece of evidence in testing the security perspective.

While threat is a determining factor, there are two other crucial elements in the deployment decision: technology and cost. Cost-effectiveness is significant as a decision driver because missile defense competes with strategic force options that might be less expensive. The strategic forces formula can be composed of an all-offensive strategic force or a mix of offense-defense. The wealth of the United States affords it billions of dollars to invest in missile defense efforts. However, resources are finite, and decision makers cannot ignore cost-effectiveness, especially during an economic downturn or huge federal deficit. Weapons programs compete with one another for funding, and cost is certainly a key part in evaluating a deployment option. This study posits that a severe budgetary constraint foils decision makers' plans to go forward with missile defense deployment plans. Technology is another essential factor in considering policy options. Without technical viability, the missile defense system would not be able to counter threats. Technical breakthrough could boost confidence in missile defense. On the other hand, lack of technical progress could result in serious setbacks for the program, undermining the arguments for missile defense.

A major question for the security perspective is: was a decision to deploy or forsake (or limit) missile defense deployment a response to a foreign threat, affordability, and/or technological status? More specifically, the security perspective chapter is intended to answer the following questions. On threat, what was the assessment or forecast of future missile threats from the Soviets or others? What were the policy options presented to the decision makers? What were the strengths and weaknesses of each option in terms of their strategic effect? Was

there any new development requiring a reevaluation of the situation? What was the strategic goal that the deployment or abandonment of missile defense was designed to serve in the wake of that new strategic development? Was the deployment or deferral of the missile defense system expected to keep, regain, or lose the deterrent balance? Was the policy turn an adjustment to the new strategic environment consistent with the framework of the previous policy option? On the other two variables, cost and technology, what was the cost estimate for missile defense deployment? Could the United States afford the cost? What was the budgetary situation? What were the estimated costs of other alternatives? How about technical feasibility? Was the missile defense system operational? Was missile defense technology more mature or promising than other competing systems? Were any technical tests conducted? If so, were the outcomes of the tests reflected in the final decision?

This study analyzes the claims made by government officials before and after the five policy shifts as they typically offer explanations for the decisions made on these criteria. Comparing the threat level, cost estimates, and technical developments around the time of the five policy changes would provide valuable data for testing the validity of the security perspective.

The other two perspectives are fundamentally different from the security perspective in that they hold that missile defense policy is a result of domestic politics. Decision makers support a particular policy for their own interests and beliefs. This is not to claim that they are willing to sacrifice the security of the United States for parochial interests, but these perspectives shed light on components other than external factors in the decision making process. There are a number of players inside and outside government involved in missile defense decisions. The players include the president, governmental bureaucracies, Congress, the public, contractors, scientists, major think tanks, and nongovernmental organizations, to name a few. Among the multiple actors in the realm of domestic politics, this study focuses on two decision making bodies, the executive branch and Congress. The executive and legislative branches are the principal players directly engaged in the policy making process, and it is important to understand the power struggle between the two supposedly equal branches in order to assess their roles in the decision to deploy or defer missile defense. The selection of these two institutions should not be construed as an attempt to dismiss the significance of other players but only to maintain coherence by focusing on these two most important players.

1.6.2 Bureaucratic Politics Perspective

Departing from the traditional view that policy options are a result of strategic conditions, two alternative perspectives are proposed in an attempt to explain the decisions behind US missile defense policy. These two alternatives consider domestic politics—as opposed to external factors such as the rise and fall of threat levels, technology and affordability—as the determinant of policy making. Among the numerous domestic political factors and institutions, the bureaucratic politics perspective first tests the role of the executive body. Major policies are often identified with the president under whom the decisions are made. That is because the executive body plays a leading role in developing and implementing policy choices. The executive branch is particularly important in security policy since the chief executive is the commander in chief of the US armed forces, and the president is granted with the power to make treaties and conduct other foreign affairs.

Central Arguments

The bureaucratic politics perspective makes three central arguments. First, the executive body determines missile defense decisions. Second, bureaucracies support a policy option that best suits their organizational interests. Third, within the executive branch, bureaucracy dominates the decision making process, overwhelming the president through persuasion or even manipulation.

Theoretical Foundations

The bureaucratic politics perspective's first point that the executive branch determines missile defense policy is based on the work of John Spanier and Eric Uslaner. The two authors put the executive branch at the core of the decision making system in the foreign policy arena and attributed the dominance of the executive branch to the high-stakes nature of foreign policy that demands decisive and rapid action. The president and key advisers such as secretaries, under secretaries, and assistant secretaries of the State and Defense Departments, national security adviser, and the Chairman of the Joint Chiefs of Staff are all part of the decision making inner circle. Spanier and Uslaner placed the Armed Services Committee, lower-level bureaucrats, and scientists in the second tier after the president and his close advisers. Congress,

political parties, and interest groups comprise the third circle, while public opinion and the media have limited roles in foreign policy decision making.³¹ Adopting Spanier and Uslander's approach emphasizing the influence of the president and his key advisers, the bureaucratic politics perspective primarily examines the role of the president and high-ranking government officials in the decision making process.

The second proposition of this perspective deals with policy preference. The bureaucratic politics perspective puts forth that bureaucracy pursues a policy option which best promotes its organizational interests. Allison, Morton Halperin, William Niskanen, and Anthony Downs all recognize the interest of bureaucracies for self-preservation or self-promotion, and bureaucracies' tendency to expand budget and staffs are ways to pursue such organizational goals. Downs argues that "bureaucratic officials, like all other agents in the society, are significantly—though not solely—motivated by their own self-interests."³² Niskanen takes an economist's approach emphasizing utility, and argues that "a bureaucrat, like anyone else, maximizes his personal utility."³³

The bureaucracy's policy preference is largely determined by organizational purpose, culture, practices, and its own bias. As Allison put it, "where you stand depends on where you sit."³⁴ One of Halperin's examples highlighting Allison's point is the decision regarding the Skybolt air-to-ground missile manufactured in the 1960s. The cancellation of the Skybolt was a cost-saving measure taken by the Department of Defense (DOD) comptroller. To the State Department, it was a diplomatic relations issue with Britain since the British were anticipating a supply of Skybolts for their bombers. For the Air Force, the decision to cancel the Skybolt was a threat to its manned strategic bomber program. The Skybolt decision illustrates how bureaucrats look at policy questions through their organizational lenses.³⁵

³¹ John Spanier and Eric M. Uslander, "The Decision-Making Arena: The Cast of Characters," *How American Foreign Policy Is Made* (New York: Pager Publishers, 1974), 54–55.

³² Anthony Downs, *Inside Bureaucracy* (Boston: Little Brown, 1967), 2 quoted in Guy Peters, "The Problem of Bureaucratic Government," *The Journal of Politics*, 43, no.1 (February 1981): 58–60.

³³ William A. Niskanen, Jr., *Bureaucracy and Representative Government* (Chicago: Aldine/Atherton, 1971) quoted in Peters, 58–60.

³⁴ Allison, 307.

³⁵ Morton H. Halperin, "Why Bureaucrats Play Games," *Foreign Policy*, no. 2 (Spring, 1971): 70-71. Both Allison and Halperin were careful not to oversimplify this point. Allison clarified in his second edition of the *Essence of Decision* that "Where You Stand Depends on Where you Sit" was not meant to be interpreted as player's view "is always determined by" his position but to "assert that where one stands is influenced, most often influenced

The individuals involved in decision making do not see the problem in the same way, nor do they have the same interests. Each participant, because of his/her background and his/her particular role in the government, has access to different information and different concerns. What is a budget issue to one participant will be a foreign relations issue to a second or a congressional relations issue to a third.

Although the merits, problems and influence of bureaucracy have been extensively discussed in decision making studies, scholars have exhibited various and sometimes contrasting comprehensions of the characteristics of bureaucracy. Downs likens this confusion to schizophrenia. Sometimes, bureaucracy is deemed “an integrated, monolithic institution unfettered by political checks and balances, and possessing an insatiable appetite for power,” as Guy Peters compares it to a Leviathan. Other times, it has been described as a “Court Jester” of loosely assembled administrative units devoid of creativity, energy and coordination.³⁶ Bureaucracy is averse to change, and overcoming this bureaucratic resistance poses a challenge in the reorientation of foreign policy, according to K.J. Holsti, L.S. Etheredge and K. Goldman.³⁷

This kind of confusion is also found in understanding Allison’s organizational behavior model and his governmental politics model. For example, Allison’s organizational behavior model’s emphasis on inertia and the perfunctory nature of organizational output through standard operating procedures (SOPs) is often identified as bureaucratic characteristics symbolized by red-tape and stove-piping. Bureaucracy embodies many of the traits portrayed by the organizational behavior model because governmental bureaucracy, whether a small agency or a much larger cabinet department, is an organization. This is why it is difficult to clearly distinguish between Allison’s two models, the organizational model and governmental politics. Both essentially deal with organizational characteristics, but the key distinction between the two models is that the former focuses on the organizational proclivity for maintaining the status quo while the latter highlights political games played by the governmental organizations. Halperin’s study has also pointed out that a decision making process is the result of the distinct missions

strongly, by where one sits.” Halperin also noted that the personalities, experiences, and conviction of individual bureaucrats as well as their organizational interests influence a decision making process.

³⁶ Peters, 57.

³⁷ Charles F. Hermann, “Changing Course: When Government Choose to Redirect Foreign Policy,” *International Studies Quarterly* 34, 2 (1990): 7–8.

each bureaucrat is commissioned to achieve and satisfies the unique perspectives they developed while performing their tasks.³⁸

Politics is present within a bureaucracy as well as between bureaucracies. James H. Lebovic examined intramural politics at the Department of Defense by analyzing the defense budget. His review of the budgeting and acquisition process at the Department of Defense found that military services do not always shape weapon requirements to meet a mission; rather, a mission is often created to substantiate acquisition because “any mission can be served by many different means and any means can serve many different missions.” From his study, Lebovic concluded that defense budgets are “contested and manipulated under conditions of information scarcity, uncertainty, and institutional deference that have long given the services bargaining advantages.”³⁹

Allison’s governmental politics model highlights the political nature of the decision making process, the pulling and hauling, and the political games participants play. The bureaucratic politics perspective focuses on this power struggle that aims to maximize organizational interests.

The third hypothesis this study puts forth and tests is the power of the president. There have been diverse views on the power of the president in foreign policy making. The argument for the strong power of the president is readily buttressed by the Constitution. After all, the president is the commander in chief and the chief diplomat. The president has the responsibility to protect the American people, and is granted with the authority to train and deploy military forces.⁴⁰ Probably the best case demonstrating the ultimate power and burden of the commander in chief is the nuclear button that only the president can push.

Aaron Wildavsky and Samuel Huntington belong to the school of thought that, at least in foreign policy, the president’s stature and autonomy afford him the ability to run international affairs independently. Wildavsky explained that it is because foreign policy issues often need a swift decision and are less subject to the influence of interest groups. Furthermore, the president has the authority to commit national resources and enjoys privileged access to exclusive

³⁸ Halperin, 70–71.

³⁹ James H. Lebovic, “Riding Waves or Making Waves? The Services and the U.S. Defense Budget, 1981–1983,” *American Political Science Review* 88, no. 4 (December 1994): 840.

⁴⁰ Clinton Rossiter, “Chapter 1: The Power of the President,” in *The American Presidency* (Baltimore, MD: The Johns Hopkins University Press, 1984), 1960, 8–13.

intelligence.⁴¹ Huntington argues that when it comes to strategic programs, the president exhibits dominance over Congress in managing those programs.⁴²

Richard Neustadt and Warner Schilling suggest—and other leading scholars in the field of foreign/defense policy decision making such as Halperin and Allison imply that the president is often a victim of bureaucratic manipulation or political games. A case in point is Schilling's account of the H-bomb development decision in early 1960. In the wake of Russia's fissile bomb explosion, President Truman issued an order to evaluate the desirability of hydrogen bomb development. Based on five months of review headed by the Atomic Energy Commission (AEC), the Department of Defense, and the Department of State, the president announced his decision. The general direction of the decision was to continue exploring the option without completely abandoning the possibility for development nor stepping up the existing effort.⁴³ This is an example illustrating how bureaucrats and the government decision making process limited the president's options to already watered-down ones. The final decision was an evasive political compromise intended to minimize bureaucrats' discontent and clashes. The conclusion of Schilling's study can be extrapolated to be that the president is not exposed to complete policy discourse, due to bureaucracies playing politics motivated by self-interests.

Applying Schilling's argument, this study examines the president's influence on the five missile defense cases and thereby tests whether the president had as little power as is often portrayed. This study further examines if it would be possible to establish a pattern for the way presidents exercised their authority in the decision making process.

Here it needs to be reiterated that the bureaucratic politics perspective primarily investigates the departmental secretaries. Since Allison's analysis on the Cuban missile crisis in the 1960s, the term "bureaucratic" in decision making studies recalls his "bureaucratic politics model" (later "governmental politics model"), which provides insight on organizational culture and institutional preferences beyond those of individual secretaries, and on the intricate relationships among bureaucrats at various levels as well as political appointees. This study is a parsimonious version of Allison's bureaucratic politics model in that it limits the scope of

⁴¹ Paul E. Peterson, "The President's Dominance in Foreign Policy Making," *Political Science Quarterly* 198, no. 2 (Summer 1992): 225–226.

⁴² Ibid.

⁴³ Warner Schilling, "The H-Bomb Decision: How to Decide without Actually Choosing," *Political Science, Quarterly*, March 1961, 24–46.

participants to top political appointees such as secretaries of defense and state. Discussing the executive branch's policy positions already requires examining several main actors: the president, the Department of Defense, the Department of State, and the national security adviser. Bureaucracy includes a huge number of agencies and bureaucrats. Competing interests and opinions among multiple players within the bureaucracy should be somehow deduced to the departmental positions. They are typically summarized by departmental secretaries' "official positions." Using secretaries' positions as data points helps maintain consistency and focus. This approach is based on the initial observation that missile defense has been a politically visible issue that warrants the department heads' influence developed from their own interests and views.

Another reason for focusing on top-level officials relates to the central question of this study. A widely held belief is that the executive branch is the main institution within the US government in decision making. The primary purpose of choosing the bureaucratic politics perspective and congressional perspective for this study is to analyze the merits of this premise and compare the influence of these two institutions. Therefore, examining whether the five policy turns resemble the executive branch's preferred policy options or those of Congress is a more important question than investigating any intramural conflict.

Operationalization – Case for Missile Defense

In order to test whether the executive branch was the main player making the missile defense decisions examined in the five cases, the bureaucratic politics perspective is organized to first identify key players and their positions on the missile defense deployment issue. Although the significance of the players and the agencies/departments they represent has waxed and waned from one administration to another, two bureaucracies stood out as relevant players throughout: the Departments of Defense and State. The question of missile defense deployment is intrinsically a military question. It is largely the secretary of defense's responsibility to assess the suitability and requirements, and to implement deployment. The Department of State is another inevitable participant in discussion since missile defense deployment bears significant diplomatic implications. ABM deployment was explicitly linked to arms negotiations with the Soviet Union beginning in the 1960s when the idea was first entertained under President Johnson, and even more so during the Nixon administration as arms negotiations directly dealt

with the question of missile defense deployment. In addition, other players such as the national security adviser and president's science adviser are included in the analyses as needed. Each case study also examines the role of the president, the relations between the president and bureaucracies, and interactions among bureaucracies.

Once the key players and positions are identified, this chapter analyzes if a particular bureaucracy won the political game in the decision making process, or if the final decision was a political compromise among multiple participants and did not resemble any of the policy options originally proposed or supported by a particular participant. In essence, the following questions comprise the bases of this chapter throughout the five cases. Who among the bureaucracies and bureaucrats were influential participants? What were their perceptions, preferences, and stances on the issue? How did the participants play political games? Did a single player emerge as an apparent winner and if so, who was the winner? Why did a particular bureaucracy's position triumph? How about at the highest political level in the executive? According to Schilling's argument, bureaucracies and their politicking thwart the president's ability to choose an alternative in an unbounded environment. Is there any evidence that Presidents Johnson, Nixon, Reagan, Bush and Clinton were ill-informed or steered away from their predisposition on the issue due to departmental resistance or bureaucratic manipulation? Answers to these questions are sought by analyzing remarks made by the presidents and other administration officials, memoranda of former officials involved in the decision making process, and their hearing statements before Congress.

1.6.3 Congressional Perspective

The third approach, titled the congressional perspective, seeks answers to why missile defense policy has survived for more than half a century, and what triggered its rise and fall, by examining the legislative body of the US government. This approach highlights the political nature of the decision making process and the role of Congress. The emphasis on these attributes makes a distinction from the first two perspectives introduced, the security perspective and the bureaucratic politics perspective. Whereas the security perspective emphasizes apolitical factors in the policy making process, such as external security developments and technology, the

congressional perspective takes politics into consideration in the decision making process. The bureaucratic politics perspective also addresses political games played by the bureaucracies, but its focus is on the politics within the executive branch of the government.

The role of Congress is frequently overlooked, and if Congress draws attention from scholars in decision making studies, it is often in the context of Congress's investigative or responding role to a policy failure or a scandal such as the Vietnam War and Iran Contra. In certain cases, Congress had little part in the crucial decision making process since the administration purposely sidestepped it. However, Congress is an equal institution to the executive branch, and the congressional perspective is intended to investigate the legislature's influence. This perspective also examines Congress's interactions with the presidential administration so as to understand congressional behavior in a broad political context and incorporate the interplay of the two bodies. The concept behind this approach is that contrasting and comparing two branches' positions can lend better insight into how strong the role of Congress was in the critical decision making process than by analyzing congressional actions alone.

Central Argument

The central claim of this perspective is that Congress played a determining role in begetting the five policy turns this study examines. Such an argument challenges commonly held beliefs that defense policy is a direct response to security conditions or that the executive branch dominates defense policy decision making in domestic politics. To evaluate this hypothesis, the congressional politics chapter examines whether Congress engaged in the missile defense policy making process in a meaningful way, more than as a rubber stamp or a budget cutter. The essential questions for the congressional perspective are: Did Congress support a policy option independent from the executive branch? For the five cases, was the final policy outcome the choice of Congress? In addition, the congressional chapter analyzes how the legislative body exerted power in the five missile defense cases, and how Congress was able to achieve its goal of overcoming the executive's authority.

Theoretical Foundation

The congressional perspective's central argument that the legislative body was the main actor in missile defense policy contends with that of the bureaucratic politics perspective. A strong case can be made for the dominance of the executive branch in the decision making process, particularly in security policy, as discussed in the previous section.

One of the critical reasons for asserting the authority of the executive is the contrast between the speedy actions of the executive and the slow decision making process in the legislative branch. Leading Congress is often compared to herding a group of cats. It is true that the chairmen or ranking members of the Armed Services Committees and Foreign Relations or International Relations Committees of the Senate and House are key figures in issues such as missile defense. However, the normal legislative process through which Congress expresses its will still requires the vote of the majority of its 535 members.

Despite this drawback, Congress exerts its power in the decision making process thanks to the Constitution, which carefully crafted a system ensuring the separation of powers. Congress can compete with the president through its investigatory power, power to impeach, and most importantly, the power of the purse.⁴⁴ Even authority over bureaucracy, which many consider to be under the command of the president, has become the subject of an inquiry into growing congressional influence. Francis E. Rourke highlights that the constitutional framework is designed for checks and balances using an analogy of joint custody in depicting the two branches' control of the bureaucracy. The rivalry between the president and Congress emerged early in American history, especially with management of the Treasury Department. While Congress largely deferred foreign affairs and defense issues to the president, Congress early on in the nineteenth century viewed the Treasury Department as a bureaucracy which carries out legislators' appropriations decisions. That changed with the end of the Cold War, and Congress vied with the president in these areas as well.⁴⁵

Edward Lurance showed that legislative influence in the foreign and defense domains existed even before the Cold War was over. Lurance concedes that the executive branch had

⁴⁴ Rossiter, "Chapter 2: The Limits of the Presidency," in *The American Presidency*, 14–40; The power of Congress is more fully discussed in the Congressional Perspective section.

⁴⁵ Francis E. Rourke, "The 1993 John Gaus Lecture: Whose Bureaucracy Is This, Anyway? Congress, the President and Public Administration," *Political Science and Politics* 26, no. 4 (December 1993): 689.

been the principal body in defense policy making between 1947 and 1967.⁴⁶ The need to maintain secrecy on defense issues legitimized the executive branch's monopoly of sensitive information, and the strategic and technical expertise of the military and specialists at the Pentagon enabled them almost exclusively to be in charge of defense policy. However, Laurance observed from his study of the ensuing years that the power of the executive branch vis-à-vis Congress had waned between 1968 and 1974. Congress had always enjoyed its power of the purse, since without congressional funding, no executive program could be accomplished. In addition to its power of appropriations, the authorization process beginning in 1961 expanded the influence of Congress. The growing number and professionalism of the congressional committee staffs allowed lawmakers to hold hearings, produce congressional reports, and scrutinize, evaluate, and modify the administration's plans or even propose Congress's own policy.⁴⁷

The congressional perspective is founded on these observations made by Laurance and argues that the legislative body was a central player in determining the five missile defense decisions this study examines. As Congress's interest in and comprehension of defense policy making deepened over time, it was able to exercise increasing power thanks to institutional supports such as congressional staff. Congress grew out of its role as a body simply approving the president's policy proposals and more proactively offered its own ideas. The analyses of the five missile defense cases between the mid-1960s and 2000 provide valuable insight on the sustainability of Laurance's observation. They also contribute to an assessment of whether his findings showed a definite turn that changed the dynamics between the two branches of the government, whether it was a response to a temporal phenomenon in the late 1960s and early 1970s, or whether there are specific conditions under which one becomes more powerful than the other.

If Congress competes with the executive branch on policy options, what are the factors determining the congressional positions? There are a number of potential variables to this question: Congress's own strategic assessment, party politics, electoral politics, and ideology. The bulk of studies in congressional decision making involve political incentives for lawmakers.

⁴⁶ Edward J. Laurance, "The Changing Role of Congress in Defense Policy-Making," *Journal of Conflict Resolution* 20, no. 2 (June 1976): 214-219.

⁴⁷ Ibid.

Their need to provide constituency services by bringing federal projects home, reelection, being loyal to their political party, and their ties with the defense industry are a few examples.

Does political party affiliation influence congressional members' policy positions? According to Julius Turner's survey of the House of Representatives on this question, the answer is affirmative. He analyzed the roll call votes in twelve sessions between 1921 and 1965 (not continuous sessions), and found that when the House was sharply divided, political party was a statistically significant determinant approximately 90 percent of the time. His study demonstrated that "partisan influences are effective on a large proportion of roll-call votes in the House of Representatives."⁴⁸

In the American political context, the Republican and Democratic parties have been dominant. Since the mid-nineteenth century, all presidents and most members of Congress have been elected from one of the two parties.⁴⁹ The two major parties present themselves as having distinct philosophies. Democrats claim to be more supportive of social welfare programs, prefer a strong federal government, and support civil liberties and civil rights whereas Republicans claim to be fiscally conservative, pro-business, and favor the state's right. On defense issues, Republicans declare themselves to be keen supporters of a strong military posture as a way to maximize security, in contrast to Democrats who favor negotiation and diplomatic means.

The candidates' dependence on the political party has resulted in the party's pressure on its members. The contender has to affirm his/her willingness to accept what the party pursues. This is well pointed out by Bryce in his *Modern Democracies* where he puts forth that

legislation is not one of the chief aims of party...Its chief purpose is to capture, and hold when captured, the machinery, legislative and administrative, of the legal government established by the constitution. That machinery, when captured, is used, mainly of course for discharging the routine work of legislation and administration, most of which has nothing to do with party doctrines and proposals, to some extent also for carrying out those doctrines by legislative action, but largely also for putting into public office 'sound men,' being those who profess the tenets of the party, and have rendered service to it.⁵⁰

⁴⁸ Julius Turner, "Party and Constituency," in *Party and Constituency: Pressures on Congress*, Revised edition by Edward V. Schneider, Jr. (The Johns Hopkins Press: Baltimore, 1970), 32–39.

⁴⁹ Hugh L. LeBlanc, "The Parties and Their Role in American Political Life," in *American Political Parties* (New York: St. Martin's Press, 1982), 2.

⁵⁰ James Bryce, *Modern Democracies* (New York: The Macmillan Company, 1921), 42–43 quoted in Edward McChesney Sait, "Chapter VI, Party: Its Origin and Function," in *American Parties and Elections* (New York: The Century Co., 1929), 144–145.

In recent years, with the modern campaign based on organized political activities and various media such as direct mail or TV advertisements, campaigns have become increasingly expensive and dependent on large-scale human resources and organizational experience. Without the name recognition one can earn as a member of the two major parties, it became extremely difficult to obtain seats in government. Hence, the dependence of political candidates on support from the two established parties has considerably increased.

Party members' loyalty is not expected only from candidates. After they are elected to government offices, they continue to feel obligated to go along with party guidance upon various policy decisions. This is because members feel indebted for the party's support during the election campaign. Also, there can be punitive actions from the leadership. For example, if a member of Congress repeatedly parts from the party's position, the party leadership can discipline the member by assigning him or her to less popular committees or withholding support in the next election.⁵¹

An alternative to party pressure in explaining the party division in voting can be drawn from Edmund Burke's approach to the political party. Burke saw the political party as a union built on competing ideologies, and it is only natural to observe that congressional members support or oppose a measure alongside their party position, which is likely to reflect the members' own beliefs to begin with.⁵²

Other scholars have a different view and put more emphasis on a party's goal in seeking victory in elections. Members join a political party mainly to increase the possibility of winning an election. An extreme and almost cynical view is expressed by J.J. Murphy, a reformer in New York City. He has claimed that "the assumption that parties exist to advance the ideas with which they are identified in the public mind, is almost wholly erroneous. Parties make up ideas to keep themselves alive."⁵³ His view is in stark contrast to Burke's view of the party.

Laurance's study, in addition to arguing for the influence of Congress in foreign policy, addressed the basis of congressional decisions. He puts forth that "when Congressional action on strategic issues does occur, it mainly concerns waste and logrolling, and rarely concerns

⁵¹ Turner further examined whether it was due to party pressures, and on this question, the evidence was weak.

⁵² LeBlanc, 2.

⁵³ "Non-partisanship in Municipal Affairs," *Nat. Mun. Rev.*, VI (1917), 217-218 quoted in Sait, 144.

foreign policy goals and objectives.”⁵⁴ In contrast, Joanne Gowa’s study demonstrated that politics stops at the water’s edge. Using Melvin Small and J. David Singer’s Correlates of War data set, Gowa tested whether election cycle or partisanship affected the decision to deploy troops abroad. Her study found that these two political factors were not strong while other factors such as the location of legislators and their ideology were significant.⁵⁵

James Lindsay analyzed Congress and the Strategic Defense Initiative, the very topic of this study. His model included party, presidential strength, hawkishness, and constituency benefit. The test of his hypothesis showed that the model was credible overall. Among the four variables, hawkishness and partisanship proved to be strong indicators for congressional voting patterns. Presidential popularity showed moderate validity, and the constituency benefit factor seemed weak.⁵⁶ Noticeable in this study is that Lindsay omitted strategic considerations in understanding the choices of Congress. Scholarly work on the legislative body often ignores its strategic calculations and tends to focus on political elements in trying to understand its decision making process.

This study tests the premise of such an approach by examining if external developments were irrelevant to Congress’s decision making model and if the five missile defense cases confirm that Congress is operated for purely political purposes. Congress is extremely sensitive to politics since its members are regularly judged by the public in contrast to bureaucrats whose tenures are not as susceptible to public sentiment. Therefore, it is important to test if Congress is indeed solely interested in politics, not strategic considerations.

Operationalization

In order to analyze systematically the congressional perspective, the following set of questions is asked: As a collective entity, did Congress express a unified position on the missile defense issue, and if so, what was the preferred policy option? How were Congress’s choices compared to those of the executive branch? Were there contentions between the two branches of

⁵⁴ Laurance, 215.

⁵⁵ Joanne Gowa, “Politics at the Water’s Edge: Parties, Voters, and the Use of Force Abroad,” *International Organization* 52, no.2 (Spring 1998): 307–324.

⁵⁶ James M. Lindsay, “Testing the Parochial Hypothesis: Congress and the Strategic Defense Initiative,” *The Journal of Politics* 53, no.3 (August 1991): 860–876.

government over the differences? How did the two competing institutions finally reconcile the differences? Was there any pattern in which one defeated the other and if so what was the pattern? Was the result mixed, with the two splitting victories at different times, or was the policy choice an outcome of the compromise between the two and a diluted version of what the two sides had hoped to achieve?

After testing the central claim of the congressional perspective in asserting the power of Congress over missile defense decisions, the congressional perspective chapter examines what variables triggered members of Congress to support or oppose the presidents at the time. Did they mainly consider the strategic situation? Or were they more subject to politics? If the latter is a more prominent reason, did they conform to the party ideology or political demands at a given time, such as public sentiment or timing against election cycles? Or did the members of Congress fall in the party line and make a decision based on the party platform?

Determining whether partisan politics for electoral purposes shapes missile defense policy hinges critically on the timing of the policy turns in the five cases. The timing of these decisions needs to be examined against the election cycle and whether there was a pattern in which missile defense policy showed significant changes prior to elections. Legislative history, congressional records and hearing transcripts are useful data for analyzing the congressional perspective.

2.0 SECURITY PERSPECTIVE

The security perspective argues that missile defense policy decisions are a result of three key factors: threat, technology, and cost-effectiveness. At the heart of missile defense policy debates among decision makers is whether the United States should deploy a missile defense system. The security perspective hypothesizes that policy makers pursue deployment of a missile defense system when such a policy is affordable, technologically feasible, and is considered the best strategic choice. These three variables are seemingly objective criteria. However, as was discussed in the introduction chapter, they are not immune to controversies. For example, in terms of cost, what level of investment in missile defense is excessive or insufficient is a matter of perspective. Supporters of missile defense argue that saving American lives is priceless, while opponents of missile defense contend that less expensive alternatives can also protect the US population. The two rival groups also disagree in assessing whether the technology is achievable in the end. Most importantly, proponents and skeptics of missile defense have fundamentally different approaches in evaluating the strategic advantages of missile defense.

This chapter tests the validity of the security perspective by analyzing these three variables: was the technology deemed practical? Was the cost affordable? Was there a threat and was missile defense the best armor to deal with the threat? Keeping in mind the subjectivity of evaluating these critical questions, this study not only investigates technical progress, budgetary situations, and the threat, but also focuses attention on major new developments that might have triggered the five policy changes and the administrations' explanations for the policy changes. In other words, since the policy shifts did not occur on the heels of presidential transitions but during the actual presidencies, it is reasonable to postulate that progress or deterioration in cost estimates, technological advancement or threat could provide a critical piece of evidence in corroborating the security perspective. On this point, this chapter first summarizes how each administration moved away from its original stance on missile defense, presents reasons for

those changes given by decision makers, analyzes the official accounts in view of the security perspective's three criteria, and determines how well the rationales meet the security perspective's expectations.

2.1 JOHNSON ADMINISTRATION

2.1.1 The Policy Turn

The United States was deeply engrossed in research and development activities for an antiballistic missile system when Johnson became president in 1963 due to the unexpected death of President John F. Kennedy.¹ In the mid-1960s, there began serious debates over deployment of an ABM system. Some believed that the technology had ripened and that worrisome strategic developments were taking place with the Soviets accelerating their nuclear capabilities and China joining the nuclear club.

The Johnson administration had been disregarding calls for an ABM deployment decision for a couple of years, but by 1967, the administration had to address the issue as the demand to deploy an ABM system continued to grow. President Johnson handled the ABM question head on by announcing his decision to delay deployment of the ABM system. In his budget request to Congress in January 1967, the administration stated that it would “continue intensive development of Nike-X but take no action now to deploy an antiballistic missile (ABM) defense.” In an effort to assuage the friction over ABM deployment, he attached a caveat—until a determination was made about the possibility of talks with the Soviet Union regarding ABM. The administration explained that it would seek talks with the Soviet Union so that the two sides would both limit ABM deployments and “in the event these discussions prove

¹ Ballistic Missile Defense Organization (BMDO), *Missile Defense Milestones 1944-2000*, <http://www.acq.osd.mil/bmdo/bmdolink/html/milestone.html>, downloaded on March 31, 2001. BMDO was renamed the Missile Defense Agency (MDA) in 2002.

unsuccessful, we will reconsider our deployment decision.”² The administration was betting on the possible arms control talks with the Soviet Union to deflect the pressure.

However, the Johnson administration switched its stance and reversed its earlier plan to postpone an ABM deployment decision. On September 18, 1967, in San Francisco, Secretary of Defense McNamara revealed the administration’s intention to build an ABM system, marking a revised position for the administration’s ABM policy. Secretary McNamara’s speech began with his regular reservations on the ABM system pointing to the technical uncertainty of the system and strategic complications caused by ABM intensifying the action-reaction cycle of the arms race between the two superpowers. However, the speech then took a swift turn and the defense secretary announced the Johnson administration’s plan to deploy a small scale ABM system. The ABM system the administration planned to deploy was a so-called light or thin ABM system owing to its small scale. The strategic goal of the light ABM system was to protect the United States from a limited Chinese attack, which required a much smaller- scale ABM system than when the goal was set to provide a shield against a massive Soviet attack.³

The policy choice to deploy the light ABM system reconfigured ABM debates. Since the light ABM system was intended to ward off several missiles from China, not hundreds or thousands from the Soviet Union, the number of antiballistic missiles required to provide protection was smaller, which would save a substantial amount in cost. It also meant that effective technology to thwart a nascent Chinese missile seemed much more attainable. Moreover, the strategic goal was less controversial—at least in theory. The United States and the Soviet Union were in a close contest for strategic superiority in the number, types, and technological advances of missiles and nuclear warheads. The ABM deployment could well exacerbate the arms race and escalate tensions between the two nations. With China, however, there were different dynamics. Although China had just joined the nuclear club, its overall industrial capacity or defense capability was nowhere near that of the United States and given that, China would not seriously try to compete with the United States for military dominance. Therefore, the US’s decision to pursue or forgo ABM capability would not have the kind of

² John Woolley and Gerhard Peters, “Lyndon B. Johnson, XXXVI, 13 – President of the United States: Annual Budget Message to the Congress, Fiscal Year 1968, January 24, 1967,” *The American Presidency Project*, <http://www.presidency.ucsb.edu/ws/index.php?pid=28150&st=&st1=>.

³ Morton H. Halperin, “The Decision to Deploy the ABM: Bureaucratic and Domestic Politics in the Johnson Administration,” *World Politics* 25, no.1 (October 1972): 62–95.

sensitive impact on China's decision to improve or maintain its nuclear capability as on the Soviet Union's decision.

The following section seeks to explain why the Johnson administration initially opposed the deployment of an ABM system, and whether Johnson's opposition established sufficient strategic grounds. The ensuing section then analyzes the validity of the Johnson administration's ABM deployment decision in the fall of 1967 from the security perspective's three criteria.

2.1.2 Johnson Administration's Original Stance

How does the security perspective explain the Johnson administration's original position not to deploy an ABM system? There arose a number of strategic reasons for ABM supporters to demand that the Johnson administration deploy an ABM system, and those reasons were the Soviets' growing strategic weapons inventory and China's nuclear development in the mid-1960s. The Soviets stepped up their offensive and defensive strategic capabilities both in terms of quality and quantity in the 1960s. The number of Soviet ICBM launchers more than tripled in only three years from 200 in 1964 to over 700 in 1967. The efforts to build up an offensive front included qualitative improvements as well. The Soviet Union upgraded their ICBMs with SS-9 launch vehicles capable of carrying a 25-megaton warhead. On defense, the Soviets began groundwork for an extensive ABM system at six locations around Moscow.

There had been speculations on the Soviet ABM deployment in the media and on the Hill, but the Johnson administration kept silent. The rumor was not confirmed until November 1966, when Defense Secretary McNamara publicly recognized it.⁴ Calls for Nike-X deployment as a quid pro quo action among ABM supporters grew vociferous. Even after the Johnson administration acknowledged the Soviets' move for ABM deployment and its rapidly growing offensive forces, the administration showed no desire for ABM deployment and reserved its commitment for building a system against Soviet attacks.

Another development that fueled ABM demand, albeit on the fringe, was China's achievement of a weaponized nuclear capability. China exploded its first nuclear bomb in

⁴ Robert B. Semple Jr., "M'Namara Hints Soviet Deploys Antimissile Net: Administration Will Probably Urge Poseidon Production to Counter Development," *New York Times*, November 11, 1966.

October 1964 and conducted nuclear-topped missile tests two years later in 1966.⁵ When these unsettling developments were followed by China's hydrogen bomb detonation in June 1967, pressure for ABM deployment substantially increased. However, these new events in East Asia and the Soviet Union did not persuade the Johnson administration to act on ABM more forcefully.

Why did President Johnson refuse to deploy an ABM system during the earlier years of his presidency? The Johnson administration found strategic, budgetary, and technological reasons to resist building an ABM system. Technological and budgetary justifications are first discussed and the strategic grounds are analyzed in the next section. When President Johnson took over from the Kennedy administration, the United States was proceeding with research and development of the Nike-X ABM system. It included more sophisticated features than the previous Nike Zeus system, and one of those features was an advanced radar system to discern decoys from nuclear warheads. The Nike-X plan also diversified interceptors by adding speedier short-range Sprint missiles to provide more thorough coverage and destroy rockets once they entered the atmosphere in addition to long-range interceptor development.⁶ However, neither President Johnson nor his defense chief McNamara believed that ABM was ready for deployment. The antiballistic missile system required extremely sophisticated technology. The system should be able to detect an incoming missile flying at a high velocity, compute its trajectory, activate the Nike system, launch the ABM missile and strike the enemy missile with precision.⁷ What complicated the already difficult technical tasks even further were the various countermeasures that could be built by potential enemies to defeat the US ABM system. The ABM system could be impeded by decoys, dummies, and multiple warheads or by simply continuing to increase the number of offensive weapons to overwhelm the US interceptors. The Nike-X ABM research and development plan was designed to address the decoy problem, but key decision makers in the Johnson administration were not convinced that the United States would be able to perfect the sophisticated technology in the near future.

Another downside of assembling the ABM system was the high price. What was most troubling in ABM deployment calculations was the expense ratio of US ABM deployment to

⁵ Ted Sell, "China Test May Affect US Nike Development," *Los Angeles Times*, November 7, 1966.

⁶ John Norris, "Anti-Missile Plan Altered Under Budget," *Washington Post*, January 18, 1963; *Washington Post, Times Herald*, "Nike-Zeus Scores Its Tenth Hit," November 30, 1963.

⁷ Wayne Thomis, "'New Weapons' Just Gains in Nike Programs," *Chicago Tribune*, September 20, 1964.

Soviet offensive weapons deployment. Defense Department analysis concluded that the Soviets could compensate for the US antiballistic missiles by increasing the number of their strategic offensive missiles at a cheaper rate for each additional missile than the US would have to spend on each additional antiballistic missile, if the US ABM system were to be able to cover at least 40 percent of its industry. For example, relying solely on ABM, protecting 60 percent of the US industrial base from a Soviet attack with 200 missiles was estimated to cost \$18 billion, and the price was almost double for an attack with 300 Soviet missiles. Antiballistic missiles were determined cost-inefficient for protection of US industry at the 40 percent level or above. The United States had to spend almost twice more to compensate for every dollar the Soviets invested in order to protect half of US industry, and the cost would triple to improve to 70 percent coverage (See Table 1).⁸

Table 1. Increase in Investment for an Additional ABM by the United States per Increase in Investment for an Additional Offensive Missile by the Soviets

Percentage of Industry Protected	70%	60%	50%	40%
Ratio of US Investment to Soviet Investment	\$3:\$1	\$2:\$1	\$1.8:\$1	\$1:\$1

Source: Fred M. Kaplan, *The Wizard of Armageddon* (Stanford: Stanford University Press, 1991), 321–324.

Not just the ratio, but also the total amount estimated for ABM deployment was troublesome for the Johnson administration's budget. Estimates of the full-scale ABM deployment cost had varied widely, ranging from \$12 billion to \$40 billion, which became a source of disagreement between supporters and opponents. Estimating costs of any defense product is difficult, especially at the onset of a program cycle for new weapons systems which often require extremely innovative technology. Cost overruns have been common for numerous defense programs. It was particularly difficult to produce precise cost estimates for a large-scale project such as the ABM system, which needed production and deployment of high-tech missiles and radars at multiple locations with various geographical and physical conditions. What was clear, however, was that even a very conservative estimate to shield only 25 major cities would cost in excess of \$10 billion over nine years. Protection of 50 cities would cost \$20 billion. An

⁸ Fred M. Kaplan, "Damage Unlimited," In *The Wizards of Armageddon*, foreword by Martin J. Sherwin, Stanford Nuclear Age Series (Stanford: Stanford University Press, 1991), 321–324.

alternative, equipping US land-based and sea-based launch systems with the Multiple Independently Targetable Reentry Vehicle (MIRV), could be achieved at \$3.6 billion, less than half of the amount required for ABM.⁹

The federal budget recorded deficits for seven consecutive years starting in 1961, with the cost of the Vietnam War and the burgeoning of President Johnson's cherished Great Society programs in the mid-1960s. For the existing fiscal year 1967, the deficit was expected to reach \$9.7 billion. For the fiscal year 1968 budget, the administration requested a \$2 billion increase from fiscal year 1967 for domestic welfare programs, and about one-third of the entire defense budget was allocated for expenses in Vietnam.¹⁰ The security perspective is able to justify the Johnson administration's rationale based on the cost and technical challenges as to why it was initially reluctant to pledge deployment of an ABM system. The next section examines the most important criterion of the three, threat, in analyzing the Johnson administration's ABM policy.

2.1.3 Deterrence, MAD, and Arms Control

The Johnson administration's opposition to deployment of the Nike-X system was not only because of the high cost and technical difficulties, but also because US nuclear forces were centered around a deterrence-only strategy. This was manifested by Secretary McNamara's MAD doctrine, which was a policy adoption of the balance of terror theory. The balance of terror theory required second strike capability, the understanding of the destructive power of the nuclear strike, and the rationality of the actor. The Johnson administration treated the Soviets as a rational actor and assumed that they were apprehensive of a deadly US second strike. As a sensible actor, the Soviets would not launch a first strike against the United States knowing that the US retaliation would certainly result in catastrophic losses for Soviet population and industry. In addition, the Johnson administration ensured the second strike capability, and believed that it was necessary to maintain mutual vulnerability.

⁹ Robert A. Divine, "Lyndon Johnson and Strategic Arms Limitation," in Robert A. Divine, ed., *The Johnson Years* (Lawrence, Kansas: University Press of Kansas, 1994), 244–245.

¹⁰ Laurence Burd, "Biggest Budget in U.S. History Sent to Congress by Johnson," *Los Angeles Times*, January 25, 1967.

At this point, one issue needs to be reiterated. The rationality of the Soviets and the Soviet leaders' concerns for their people were at dispute among strategists. Skeptics argued that the Soviets were unpredictable and defiant as their recent experience during the Cuban missile crisis displayed. It was also suggested that Soviet leaders might not be as sympathetic to the deaths of their citizens as US leaders would be to their citizens. As discussed earlier, these two assumptions, along with how much of an insurance policy one should obtain in case MAD failed, constituted the sources of dispute between deterrence-only and war-fighting strategists. However, these issues are a matter of an individual's inclination and worldview. Vindicating one approach over the other would be a mistake in an attempt to objectively analyze the decision making process. Therefore, this section focuses on the physical aspect of the MAD doctrine and the presence or lack of nuclear balance.

The strategic circumstances during the Johnson administration were considered to have met the mutual vulnerability condition in relation to USSR. The United States possessed the capability to inflict unacceptable damage as thousands of formidable nuclear warheads were aimed at the Soviet population, industrial base, and military targets. US cities were also vulnerable to Soviet threats. Although the United States had a superior nuclear arsenal to that of the Soviet Union, much of this arsenal was committed to a second strike, and while the US ICBMs were reinforced in hardened silos, American cities were bound to suffer incredible destruction should the Soviets fire ICBMs at them.

In terms of strategic capability in comparison with the Soviet Union, the United States was winning the numbers game. According to the National Intelligence Estimate (NIE), between 1966 and 1970 and for the years between 1967 and 1971, the United States would maintain the lead. In retrospect, the NIE underestimated the pace of Soviet development. Nevertheless, the significance of this projection is a very important piece of information in analyzing decision makers' behavior since, rightly or wrongly, it was used as the basis of their decision. The NIE projection revealed that the United States did not need any more offensive systems for the upcoming years. From the Johnson administration's point of view, the United States was already significantly ahead of the Soviet Union in strategic forces, and further increase of US capability by deploying ABM was considered a dangerous move that could undermine mutual vulnerability.

Table 2. The National Intelligence Estimates in 1966 for Soviet Ballistic Missiles, Years 1967–1971¹¹

	Projected Strength (mid-year)				
	1967	1968	1969	1970	1971
ICBMs	420–476	514–582	505–695	509–792	499–844
SLBMs	24–30	24–42	24–78	24–114	30–138

Source: John Prados, *The Soviet Estimate* (Princeton: Princeton University Press, 1982), 193.

From the MAD doctrine believers' perspective, it was more important to ensure a capability to absorb the enemy's first strike and inflict an unacceptable level of damage to the vital industrial base of the enemy and its population than to defend the United States from the enemy's initial attack. In fact, the Soviets might perceive US ABM as a preparatory move to an attack. Thus, it could send a wrong signal to the Soviets that the United States was moving away from its commitment to deterrence, and such a signal could undermine the MAD doctrine and thereby intensify the arms race.¹² One of the elaborations on this point was made, ironically, during Secretary McNamara's San Francisco speech announcing the Johnson administration's decision to deploy a light ABM system.

“...any such [ABM] system can rather obviously be defeated by an enemy simply sending more offensive warheads, or dummy warheads, than there are defensive missiles capable of disposing them. And this is the whole of the nuclear action-reaction phenomenon. Were we to deploy a heavy ABM system throughout the United States, the Soviets would clearly be strongly motivated to so increase their offensive capability as to cancel out defensive advantage. It is futile for each of us to spend \$4 billion, \$40 billion, or \$400 billion—and at the end of all the effort, to be relatively at the same point of balance on the security scale that we are now....”¹³

Until the announcement of the deployment of the light ABM system, Secretary McNamara had maintained his focus on US second strike capability in dealing with the growing Soviet strategic offensive forces and their effort to attain ABM capability. This was evident during his press conference confirming the Soviets' construction of their ABM complex. Asked about a remedy to the situation, Secretary McNamara proposed immediate production of the

¹¹ Secretary of Defense Melvin Laird, Fiscal Year 1971 Classified Posture Statement, March 2, 1970, A-1, from John Prados, “The Soviet Missile Buildup,” in *The Soviet Estimate: U.S. Intelligence Analysis & Soviet Strategic Forces* (Princeton: Princeton University Press, 1982), 193.

¹² Ted Sell, “Nike-X Plan Would Reverse Defense Policy,” *Los Angeles Time*, November 11, 1966.

¹³ Halperin, “The Decision to Deploy the ABM,” 62–63.

Poseidon, an upgrade of the Polaris Submarine Launched Ballistic Missile (SLBM). Poseidon was “only a yard longer and 18 inches fatter than the Polaris A-3,” but it was expected to be far superior in accuracy and effectiveness. According to the Department of Defense, it would be capable of transporting twice the payload of Polaris and its firing range would be increased by 400 miles to 3,200 miles.¹⁴ Also, what Secretary McNamara did not publicize then but had been pursuing was the MIRV. MIRV was under development to be mounted on the Minuteman III ICBMs and Poseidon sea-based missiles with three and ten warheads respectively. Once deployed, it was expected to significantly increase the US offensive arsenal.

The next question involves an analysis of whether the pursuit of greater offensive capability and the later decision to deploy light ABM was compatible with the Johnson administration’s strategic thinking. Was mutual vulnerability at risk as the Soviets were stepping up their forces, and was the MIRV necessary to cope with the Soviet threat?

With the Soviets’ move toward ABM construction and China’s nuclear experiments, adhering to the MAD principle and resisting the demand to deploy ABM had become increasingly difficult, and MIRV was one alternative to fend off the pressure. Secretary McNamara’s support for MIRV was not in tune with his overall strategic goal. He was so adamantly opposed to ABM that he overlooked the problems MIRV would pose to his hopes for restraining the arms race.

Obviously, MIRV was a superior choice to ABM in terms of technology and cost. However, there were a couple of problems associated with MIRV from the Johnson administration’s strategic point of view. First, one of the reasons that dissuaded Secretary McNamara from building a US ABM was the potential acceleration of the arms race due to the Soviets’ response. Deployment of MIRV would trigger the Soviets to increase the number in their offensive arsenal or to develop and deploy multiple warheads similar to MIRV. The negative impact of MIRV on the arms race would not be any less serious only because it required no additional number of ballistic missiles. MIRV would also pose a grave challenge to arms control. Since satellite images were unable to detect the existence of MIRVs, its monitoring required an on-site inspection. The Soviets were extremely wary of such measures and it was viewed to be almost impossible to achieve an arms control treaty of this sort. Second, there was

¹⁴ George C. Wilson, “McNamara Stressing Offense in Missiles,” *Washington Post*, November 12, 1966.

no urgent need to increase US offensive forces anyway since the United States was ahead in strategic offensive capability and projected to maintain the advantage for a while according to the intelligence estimates provided to the decision makers. It was particularly tricky because Secretary McNamara saw the ongoing arms competition as endless and futile and had hoped for arms control under the MAD doctrine.

Another solution was arms control talks with the Soviets. An arms agreement would effectively curtail a spiraling arms race and improve US security at the same time. It was in this context that the Johnson administration initiated arms talks with the Soviet Union. The Johnson administration made a formal advance to Alexsei Kosygin, Premier of the Soviet Union, on January 27, 1967. The Soviets reacted positively but in a vague and lukewarm manner. The Johnson administration proposed that the Russians enter negotiations on April 12, 1967. The Soviets did not respond to the offer, only repeating that their ABM was of no threat and they were more concerned with the American offensive systems. In June 1967, Premier Kosygin visited the UN in New York, and President Johnson seized an opportunity to talk to Kosygin in private. However, when the two leaders had meetings in person in Glassboro, New Jersey, President Johnson realized that the Soviets were not earnest about negotiations.¹⁵ With the failure of the talks, President Johnson decided to deploy the ABM network. The Johnson administration had formulated strategic policy under the MAD doctrine, and it had to find a way to change its ABM policy without admitting any fundamental change in strategic doctrine. The light ABM against the China threat served as a pretext for such a change while preserving the MAD doctrine at least on the surface.

2.1.4 The China Threat and ABM Deployment

The Johnson administration offered the China threat as the central reason for its decision to go ahead with ABM deployment. How credible was the China threat? Was the emergence of a new nuclear power in East Asia a strong enough reason for the United States to determine that ABM was necessary? China tested its first nuclear bomb in 1964 and developed the more sophisticated

¹⁵ John Prados, "Prague Spring and Salt: Arms Limitation Setbacks in 1968," in *The Foreign Policies of Lyndon Johnson: beyond Vietnam*, edited by H.W. Brands. 1st ed. (College Station, TX: Texas A&M University Press, 1999), 9–23.

H-bomb in 1967. ABM technology against a smaller-scale attack such as from China was more promising than against a massive attack from the Soviet Union. The possibility of the Johnson administration installing ABM systems against a China threat was speculated along with each step of China's strategic weapons development.¹⁶ While the Johnson administration acknowledged this challenge and addressed the China threat when requesting funds for the Nike-X system, the core policy remained the same. The Department of Defense was to continue a research and development effort without a commitment to deploying the system. This was because the Johnson administration did not think the China threat was a pressing security risk. During his testimony to Congress in 1966, Secretary McNamara made it clear that China did not pose a threat to the United States at the present time.

The Johnson administration's assessment was reasonable from their perspective—after all, China's nuclear program was far from a match to that of the United States, and China still had to overcome the technical challenge of assembling nuclear warheads on a long-range missile. According to the Pentagon's estimation, although a Chinese ICBM might be ready for a test in 1967, the country was about eight years away from developing an operational delivery system for nuclear weapons.¹⁷

More importantly, there was no mistake in predicting the outcome of a Chinese attack on the United States. It would be suicidal for China to initiate a nuclear attack against US soil since US nuclear warheads and delivery systems significantly outnumbered China's weapons. The United States would not have any problem in launching a second strike on China. Thus, the administration's rationale for ABM deployment citing the China threat was dissonant with the Johnson administration's MAD doctrine, the strategic thinking of which relied on a formidable offensive strategic capability. The China threat argument was incompatible with the MAD doctrine, but the Johnson administration came up with a solution to this problem. The China threat, or a Third World threat in general for that matter, could be framed outside of the MAD doctrine by citing the irrationality of the actor. That was precisely what Secretary McNamara did when he made the thin ABM deployment announcement during his San Francisco speech in

¹⁶ Howard Margolis, "US Missile Defense Plans Pegged to Chinese Threat," *The Washington Post*, May 26, 1965; Ted Sell, "US May Build Nike to Meet China's Threat," *Los Angeles Times*, May 26, 1965.

¹⁷ Tribune Wire Services, "Chinese ICBM Estimated As 8 Years Off: Cite Testimony by McNamara," *Chicago Tribune*, January 18, 1967; William Beecher, "M'Namara Sees China ICBM Gains: Secretary Says Evidence Points Toward Missile or Space Launching in '67," *New York Times*, January 27, 1967.

September 1967. The defense secretary invoked the irrationality argument against China in order to differentiate China from the Soviet Union and to explain why the MAD doctrine was applicable only to the Soviet Union. It was not clarified, however, why the Soviets would not commit a self-destructive attack but the Chinese would. In addition, unlike the Soviet Union, China was not a rival competing with the United States in the world politics scene, which reinforced the belief that China had no reason to be interested in provoking the overwhelming superpower. In any case, the Johnson administration did not elaborate on why it revised its strategic assessment. During the San Francisco speech, McNamara emphasized China's latest efforts to develop "both nuclear warheads, and missile delivery systems." He further predicted that China would possess medium-range ballistic missiles in a year and an ICBM in a couple of years.¹⁸ It was a turnaround from the administration's assertion less than a year earlier when trying to justify its resistance to the ABM deployment request that China's threat would not materialize for several years.

The suspicion that the ABM deployment decision was not entirely a strategic response to the China threat was further evidenced by Secretary McNamara's own account. In an interview with *Life* later in the month, Secretary McNamara offered the protection of the US "underground Minuteman" capability as another reason for the ABM decision in addition to the China argument.¹⁹ It was his attempt to expand reasons for the ABM deployment. He added the need to protect US offensive systems in addition to the original justification based on the growing China threat. However, this tactic backfired. Secretary McNamara's interview deepened the suspicion that the real motivation for the Johnson administration to change its ABM policy stance was not entirely due to the China threat.

There was another weakness in the administration's assertion. The Johnson administration planned to deploy an ABM system without admitting that the decision would undermine the MAD doctrine. In theory, the Nike-X, which was later renamed as Sentinel, was designed to provide protection against a Chinese attack, not against a Soviet attack. However, the weapons systems, once in place, could be used against any target. Supporters of missile defense believed that this potential was a positive attribute since the light ABM system against China could be a stepping-stone towards a more comprehensive ABM network against a Soviet

¹⁸ Halperin, "The Decision to Deploy the ABM," 62–95.

¹⁹ Divine, "Lyndon Johnson and Strategic Arms Limitation," in *Johnson Years*, 257–258.

attack. To opponents of ABM, this very characteristic was the problem destabilizing the superpower relationship. Although ABM technology was yet to be proven and the military effect was still tentative, the US ABM system would damage the psychological aspect of the balance of terror theory and undermine the principle of the MAD doctrine. Skeptics of ABM understood that the Soviets would feel threatened by the US ABM system, regardless of its declaration against China. The light ABM deployment decision undercut the MAD doctrine the Johnson administration had espoused. In short, the China threat rationale posed a problem for the security perspective, not because the argument was unreasonable, but because it was inconsistent with the Johnson administration's own strategic assessment before it changed its policies.

2.1.5 Summary

This section examined the Johnson administration's decision to go ahead with deploying a small-scale ABM in 1967. Prior to the announcement of the decision in 1967, the Johnson administration had opposed ABM deployment. Did the administration's original position on ABM vindicate the security perspective? The Johnson administration's decision to delay ABM deployment partially satisfied the security perspective. From the administration's point of view, antiballistic missile defense would drain funds from a budget already constrained due to the Vietnam War. Furthermore, the technology was not proven, especially to be effective against decoys or multiple warheads. Most importantly, the key decision makers in the Democratic administration solidly believed in the MAD doctrine, and for them, a strategic defensive system was harmful to the strategic stability between the United States and the Soviet Union, since US ABM capability would disrupt the mutual vulnerability between the two superpowers. Therefore, resisting the pressure to deploy an ABM system was consistent with what they believed was in the best US strategic interest. However, the Johnson administration's support for MIRV as a solution to the Soviets' expansion of their strategic weapons complicated the administration's desire to stop the arms race. Achieving MIRV would further increase US capability, which was already superior to the Soviets', and imperil arms negotiations, yet Secretary McNamara recommended MIRV as an alternative to ABM. Another problem for the Johnson administration was the emerging imbalance between the two superpowers with respect

to missile defense. The Johnson administration's argument that denying ABM was an essential part of mutual vulnerability was difficult to defend when the Soviets were building their own ABM. The Soviets' attempt to build their ABM system exposed a weakness of MAD: the doctrine could not be successfully carried out by US action alone.

How about the administration's later decision to deploy an ABM system? Did the new policy corroborate the security perspective? The Johnson administration's explanations for the decision to deploy a small scale ABM system using the China threat argument were contradictory to its earlier strategic evaluation. In terms of technology and cost, the thin ABM system designed against the Chinese attack was certainly more affordable and technologically more promising than a system against a Soviet attack. One predicament, however, to justifying the Johnson administration's ABM deployment decision was its inability to explain what prompted the administration to change its strategic assessment of the China threat. It was also problematic that the administration tried to isolate its ABM deployment decision from the Soviet Union's threat as if the China argument would not affect the strategic equation with the Soviet Union.

However, the examination of the United States as the unit of analysis, rather than focusing on the Johnson administration's argument, finds that the security perspective was valid since the policy change was stirred by strategic developments of the two major communist countries in the 1960s. Although the China threat argument put forth by the Johnson administration contains flaws, this study discovers that the policy change supported the security perspective in that the growing Soviet strategic capability and China's emergence as an additional nuclear power induced the Johnson administration's renewed ABM policy. Overall, the strategic developments alone were not sufficient to persuade the Johnson administration to reconsider the ABM policy. President Johnson decided to change his ABM course only after he realized that arms talks with the Soviets seemed pessimistic, and maintaining the status quo was deemed politically unsustainable. However, the strategic developments were an important factor and therefore, the Johnson's Sentinel case partially supports the security perspective.

2.2 NIXON ADMINISTRATION

Nixon had always supported ABM deployment. During his 1967 primary, the likely Republican contender argued that the United States was facing strategic threats from both China and the Soviet Union. Mr. Nixon emphasized the narrowing missile gap between the United States and Soviet Union and pointed out that China not only possessed nuclear capability but also was developing ICBMs. As such, he called for ABM deployment “at all costs.”²⁰

Nixon won the presidential election against then-Vice President Humphrey in November 1968. Soon after his presidential inauguration, the new president reaffirmed his stance on antiballistic missile defense. During a news conference in March 1969, President Nixon announced his decision to “proceed [now] with the development and construction of the new system.”²¹ It was an expected policy choice from a Republican president who spent much of his political career promoting a strong military posture.

2.2.1 The Policy Turn

The Nixon administration’s 1969 deployment decision was considerably scaled back in 1972 by the ABM Treaty with the Soviet Union, which was the conclusion of the arms talks President Johnson had initiated five years earlier. Even after disappointed President Johnson made a decision to go ahead with ABM deployment in the wake of the failed Glassboro meeting in 1967, he did not give up his hopes for entering into negotiations. The two leaders kept up communications, but it was not until mid-1968 that the Soviets showed serious interest in the talks. The Soviets wanted to wait until the Nuclear Nonproliferation Treaty (NPT) was signed on July 1, 1968.²² The NPT had 62 signatories, including the United States, the Soviet Union,

²⁰ *New York Times*, “Missile Defense Is Urged By Nixon: Says US Should Counter Soviet ‘at All costs,’” September 15, 1967.

²¹ *New York Times*, “Text of President Nixon’s Announcement on Revised Proposals for Sentinel Antiballistic Missile Program,” March 15, 1969.

²² W.W. Rostow, “Introduction: The Politics of Arms Control or How to Make Nuclear Weapons Wither Away,” in William R. Kintner and Robert L. Pfaltzgraff, Jr., eds., *SALT: Implications for Arms Control in the 1970s*, (Pittsburgh: University of Pittsburgh Press, 1971), xvi; Jonathan Haslam, *SALT I: The Limitations of Arms Negotiations: U.S.–Soviet Talks Leading to the Interim Agreement on the Limitation of Strategic Offensive Arms*,

the United Kingdom, and West Germany. The three primary objectives of NPT were “preventing the further spread of nuclear weapons [to countries that did not have any]; facilitating international cooperation in the peaceful uses of nuclear energy under International Atomic Energy Agency (IAEA) safeguards; and encouraging negotiations on nuclear arms control.” As the United States and the Soviet Union became part of the arms control regime, they felt a political responsibility to take serious actions against the spiraling arms race. More importantly, NPT raised the Soviets’ interest in the talks since it relieved the Soviets’ concern over a nuclear West Germany.²³

The Soviets invited President Johnson to visit Moscow on September 30, 1968. The visit, which could have been the first American president’s trip to the Soviet capital city, was scheduled for announcement on August 21, 1968. However, President Johnson canceled the announcement due to the Soviet and Warsaw Pact invasion of Czechoslovakia on the evening of August 20, 1968.²⁴ Three months later, the United States elected a Republican president who was not as keen on the idea of arms control negotiations as President Johnson. Still, President Nixon, after almost a year of major review, began talks with the Soviets in November 1969 and finally reached an accord in 1972.²⁵ The signing of the ABM Treaty was a dramatic shift of Nixon’s position on ABM by limiting the deployment of ABM at two sites with no more than 100 missiles at each location. Why was there a change in Nixon’s policy on antiballistic missile defense? The security perspective puts forth that cost, technology, and strategic factors were the reasons that triggered the change—technology was uncertain, and even if the Safeguard systems were to be operational, it was too expensive, or the threat had diminished. The next section analyzes if the three factors indeed caused the Nixon administration’s policy shift.

1969–1972, (Washington, DC: Foreign Policy Institute, School of Advanced International Studies, The Johns Hopkins University, 1983), 15.

²³ Bernard Gwertzman, “Five-Year Effort for an Arms Curb Began With Secret Johnson Letter to Kosygin: Escalating Defenses In Soviet Were Topic,” *New York Times*, May 27, 1972; Federation of American Scientists, “Nuclear No-Proliferation Treaty [NPT] Chronology,” <http://www.fas.org/nuke/control/npt/chron.htm>, accessed April 10, 2003.

²⁴ Gwertzman, “Five-Year Effort.”

²⁵ Ibid.

2.2.2 Nixon's ABM – Safeguard

This section examines whether the Safeguard ABM system encountered problems that might have foiled the Nixon administration's original plan to deploy antiballistic missile systems at twelve sites, focusing on technology and cost. As was demonstrated during his long political career and the presidential campaign, Nixon was a strong anti-communist and defense hawk who believed in achieving security through strength. He viewed ABM capability as a contribution to US military power. Until the signing of the ABM Treaty in May 1972, his administration put forth plans to deploy antiballistic missiles. However, from the beginning the administration sensed that the policymaking environment was strained due to budgetary constraints and technical uncertainties. When President Nixon took office in 1969, ABM technology was under severe criticism from various groups. The Johnson administration's Sentinel deployment plan galvanized debates among skeptical scientists who questioned technical aspects of the Sentinel system. One of the most damaging assessments was a report released a couple of months after the announcement of the Safeguard system. At the request of liberal Democratic Senator Edward Kennedy, a team of experts put together a comprehensive review of the US ABM program.²⁶

The report questioned the reliability of the Sentinel and Safeguard system, which shared many technical features. The ABM system was composed of three main modules: radars, computers, and missiles. The Perimeter Acquisition Radar (PAR) was designed to monitor an incoming missile when it was still several thousand miles away from its target. When the inbound missile closed on its target, the Missile Site Radar (MSR) took over responsibility for monitoring the missile, tracking multiple missiles and interceptors simultaneously.²⁷

A second component was a mega-sized computer operation. The system required more complicated and advanced capacity than what was then available. Computers needed to spot incoming missiles, monitor and calculate their trajectory, identify their targets, determine decoys,

²⁶ John W. Finney, "Kennedy-Sponsored Study Of ABM Upsets Pentagon," *New York Times*, May 7, 1969.

²⁷ Abram Chayes and others, "An Overview," in Abram Chayes and Jerome B. Wiesner, ed., *ABM: An Evaluation of the Decision to Deploy an Antiballistic Missile System* (New York: Harper & Row, 1969), 3–6.

and destroy attacking missiles with ABMs. Each of these already extremely complex tasks had to be performed within a very short period of time, about ten minutes.²⁸

The last main element of the ABM system was missiles. Both Sentinel and Safeguard were to employ two types of missiles: a long-range Spartan missile and a short-range Sprint missile. The report pointed out that ABM missile validation confronted a unique challenge since testing of the missiles could not be conducted in a realistic setting. ABM missile tests would be carried out with a limited number of missiles and with prior knowledge as to where they would be coming from. In contrast, if an enemy launched an attack, it would likely fire multiple missiles from unknown directions. Moreover, conditions in space and the atmosphere had not been sufficiently analyzed, and the Nuclear Test Ban Treaty (NTBT) prohibited nuclear tests in these environments.²⁹

The Nixon administration insisted that the technology was ready for building ABM against limited attacks, but even a key administration official, Deputy Secretary of Defense Packard, admitted that area defense against a large-scale attack by the Soviet Union was a difficult task.³⁰ Technical feasibility was a persistent source of criticism and opposition to the Nixon administration's Safeguard plan, and the Nixon administration showed signs that they understood the technical uncertainties.

The cost factor was another big challenge to the Nixon administration. Safeguard was an expensive defense system. It would cost close to \$1 billion per fiscal year and \$6–7 billion for the completion of systems at the twelve proposed sites. The administration faced a tough job convincing Congress and the public when high defense spending was frowned upon. Critics warned that the already high price tag would likely escalate, as was frequently the case with most defense programs and even more so with novel programs.

In the first year of his presidency, President Nixon proposed \$800–900 million to begin construction of two complexes at Grand Forks Air Force Base in North Dakota and Malmstrom Air Force Base in Montana.³¹ In total, the initial estimate for the entire twelve sites was \$6.6

²⁸ Ibid., 6–7.

²⁹ Ibid., 7, 11–13.

³⁰ *Wall Street Journal*, "Some Kind of Sentinel System Will Be Built Despite Wide Opposition, Pentagon Hints," February 19, 1969.

³¹ *Wall Street Journal*, "ABM Funds to Be Sought This Week: Plan Strongly Opposed by Many Congressmen," March 17, 1969; Robert B. Semple Jr., "Nixon's Aides Insist They Will Not Compromise on Safeguard," *New York Times*, April 28, 1969.

billion. This figure quickly rose by almost \$4 billion to \$10.3 billion after the Atomic Energy Commission (AEC) included \$2.5 billion for Research, Development, Testing and Evaluation (RDT&E) and added \$1.2 billion for nuclear warheads. The increase in the estimate reinforced critics' suspicions.³²

Nixon inherited an economic problem from the previous Johnson administration. The war spending coupled with Johnson's Great Society programs caused increasing inflation in the late 1960s and put the US economy under pressure. By July 1969, federal mandatory spending was up by \$2.5 billion from its earlier forecast only three months ago.³³ Despite Nixon's effort to control inflation through austere fiscal policy, the economy remained sluggish, unemployment was seriously worsening, and other social programs were being downsized.³⁴

The cost estimate continued climbing up in 1970. The administration proposed about \$1.5 billion for fiscal year 1971. Nine hundred million dollars were for the completion of the first two sites and \$600 million were requested for expansion.³⁵ The total cost estimate was yet again increased by over a billion dollars to \$11.9 billion.³⁶

The Safeguard program was undoubtedly a costly program, and the Nixon administration had a difficult challenge in proving the technological feasibility of the program against critics' charges. However, these two factors were less important than the strategic situation the United States was in. President Nixon firmly believed in the value of an antiballistic missile system, and technical difficulties and the high cost alone would not have persuaded the Nixon administration to make a deal with the Soviet Union in 1972 that significantly limited ABM deployment. The administration's strategic calculation played a bigger role in SALT and the ABM Treaty.

³² John W. Finney, "Safeguard's Cost Was Understated; Pentagon Says \$1.2 Billion for Warheads Was Left Out of Its Estimates," *New York Times*, May 6, 1969; House Committee on Appropriations, *Safeguard Antiballistic Missile System: Hearings before Subcommittees on Department of Defense*, 91st Cong., 1st sess., 1969, 28–29.

³³ Edward L. Dale Jr., "When Inflation Takes a Seat in the Military Councils," *New York Times*, August 24, 1969.

³⁴ Max Frankels, "Nixon vs. Inflation: A Quiet but Vital Contest," *New York Times*, December 4, 1969.

³⁵ William Beecher, "President Seeks Expansion of ABM: \$600-Million to Be included in Budget for Work on 5 Additional Missile Sites," *New York Times*, January 30, 1970.

³⁶ William Beecher, "Expansion of ABM to 3d Missile Site Is Sought by Laird: Pentagon Also Wants to Buy Land and Do Preliminary Work at 5 Other Bases," *New York Times*, February 25, 1970.

2.2.3 From Strategic Superiority to Strategic Sufficiency

President Nixon continued the previous administration's ABM option to deploy antiballistic missiles when he succeeded President Johnson. There was no reason for the Nixon administration to steer away from the path his Democratic predecessor had paved for the deployment of ABM. If anything, the Nixon administration was anxious to expand the program beyond what the Johnson administration had pursued. President Nixon was not impressed with the MAD doctrine, and the three objectives of the ABM plan the president articulated indicated the Nixon administration's strategic view. The three goals were "(1) to defend US land-based retaliatory forces against a Soviet attack, (2) to protect the American people from a threat expected to be posed by China within a decade, and (3) to provide protection against accidental attacks from any source."³⁷

It is noteworthy that the Nixon administration's ABM plan included protection against both the Soviet threat and the China threat, in contrast with the Johnson administration's goal of limiting its Sentinel antiballistic missile system to protection against a Chinese attack. The emphasis on China was important to the Johnson administration so that it appeared to maintain the integrity of its strategic policy based on the MAD doctrine, although it was later revealed by Secretary McNamara's faux pas that the Johnson administration understood the value of ABM in point defense against a Soviet attack. The Nixon administration, on the other hand, pronounced its intent to use the Safeguard system for both point defense, and area defense.

What motivated the Nixon administration to give up its ambitious goals? A couple of strategic reasons contributed to the Nixon administration's decision to engage in talks with the Soviets and eventually conclude the SALT and the ABM Treaty. First, President Nixon and his national security adviser, Henry Kissinger, believed that arms talks would provide the United States with extra leverage in advancing US foreign policy goals. Although President Nixon was not eager about arms limitations, Nixon never closed the door to arms control, and he pledged to

³⁷ American Security Council, "The ABM and the Changed Strategic Military Balance: A Study by a Special American Security Council Committee of 31 Experts," Acropolis Book, Washington, DC, in cooperation with American Security Council Press, 1969, 60.

continue arms talks even during the politically charged presidential campaign.³⁸ President Nixon assumed that Soviets were more interested in arms control talks and thus, the negotiation could be used as a bargaining chip for resolving other political problems on the international scene.³⁹ Henry Kissinger devised this idea, known as linkage, and introduced it to Nixon, and Nixon agreed to connect “progress in such areas of Soviet concern as strategic arms limitation and increased trade with progress in areas that were important to us [the United States]—Vietnam, the Mideast, and Berlin.”⁴⁰

Second, President Nixon understood that the era of US strategic superiority was closing quickly, despite his wish to maintain that superiority. During the presidential campaign, Nixon had charged that the near equality spawned by the Kennedy and Johnson administrations’ doctrine of “parity” meant vulnerability for US defenses.⁴¹ He had also argued that not only Soviet superiority but also parity between the two nations was dangerous “since parity would be the same as superiority for they’d have the advantage of striking first.”⁴²

However, the strategic policy under the Nixon presidency was settled at strategic sufficiency, not superiority, due to two strategic conditions: growing Soviet strategic forces that were beyond US control and the worsening situation in Vietnam. While various domestic factors such as political resistance thwarted the administration from pursuing its ambitious ABM policy and a massive arms buildup, the Soviet Union was relentless in keeping up with US strategic capabilities. By the time Nixon became president, the nuclear superiority the United States had enjoyed earlier was faltering. Although the United States had maintained the predetermined ceiling of 1,054 ICBMs since 1967, the Soviet Union accelerated the development and deployment of its strategic forces and simply outnumbered the US ICBMs by 1969.

³⁸ Robert B. Semple Jr., “Nixon Vows Effort To Seek Arms Curb; Stand Seen Ease,” *New York Times*, October 17, 1968.

³⁹ Marshall D. Shulman, “SALT and the Soviet Union,” in *SALT: The Moscow Agreements and Beyond*, ed. Mason Willrich and John B. Rhinelander (New York: The Free Press, 1974), 106.

⁴⁰ Richard M. Nixon, *RN: The Memoirs of Richard Nixon* (New York: Grosset and Dunlap, 1978) 46.

⁴¹ R. W. Apple Jr., “Nixon Promises Arms Superiority Over The Soviet: Vows a ‘Clear-Cut’ Military Edge if He Is Elected- Sees ‘Security Gap,’” *New York Times*, October 25, 1968.

⁴² *New York Times*, “Missile Defense Is Urged By Nixon.”

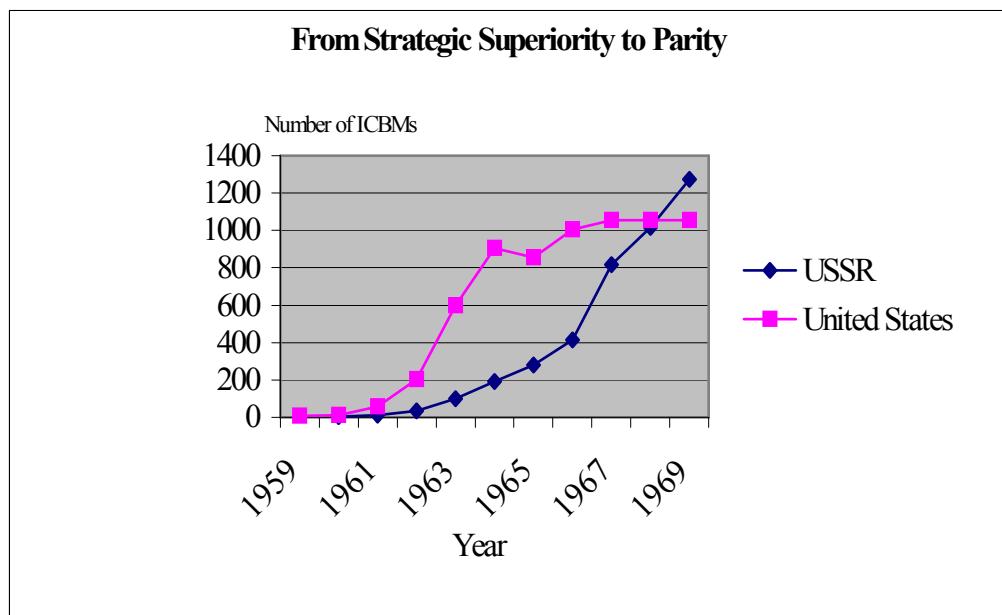


Figure 1. Comparison of the US and USSR ICBM Numbers ⁴³

Source: Natural Resources Defense Council, <http://www.nrdc.org/nuclear/nudb/datab1.asp>.

The Johnson administration also ceased building additional Submarine Launched Ballistic Missiles when the United States acquired 656 of those missiles. The number was still ahead of that of the Soviets, but it was predicted to be surpassed after 1974. The Soviets had fourteen submarines and more than 200 missiles, and they were building six to eight additional submarines a year. On ABM, the Soviets continued building their Galosh ABM missiles around Moscow.⁴⁴

A strategic doctrine aiming at superiority was meaningless without the resources and political backing from Congress to translate the policy goal into an actual expansion of military forces. President Nixon had to make policy decisions under these predicaments, and it did not take long for the president to accept the harsh reality. His first press conference in January 1969 alluded to such an acknowledgment when he argued that the United States needed “sufficient

⁴³ Terry Terriff, “The Changing Strategic Environment,” in *The Nixon Administration and the Making of U.S. Nuclear Strategy* (Ithaca, NY: Cornell University Press, 1995), 18–19; Natural Resources Defense Council, “Table of US Strategic Offensive Force Loadings, Table of USSR/Russian Strategic Offensive Loadings,” <http://www.nrdc.org/nuclear/nudb/datab1.asp>, accessed on March 25, 2003.

⁴⁴ Terriff, 19; John W. Finney, “President Warns U.S. Could Lose Arms Race Lead: G.O.P. Aides in Congress Told Soviet Would Take Advantage of ABM Lag,” *New York Times*, April 28, 1970.

military power” for the protection of US interests.⁴⁵ That hint of strategic sufficiency became official two years later when the president extensively discussed the concept of strategic sufficiency and pronounced its definitions. According to President Nixon, strategic sufficiency in narrow military terms meant “enough force to inflict a level of damage on a potential aggressor sufficient to deter him from attacking,” and in more general political terms, “the maintenance of forces adequate to prevent us and our allies from being coerced.”⁴⁶

The Pentagon clearly followed the sufficiency principle, and one such example was a DOD document that put forth acquisition guidelines. The Defense Department required “(1) maintaining an adequate second strike capability to deter an all-out surprise attack on our strategic forces; (2) providing no incentive for the Soviet Union to strike the United States first in a crisis; (3) preventing the Soviet Union from gaining the ability to cause considerably greater urban/industrial destruction than the United States could inflict on the Soviets in a nuclear war; and (4) defending against damage from small attacks or accidental launches.”⁴⁷ The requirements emphasized a deterrent capability, prevention of an enemy’s first strike, and sustaining the level of mutual vulnerability rather than a victory in conflict.

Third, the Nixon administration well understood that giving up the goal to maintain US strategic superiority meant the two superpowers might be in a lockdown for an endless arms race with no net gain. For this reason, and since the idea of arms talks was already a question the Nixon administration had to address one way or the other since his predecessor began the process, President Nixon ordered an extensive review of the strategic status of the United States and the Soviet Union to determine whether any arms control measures were needed. The Departments of Defense and State, the Arms Control and Disarmament Agency (ACDA), and the Central Intelligence Agency (CIA) each examined the strategic balance and made arms limitation proposals. Henry Kissinger’s National Security Council staff put together these reports and analyzed each option in May 1969.⁴⁸

⁴⁵ “President Nixon’s News Conference of January 27,” Department of State Bulletin 60 (17 February 1969)” 143, in Terriff, 27.

⁴⁶ Richard Nixon, *U.S. Foreign Policy for the 1970’s—Building for Peace* (Washington, DC: GPO, 1971), 170–71 quoted in Terriff, 27.

⁴⁷ *Statement of Secretary of Defense Melvin R. Laird on the Fiscal Year 1972–76 Defense Program and the 1972 Defense Budget*, before the House Armed Services Committee, March 9, 1971, 62 quoted in Terriff, 28.

⁴⁸ Henry Kissinger to President Nixon, “Analysis of Strategic Arms Limitation Proposals,” May, 23 1969, with attachment “Comments on Strategic Exchange Analysis NSSM 28,” Top Secret, William Burr. ed., The George

Options 3 and 7 in table 3, superhardening missile silos, would increase the second strike capability of both the United States and the Soviet Union but reverse US superiority without an agreement. The “No ABM option” would give the Soviet Union the edge by a bigger margin of 15 percent than the 10 percent margin of allowing the limited ABM option.

Table 3. ABM Options and Strategic Values (For 1978)

	No Agreement: US Programmed Force vs. High Intelligence Projection of Soviet Forces	No ABMs			
		OPTION [1] Basically a simple ICBM Freeze	OPTION [2] Comprehensive offensive and defensive limits but MIRVs allowed	OPTION [3] Allow both sides to superharden missile silos	OPTION [4] Comprehensive offensive and defensive limits with no MIRVs
US second strike capability (% Soviet people killed promptly)	40%	41%	40%	42%	38%
Soviet second strike capability (% US people killed promptly)	33%	51%	42%	57%	54%
Crisis Stability ^a					
US lives saved by striking first instead of second	32 mil	3 mil	18 mil		5 mil
Soviet lives saved by striking first instead of second	-9 mil ^b	3 mil	0		-6 mil ^b
US deaths in nuclear war					
US strikes first: US deaths	87 mil	127 mil	111 mil		130 mil
Soviet strikes first: US deaths	139 mil	142 mil ^c	142 mil ^c		141 mil
Difference between US and Soviets killed in Soviet First strike (if Soviets lose more)	4 mil	12 mil	12 mil		17 mil

Washington University National Security Archive, National Security Archive Electronic Briefing Book no. 60 (November 8, 2001), <http://www.gwu.edu/~nsarchiv/NSAEBB60/abm01.pdf>, <http://www.gwu.edu/~nsarchiv/NSAEBB/NSAEBB60/index.html>, downloaded on March 12, 2003.

Table 3 (continued)

	ABM Limited to 500 Spartan-type			
	OPTION [5] Basically a simple ICBM Freeze	OPTION [6] Comprehensive offensive and defensive limits but MIRVs allowed	OPTION [7] Allow both sides to superharden silos	OPTION [8] Comprehensive offensive and defensive limits with no MIRVs
US second strike capability (% Soviet people killed promptly)	39%	39%	44%	29%
Soviet second strike capability (% US people killed promptly)	41%	25%	54%	40%
Crisis Stability ^a				
US lives saved by striking first instead of second	11 mil	31 mil		19 mil
Soviet lives saved by striking first instead of second	-2 mil ^b	-5 mil ^b		-8 mil ^b
US deaths in nuclear war				
US strikes first: US deaths	117 mil	95 mil		107 mil
Soviet strikes first: US deaths	140 mil	140 mil		135 mil
Difference between US and Soviets killed in Soviet First strike (if Soviets lose more)	9 mil	8 mil		11 mil

^a: The strategic relationship is considered to be unstable if one side could save a significant number of its own people (20–30 million) by striking first in a crisis instead of striking second.

^b: This means that the Soviets would lose more lives by striking first than by striking second. This is highly desirable from the US point of view.

^c: The calculations were done using a method which does not take into account fatalities above the 142 million level.

For the Soviets, option 1, a simple ICBM freeze with “no ABM,” was most desirable in terms of second strike capability and crisis stability. Crisis stability is “a balance in which neither side has any incentive to strike first in time of crisis.”⁴⁹ This option would increase the Soviet’s second strike capability by 18 percent and drop US lives saved in a first strike from 32 million to 3 million. It would not discourage the Soviet Union from attacking first since the

⁴⁹ Warner R. Schilling, “U.S. Strategic Nuclear Concepts in the 1970s: The Search for Sufficiently Equivalent Countervailing Parity,” in Steven Miller, ed., *Strategy and Nuclear Deterrence: An International Security Reader*, (Princeton: Princeton University Press, 1984), 203.

Soviets' first strike capability would save 3 million rather than costing 9 million without an agreement.

Option 5, a simple ICBM freeze with limited ABM, would be also more advantageous to the Soviets than no agreement but to a lesser extent than option 1. It would increase the Soviets' second strike capability by 8 percent instead of 18 percent under option 1. The limited ABM option would save 11 million US lives, 8 million more than without ABM, and cost 2 million Soviet lives rather than saving 3 million under option 1, a simple ICBM freeze.

Option 2, allowing MIRVs and limiting offensive capability without ABMs would make no difference to the US second strike capability and increase Soviet second strike capability by 10 percent. It would drop US lives saved by striking first from 32 million to 18 million.

Option 6, limiting ABM with 500 Spartan-type missiles but allowing MIRVs, was the best scenario for the United States. With option 6, the United States could maintain about the same level of second strike capability as without an agreement at about 40 percent, reduce the Soviets' second strike capability by 8 percent, save 31 million American lives by the US first strike, and cause the Soviets to lose 5 million if they strike first.

Option 4, limiting both offense and defense forces without MIRVs, would decrease US second strike capability by 2 percent and increase that of the Soviets by 11 percent. It would reduce US motivation to strike first since it would save only 5 million instead of 27 million without an agreement.

Option 8, a ban on MIRV with limited ABM, would drop US second strike capability even more to 29 percent, and increase Soviet second strike capability by 7 percent. It would increase American lives saved by 19 million if the United States struck first. The Soviets' first strike would cost 8 million under this option.

As such, Kissinger favored option 6, but he was aware that the Russians would be reluctant to agree on the option giving the United States such an edge. In his memorandum, Kissinger wrote, "the option that looks good to us in terms of retaliatory measures, one that retains at least 500 ABM launchers, MIRVs, and a large US bomber force, may well not be acceptable to the Soviet Union."⁵⁰

⁵⁰ Kissinger, "Analysis of Strategic Arms Limitation Proposals," in National Security Archive Electronic Briefing Book no. 60.

In this National Security Memorandum, Kissinger concluded that should there be any strategic arms limitations, it was in America's best interest to agree on comprehensive limitations containing both offensive and defensive forces with no constraint on MIRVs.

This preliminary analysis on arms limitation showed the Nixon administration's strategic thinking. On the one hand, the Nixon administration did not find much advantage from an agreement. In most scenarios except option 6, an agreement would increase the Soviet second strike capability while the US second strike capability would remain the same or even decline. However, the same analysis also identified long-term strategic interests, and they were reducing uncertainties and holding "strategic relationships in a manner which preserves 'equality' at worst and US edge at best."⁵¹ In other words, with the agreement, the United States would be able to halt the Soviets' expansion of their strategic capability.

Despite misgivings on the benefits of an arms agreement, SALT as a bargaining chip and the idea of linkage were attractive enough for the Nixon administration to seriously contemplate entering into arms talks. In addition, as the National Security Council study suggested, it could stabilize the superpower relationships, and with the absence of an arms treaty, past trends showed that the Soviet Union could achieve strategic superiority over the United States.

In November 1969, the administration embarked on its first negotiations with the Soviets in Helsinki.⁵² During the five-week talks, no specific measures were discussed but both sides agreed to a basic goal to curb "the action-reaction escalation of the arms race." Also consented to was an agreement to include defensive and offensive weapons in the arms control negotiations.⁵³

The negotiations continued in the ensuing years but with little progress for any agreement. The United States made the first move and presented its proposal to the Soviet Union, outlining three main conditions: (1) a numerical ceiling on all three strategic weapons systems of land- and sea-based missiles and bombers; (2) a limitation on the number of Soviet SS-9 missiles or comparable weapons on either side; and (3) a limit on the ABM systems both in

⁵¹ Henry Kissinger to President Nixon, "Analysis of Strategic Arms Limitation Proposals," 23 May 1969.

⁵² John W. Finney, "G.O.P House Aide Asks Moratorium on MIRV Testing: Anderson and Senate Group Urge Nixon to Seek Arms Accord With Russians," *New York Times*, June 17, 1969; Gwertzman, "Five-Year Effort.

⁵³ *New York Times*, "SALT in Slow Motion," December 28, 1969.

terms of location and number. However, the Soviets responded with ambiguity.⁵⁴ Later, the United States made an offer to allow ABM deployment at one site to protect the National Command Authority (NCA), only to reverse the offer after the Soviet Union accepted the deal. In the midst of the rounds of SALT negotiations, the NSC staff conducted another strategic analysis. K. Wayne Smith and Helmut Sonnenfeldt coauthored a National Security Council Staff Memorandum in January 1971, which provides an important clue in understanding the Nixon administration's perception of the strategic reality. The administration's own analysis revealed that the value of the Safeguard ABM was modest. Even if the administration succeeded in emplacing ABM missiles at four sites, which was doubtful considering the domestic political problems the administration had encountered in the previous two years, it would save "only about 10 Minutemen more than no defense at all against the high 1979 threat."⁵⁵ The Safeguard system would hardly increase the US's strategic advantage in a significant way.

The Soviets' continuing arms buildup, the weak strategic value of the four-site ABM network, and the prospect that Congress might halt the construction of the Safeguard systems—which would leave the United States with neither an arms control measures nor a mechanism to protect itself against Soviet attacks—were threats to US security. Under these circumstances, the Nixon administration made a strategic choice to limit deployment of ABM at two sites and put ceilings on offensive weapons systems. As the NSSM 28 implied, with existential deterrence—that is, when two actors acquired enough nuclear forces to inflict calamitous damage on each other—the size of particular capabilities became less consequential. Deterrence was not the strategic option the Nixon administration had favored, but the external security environment, i.e., the Soviet's growing strategic capability, and the ineffectiveness of ABM forced the Nixon administration to embrace deterrence.

⁵⁴ *New York Times*, "Pace of Vienna Arms Talks Intensifies As U.S. and Soviet Hold Extra Sessions," August 1, 1970.

⁵⁵ K. Wayne Smith and Hal Sonnenfeldt, Memorandum for Dr. Kissinger, National Security Council, Subject: SALT—Vienna Phase IV, January 12, 1971, William Burr, ed., *The George Washington University National Security Archive*, National Security Archive Electronic Briefing Book no. 60 (November 8, 2001), 7.

2.2.4 Summary

The Nixon administration was eager to pursue deployment of the Safeguard antiballistic missile defense systems in order to protect the Minuteman missiles from Soviet first strikes, as well as the US population from small attacks. President Nixon, however, officially abandoned his ABM plan when he concluded the ABM Treaty, which allowed only moderate ABM capability for the United States and the Soviet Union in 1972. The security perspective was able to explain this policy change. The administration's Safeguard ABM plan was perceived as too costly at a time when the administration was trying to reduce the defense budget, and questions about technology were still challenging the effectiveness and feasibility of the Safeguard plan. In terms of strategic conditions, ironically, the increasing threat level by the Soviets' growing strategic capability motivated the Nixon administration to compromise its favored and ambitious goal, ensuring US strategic superiority. Nixon soon realized it was an untenable option given the Soviets' expansion of nuclear forces while the United States stopped its strategic weaponry due to the general political mood resisting further increases of US arms, both offensive and defensive weapons.

The most critical implication of the ABM Treaty was the acceptance of the MAD doctrine and existential deterrence by US policy makers and the codification of that principle.⁵⁶ The strategic power of the United States and the Soviet Union indeed created paralysis in the strategic environment in which further strengthening of strategic forces would mean an arms race without adding strategic value. This strategic condition forced the two superpowers to accept, however reluctantly, that they were at that paralysis of the MAD juncture.

The policy shift under the Nixon administration is a strong case for the security perspective. The Nixon administration recognized that the Soviet Union was catching up with the United States in strategic forces and that the absence of an arms agreement meant possible Soviet superiority at worst or strategic parity at best, with both sides continuously pouring more money into the arms race. Moreover, the budgetary constraints, political resistance, and lack of confidence in the effectiveness of the ABM system all contributed to the Nixon administration's

⁵⁶ Morton Halperin, "Arms Pact: Light through 'The Cloud of Doom'" *New York Times*, May 28, 1972.

strategic calculation to scale down its Safeguard plan in exchange for certainty in strategic relationships.

2.3 REAGAN ADMINISTRATION

2.3.1 The Policy Turn

On March 23, 1983, in a televised address to the nation, President Reagan proposed a system to make nuclear weapons “obsolete and impotent” by deploying a system to destroy enemy missiles. He appealed to the scientific community “to turn their great talents” toward this effort.⁵⁷ Such an antiballistic missile system would fundamentally alter nuclear policy based on the concept of mutual vulnerability.

Even after the Nixon administration signed on to the ABM Treaty, missile defense continued to be a research program throughout the Ford and Carter administrations, with its budget hovering around \$1 billion each year. However, the MAD doctrine was accepted as the fundamental basis of US strategic policy.⁵⁸ Reagan’s speech renewed the debates on technical feasibility, cost, and strategic implications that had overwhelmed Washington a decade earlier. Although ABM efforts had never been completely halted, Reagan’s call for missile defense was seen as a revolutionary change in posture and intensified these controversies. The controversies centered on the magnitude of a program seeking population defense, the futuristic technologies he promoted, and the challenge posed to the ABM Treaty. Also, the proposal was a fundamental paradigm shift in the existing nuclear policy, from MAD to Mutual Assured Survival (MAS).

From the security perspective, it was puzzling that President Reagan proposed a dramatic modification of the existing nuclear policy without any major developments in the

⁵⁷ Steven R. Weisman, “Reagan Proposes U.S. Seek New Way To Block Missiles: Strong Plea for Outlays: He looks to Use of Technology to Replace the Old Doctrine of Massive Retaliation,” *New York Times*, March 24, 1983; Walter S. Mossberg, “President Asks New Anti-Missile Research That Would Make Nuclear Arms ‘Obsolete’,” *Washington Post*, March 24, 1983.

⁵⁸ There were certainly persisting disagreements among nuclear strategists and policy makers as to whether the MAD doctrine was the best nuclear policy for the United States. However, the MAD doctrine had become mainstream strategic thinking, and there was no serious challenge to the MAD doctrine until 1983.

strategic environment. With the signing of the ABM Treaty and the interim agreement on strategic offensive missiles, MAD seemed to have become the norm ensuring deterrence in the nuclear age. President Reagan's call for an antiballistic missile system challenged the existing MAD doctrine.

Why did the United States shift away from MAD? Administration officials put forth three main reasons for a renewed ballistic missile defense program initiated by President Reagan. Dr. Fred Ikle, Under Secretary of Defense for Policy, elaborated that "the continuing growth of the ballistic missile threat from the Soviet Union," "the advances in technology relative to ballistic missile defense," and "ongoing Soviet effort for ballistic missiles and air defense, in particular Soviet violation of the ABM agreement" compelled the United States to respond in an adequate manner.⁵⁹

The following section analyzes these claims in light of the security perspective. Was the technological advance significant enough to renew ABM efforts? Was the Soviet military force becoming a more serious threat to the United States? Did the Soviet Union violate SALT? In addition, was the United States under President Reagan's leadership able to fund a higher level of expenditure on the program?

2.3.2 The Technical Optimism and Increased Resources

During the previous ABM debates, technology was one of the most discouraging factors to the supporters of ballistic missile defense. The ABM system demanded highly complicated physics, engineering, and computer technologies, and the challenges were considered even more daunting against multiple warheads or decoys. Also troublesome was the idea of using nuclear weapons to destroy incoming nuclear warheads that might result in mass destruction on US soil.

President Reagan's speech in March 1983 invoked a new vision rooted in technical advances achieved over the past ten years since the ABM Treaty. His initiative seemed more promising with such technologies as particle beams, lasers, and microwave devices. These novel

⁵⁹ Senate Committee on Armed Services, *Hearings on Department of Defense Authorization for Appropriations for Fiscal Year 1985: Hearing before the Armed Services Committee*, Statement by Dr. Fred C. Ikle, Under Secretary of Defense for Policy, 98th Cong., 2nd sess., S. Hrg. 98-724, March 8, 1984, 2905-2910.

technologies could be controlled by satellites as well as deployed by airplanes or land-based systems.⁶⁰ These futuristic technologies and the possibility that these devices could be deployed in space earned Reagan's proposal the nickname "Star Wars."

President Reagan's initiative prompted new hope among proponents of missile defense and optimistic scientists. Soon after the March speech, the administration put together a blueprint for the idea, delineating long-term goals for a research and development program and a budget outline. Under the leadership of Defense Secretary Casper Weinberger and National Security Adviser William Clark, the administration produced an interagency report largely based on two other studies directed by the National Security Decision Directive (NSDD 6-83). The Defensive Technologies Study led by James Fletcher, a former NASA administrator, investigated technical feasibility and budget evaluation. The other study, the Future Security Strategy Study, was set up for strategic and policy implications. Dr. Fred Hoffman of Pan Heuristics chaired the team.⁶¹

The interagency report, also known as a bridging document for integrating the two reports, recommended the exploration of various types of lasers, sensors, and interceptors on the ground, airborne, and in space within a couple of years.⁶² On the budget, the interagency report suggested \$2.6 billion for the upcoming fiscal year 1985. For a five-year plan between FY 1985 and FY 1989, the total estimation ranged from \$18 billion to \$27 billion depending on the inclusion of an early deployment option and its magnitude.⁶³ The Reagan administration eventually requested \$1.98 billion for FY1985 (including Department of Energy (DOE) funding), and the \$27 billion five-year estimate was widely cited.⁶⁴

The studies were classified, but parts of them were reported in the press, and more specifics became public when the discussion on the budget cycle for FY 1985 began in spring 1984. In testimony before the Senate Armed Services Committee (SASC), Dr. Fletcher, who led the Defensive Technologies Study, summarized the principle of the report. The study was not a

⁶⁰ Weisman, "Reagan Proposes U.S. Seek New Way"; Mossberg, "President Asks."

⁶¹ Clarence A. Robinson, Jr., "US Strategic Defense Options; Panel Urges Defense Technology Advances," *Aviation Week & Space Technology*, (October 17, 1983): 16.

⁶² Ibid.

⁶³ Ibid.

⁶⁴ Senate Committee on Armed Services, *Hearings on Department of Defense Authorization for Appropriations for Fiscal Year 1985: Hearing before the Armed Services Committee*, Statement by Dr. Richard D. DeLauer, Under Secretary of Defense for Research and Engineering, 98th Cong., 2nd sess., S. Hrg. 98-724, March 8, 1984, 2910-2917.

full endorsement of BMD deployment or of the practicality of developing a particular system but rather a recommendation for a ground research program to assist the president or Congress in making a decision in the future. The panel suggested a research direction for new technologies such as directed energy and “hypervelocity” kinetic energy weapons. The study also emphasized the importance of interception at the boost phase of a missile launch to maximize the probability of success. Another important concept was that new electronics development and sensors could be used for a “hit-to-kill” missile without using nuclear warheads.⁶⁵ Given these technical advances, the study offered that research efforts would lead to a viable BMD capability in years.

Key administration officials painted a highly positive picture for SDI. Especially optimistic were President Reagan’s science advisor, George Keyworth, and Defense Secretary Weinberger. Throughout their tenure under the Reagan administration, they advocated SDI technologies and expressed their confidence in an extensive missile defense system. Conversely, a large segment of the scientific community showed a skeptical response to President Reagan’s new initiative. Researchers at prestigious universities, Nobel laureates, and citizens groups argued that despite an enormous amount of money to be invested, the idea was something like science fiction. The complexity in computer engineering, aerodynamics and the physical strains of deploying large stations in space, as well as various countermeasures were all cited as impediments to an effective BMD system.⁶⁶

Throughout the Reagan administration, scientists continued to express their skepticism. More than 2,000 science professors at top universities and 16 Nobel laureates in physics objected and pledged not to engage in SDI research efforts.⁶⁷ Over time, Dr. Hans Bethe, a Nobel laureate in physics, Dr. Sidney Drell, a physicist at Stanford University, Dr. Kurt Gottfried of Cornell University, and Dr. Henry Kendall at MIT criticized the administration’s proposals, and groups such as the Union of Concerned Scientists and the Federation of American Scientists emerged as leading opponents to SDI.

⁶⁵ Senate Committee on Armed Services, *Hearings on Department of Defense Authorization for Appropriations for Fiscal Year 1985: Hearing before the Armed Services Committee*, Statement by Dr. James C. Fletcher, the University of Pittsburgh, Chairman, Defense Technologies Study Team, 98th Cong., 2nd sess., S. Hrg. 98-724, March 8, 1984, 2917-2920.

⁶⁶ Charles Mohr, “Research Is Urged to Increase Research on Exotic Defense Against Missiles,” *New York Times*, November 5, 1983.

⁶⁷ Boyce Rensberger, “Scientific Opposition to SDI Is Waning, Program Chief Says,” *Washington Post*, November 21, 1985.

More damaging to the administration were assessments by the now defunct Office of Technology Assessment (OTA), and other congressional reports. At the request of interested members of Congress and relevant committees, OTA had investigated the prospects for SDI technologies. Their analyses were less optimistic than what the administration claimed. Their early report concluded that the prospect of “Star Wars” technologies was not credible as a basis for national policy.⁶⁸

President Reagan’s SDI marked a very interesting watershed for technological debates in missile defense. While Reagan officials were upbeat about the advanced devices such as laser beams and infrared sensors, as well as the possibility of placing a missile defense system in space, their reports and testimonies carefully avoided commitment to definite architecture at the beginning and remained that way throughout the Reagan presidency.

The first year after the president’s speech was spent on preparation of the three aforementioned reports meant to identify research areas. As time was passing by, SDI exposed lack of clear goals and focus in research despite the billions of dollars being spent. Even such basic objectives as whether the SDI efforts were to provide population defense or protection for retaliatory forces were not clarified.

Although SDI was fraught with these problems, the ambiguity did not hurt the supporters’ arguments. By proposing the use of futuristic technologies and setting a long-term goal without commitment to specific design or systems definition, however vague or imprudent the opponents thought it, President Reagan turned the technology debate into an ideological confrontation between “true believers” and “non-believers.” To the proponents, technological challenges were not a reason to surrender but a motivation for further effort. This kind of logic was also applied to expenditures on SDI. The debate was not limited to what had been accomplished with the funding but how much more should be invested to achieve necessary technologies.

The idea of missile defense had always been an expensive program, but SDI marked a new level of funding for a defense R&D program. As discussed, the initial estimate for the five years between FY 1985 and FY 1989 was about \$18 billion at a minimum, and deployment was estimated to cost approximately \$100 billion. It was an astronomical amount. During the five

⁶⁸ Whitt Flora, “Management: Research on ABM Meets Opposition from Senators,” *Aviation Week & Space Technology*, (April 30, 1984).

years between FY 1984 and FY 1988, the administration spent almost \$20 billion, but President Reagan's defense modernization programs made great resources available to various programs in the Pentagon. President Reagan's technical optimism, determination, and the overall increase in defense spending permitted such a high level of spending on SDI.

2.3.3 The Strategic Development: Imbalance of power

The technology and budgetary situations when President Reagan introduced the idea of SDI seemed to favor the security perspective. There were novel technologies developed during the previous decade that deserved at least a chance to be tried for missile defense purposes, and the overall defense budget experienced a sharp hike. The strategic environment when the ballistic missile defense decision was made is the other factor that needs to be examined from this perspective, and that is the point of the analysis in this section.

President Reagan and his officials argued that the growing threat caused by the Soviets' strenuous military buildup and their violation of the SALT agreement pressed them to pursue a more aggressive missile defense policy. How serious was the threat from the Soviets and how credible was the claim of Soviet treaty violations? By the mid-1980s, the USSR increased its number of ICBMs to almost 1,400 and its number of warheads to 6,000, surpassing the 1,030 ICBMs and 2,000 warheads possessed by the United States.⁶⁹ Furthermore, the Soviet Union was improving the quality of its offensive capability by deploying more than 300 SS-18 and 300 SS-19. These "fourth generation" missiles were capable of carrying up to ten warheads and were as accurate as the Missile Experimental (MX) missile. The Soviets were also developing even more precise and powerful missiles such as the SS-24 and the SS-26.⁷⁰ The accuracy of the two Soviet "fourth-generation" missiles could destroy about two-thirds of the US land-based retaliatory forces. On strategic defense, while the United States terminated the deployment of

⁶⁹ Alun Chalfont, "A New Strategic Concept," in *Star Wars: Suicide or Survival?* (London: George Weidenfeld & Nicolson Limited, 1985), 132.

⁷⁰ Robert Jastrow, "Reagan Versus the Scientists: Why the President Is Right about Missile Defense," in F.C. Holroyd, ed., *Thinking about Nuclear Weapons: Analyses and Prescriptions* (Dover, MA: Auburn House Publishing Company, 1985), 237; George A. Keyworth II, *Security and Stability: The Role For Strategic Defense*, Remarks to the Faculty Seminar on International Security, University of California, San Diego, May 1, 1985 (La Jolla, CA: University of California Institute on Global Conflict and Cooperation, 1985), 3.

the Safeguard system at the Grand Forks site in 1975, the Soviet Union not only kept its ABM system in operation around Moscow but also continued to improve their Galosh installation by upgrading it with the SH-04 and SH-08 missiles.⁷¹

There had been several incidents where the Soviets might have violated the SALT agreement. Some turned out to be false alarms and some resulted from confusion over definitions in the agreement. In other cases, the Soviets admitted their violation and corrected the situation. The first dubious incident was the discovery of excavation sites in June 1973 that appeared to be for missile silo construction. Despite a fear that they could be converted to silos, the United States consented to the Soviets' explanation that the sites were command and control centers. There ensued several other suspicious cases in 1974. The Soviets conducted multiple tests of SA-5 radars in "an ABM mode" that might have been a violation of the treaty. Confronted by American representatives at the Standing Consultation Committee,⁷² the Soviets argued that the radars were merely conducting range instrumentations. The United States also suspected that the Soviets were using encryption to obstruct American intelligence monitoring of the telemetry of their SS-16 tests. An obvious violation that the Soviet Union admitted occurred in December 1975, when they began trials of upgraded ballistic missile submarines without dismantling their old ICBM launchers. The Soviet Union said that the breach was caused by a delay in demolishing ICBM launchers due to the harsh winter weather. Upon acknowledging the violation, they destroyed over 40 bins.⁷³

This track record prompted some decision makers to speculate that behind the Soviets' vigorous strategic modernization program was the Soviet Union's desire to seek superiority, which could grant them a capability to take preemptive action. Also, they feared that the Soviets might pull away from the treaty, leaving the United States behind in the strategic competition.

The strategic situation by the early 1980s corroborates why the United States sought a change in the strategic equation. During the last decade after signing the ABM Treaty, the Soviets had been strengthening both their offensive and defensive forces while the United States was restraining its military increase until President Reagan. Evidence suggests that strategic

⁷¹ Sidney Drell, Phillip J. Farley, and David Holloway, "The ABM Treaty and the U.S.-Soviet Strategic Relationship," in *The Reagan Strategic Defense Initiative: A Technical, Political, and Arms Control Assessment* (Cambridge: Ballinger Publishing, 1984), 18–19.

⁷² The Standing Consultation Committee was created by the ABM Treaty, 1972, see Appendix I.

⁷³ John Prados, "Monitoring SALT," in *The Soviet Estimate*, 234–242.

conditions were forming in a way to demand a change in US nuclear policy. The prerequisite parity of the deterrence-only theory or MAD doctrine was deteriorating, and the United States was taking measures to counter the imbalance. As an alternative to the existing MAD doctrine, President Reagan proposed a policy of Mutual Assured Survival (MAS) relying on SDI.

In spite of the strategic situation that rationalized the policy shift, SDI revealed flaws. The Reagan administration either failed to set or muster consensus on important policy objectives with regard to deployment, scale, and strategic goals for SDI. The statements over SDI were riddled with inconsistencies as to whether SDI was to complement or supplant the old MAD doctrine. Administration officials made contrasting statements over the program's eventual goal. The president's statement, "to make nuclear weapons obsolete," gave the impression that it was to develop and deploy a system for population protection. Secretary of Defense Weinberger confirmed this interpretation shortly after Reagan's speech by saying that, "the defensive systems the President is talking about are not designed to be partial" and "what we will try to do will be to develop a system that is so reliable that it will, in effect, render impotent all of the nuclear missiles."⁷⁴

However, testimony before later congressional hearings given by other officials presented a far less ambitious goal. Under Secretary Ikle suggested a defense system against limited attacks as a plausible intermediate system. In his written testimony for the Senate Armed Services Committee (SASC) hearing, he stated that "such intermediate versions of a ballistic missile defense system, while unable to provide the protection available from a completed multi-tiered system, may nevertheless offer useful capabilities.... And, ... if deployed, they could play a useful role in defeating *limited nuclear attacks* [emphasis added] and in enhancing deterrence against large attacks."⁷⁵ In other words, the aim was not for a leak-proof system but to reduce damage.

Another key question was whether SDI was a deployment program. In the same hearing before the SASC, both Under Secretaries Ikle and DeLauer emphasized that it was a research program examining technical feasibility, not a weapons development or deployment program.⁷⁶ Reagan and other proponents of SDI wanted to eventually deploy the system. To think otherwise

⁷⁴ R. Jeffrey, Smith, "Weapons bureaucracy spurns star wars goal; contrary to popular belief, the Pentagon did not endorse Reagan's vision of a missile-free world," *Science* 224 (April 6, 1984): 32.

⁷⁵ Senate Committee on Armed Services, Fred C. Ikle Statement, 2905–2910.

⁷⁶ *Ibid.*; Senate Committee on Armed Services, Richard D. DeLauer Statement, 2910–2917.

was illogical, because without the defense system in place, none of the advantages the administration was promoting would be achieved. However, for administration officials, there was no political value in announcing their long-term goal. They acknowledged that the system would not be technologically ready for deployment anyway until the mid-1990s (an overly optimistic estimate in retrospect). Therefore, it was wise not to declare a deployment goal and thereby avoid inviting any more conflict with the Soviet leadership as well as arms control advocates who were already anxious about the potential for violation of the ABM Treaty.

The ambiguities and inconsistencies have trouble supporting the security perspective that the policy was an outcome of the given strategic circumstances and that the policy choice was based on rational, strategic grounds. In addition, there are other problems that the security perspective faces in explaining President Reagan's SDI decision. Reviving ballistic missile defense was not the only option in dealing with these problems—there were other choices such as increasing US strategic offensive forces within the framework of the SALT agreement. Another puzzle the security perspective cannot fully explain is the timing of the initiative. What prompted President Reagan to reinvigorate ballistic missile defense policy in 1983, two years after his inauguration? After all, he began making the “window of vulnerability” claim during his presidential campaign, well before the beginning of his presidency, and the Soviets' violation of the agreement had been suspected since the mid-1970s.

2.3.4 MX controversy

Behind the selection and timing of the renewed ballistic missile defense campaign in 1983, was the controversy over the MX missile. During the presidential campaign, Ronald Reagan blamed the Carter administration for weakening the US military. On March 17, 1980, the leading presidential candidate, Mr. Reagan, told the Chicago Council on Foreign Relations that “in military strength we are already second to one: namely, the Soviet Union.” In particular, he argued that the US strategic stance was exposed to the “window of vulnerability” and pledged to regain superiority over the Soviet Union.⁷⁷

⁷⁷ George C. Wilson, “Reagan Advisers Urge More for Defense,” *Washington Post*, June 16, 1980.

Mr. Reagan won the election and began his presidential term in 1981. The administration had already elaborated the window of vulnerability claim in the Military Posture for FY 1982. It argued that the Soviets' high investment in force modernization had resulted in the improvement of their strategic forces. The Soviets deployed more multiple warheads per missile, incorporated greater throw-weight, improved accuracy and developed better Command, Control, and Communications (C3), all of which conspired to tip the balance in their favor. While they emphasized their ICBM forces, the Soviets also developed new generations of longer-range Submarine Launched Ballistic Missiles (SLBMs) and maintained a strategic defense force.

As a first step to rearm America, Reagan's defense team overhauled the Carter administration's defense plan and decided to give a significant boost to defense spending. Its emphasis was put on conventional weapons such as battleships, aircraft, and tanks to quickly fix the readiness problem, and initially no nuclear policy was offered to close the much-debated window of vulnerability.⁷⁸

It was not until October of 1981 that Reagan finally announced his five-point nuclear strategy program. This \$180.3 billion scheme over six years encompassed five strategic systems: the B-1 bomber, Trident submarine, communication networks, warning systems, and the MX missile. The proposal revived the B-1 long-range bomber that had been eliminated by President Carter. The subsonic bomber—with intercontinental range and capable of carrying 32 air-to-surface nuclear missiles or 115,000 pounds of conventional bombs—would replace the old B-52 bomber. The production of the B-1 would slow down after the deployment of radar-evading Stealth planes. To strengthen the least vulnerable triad of the strategic deterrent, the Trident submarines would be equipped with more accurate D-5 ballistic missiles.⁷⁹

The president decided to place the MX missiles in Titan silos in Kansas, Arkansas, and Arizona air force bases while the administration would study airborne patrol in aircraft or deep underground silos and antiballistic missiles. This interim solution would base 36 MX missiles in

⁷⁸ George C. Wilson, "Reagan Opts for Conventional Instead of Strategic Weapons," *Washington Post*, March 8, 1981.

⁷⁹ Richard Halloran, "Reagan Arms Policy Said to Rely Heavily On Communications," *New York Times*, October 12, 1981.

silos hardened with concrete and steel to resist nuclear explosions by 1986.⁸⁰ Mr. Reagan had harshly criticized Carter's "shell game" scheme during his campaign. The Carter plan was to shuttle 200 of the MX missiles among 4,600 shelters in Utah and Nevada.⁸¹ In 1981, Reagan's Defense Secretary Weinberger was initially interested in putting the MX missiles on small-submarines to transfer the missiles more easily without having to build silos.⁸² However, the submarine communication mechanism was to inevitably expose its location and the accuracy of the submarine-based missiles was poorer than that of the land-based missiles. As an alternative, small offshore submarine basing was considered. The OTA study evaluated the suggestion and concluded that the offshore submarines were able to overcome the two problems by relying on coastal guidance and radio. However, the OTA also recognized a problem with deployment schedules due to the shortage of shipyard capacity and that a technological breakthrough in antisubmarine warfare could threaten both the Trident and small offshore submarines.⁸³ By the time President Reagan announced his five-point nuclear strategy program in October 1981, the administration decided to place the first 36 of 100 MX missiles in the strengthened Titan silos as an interim plan. Meanwhile, an airborne patrol would be continued and research on ballistic missile defense was to be stepped up.⁸⁴

Reagan's MX basing plan faced serious resistance from Congress. The House Defense appropriations subcommittee approved funding for the B-1 bombers but refused any money for the MX program.⁸⁵ The opposition was merely a preview of a long battle between the administration and Congress on this issue. Many believed that hardening existing silos would not help protect the MX missiles from the increasingly accurate Soviet warheads. In response to the criticism, Secretary Weinberger sent a letter to the Senate Armed Services Committee chairman, John Tower (R-Tex.), expressing his intention to explore the original shell game scheme favored by the Carter administration. Both the House and Senate, encouraged by the

⁸⁰ Richard Halloran, "Reagan Drops Mobile MX Plan, Urges Basing Missiles In Silos; Proposes Building B-1 Bomber To Bolster Trident: \$180.3 Billion Cost in Six Years Put on Plan for Nuclear Deterrent," *New York Times*, October 3, 1981.

⁸¹ Ibid.

⁸² *New York Times*, "Must MX Be a Shell Game?" March 18, 1981.

⁸³ Ibid.

⁸⁴ Halloran, "Reagan Drops Mobile MX Plan."

⁸⁵ Richard Halloran, "House Panel Votes B-1 Funds but Turns Down MX," *New York Times*, October 29, 1981.

new flexible approach of the Pentagon, approved \$2 billion for the MX program in FY 1982.⁸⁶ In December, Secretary Weinberger decided to stick to the plan using the existing silos but using the Titan silos instead of the Minuteman silos with no extra protection. Critics argued that putting the larger MX missiles in the silos would leave less space to absorb shocks caused by Soviet warhead explosions and thereby make the missiles more vulnerable.⁸⁷

For FY 1983 spending, the Pentagon requested \$1.5 billion for the production of the first nine MX missiles and \$715 million for research to restructure Minuteman silos to temporarily house them. The Senate Armed Services Strategic and Theater Nuclear Forces Subcommittee cut the \$2.2 billion earmarked for the MX program. The decision was not to kill the MX but to put a hold on production until a permanent basing plan could be decided.⁸⁸

The Defense Department presented yet another MX basing method called “dense pack” using the cluster arrangement. President Reagan championed the idea and renamed it “Peacekeeper.” The dense pack deployment would call for building 100 new silos hardened with concrete and steel to resist a nuclear blast. It would also rely on “nuclear fratricide” in which bunched missiles would cause the first incoming Soviet nuclear warheads to destroy those warheads coming behind. The dense pack plan was again rejected by Congress. Reagan appointed a bipartisan commission to rescue the MX. The President’s Commission on Strategic Forces was also known as the Scowcroft Commission, named after chairman Brent Scowcroft, a national security adviser to former President Ford.⁸⁹

It was two weeks before the Scowcroft Commission issued its report when President Reagan announced his ambitious plan to close the window of vulnerability through a leak-proof defensive system. The announcement marked a critical shift away from solely offense-based measures that sustained deterrence for a long time. The announcement was a surprise to many, including most of his own security staff. The timing of President Reagan’s March 1983 speech might have been a coincidence. However, what is reasonable to construe is the fact that the Reagan administration wanted to propose a fresh option without the kind of political baggage the

⁸⁶ George C. Wilson, “Reagan Assailed Idea in Campaign: Shell Game With MX Studied Anew,” *Washington Post*, November 20, 1981.

⁸⁷ Tom Wicker, “In the Nation; A Switch for The MX,” *New York Times*, February 19, 1982.

⁸⁸ George C. Wilson, “Senate Subcommittee Votes To Put MX Missile on Hold,” *Washington Post*, March 24, 1982.

⁸⁹ Lou Cannon, “Silo Basing Backed for MX Missile; Commission Sees Narrower Threat Than Reagan Said,” *Washington Post*, April 12, 1983.

MX plan had accrued. Obviously, the administration first focused on offensive capabilities in remedying the perceived imbalance of power with the Soviet Union, and as a result, it experienced an embarrassing political setback for its MX plans. At this point, ballistic missile defense surfaced as a glamorous alternative to the ongoing political problem.

2.3.5 Summary

How well did the security perspective explain the prominent reemergence of missile defense in 1983? Was President Reagan's SDI an outcome of the strategic imperative? The strategic environment in which the Soviet Union was appearing as an increasingly powerful entity certainly seems to be one factor behind the possibility of the SDI's inception. The Soviets' compliance with the ABM Treaty had been questioned numerous times in the past decade. Although the seriousness of the allegations over the Soviets' breach of the ABM Treaty was understood differently by arms controllers who firmly believed that the ABM Treaty should not be abandoned and by those who considered the treaty a hindrance to the US strategic interest, skepticism of the Soviets' good faith further inspired President Reagan to ponder a different approach. Also, while the United States was lethargic in strengthening its nuclear forces, the Soviet Union continued to build up its strategic power with the development of updated SS-24 and SS-26 ICBMs as well as quantitative increases in the number of ICBMs and nuclear warheads. What was more important was the strategic view of President Reagan and his administration. They had been always wary of the MAD doctrine and deterrence-only theory. The Soviets' behavior—increasing their nuclear capability and possible violation of the ABM Treaty—helped MAD pessimists establish their case for missile defense. The proponents of missile defense could buttress their argument that the Soviet Union was not trustworthy, a dagger in the heart of the deterrence-only principle.

The strategic developments were sensible reasons to reintroduce a large-scale missile defense program, but they were not sufficient in explaining what determined the timing of the decision. The trend of the Soviets' surpassing the United States in strategic forces began well before 1983, and it was evident that Reagan took notice of this problem when he made the “window of vulnerability” claim during his presidential campaign. Yet he did not address

missile defense as a remedy to the situation until the third year of his presidency. The Reagan administration at first aggressively pursued other alternatives to missile defense, such as MX. There was a troubling trend, but there was not an obvious incident or heightened tensions between the United States and the Soviet Union that might have alarmed the Reagan administration's measures to reinstate a more forceful missile defense policy. This lack of a major crisis prior to the SDI announcement makes it difficult to completely validate the security perspective. Also problematic was the imprecision of the Reagan administration in setting forth strategic objectives for SDI. Administration officials revealed disagreements and confusion among themselves when trying to define missile defense alternately as a force to substitute for the MAD doctrine or a complement to the MAD doctrine. Administration officials also found it difficult to explain whether SDI was being pursued to achieve point defense or population defense. Such contradictions were symptoms of inadequate preparation and analysis of the strategic merits of missile defense before the decision was made. It is difficult to rule that SDI was solidly a strategic decision when administration officials failed to present the most fundamental elements of SDI in a coherent and clear manner in policy debates. Overall, President Reagan's SDI decision meets some of the criteria of the security perspective, but it is not a strong case for the perspective.

2.4 BUSH ADMINISTRATION

2.4.1 The Policy Turn

George H.W. Bush was not one of the SDI "true believers" in the conservative Republican circle. Although he became the Republican nominee partially thanks to his status as the incumbent vice president under the Reagan administration, he did not share the hardliner attitude that characterized President Reagan and many of his officials. A former chief liaison to China and head of the Central Intelligence Agency, Bush had a more internationalist outlook on world affairs than the rest of the key players in the Reagan administration.

During his presidential campaign, Vice President Bush called attention to his support for domestic programs such as drug eradication and rehabilitation, the environment, education and child care rather than defense issues. He vowed to build a “kinder and gentler nation,” implying a move away from President Reagan’s strong emphasis on the military in handling foreign affairs and national security matters. On SDI, Bush expressed his commitment for deployment of a ballistic missile system but opposed a “premature deployment.”⁹⁰ He later told the *New York Times* that full deployment would be costly and the decision depended on additional research.⁹¹ In general, he was “reserved” in pushing SDI.

The beginning of the Bush presidency seemed in line with his original position on SDI, but over time, administration policy grew more supportive of SDI in official statements and with increased funding culminating in the 1991 Missile Defense Act. For the first time since the inception of SDI, legislation mandated the deployment of a limited-scale missile defense system, marking a clear policy turn during the Bush administration. The Missile Defense Act of 1991 required the Defense Department to “develop for deployment by the earliest date allowed by the availability of appropriate technology or by fiscal year 1996 a cost-effective, operationally-effective, and ABM Treaty-compliant antiballistic missile system.”⁹² What, then, was the impetus behind the renewed enthusiasm for ballistic missile defense policy? It is particularly puzzling that President Bush reinforced BMD at a time when the most alarming threat was virtually disappearing with the end of the Cold War.

2.4.2 From SDI to Global Protection Against Limited Strikes (GPALS)

When President Bush took over the White House, the most significant problem the United States was facing was a deteriorating economy fraught with a high unemployment rate and budget deficits. After Bush was elected to the presidency, his team debated how to reduce the budget deficit without raising taxes. For the defense budget, Office of Management and Budget (OMB)

⁹⁰ David Hoffman, “Bush Promises a Strategic Defense; Vice President Also Urges Curb on Spread of Missiles in Third World,” *Washington Post*, August 3, 1988.

⁹¹ Bill Peterson, “Bush Acts to Reassure Conservatives on SDI; Nominee ‘Surprised’ Commitment Is Doubt,” *Washington Post*, August 31, 1988.

⁹² *National Defense Authorization Act for Fiscal Years 1992 and 1993*, H.R. 2100.ENR., Division A, Title II, Part C, Missile Defense Program, Sec. 233 Implementation of goal, 102nd Cong. 1st sess.

director Richard Darman recommended no real growth increase over the ensuing five years, but other high-level officials preferred a slight increase in the military budget on top of an adjustment for inflation. A compromise was reached on freezing the defense budget in the first year with one percent increases for the next two years and two percent increases for the last two of the five years. It brought the FY 1989 defense budget down to \$305 billion from Reagan's initial request of \$315 billion.⁹³

The proposal was further reduced as Bush and key members in Congress agreed to cap the DOD budget at \$295.6 billion.⁹⁴ Defense Secretary Dick Cheney sought to adjust military spending to the austere budgetary environment. He canceled nine conventional weapons programs while favoring a lesser cut for the strategic forces. His decision zeroed out funding for the Marine Corps' V-22 Osprey and the Navy's F-14 jet fighter. For SDI, Secretary Cheney requested \$4.6 billion, a billion dollar decrease from Reagan's original proposal, and \$33 billion for a five year projection, an eight billion dollar reduction from that of Reagan's.⁹⁵

For SDI development, the Bush administration decided to restructure Phase I of the SDI program inherited from the Reagan administration for budgetary and technology reasons. The original Phase I was composed of seven major elements: Boost Surveillance and Tracking System (BSTS), Space Surveillance and Tracking System (SSTS), Ground-based Surveillance and Tracking System (GSTS), Ground-Based Radar (GBR), Command Center (CC), Ground-Based Interceptor (GBI), and Space-Based Interceptor (SBI).⁹⁶

The two tracking systems, BSTS and SSTS, were targeted first for full development. The SDIO planned to complete scale development of the BSTS within two years and SSTS by 1994. BSTS was to detect the launch of a missile, identify the origin and destination, and thereafter send a signal to SSTS. SSTS would then track the flight course of the boosted vehicles and help distinguish re-entry vehicles from decoys. The SBI was designed to destroy the boosters and post-boost vehicle. The GSTS, GBR, and GBI were the counterpart systems to execute similar

⁹³ Fred Kaplan, "Bush Aide Seen Urging Zero Growth For Military," *Boston Globe*, February 8, 1989.

⁹⁴ Andy Pasztor, "House Panel Votes To Cut \$1.4 Billion In Defense Funds," *Wall Street Journal*, June 28, 1989.

⁹⁵ Chicago Tribune, "Bush Studies 'Star Wars' Change," May 12, 1989.

⁹⁶ Senate Appropriations Committee, *Statement of Lt. Gen. George L. Monahan, Jr., before the Subcommittee of the Committee on Appropriations on Department of Defense Appropriations for Fiscal Year 1990*, 101st Cong., 1st sess., May 11, 1989, 853-874.

tasks on the ground. The original interceptors in space were designed to accommodate ten missiles in a carrier vehicle. The total cost of Phase I was estimated at \$69 billion.⁹⁷

The Bush administration restructured the Reagan administration's SDI program for budgetary and technology reasons. The plan was to replace the Space-Based Interceptor with a newly recommended Brilliant Pebbles concept contrived by two leading scientists of SDI, Edward Teller and Lowell Wood. The Brilliant Pebbles system was to bring a huge savings in an austere budgetary environment and was deemed more survivable against an enemy attack. The original SDI was garage-like satellites housing interceptors. The concern was that they would make an easy target for an attack because of their large size.⁹⁸ The Brilliant Pebbles system would be composed of thousands of small, lightweight spacecraft interceptors with their own detection and communication systems. Their autonomy would reduce their reliance on other sensors and satellites, improving their survivability against enemy countermeasures.⁹⁹ In addition, the pebbles' small size and their dispersal pattern were to make it harder for an enemy to target them.¹⁰⁰ The retiring head of SDIO, Gen. Abrahamson, emphasized that the pebbles system was more cost-effective, technologically feasible, and survivable than the Space-Based Interceptors (SBI). According to his memo written as he was leaving the SDIO director position in February 1989, the pebbles system could be deployed within five years at an estimated price of \$25 billion, including surveillance satellites and command and control capabilities.¹⁰¹

However, the Brilliant Pebbles ideas did not end technical skepticism. Critics argued that the large numbers of pebbles were in themselves a problem. It would be a huge challenge to monitor them, and the pebbles could collide with other objects in an already crowded space environment. Another source of skepticism was that the independent capabilities of the pebbles could also be a recipe for disaster. Lowell L. Wood had earlier praised the pebbles' ability to execute their mission without "external supervision or coaching." The risk, however, was that

⁹⁷ Eliot Brenner, "SDI Chief: deployment decision 3-4 years off," United Press International, May 11, 1989.

⁹⁸ Michael Evans, "Key SDI Pebble's a Last Hope? 'Star Wars' Stakes Future on Mini-Missile Concept," *Los Angeles Times*, April 29, 1989; Thomas Moore, "SDI: prospects for the 1990s; Strategic Defense Initiative; includes related articles," *Defense Electronics* 22, no. 3 (March 1990): 39.

⁹⁹ Senate Appropriations Committee, George L. Monahan Statement, 853-874; Michael Evans, "Key SDI tests due this year," *Times*, January 30, 1990; Moore, "SDI: prospects for the 1990s," 39.

¹⁰⁰ Moore, "SDI: prospects for the 1990s," 39.

¹⁰¹ Patricia A. Gilmartin, "Defense Dept. Postpones Decision On Brilliant Pebbles Until November," *Aviation Week & Space Technology* 131, no.7 (August 14, 1989): 23.

once a pebble sent a false signal activating an interceptor, the mission was incapable of being aborted by humans, which in turn could damage satellites in space and, more seriously, destroy human lives. Additionally, the technical feasibility of its primary sensor, “brilliant eyes,” remained unproven, and the guidance system, the “brain,” was still at an embryonic stage of development.¹⁰² Ray Kidder at the Lawrence Livermore National Laboratory contended that the Soviets could build missiles to circumvent the Brilliant Pebbles. Should they develop high speed missiles, the flames would be extinguished before the pebbles could possibly intercept them.¹⁰³

The highly touted Brilliant Pebbles system lost its steam rather quickly. The Bush administration reoriented SDI again to a new scheme called the Global Protection Against Limited Strikes (GPALS) in January 1991. It maintained the space-based program but at a much smaller scale than planned in Phase I. GPALS also emphasized development and deployment efforts for the ground-based system, in particular for theater missile systems capitalizing on the momentum gained by the performance of the Patriot during Operation Desert Storm. The proposed GPALS system was directed towards destroying a limited number of missiles (up to 200). Like Phase I of the SDI architecture, it outlined a layered system, including both space- and ground-based capabilities. However, the SDIO deferred development and deployment of kinetic energy systems and directed energy systems that had been included in Phase I.¹⁰⁴

Despite setbacks in the earlier years of the Bush administration, the Patriot missile’s performance during the Persian Gulf War in blasting Iraqi Scud missiles out of the sky allowed SDI to gain traction in terms of its technical feasibility. Lt. Gen. Daniel Graham (ret.) claimed that the Patriot success showed it was possible to “hit a bullet with a bullet.” Critics disputed the optimism generated by the Patriot missile’s performance on two grounds. Former Defense Secretary Harold Brown emphasized the technical differences between the Patriot missile and the proposed SDI. He said “the people who say the Patriot’s success shows that SDI works don’t know what they’re talking about,” and continued that the Scuds are “very unsophisticated old

¹⁰² John M. Broder, “‘Brilliant Pebbles’ a Last Hope? ‘Star Wars’ Stakes Future on Mini-Missile Concept,” *Los Angeles Times*, April 29, 1989.

¹⁰³ R. Jeffrey Smith, “Year of Lobbying Turned ‘Brilliant Pebbles’ Into Top SDI Plan,” *Washington Post*, April 26, 1989.

¹⁰⁴ House Committee on Armed Services, *Statement of Douglas R. Graham, Deputy Assistant Secretary of Defense for Strategic Defense, Space and Verification Policy, Department of Defense: Hearing before the Research and Development Subcommittee*, 102nd Cong., 1st sess., April 18, 1991.

stuff—easy to see, relatively easy to hit, compared with the Soviet intercontinental ballistic missiles SDI is supposed to intercept...it is clear that the Scud missile itself cannot be attacked from space.”¹⁰⁵ The debates over technical feasibility continued, but whatever the genuine technical implication of the Patriot missile’s success was, it certainly boosted confidence in SDI technology.

The two variables, technology and budgetary conditions, were first examined for the Missile Defense Act of 1991, and they did not strongly support the security perspective. The Bush administration’s frequent changes in the design of its missile defense structure could not be seen as a positive sign of confidence in the technology. President Bush’s missile defense program was also in competition with other programs at a time when the defense budget was experiencing a considerable reduction. However, the Patriot missile’s performance provided the best explanation for the technical optimism. Although its applicability for nationwide defense was unclear, witnessing the Patriot missile’s success gave the supporters of the 1991 Missile Defense Act a tremendous advantage in making their case and gave the opponents of SDI reason to pause.

2.4.3 Strategic Debates in a New World

The security perspective hypothesizes that a strong missile defense policy—such as enacting a law demanding the deployment of a missile defense system—should be an outcome of an increasing threat as well as better technology and economic conditions. Was there any credible threat to the United States, and if so, what was the nature of it when the missile defense deployment legislation was enacted? During the last two years of the Bush administration when the support for SDI gained strength, was there any new strategic development that spurred such change? These are the questions to be examined in this section.

When President Bush began his term, strategic debates lost attention and focus. Nuclear strategy and strategic posture were no longer heated subjects among decision makers, and there

¹⁰⁵ Bruce Ingersoll, “The Gulf War: Star Wars Defense Backers Take Heart As Patriot Missile Score Hits in the Gulf,” *Wall Street Journal Europe*, January 30, 1991.

was no clear strategic objective envisioned, due to the changing international environment. The Cold War was ending as the Eastern bloc was crumbling, and the Soviet leadership declared a political reform to transform its country towards democracy and the free market. As the dramatic changes diminished hostilities between the East and the West, there was wide recognition that the United States would not have to deal with the intense level of strategic threat the country experienced until the late 1980s. While the majority in the decision making circle believed that the United States was heading towards a less hostile environment, there was uncertainty about the transformation still in progress and not everyone believed that the United States should swiftly decrease its strategic programs.

In this circumstance, the United States continued its policy of deterrence through the combination of massive retaliation and missile defense. To achieve this strategic goal, the Bush administration continued a moderate level of strategic modernization (considering more accurate and survivable mobile missiles, deploying Trident II SLBM, and adding the B-2 stealth bomber).¹⁰⁶

On missile defense, the fundamental assumptions of SDI were maintained although there were technology changes and funding was reduced. The Soviet Union continued to be identified as a major source of threat to the United States. The DOD 1990 Annual Report to Congress outlined threats and defended the US missile defense program. The document stated “the Soviet Union...today, modernizing Soviet strategic nuclear offensive forces are structured to emphasize their ability to strike US forces. To limit damage from the US weapons they could not destroy in a counterforce attack, the Soviets emphasized defenses... Pursuit of a robust SDI program also will provide an effective hedge against any near-term Soviet decision to expand rapidly its antiballistic missile capability beyond that allowed by the ABM Treaty.”¹⁰⁷

The director of SDIO, George Monahan, shared such a view and put forward three specific reasons to support SDI: the remaining Soviet threat, political instability in the Soviet Union, and the proliferation of ballistic missiles. Gen. Monahan emphasized the Soviet nuclear

¹⁰⁶ Charles L. Glaser and George W. Downs, “Defense Policy: U.S. Role in Europe and Nuclear Strategy,” in *Eagle in a New World: American Grand Strategy in the Post-Cold War Era*, ed. Kenneth A. Oye, Robert J. Lieber and Donald Rothchild (New York: The Lehigh Press, Inc. 1992), 90-91.

¹⁰⁷ Richard Cheney, *Report of the Secretary of Defense to the President and the Congress* (Washington, DC: Department of Defense, January 1990), 35.

threat as the number one reason for supporting SDI. He judged that despite the new détente between the two superpowers, the Soviet Union was modernizing its strategic nuclear weaponry. Citing Soviet Foreign Minister Eduard A. Shevardnadze, Gen. Monahan drew attention to the employment of the Soviet Union's chemical and nuclear weapons for aggressive purposes as a possibility being contemplated by Soviet hard-liners. On proliferation, the general used CIA analysis which estimated that by the year 2000, fifteen more countries could have ballistic missile capability.¹⁰⁸

The most prominent security doctrine under the leadership of President Bush came in the middle of his tenure in January 1991, when he declared the New World Order during the state of the union address. The Bush administration reexamined its foreign policy objectives and shifted its goal from deterring Soviet expansionism to creating mechanisms for peace in global hot spots, especially in the Middle East. It marked formal acknowledgment of the end of the Cold War and the beginning of a new era, which was brought about by the Middle East conflict in 1990. Whereas the transformation in the East was an evolving process, Iraq's invasion of Kuwait was a more decisive illustration of the new reality, providing the United States an impetus to break away from the Cold War mentality and focus on new challenges.

The supporting arguments for continuing ballistic missile defense prior to the "New World Order" speech in January 1991 boiled down to extreme vigilance. Although the Soviet Union was waning, it still possessed huge stockpiles of nuclear warheads and delivery systems. The existence of these weapons in the Soviet Union and elsewhere justified the continuing support of the US BMD policy since there were many contingencies including unauthorized or accidental launches. Also, a fundamental distrust in the Soviets prevented conservative decision makers from giving up BMD. They cautioned that the Soviets could renew efforts to strengthen their strategic forces when they regained economic, technological, or political power.

What, then, was the implication for the nuclear strategies and deterrence in the second half of President Bush's term after the declaration of the New World Order? What was the

¹⁰⁸ George L. Monahan Jr., "A Less Tense World Doesn't Eliminate the Need for Strategic Defense SDI: The No. 1 reason to deploy remains the threat from the Soviet Union, still modernizing its most deadly nuclear weapons," *Los Angeles Times*, July 15, 1990.

strategic connotation for ballistic missile defense in this environment? And, what was the implication of the Missile Defense Act of 1991 for the security perspective?

Deterrence was the backbone of the Bush administration's US nuclear strategy "so that a potential aggressor would conclude that the cost of an attack against the United States or its allies would far exceed any expected gain."¹⁰⁹ However, the nuance of deterrence in the nuclear debates had changed. Some in the arms control community or opponents of military buildup continued to argue that achieving a balance of power (by reducing the US strategic forces) was a necessary condition to avoid a nuclear war. Another crucial strategic implication was that deterrence as a synonym to MAD or balance of terror became obsolete in the new era. During the height of the Cold War, the deterrence-only theorists and MAD strategists supported the proposition that mutual vulnerability was the key to preventing the outbreak of a nuclear war by discouraging the United States and the Soviet Union from launching a nuclear attack on the other side. In the New World, however, with the United States becoming the lone superpower, the insistence on the vulnerability of the United States lost traction. Continuing the MAD doctrine involved a drastic and unilateral reduction of the US strategic forces, and it was not an easy policy choice for the United States or any other country to accept.

With regard to missile defense in the post-Cold War era, proponents and opponents of missile defense alike concluded that massive numbers of Soviet nuclear warheads became a less serious threat to the United States, but this did not end the disagreement between the two groups on the need for SDI. The main point of contention was the likelihood of threats from Third World states or terrorists, as well as the possibility of accidental or unauthorized launches of ICBMs from the Soviet Union.

Opponents compared the BMD policy to "buying home insurance against meteors".¹¹⁰ While they also found horizontal proliferation of missiles and weapons of mass destruction troubling, they doubted Third World countries had an incentive to attack the United States. They also doubted deploying ballistic missiles tipped with weapons of mass destruction would be the

¹⁰⁹ Richard Cheney, *Report of the Secretary of Defense to the President and the Congress* (Washington, DC: Superintendent of Documents GPO, January 1991), 51.

¹¹⁰ *The Bulletin of Atomic Scientists*, "The Remilitarization of Sam Nunn," October 1991, 3.

choice of terrorists or Third World states since such actions would be costly to operate and would certainly reveal the origin of the attacker.¹¹¹

Dr. Keith Payne, an ardent champion of BMD, contested this criticism by citing Muammar Al Qadhafi (the leader Libya), Saddam Hussein, and Abu Abbas (head of the Palestinian Liberation Front), who had all similarly stated their respective desires to attack the United States with ballistic missiles, had they possessed the capability.¹¹² He also disputed the argument that Third World parties preferred aircraft, ships or trucks to ballistic missiles because missiles were more effective and reliable for attacks than other delivery means. For example, “suitcase bombs” were subject to “the chance of discovery” and “the loss of direct control over weapons.”¹¹³

The Bush administration was on the side for missile defense. Defense Secretary Cheney elaborated the WMD proliferation risk and suggested that US defense force plans should take these new threats into consideration in addition to the persistent Soviet threat. His 1991 report stated, “While the requirement for the United States to deter Soviet strategic nuclear attack remains, the spread of military technology of increasing sophistication and destructiveness is a development that must increasingly be considered as we develop military forces to be fielded in the 1990s.” Iraq’s aggression and UN inspectors’ discovery of Iraqi nuclear and bio-chemical weapons programs buttressed those who doubted arms control measures and advocated missile defenses instead. Iraq was a signatory to the Nuclear Non-Proliferation Treaty, the 1925 Protocol prohibiting the use of chemical weapons, and the 1972 Convention on Bacteriological and Toxin Weapons. These arms control regimes had not prevented Iraq from developing nuclear, biological and chemical weapons. During the Iran-Iraq war, the Iraqis had used chemical weapons.¹¹⁴

¹¹¹ Edward Reiss, “Conclusions, Into the 1990s,” in *The Strategic Defense Initiative* (New York: Redwood Press, 1992), 183.

¹¹² Keith Payne, “Missile Defenses In the Future Security Environment—Emerging Missile Threats And The Shadow Of The Gulf War,” *Missile Defense in the 21st Century: Protection Against Limited Threats: Including Lessons From The Gulf War*, (Boulder, CO: Westview Press, 1991), 64–67.

¹¹³ Ibid., 67–69.

¹¹⁴ Robert Jastrow and Max M Kampelman, “Why We Still Need SDI,” *Commentary* 94, no. 5 (November 1992), 23.

The Bush administration's missile defense policy corresponded with the threat level. President Bush's earlier goal of pursuing a moderate scale missile defense system was the product of a strategic environment where no clear threat had yet emerged. To the opponents of missile defense, even this scaled-down version of missile defense put forth by the Bush administration was extravagant, but it should be noted that President Bush was a Republican president and had spent the previous eight years as vice president under Reagan, who had reestablished an extensive missile defense program. It was unrealistic to expect President Bush to completely renounce SDI. Considering this political backdrop, President Bush's missile defense plans meaningfully reflected the security environment.

The commitment to deploy a missile defense system by 1996, as was asserted in the Missile Defense Act of 1991, could be explained by the elevated perception of threat. The Persian Gulf War was an actual demonstration of the potential threat. Therefore, the threat variable of the security perspective had an important effect on the Bush administration's missile defense policy.

2.4.4 Summary

The Bush administration confronted difficult realities in enthusiastically continuing President Reagan's SDI. Several years of research and development efforts had not yet produced impressive technological breakthroughs, and the Bush administration toyed with a couple of new technological architectures such as Brilliant Pebbles and GPALS. The debates over technical feasibility that continued in the 1980s followed the same line as those that occurred between the late 1960s and early 1970s. Proponents of missile defense argued that these latest proposals were more promising and offered full support for them, while opponents not only pointed out technical problems with the new ideas but also claimed that the frequent changes in the blueprints for missile defense itself were indicative of technical problems. The reduced amount of funding provided for SDI in 1989 and 1990 was due to the weak economy and, more importantly, the recognition that with the Cold War over, the United States could begin the decade in a new world where the level of threat was significantly diminished. Despite disagreements over the scale of the Bush administration's missile defense policy and the

likelihood nuclear attacks or accidents, what seems certain is the fact that the Bush administration had much less ambition for SDI and later GPALS than his predecessor, President Reagan. The administration's policy was moving in the direction of downgrading its missile defense policy. Taking the three variables into consideration, the Bush administration's decision to go slow on missile defense is explainable by the security perspective.

US missile defense policy was boosted dramatically when the Missile Defense Act of 1991 was passed. This remarkable policy turn was thanks to the technical optimism and strategic necessity generated by the eruption of the war in the Persian Gulf and the Patriot missile's performance. It was an occasion that reminded decision makers of persisting threats, and the demise of an archrival did not mean the disappearance of danger. The Persian Gulf War was a testament to the new kinds of threats found in the New World, and this served as a wake-up call to decision makers.

There were certainly a number of unresolved questions with respect to the technology and the likelihood of the above threat materializing. Although there was a chance that an irrational actor could attempt to attack the United States with a ballistic missile topped with nuclear warheads or other WMD, the probability was deemed low. Also, the level of threat was perceived to be high due to the destructive power of weapons of mass destruction, but the nature of the regional conflict did not fully justify the deployment of GPALS, which was intended to protect the population in the United States, not troops in theater. On technology, skeptics argued that it was an undue leap of faith to conclude that a missile defense system to protect the general population against incoming intercontinental ballistic missiles was technically feasible based on the success of a theater missile system. In fact, the exaggerated optimism was soon realized, and the very next year after the 1991 Missile Defense Act was legislated, the United States postponed the deployment of the limited defense system to 2002 instead of 1996, recognizing the technical uncertainties.¹¹⁵

There was an element of overexcitement in the 1991 Missile Defense Act. Nevertheless, the enactment of US will to deploy a missile defense system was encouraged by strategic reasons. Saddam Hussein's aggression sparked a new consciousness about security risks, and the Patriot missile's performance improved the prospect of missile defense technology. The

¹¹⁵ Aerospace Daily, "Conferees delay SDIO deployment deadline to 2002," 164, no. 3 (October 5, 1992): 20.

legislation was an attuned response to a new kind of security threat in that it highlighted the need for theater missile defense systems. The Persian Gulf War was a development that triggered a different attitude on missile defense and strongly buttresses the security perspective.

2.5 CLINTON ADMINISTRATION

2.5.1 The Policy Turn

Between proponents and opponents of missile defense, President Clinton clearly represented the latter. He was a Democratic president who was elected in a time when the economy and other domestic agenda items became more pertinent for voters than security issues. Defense was not a central issue for the 1992 presidential election campaign. The absence of a major identified threat, the stumbling economy, and the mounting federal deficit made domestic policies more important campaign subjects. Also, there was little difference in the defense policies articulated by the Democratic candidate, William Clinton, and incumbent President Bush running for his second term. Arkansas Governor Clinton endorsed the Bush administration's overall defense policy course. For military spending, he proposed a \$60 billion cut from President Bush's defense plan for FY 1993 and FY 1997; in percentage terms, only five percent less than Bush's budget request.¹¹⁶ One defense area where the two demonstrated an apparent divergence was missile defense. Clinton supported the development and deployment of theater missile defense systems intended to protect US troops in the battlefield but rejected fielding a more technically challenging and politically controversial system to shield the US mainland unless a credible threat emerged.

As expected, the United States under the Democratic president began with a "moderate" missile defense policy. Its budget was significantly reduced from that of the Bush administration, and theater missile defense was emphasized while national missile defense was

¹¹⁶ Aerospace Daily, "Clinton on defense: In the mainstream, except for SDI," 164, no. 18, (October 27, 1992), 140; Ed Offley, "Don't Expect Big Pentagon Budget Cuts," *Seattle Post-Intelligencer*, November 7, 1992.

limited to research.¹¹⁷ Then came the landmark National Missile Defense Act of 1999 in which the United States vowed to deploy a nationwide missile defense system, though the timing proposed for deployment was vaguely left “as soon as technologically possible.” On signing the bill, President Clinton announced that his administration would make the deployment decision in the summer of 2000 based on four criteria: technology, cost-effectiveness, threats, and the implications for arms control.¹¹⁸

During the eight years of his presidency, the Clinton administration revealed subtle changes in the course of its BMD policy, but the 1999 legislation symbolized an obvious turn since President Clinton had unequivocally objected to similar bills in the past. What were the technological prospects, budgetary conditions, and strategic threats when the administration first opposed an aggressive NMD policy and when President Clinton signed the 1999 legislation? Was the shift by the Clinton administration a result of new developments in the security environment or changes in other conditions such as the budget or technology? If so, what were the incidents that prompted the change? How far did the necessary US technology advance? Did the United States have the economic resources to commit to the missile defense program? Considering these factors, can the 1999 National Missile Defense Act be deemed an alternative in support of the security perspective?

2.5.2 From Technology Readiness to Deployment Readiness Program

The budgetary conditions in the early years of the Clinton administration were tough for missile defense. The new president was elected on a domestic platform focusing on the revival of the weak economy and curbing the federal deficit problem. Defense spending was an easy target for the Democratic presidential candidate in his plan to reduce the federal deficit, and Clinton put forward a plan to cut \$60 billion from the Bush administration’s defense spending proposal. As a first step to implementing Clinton’s campaign promise to achieve the \$60 billion reduction, Defense Secretary Les Aspin directed each of the services in the Pentagon to submit a revised

¹¹⁷ Bill Gertz, “Toward a Thin Missile Defense,” *Air Force Magazine*, July 1995.

¹¹⁸ William Clinton, “Statement on signing the National Missile Defense Act of 1999; Pres Bill Clinton speech; Transcript (July 22, 1999),” GPO 35, no. 30 (August 2, 1999), 1471.

budget plan that would be at least \$14 billion below the original request made by the Bush administration for fiscal year 1994.¹¹⁹ In March 1993, Secretary Aspin disclosed a modified military spending amount of \$263.4 billion, \$2 billion short of his savings goal, but about \$12 billion less than his predecessor, Secretary Cheney, had requested for the upcoming fiscal year. The Aspin outline accelerated reductions in military personnel, cuts in the number of Navy warships, aircraft carriers, ICBMs, and bombers, but it proposed no significant change in weapons systems development and procurement pending a major review of the overall defense strategy. The strategic analysis, the Bottom Up Review (BUR), was to be completed in the summer.¹²⁰ This moderate cut was a reflection of Secretary Aspin's cautious approach to the post-Cold War environment, where no major threat had yet emerged as a replacement for the former Soviet Union, but where uncertainties about regional conflicts and new breeds of threats such as terrorism also grew. In any case, defense spending had been undergoing a steady reduction since 1989, and the new defense secretary worried that any further severe cut could damage an already declining defense industry and further exacerbate the feeble economy.¹²¹ The budget submission included \$3.8 billion for missile defense, \$2.4 billion less than Defense Secretary Cheney's \$6.3 billion request, but about the same level as approved for spending in FY 1993.¹²² Of the \$3.8 billion, \$1.8 billion was allotted for the theater missile defense system and \$1.2 billion for the nationwide system, leaving the rest for other support programs and follow-on technologies.¹²³ In this competitive budgetary environment, the missile defense program in the first two years of the Clinton administration received \$2.8 billion in 1993 and 1994, the lowest level of funds since the inception of SDI.

The Pentagon divided the missile defense program into three categories: near-term, mid-term, and long-term efforts. The near-term effort sought to improve existing theater missile capabilities such as the PAC-2 Patriot missile and the Marine Corps HAWK air defense system. The mid-term plan focused on evaluating the development of more advanced theater missile systems between FY 1996 and FY 1999. They included the PAC-3, the Aegis, and the Theater

¹¹⁹ Associated Press, "Aspin: 'Very cautious' defense cuts for 1994," *Chicago Tribune*, March 28, 1993.

¹²⁰ Associated Press, "Aspin: 'Very cautious' defense cuts for 1994.," Associated Press, "'94 defense budget speeds cuts in troops, retains most weapons," *Chicago Tribune*, March 27, 1993.

¹²¹ Offley, "Don't Expect Big Pentagon Budget Cuts."

¹²² Charles Doe, "Washington News," United Press International, March 27, 1993.

¹²³ Aerospace Daily, "Aspin describes \$ 1.56 billion of budget 'adds' for new missions," 165, no. 59, (March 26, 1993): 481.

High Altitude Area Defense (THAAD) system. The PAC-3 would be the next generation of the Patriot missile. The Aegis was proposed for maritime theater missile defense to protect ports and amphibious operations. THAAD was a wide-area defense system that would be able to cover an area ten times larger than the Patriot missile deployed during the Gulf War. The space-based sensor program, Brilliant Eyes, was scheduled for development in the far-term after FY 2000.¹²⁴ The controversial program's budget was diminished to \$73 million, a \$147 million reduction from the amount appropriated for FY 1993. Moreover, Secretary Aspin eliminated the space-based interceptor program, merging it into the follow-on technologies program element, which also included direct energy systems development and particle beam research.¹²⁵ These cuts were part of the Clinton administration's effort to distance itself from the Reagan and Bush administrations' SDI elements by playing down NMD and futuristic space technologies.

National missile defense policy in the first couple of years under the Clinton leadership followed a slow pace, but it gained some momentum in 1996. During a press briefing in February 1996, Secretary William Perry, who replaced Aspin, promoted an upgrade of the NMD system from a "technology readiness" plan to a "deployment readiness" program. The technology readiness outlined in BUR emphasized that "the NMD program focused on maturing the most challenging technical elements—often called the 'long poles' of the NMD system" without any commitment for deployment.¹²⁶ In contrast, the deployment readiness program, also known as "three plus three," put heavier weight on fielding the NMD system. In the first three years, the US government would plan, develop, and test various elements of an initial NMD system. After the first three years, the United States would assess the ballistic missile threat, and if guaranteed a threat, it would enter the acquisition and deployment phase in the second three years.¹²⁷

¹²⁴ House Committee on Appropriations, *Testimony of Major General Malcolm R. O'Neill, Acting Director, Strategic Defense Initiative Organization: Hearing before the Subcommittee on Defense*, 103rd Cong., 1st sess., April 28, 1993.

¹²⁵ House Committee on Armed Services, *Statement of Major General Malcolm R. O'Neill, USA Acting Director, Ballistic Missile Defense Organization, Accompanied by Admiral John Mitchell and others, Ballistic Missile Defense Hearing before Military Acquisition Subcommittee and Research and Technology Subcommittee*, 103rd Cong. 1st sess., June 10, 1993.

¹²⁶ Senate Appropriations Committee, *Statement by Lt. Gen. Malcolm R. O'Neill, Director, Ballistic Missile Defense Organization, Department of Defense, before the Subcommittee on Strategic Forces, Armed Services Committee, Department of Defense Authorization for Appropriations for FY 97*, 104th Cong., 2nd sess., March 25, 1996.

¹²⁷ Ibid.

Soon after the announcement of the plan, the Pentagon submitted its formal budget request for FY 1997 to Congress. The \$242.6 billion total was a six percent decrease from FY 1996 after adjusting for inflation.¹²⁸ For ballistic missile defense, the DOD requested approximately \$2.8 billion, about \$550 million less than the amount approved by Congress in the previous year. Of the total amount, about \$2.1 billion was for TMD research, development, and procurement efforts, \$508 million for NMD, and \$226 million for other supporting technologies.¹²⁹ The NMD share counted for about 18 percent of the entire missile defense budget, while 75 percent was budgeted for TMD. It indicated that the administration was still halfhearted about a national missile defense system in spite of the seeming boost from the three plus three program.

When President Clinton was reelected in November 1996, Defense Secretary Perry notified the White House that he would not stay in his job as secretary of defense. A moderate Republican from Maine, Senator William Cohen succeeded to Perry's post.¹³⁰ The Quadrennial Defense Review (QDR) was the first major policy statement endorsed by the new secretary. The review recommended a \$2 billion increase to the NMD program over the following five years.¹³¹ For the upcoming FY 1998, the Pentagon requested \$2.97 billion for the entire ballistic missile defense program. Of the total amount, \$1.83 billion was to be spent on TMD programs, \$504 million for NMD, and the other \$250 million for support technologies. Three hundred eighty four million dollars were earmarked for procurement, and all the procurement budgets were moved from the Ballistic Missile Defense Organization to the three military services of the Defense Department.¹³² After the Quadrennial Defense Review, Secretary Cohen submitted a supplemental budget request of \$474 million for NMD in FY 1998.

¹²⁸ Bradley Graham, "\$242.6 Billion Sought For defense in 1997; Clinton Proposal Represents 6 Percent Drop," *Washington Post*, March 5, 1996.

¹²⁹ Senate Appropriations Committee, *Statement by Lt. Gen. Malcolm R. O'Neill, Director, Ballistic Missile Defense Organization, Department of Defense, before the Subcommittee of the Committee on Appropriations on Department of Defense Appropriations for Fiscal Year 1997*, 104th Cong., 2nd sess., March 20, 1996, 43–64.

¹³⁰ Bill Gertz, "Perry to relinquish position after military forces review; Had told Clinton recently; Nunn, Deutsch on list," *Washington Times*, November 7, 1996.

¹³¹ Bill Gertz, "Single-site missile defense leaves Alaska, Hawaii naked," *Washington Times*, May 9, 1997.

¹³² Senate Armed Services Committee, *Prepared Statement by Gen. Lester L. Lyles for the Department of Defense Authorization for Appropriations for Fiscal Year 1998 and the Future Years Defense Program before the Subcommittee on Strategic Forces*, 105th Cong., 1st sess., February 27, 1997.

Debates over the technical viability of NMD during the Clinton administration remained much in the same fashion as before—the critics continued to challenge the possibility of erecting a foolproof system and emphasized the inability to ward off decoys or multiple warheads, but the intensity of their criticism was moderate since the administration did not have an aggressive deployment plan. One heated controversy was a *New York Times* report in August 1993 regarding a Homing Overlay Experiment (HOE) test conducted nine years before.¹³³ In June 1984, the Army launched an antiballistic missile from Kwajalein Island and the interceptor tracked and destroyed a mock warhead deployed by a boost vehicle launched from Vandenberg Air Force Base in Southern California.¹³⁴ The test was exalted by the supporters of SDI as “an absolutely tremendous success.” The *New York Times* report alleged that the Army manipulated the test by installing the target missile with a homing beacon. Former Defense Secretary Weinberger and the Pentagon officials engaged in the test strongly denied the allegation. At Senator David Pryor’s (D-Ark.) request, the General Accounting Office (GAO, renamed the General Accountability Office in 2004) conducted an investigation. The GAO report released in 1994 stated that there was a deception program, but that the plan never materialized and was terminated prior to the test.¹³⁵ However, critics were still skeptical about the test and argued that the environment for this \$300 million test was tightly controlled, losing the realism of the experiment.¹³⁶

Another GAO report published in June 1998 examined the deployment readiness program in an exhaustive study. Although the general architecture of the NMD system was outlined to include space-based radar, ground-based radar, ground-based interceptor, and the Command, Control and Communication, and Intelligence (C3I) systems, according to the report, specific acquisition programs were not sufficiently defined and the three plus three program faced a “high schedule and technology risk” caused by a rushed development schedule. The

¹³³ Tim Weiners, “Lies and Rigged ‘Star Wars’ Test Fooled the Kremlin, and Congress,” *New York Times*, August 18, 1993.

¹³⁴ Charles Mohr, “Army Test Missile Is Said To Destroy A Dummy Warhead: Success of Interceptor Device Likely to Bolster Support for Reagan Proposal,” *New York Times*, June 12, 1984.

¹³⁵ Paul Quinn-Judge, “Reagan-era officials deny faking SDI test,” *Boston Globe*, August 19, 1993.

¹³⁶ John Tirman, “The Politics of Star Wars,” in John Tirman, ed., *Empty Promise: The Growing Case against Star Wars* (Boston: Beacon Press, 1986), 18.

report also indicated that the number of tests planned was inadequate to evaluate the program effectively.¹³⁷

Considering these circumstances, technology was not a vital contributing factor to the success of the 1999 National Missile Defense Act. The deployment decision by this legislation was made before even the assessment on technical feasibility was concluded, and the most intense debates over NMD technology took place after the bill was endorsed. Despite the passage of the bill and his own signature on the act completing the legislative process, President Clinton tried to circumvent the law. Clinton declared he would make a firm decision on deployment in the summer of 2000, after evaluating technology, cost-effectiveness, threats, and the implications for arms control.¹³⁸ Three critical tests were conducted between 1999 and 2000, and only one of them was successful.

With Secretary Cohen who was more supportive of NMD than the previous defense secretaries under President Clinton, and the Republican-dominated Congress, obtaining additional funds for the program was not difficult, but the total cost (estimated at billions of dollars) was still a huge sum to spend on a defense system. In terms of technology, the Clinton administration's NMD policy experienced unimpressive progress despite the upgrade of the program and an extra two billion dollars (an almost 100 percent funding increase) that Secretary Cohen added when adopting the QDR recommendation. The feasibility of a nationwide missile defense system remained controversial before and after the enactment of the National Missile Defense Act. The repeated delays in test schedules and failures in the experiments following the National Missile Defense Act further supported the argument that the technology was not prepared for deployment. The language of the National Missile Defense Act that required the deployment of an NMD system "as soon as technologically possible" demonstrated the US resolve to relentlessly pursue the technology necessary for deployment, rather than confidence in the existing status of the technology. In fact, it tacitly acknowledged the immaturity of the technology for deployment. Nonetheless, the National Missile Defense Act was passed by Congress and signed by President Clinton, which defied the technology factor of the security

¹³⁷ Government Accounting Office, *National Missile Defense: Even with Increased Funding Technical and Schedule Risks Are High*, Washington, DC, June 1998.

¹³⁸ William Clinton, "Statement on signing the National Missile Defense Act of 1999," 1472.

perspective. The next section examines whether there was a significant strategic development jeopardizing US security during this time.

2.5.3 Proliferation of WMD

Major policy statements during the Clinton administration consistently supported theater missile defense. Defense Secretary Aspin's Bottom Up Review in 1993 identified regional conflicts in the Middle East and the Korean Peninsula as major threats and articulated the Clinton administration's leading priority on "forward-deployed US forces." Support for TMD remained firm throughout the three defense secretaries under the Clinton administration. What varied during President Clinton's eight-year term was the US policy on NMD. At the beginning of the Clinton administration, the United States left the national missile defense system as a technological readiness program without a tangible plan for deployment. It was a diluted version of the Missile Defense Act of 1991, which envisioned the deployment of a nationwide missile defense system by 1996. The emphasis on TMD, together with shrunk budgets for the overall missile defense program, corresponded to the post-Cold War security environment, but this stance only lasted for two years. The United States soon reaffirmed its resolve to develop a national missile defense system in both funding terms and policy statements. Missile defense funding was restored to over \$3 billion in 1995 and a more aggressive "three plus three" plan was introduced in the spring of 1996, which stepped up the previous NMD policy by shifting it from a "technology readiness" to a "deployment readiness" program. The National Missile Defense Act of 1999 further demonstrated the US commitment to a national missile defense system.

According to the security perspective, three variables are crucial in determining the missile defense policy decision. Because the other two, technology and budget elements, do not strongly support the claim, the importance of the threat level becomes even greater in judging the validity of the security perspective. What was the strategic environment that caused the upsurge of NMD policy, which led the United States to reinforce its position on NMD?

North Korea was at the center of the nuclear and ballistic missile proliferation concern. In March 1993, North Korea abruptly announced that it would withdraw from the Nuclear

Nonproliferation Treaty (NPT), setting off a crisis. Two months later, North Korea toned down its earlier statement and said it was merely suspending, not withdrawing from the treaty. However, North Korea still insisted that it did not have to comply with the treaty.¹³⁹ North Korea closed its reactor in 1989, but the CIA suspected that the Stalinist country had already reprocessed plutonium to weapons-grade material between 1989 and 1992.¹⁴⁰ In early 1994, North Korea allowed the IAEA to inspect whether Pyongyang was manufacturing nuclear weapons materials. Despite North Korea's disruption, IAEA inspectors found evidence that Pyongyang had expanded its nuclear weapons program.¹⁴¹

Missile proliferation was also worsening as tensions climbed between India and Pakistan in the fall of 1994. Pakistan allegedly bought M-11 missiles from China, and India began to produce its indigenous short-range Prithvi missiles, delivering them to the Indian Army in 1995 for possible deployment.¹⁴²

With these events unfolding, the National Intelligence Council produced an updated National Intelligence Estimate in 1995 that would become important for the missile defense deployment debates. The NIE concluded that 48 states, except for Alaska and Hawaii, would be safe from ballistic missile threats for the next 15 years. The National Intelligence Council's decision to exclude the two states raises the question of whether including them would have produced a different conclusion, and whether it would have shortened the timeline for a potential enemy to obtain a missile attack capability against the United States. It suggests political considerations being factored into intelligence analysis so that the Clinton administration could continue to argue against a more aggressive NMD program. From the security perspective, the Clinton administration's deployment readiness program was troubling. The security perspective cannot explain the discrepancy between the administration's own threat assessment that missile threats would not materialize for another 15 years and its policy decision to advance the NMD program by putting forth the deployment readiness program anyway.

¹³⁹ Steven Greenhouse, "North Korea to Open Access To Nuclear Sites, U.S. Says," *New York Times*, January 6, 1994.

¹⁴⁰ Robert S. Greenberger, "North Korea Has New Threat In Nuclear Issue—Nation Says It Will Quit IAEA, Expel Officials; U.S. Pursues Sanctions," *Wall Street Journal*, June 14, 1994; Lee Michael Katz, U.S. back to square one in N. Korea nuclear standoff," *U.S.A. Today*, March 22, 1994.

¹⁴¹ R. Jeffrey Smith, "N. Korea Adds Arms Capacity; Plutonium Program Is Reported to Double without Inspections," *Washington Post*, April 2, 1994.

¹⁴² *Wall Street Journal*, "Another arms race," September 14, 1994; Brahma Chellaney, "India's new missile puts U.S. in quandary," *Washington Times*, September 22, 1995.

Congress believed that the conclusion of the 1995 NIE was too optimistic, and it was displeased with the analysis's exclusion of the two states. As such, it mandated that the Director of Central Intelligence establish an independent team to review the 1995 NIE.¹⁴³ Accordingly, the DOD directed a panel to evaluate the intelligence estimates, and "the Commission to Assess the Ballistic Missile Threat to the United States," headed by former Defense Secretary Donald Rumsfeld, began its analysis in January 1998. The unclassified executive summary of the review dissented with the intelligence estimates that the United States would not confront a ballistic missile defense threat for the next 15 years. It determined that ballistic missile threats to the United States could emerge with "little or no warning" in much less time than the 15 years predicted by the National Intelligence Council.¹⁴⁴ The review also included the criticism that US intelligence abilities to track and foresee weapons proliferation activities were deteriorating due to inadequate surveillance methods. For example, dependence on US spy satellites prevented the intelligence community from detecting underground complexes for weapons development or even testing. China, North Korea, Iran, and Russia all built concealment facilities, and North Korea's underground work was cited to be the most extensive. Countries also conducted weapons experiments at night or in bad weather to take advantage of the US satellites' limitations.¹⁴⁵

There continued a series of developments in 1998 that elevated security concerns. India's nuclear testing in May 1998 caught the international community, including Washington, off guard. The proliferation of nuclear weapons and ballistic missile technology had been spiraling on the subcontinent since 1996. In January 1996, India test-fired its new Prithvi-II missiles. The upgraded Prithvi missiles were capable of carrying nuclear warheads and reaching Islamabad and other strategic cities in Pakistan such as Kahuta, where Pakistan's nuclear facility was located.¹⁴⁶ Shortly after the Indian missile tests, other gloomy news clouded the region. According to a February 5, 1996 *Washington Times* article, the CIA discovered evidence that Pakistan had purchased 5,000 ring magnets from China. It was an alarming development to

¹⁴³ David A. Fulghum and Paul Mann, "Military Modernization Wins Budget Boost," *Aviation Week & Space Technology*, 145, no. 14, (September 30, 1996): 28.

¹⁴⁴ *Washington Times*, "Every rogue has missile," July 20, 1998; Bill Gertz, "Clinton signs bill for missile defense; Says he's not required to deploy it," *Washington Times*, July 26, 1999.

¹⁴⁵ Walter Pincus, "Buried Missile Labs Foil U.S. Satellites; N. Korea, Iran Among 'Intelligence Gaps,'" *Washington Post*, July 29, 1998.

¹⁴⁶ *Washington Post*, "India Test-Fires A New Missile," January 28, 1996.

intelligence officials since they suspected that the magnets would be used in gas centrifuges to extract enriched uranium.¹⁴⁷ The tension between the two rivals in South Asia was exacerbated in 1998 as India moved its Prithvi missiles close to the border with Pakistan. In response, Pakistan test-fired its Ghauri missile in April 1998. Ghauri was a medium-range missile capable of reaching 930 miles.¹⁴⁸ In May 1998, India conducted a total of five atomic tests in three days, and Pakistan carried out five nuclear tests about two weeks later.¹⁴⁹

The missile proliferation risk was not confined to Asia. The already concerned security community was surprised by another development in the Middle East. Iran conducted a flight test of an intermediate-range ballistic missile, the Shahab-3, in July 1998 in the midst of the Rumsfeld's Team B discussion. Its range was about 800 miles. Iran's test was a destabilizing development to the region since the range included Israel and most of Turkey and Saudi Arabia, key allies of the United States in the region.¹⁵⁰ Martin Indyk, Assistant Secretary of State for Near East Affairs, said that the test of the Shahab-3 did not mean that Iran was capable of deploying the system, but he acknowledged that it was getting closer. According to the State Department's estimation, Iran would be able to deploy such a system in two to five years. Assistant Secretary Indyk also expressed concern about "a Shehab-4, a long-range ballistic missile system which would present an even greater threat" since it would reach Central Europe.¹⁵¹

The most alarming event took place in the summer of 1998. North Korea test-fired an extended-range missile over the East Sea in late August. The two-stage missile, a Taepodong-1, landed at 40 degrees north and 134 degrees east longitude after flying over 800 miles.¹⁵² North Korea's test, in the wake of the Rumsfeld Panel's assessment that the threat was more imminent

¹⁴⁷ Bill Gertz, "China nuclear transfer exposed: Hill expected to urge sanctions," *Washington Times*, February 5, 1996.

¹⁴⁸ Kenneth J. Cooper, "India Sets Off Nuclear Devices; Pakistan Vents Outrage Over Test Explosions, Delhi's First Stance '74," *Washington Post*, May 12, 1998.

¹⁴⁹ Kenneth J. Cooper, "India Sets Off Nuclear Devices"; Dexter Filkins, "India Conducts 3 Underground Nuclear Tests," *Los Angeles Times*, May 12, 1998; Indira A.R. Lakshmana, "With its public united, India holds 2 more tests," *Boston Globe*, May 14, 1998; Jonathan S. Landay, "The New Nuclear World Order: Yesterday's nuclear test by Pakistan, in response to India's, transforms the region," *Christian Science Monitor*, May 29, 1998.

¹⁵⁰ Thomas W. Lippman, "Iran Missile Test Shows Effort to Extend Range," *Washington Post*, July 23, 1998.

¹⁵¹ Bill Gertz, "Longer range on Iranian missile Shaha-4 could hit Central Europe," *Washington Times*, July 29, 1998.

¹⁵² Sandra Sugawara, "N. Korea Fires Ballistic Missile Toward Japan, Tokyo Reports; Pentagon Confirms Firing, Calls It 'Serious Development'" *Washington Post*, August 31, 1998; Barbara Slavin, "North Korea's missile test raises stakes," *USA Today*, September 1, 1998.

than the National Intelligence Council estimated, seemed an affirmation of the panel's conclusion.

While both the supporters and opponents of NMD deployment recognized the proliferation of WMD and its delivery system as major threats to the United States, there was no agreement with regards to the extent of the threats or what should be done to mitigate them. Supporters of NMD were troubled with deterrence nuclear strategy that depended on the prudence of the Soviet leaders in the past and, even more disturbed by the acceptance of the rationality of new enemies. States such as North Korea, Libya, and Iran as well as terrorists had demonstrated unreasonable and erratic behavior, so the prospect of suffering a definite defeat would not be enough to stop these potential enemies from taking risks. They argued that upholding deterrence, which relied on an enemy's rationality and a sufficient offensive capability, was "old think" from the Cold War.¹⁵³ They also continued to make the traditional "insurance policy" and "improving deterrence" claims—a ballistic missile system was designed for a scenario when deterrence failed, and a potential enemy would be more discouraged from attacking the United States when they realized that such an effort would be futile thanks to the US antiballistic missile systems. Another point the supporters used was that the adversaries might blackmail the United States with their Weapons of Mass Destruction (WMD) and ballistic missiles capable of inflicting unacceptable damage on the United States, and proponents of NMD wanted to hedge against such a possibility.

Opponents of ballistic missile defense emphasized the success of deterrence during the Cold War. They argued that history proved deterrence policy prevented even a much more formidable rival, the Soviet Union, from attacking the United States, and that it should be effective against smaller states or organizations hostile to the United States. The Clinton administration's policy against NMD deployment had been based on this line of strategic calculation, that the lone superpower's status with far superior nuclear and conventional military weaponry would effectively dissuade potential enemies from launching ballistic missiles on US territory. This was the logic behind the Clinton administration's steadfast opposition to national missile defense, notwithstanding the volatile developments in Asia and the Middle East. President Clinton showed tremendous resistance to the idea of NMD deployment, as he had

¹⁵³ Keith Payne, "Introduction," in *Deterrence in the Second Nuclear Age* (Lexington, KY: The University Press of Kentucky, 1996), 10–15.

threatened to veto similar legislative pieces before 1999. His reluctance to begin the deployment process and his approval of the legislation, which made an important policy statement for deployment, exhibited a serious discrepancy between his two contradictory policy gestures and demonstrated that the 1999 National Missile Defense Act was not a mainly strategic decision. These security developments were sound candidates to justify the security perspective on the basis of threat; however, the Clinton administration was not fully on board with the goal. Similar to the Johnson Sentinel case, the National Missile Defense Act of 1999 was set off by new threat developments, but these strategic events alone were not able to change the Clinton administration's positions.

2.5.4 Summary

The focus of the last case study tested for the security perspective was the National Missile Defense Act of 1999. The legislation was a significant policy shift, not only because it supported a policy option to deploy a missile defense system for population defense, which was a departure from the Clinton administration's original preference emphasizing only TMD, but also because President Clinton had refused almost identical bills before 1999.

The Clinton administration's NMD policy experienced gradual changes in the course of its eight years. Examining the three variables, neither cost nor technological advancement were deemed to be determining factors in the 1996 deployment readiness program or the declaration of NMD deployment in 1999. The economy was recovering and the budgetary conditions had improved, which allowed breathing room to increase the missile defense budget. However, it was still difficult to justify the budget increase without showcasing notable technological progress or the presence of a large-scale threat to the United States.

In terms of threat, the immediacy of adversaries' weapons development rising to the level of a genuine threat to the United States, their preference of methods, and the likelihood of the adversaries' reckless attack on the United States were all matters of dispute between supporters and opponents of the national missile defense deployment. For the key decision makers in the Clinton administration, a rogue state or terrorist organization launching an attack against the United States with a ballistic missile was a low probability risk, and deterrence-only was an

adequate strategy. The Democratic administration was more acutely concerned with arms control and diplomatic relations with other countries. It believed that NMD would damage the US reputation and might provoke Russia and China into an unnecessary arms race. Until the 1999 National Missile Defense Act, the Clinton administration opposed NMD deployment, arguing that the ballistic missile threat was not imminent. More importantly, these states or terrorist organizations would not dare to attack the United States, whose military might far exceeded their own. In terms of the preferred mode of attack, BMD opponents believed long-range missiles would not be the weapons of choice for terrorists or rogue states since other means such as smuggling and detonating WMDs in a suitcase or the trunk of a car would be easier without exposing their identity or location.¹⁵⁴

The Clinton administration did not convincingly lay out the strategic justifications for its policy shift because it did not believe that NMD deployment was a strategic necessity. President Clinton was forced to endorse the 1999 missile defense legislation by congressional pressure and electoral politics. From the security perspective, there had been a number of important strategic developments that proved the peril of nuclear proliferation and ballistic missiles, and thus support the hypothesis of the security perspective. North Korea, India, Pakistan, and Iran were the major players in these disconcerting occurrences. The escalated nuclear tensions caused by India's nuclear testing and Pakistan's reaction, Iran's Shabah testing, and North Korea's two-stage missile test could be surmised as determinants swaying the Clinton administration's assessment towards a more sympathetic view of NMD. A series of unsettling security developments in the mid- to late 1990s, in particular the North Korea missile test, were all deemed reasonable factors to support the security perspective in explaining the enactment of the National Missile Defense Act of 1999. However, the interval between these disturbing strategic developments and the timing of the bill when it was enacted, along with the absence of technology breakthrough or favorable cost estimates undermines the security perspective's argument that a policy option is a response to a threat. In general, the security perspective was able to explain the US intention to deploy an NMD system but could not fully explain the Clinton administration's behavior.

¹⁵⁴ Helen Dewar, "Senate Backs Missile Defense Network," *Washington Post*, August 4, 1995.

2.6 CONCLUSION OF THE CHAPTER

The purpose of this chapter was to test if the security perspective could explain US national missile defense policy decisions. The three pillars of the security perspective are technology, cost and security threat. This chapter applied the security perspective to five case studies: (1) the Sentinel deployment decision in 1967 under President Johnson, (2) the ABM Treaty signed by President Nixon in 1972, (3) President Reagan's Strategic Defense Initiative, (4) President Bush's Missile Defense Act of 1991, and (5) the National Missile Defense Act of 1999 under President Clinton. These five cases were chosen because they showed significant shifts from earlier policies promoted by the existing leadership. The three elements of the security perspective were examined as potential variables causing these changes. Evidence suggests that of the three variables, threat or strategic developments had the biggest influence on US missile defense policy. However, the advent or recognition of a serious threat was not sufficient in explaining shifts in missile defense policy.

Analyzing and comparing the significance of each of the three factors in turn, it appears that technology did not play a decisive role in the missile defense decision making process. It was not because technology was a minor element—on the contrary, it could be cited as the most important factor had it been possible to predict definitely whether the proposed systems would be achievable. If it could have been proven that the required technology was unachievable, it would have been the end of discussion, since no one would commit resources to a nonfunctional system. If the feasibility of BMD technology were proven, however, it would greatly boost support for deploying the missile defense system.

The analyses of the five cases demonstrated that the prospect of technical feasibility was a matter of perception. Technological immaturity at a given time was proof of impossibility to opponents of missile defense. Supporters of missile defense, on the other hand, believed that it was due to insufficient funding and commitment. The nature of the judgment on technical feasibility lies in the prospects for the future. This attribute limited the determining role of technology in missile defense debates and perpetuated controversies over the question.

For all five cases, there was no point at which technical feasibility provided certainty one way or the other for decision makers. When there was an improved outlook on technology, believers in missile defense capitalized on those moments. For example, President Reagan's

visionary scheme was based on the hope of applying newly developed technologies. Similarly, optimism soared during the Bush administration after witnessing Patriot missiles destroying Scud missiles in the 1991 Gulf War. These circumstances helped promote a more ambitious missile defense policy. However, the expectation turned out to be overly sanguine as SDI went through multiple transformations in its design due to technical challenges. Furthermore, the initial optimism buoyed by the success of the Patriot missile in the Gulf theater soon waned when it became increasingly apparent that TMD capability could not be easily translated into a reliable NMD system. The perception of technical feasibility has a quality of faith in its judgment. The futuristic attribute of this judgment makes it a matter of perspective. Because the perceptions differed, technology does not appear to have played a leading role in missile defense policy.

With regard to cost, there are a couple of sub-factors that need to be considered. One is the absolute amount of money needed to erect a system. ABM has been one of the most expensive defense research programs in US history, requiring billions of dollars and estimated to cost even more for the deployment of a missile defense system. Proponents of missile defense believe that ensuring the security of the nation is worth any cost, while opponents of missile defense think the cost can be better used for more urgent defense programs or domestic programs. A more important factor is the health of the overall economy and the size of the defense budget, which is a reflection of economic soundness and political will. A weak economy certainly restrains the available pool of money for an expensive defense program, but political will can overcome the challenge. Three of the five cases demonstrated decision makers' political resolve to circumvent economic constraints. The Sentinel deployment, SDI launch, and Missile Defense Act of 1991 were supported when such high costs placed tremendous burdens on already strained economic and budgetary situations.

Despite skeptics' claim that a high price tag is one more reason to oppose missile defense and seek alternative nuclear strategies or weapons systems, it did not dissuade supporters of missile defense. During distressed economic and budgetary times, the cost was certainly a discouraging factor to decision makers, especially in Congress, but it was often overcome by political determination. This study suggests that while it was a consideration, cost was not a decisive factor to policy makers.

The third pillar of the security perspective, strategic condition, is the most critical element of the security perspective. The five missile defense policy turns all took place following unsettling strategic developments; China's nuclear tests and the Soviets' rising strategic power set off the 1967 ABM deployment decision, the ABM Treaty was a result of the rough strategic balance in 1972, growing Soviet power in the 1980s provoked President Reagan to envision a massive missile defense system, Saddam Hussein's invasion of Kuwait attested to the presence of a persistent threat in the New World in 1991, and nuclear and missile proliferation, particularly a series of nuclear and ballistic missile tests by countries hostile to the United States such as Iran and North Korea, heightened the sense of urgency for deploying a nationwide missile defense system in 1999.

These antecedents constituted a promising pattern for the argument that external conditions caused missile defense policy turns. However, further analysis demonstrated that four of the five cases revealed the limits of the security perspective in explaining the policy changes. There are two reasons for this observation. First, the decision makers did not always examine all important aspects of their decisions. For example, the Strategic Defense Initiative during President Reagan's term and the Missile Defense Act under President Bush seemed reasonable at first glance given the strategic environment where the Soviet Union was growing its power and the proliferation problem was worsening. A problem in arguing for SDI arose when the Reagan administration was not able to clarify whether SDI would be providing population protection or point defense. It also sent mixed signals on the final goal of SDI as to whether it was a deployment or research and development effort. These were symptoms of the lack of analysis on the most fundamental questions prior to President Reagan's major announcement on SDI, and these frailties undermine the argument that SDI was solidly an outcome of strategic calculations against a perceived threat. The Missile Defense Act of 1991 turned out to be a hasty move, particularly in judging the technological prospects. The goal of deploying a missile defense system in 1996 had to be quickly adjusted the next year by extending the deadline another six years, and the likelihood of an accidental or Third World country's attack on the United States was still in dispute. Only the ABM Treaty fit to the hypothesis of the security perspective in an integral way—the technical uncertainties, the cost-inefficiency of ABM vis-à-vis the Soviet offensive systems, and the rough parity of strategic power between the United States and the

Soviet Union all seemed to line up against the Nixon administration's preferred deployment policy, so the administration compromised.

Second, the decision makers' behavior indicated that the increasing level of threat was insufficient to convince key policy makers in the administration, yet they eventually shifted their stances anyway. For example, the security perspective alone could not account for why the Johnson administration and the Clinton administration supported deployment of ballistic missile defense systems when such decisions were deemed contradictory to their own strategic calculations. The Johnson administration's reasoning for the ABM deployment decision in 1967 was fraught with inconsistencies since Johnson administration officials zealously advocated the MAD doctrine and dismissed the China threat argument right up until they announced the deployment plan. Defense Secretary McNamara's later account that the deployment would help protect US offensive systems only added confusion and inconsistency to the administration's justification for the decision. President Clinton's endorsement of missile defense deployment through the National Missile Defense Act of 1999 resembled the Sentinel case. The Clinton administration did not believe that there was an imminent threat that warranted NMD deployment nor that the technology was ready, and yet Clinton endorsed the 1999 legislation that was perceived to have a chilling effect on the US relationship with Russia, China, and even allies. The administration's action and its underlying strategic beliefs exhibited contradictions

In encapsulating the three elements of the security perspective, technology and cost were not determining factors. The judgment on technical feasibility relies heavily on contingencies in the future, and this quality allows both supporters and opponents to maintain their positions irrespective of the status of the existing technology. Similarly, the level of adequate funding for missile defense is subject more to decision makers' preferences than the costs of the system or the size of the defense budget. The last element, threat, was extremely important and powerful in determining the policy changes, but threat alone was often unable to justify the decision makers' behavior. The gaps could be filled only by injecting political elements such as congressional pressure and upcoming presidential elections. Overall, the security perspective was persuasive although it did not provide complete explanations to the five missile defense policy turns.

3.0 BUREAUCRATIC POLITICS PERSPECTIVE

This chapter tests the soundness of the bureaucratic politics perspective's claim, which posits that the executive branch is the determinant factor in the decision making process. The bureaucratic politics perspective puts forward that bureaucrats' influence can even exceed that of the president. Another argument this perspective makes is that bureaucrats pursue a policy option which can best serve their organizational interests.

According to the bureaucratic politics perspective, bureaucracies dominate the policy making process thanks to their expertise and responsibilities. Thus, the bureaucratic politics perspective argues that a policy option is an outcome of the executive branch, as opposed to Congress or strategic conditions. When formulating policies and engaging in policy debates, bureaucracies are inclined to shape and push a policy option representing their organizational preferences. Such an argument entails another claim that the president succumbs to bureaucracies' influence. From these hypotheses, the core questions this chapter attempts to answer are: did the executive branch have a determining influence on missile defense policy? Which bureaucratic agency within the executive body won the political game and why? Did a bureaucracy or bureaucracies try to maneuver the president's view? Did bureaucracies, in doing so, try to enhance their parochial interests such as expanding organizational power or budget or advancing ideological preferences?

In an effort to answer these questions, this study first identifies the major players for the five missile defense cases. In analyzing bureaucracy, an ensuing question arises as to who represents it. Bureaucracy is composed of a number of subunits, and hundreds of personnel within an organization, and it is not surprising that these subunits and individuals have clashing ideology and political views, and thus different preferences. Which level in a bureaucracy should this study focus on in analyzing its behavior? Since the missile defense decisions chosen for this study were all high-profile cases on the national political scene, the heads, not mid- or

low-level bureaucrats, of pertinent departments are one of the main foci of this study. Among the departmental heads, secretaries of defense and secretaries of state are studied for all five cases considering the military and diplomatic implications of missile defense policy. In addition, the role of national security adviser and other players are discussed as necessary. An essential part of this chapter is contrasting the behaviors of major actors and the presidents' reactions to bureaucrats' inputs. After analyzing the players, each case study summarizes the interplay among the bureaucrats and the effect of the bureaucratic politics perspective in explaining the policy outcome.

3.1 JOHNSON ADMINISTRATION

For years, the Johnson administration did not seriously consider an option to deploy an antiballistic missile defense system. That changed with Secretary McNamara's announcement to deploy the Sentinel system in September 1967. This chapter attempts to test the bureaucratic politics perspective paradigm for the Johnson administration's 1967 decision. Key questions to be asked are: who were the major players in the Sentinel deployment decision making process? What was each participant's original stance and why did they support the policy option? What was the political games the participants played, who won the games and why? Or was the policy outcome none of the options main players originally proposed, but a product of a political settlement?

During the Johnson administration, Defense Secretary Robert McNamara, Secretary of State Dean Rusk, and National Security Assistant McGeorge Bundy (until he was succeeded by Walt Rostow) advised the president on security matters. The three were all President Kennedy's appointees, and President Johnson wanted to maintain continuity—especially in defense and security policies—when he unexpectedly inherited the presidency after the sudden death of President Kennedy. The United States was engaged in the war in Indochina and the Cold War with the Soviet Union. The urgency of the foreign affairs matters coupled with President Johnson's lack of confidence in these areas demanded that he keep the Kennedy administration's critical national security staff.

President Johnson developed trusting relationships with the three men and worked closely with them for his foreign policy decisions. He was impressed with Secretary McNamara for his intelligence and largely agreed with the defense secretary's goal to make the Department of Defense more efficient. The president was also respectful to the secretary of state. The two developed a personal friendship beyond the official relationship, which Secretary Rusk did not have with his former boss, President Kennedy.

With respect to ABM, the defense secretary played the most important role among the president's aides, but President Johnson was not inhibited from exploring diverse opinions put forward by others. The president consulted with Secretary Rusk since the ABM deployment issue was intertwined with an arms negotiation with the Soviet Union, listened to the professional judgment of the military, and sought advice from renowned scientists.

Before the Johnson administration announced its remarkable ABM deployment plan in September 1967, debates over the deployment had been already brewing for a while. President Johnson held numerous meetings with key officials of the administration. The president was aware of the intense disagreements over the issue within his administration, and his decision was the outcome of a deliberate decision making process taking various aspects of the issue into consideration.

According to the bureaucratic politics perspective, the Department of Defense would gladly take any opportunity to expand its programs. It was natural of the Pentagon bureaucrats to desire to increase their organizational power and funds. Security concerns also contributed to this desire, particularly when the Soviet Union seemed to step up its nuclear capacity and another communist country, the People's Republic of China, joined the nuclear club. In contrast, the State Department, believing in diplomacy, was expected to be more willing to negotiate with adversaries and emphasize efforts to establish an effective nonproliferation regime in the international community since State Department officials tended to deem that preventing any physical conflicts was a more meaningful goal than winning a war.

This section begins by investigating the different positions on ABM deployment taken by the key cabinet members including the secretaries of defense and state. It also examines the military chiefs' arguments in comparison with that of Secretary McNamara, the interplay between the civilian boss and the armed services leadership, and the president's reaction to the disagreements among his aides.

3.1.1 Department of Defense: Secretary McNamara and the Military

Robert McNamara was little known within political circles, and many were surprised when he was named the secretary of defense by Kennedy. McNamara had almost no background in government or politics except teaching statistical techniques for military logistics management to Army Air Force officers during World War II. He worked for an accounting firm and began working at the Ford Motor Company. When he was nominated for the secretary job, McNamara had just been promoted to the president of Ford Motor Company.¹

Thanks to his business background, McNamara was keen on the efficiency of an organization, and he detested the bureaucratic characteristics of the Pentagon. Secretary McNamara considered the Department of Defense the epitome of bureaucracy riddled with lethargy, ineffectiveness, and incompetence, and he was resolved to fix these problems by increasing productivity and cost-efficiency through the application of business techniques. He initiated a revolutionary transformation at the Pentagon and the most significant of his efforts was the establishment of a new budgetary system. He began the Planning, Programming and Budgeting System (PPBS) and Systems Analysis practices that integrated DOD planning processes previously partitioned independently among the three services. He also introduced the “program package” under which the funds were allocated by program rather than by services. The old practice contained serious coordination problems. For example, the Army made plans to employ airlifts that the Air Force was not able to afford, and each services’ estimation of war duration for planning purposes was not in synch with the other estimations. Some of the weapons were in short supply while others were oversupplied. These problems were alleviated by a more integrated budget system and systems analysis that allowed for the evaluation of various alternatives to the existing programs.²

However, his abrasive management style and lack of understanding of government organization caused criticism within the Pentagon, particularly by the professional military. Secretary McNamara ignored the military culture, which esteemed hierarchy, tradition, and standardized procedures, and his approach clashed with many in uniform from the onset of his tenure. Upon his arrival, he ordered a review of major military policy in four areas. Such

¹ Jack Raymond, “The “McNamara Monarchy,” in *Power at the Pentagon* (New York: Harper & Row, 1964), 282.

² *New York Times*, “Text of McNamara’s Statement to Platform Group,” August 18, 1964.

studies had been conducted by the military in the past, but McNamara assigned the task to his civilian aides. The military felt ignored and bypassed. His aides were mostly young, Ivy League educated professionals, called “whiz kids” for their technical skills. The Secretary’s reliance on his aides even for such military subjects as nuclear strategy aroused deep resentment within the military. They thought the civilian aides were making military decisions based on their academic theories “without having the responsibility of command.” General Thomas D. White, former Air Force Chief of Staff, said, “In common with other military men I am profoundly apprehensive of the pipe-smoking, trees-full-of owls types of so-called defense intellectuals who have been brought into this nation’s capital.” The “whiz kids” Secretary McNamara brought with him were able men and made positive contributions to the Defense Department but the secretary’s way of management produced serious grievances among the military.³

One of the best-known stories baring Secretary McNamara’s attitude was the incident during the Cuban missile crisis. In dealing with the critical situation, the secretary insisted on direct communications with ship commanders at an operations center instead of using the standardized communication systems through the chain of command. Admiral George W. Anderson later criticized his civilian boss for lacking respect for and trust in the military leadership, and soon after he was dropped from the Chief of Naval Operations position. Secretary McNamara also had a reputation for being an extreme micromanager, which frustrated high-ranking civilian officials as well as the military at the Pentagon. Within a year, all of the Joint Chiefs of Staff but General David M. Shoup, Commandant of the Marine Corps, left their posts.⁴

Secretary McNamara had ideas about the US strategic posture and its military policy that were quite different from the traditional Defense Department approach. He determined that the United States possessed enough strategic offensive weapons and decided to curb the growth of them. On strategic defense, while the military chiefs supported ABM deployment, Secretary McNamara had a strong conviction that it was not necessary to deploy the antiballistic missile defense system and recommended for years that the president only pursue research and development. He thought ABM had more of a bargaining chip value for possible arms negotiations with the Soviets than a military value. He believed in arms control, shared many of

³ Raymond, *Power at the Pentagon*, 283, 285, 289.

⁴ *Ibid.*, 285–6, 289.

Secretary of State Rusk's views including the peril of the arms race, and worked closely with the secretary of state, often defending him from the military chiefs' objections against arms treaties.

Secretary McNamara's actions contradicted one of the hypotheses of the bureaucratic politics perspective—that the secretary would make policies to increase the Defense Department budget and weapons stockpiles. Instead, he was more concerned with saving costs and restraining the arms race with the Soviet Union, and ABM was no exception to this attitude. The defense secretary competed with the military chiefs, not the State Department bureaucracy. Secretary McNamara engaged in an intense political game with his own subordinates, and he was quite effective in overpowering the military's voice. However, his influence eroded as the military became shrewder in playing the political games with the defense secretary under a new military leadership.

The defense secretary's earlier success in overcoming the military's suggestion for deploying a missile defense system was partly thanks to his exploitation of the military services' turf battle. Of the three services in the military, the Army had the highest stake in ballistic missile defense policy. The Army was involved in the very inception of the missile defense effort, and its responsibility grew as the Nike Zeus program was assigned to the Army in 1958. Nonetheless, there was confusion as to which service was in charge of the missile defense mission. The Air Force was tasked with a ballistic missile warning system and tactical fighters in the air. Although the Navy had a limited responsibility for strategic defense, its Polaris submarines were to cover the areas neither the Army nor the Air Force could manage.⁵ The division of the missile defense task among the three prompted the services to desire dominance over the mission.

Another source of contention among the services was over anti-satellite programs that had enormous potential to be applied to antiballistic missile technology. Like antiballistic missile defense, the anti-satellite mission was spread across multiple services. The Army's anti-satellite program was a spin-off of the Nike Zeus program, but the Air Force also had its own Thor missile designed to destroy satellites. The Army conducted its first test to intercept satellite weapons carrying a hostile bomb in May 1963. About a year later, the Air Force succeeded in its own test with the Thor missile. The Army missile was tested at Kwajalein Island, and the Air

⁵ Michael H. Armacost, "The Politics of Reorganization," in *The Politics of Weapons Innovation: The Thor-Jupiter Controversy* (New York: Columbia University Press, 1969), 225.

Force Thor rocket was launched from Johnston Island, both in the Central Pacific. The Navy was also studying a system launched from a Polaris submarine to fill the gap that neither the Army nor the Air Force could cover from the Kwajalein atoll or Johnston Island.⁶

Until the mid-1960s, the Joint Chiefs of Staff had competed with each other on ABM or other system deployment issues by promoting their own services' programs. However, they realized that Secretary McNamara exploited this division within the services to his advantage to slash military programs. After several years under Secretary McNamara, the Joint Chiefs of Staff (JCS) decided that they needed to put forth a united front to overcome the defense secretary's influence against their interests, and they positioned themselves to support the deployment of ABM systems.⁷

The Army had already determined at the end of the Eisenhower administration that its ballistic missile defense system was mature enough to be considered for a deployment decision, but Secretary McNamara never seriously entertained the idea of deployment even in the 1960s. Although the Army claimed that the Nike Zeus system could destroy a rudimentary offensive system, it was susceptible to multiple warheads or decoys.⁸ Secretary McNamara, citing the inability of the Nike Zeus system to counter these "sophisticated" attacks, ordered an upgrade of the Nike Zeus program and renamed it Nike-X in 1963 so that the ABM system would not be obsolete against these challenges after being deployed.⁹ Nike-X was an effort to correct these vulnerabilities with faster missiles and radar systems capable of discriminating imitations and defeating multiple bombs.¹⁰

Secretary McNamara's order to redirect Nike Zeus to Nike-X earned the Johnson administration a couple of years to defer a deployment decision. However, both international and domestic situations dramatically altered the dynamics over the ABM debate in the ensuing years. By 1965, Secretary McNamara was under rising demands to make a deployment decision.

⁶ *Chicago Tribune*, "Here's Weapon Johnson May Be Discussing: Intercepting Bomb in Orbit No Feat," September 18, 1964; John G. Norris, "McNamara Confirms Spacecraft Intercepts," *Washington Post, Times Herald*, September 19, 1964; Michael Pakenham, "More Bared on U.S. Defenses," *Chicago Tribune*, September 19, 1964; Marvin Miles, "Anti-Satellite Missile Launch Sites Revealed," *Los Angeles Times*, October 5, 1964.

⁷ Lawrence J. Korb, "The Battle of the Potomac," in *The Joint Chiefs of Staff: The First Twenty-five Years* (Bloomington: Indiana University Press, 1976), 115–6; Halperin, "The Decision To Deploy The ABM," 76–78.

⁸ Howard Margolis, "U.S. Build Better Missile Defense At Twentieth of the Present Cost," *Washington Post, Times Herald*, April 14, 1965.

⁹ John G. Norris, "Anti-Missile Plan Altered Under Budget," *Washington Post, Times Herald*, January 18, 1963.

¹⁰ *Ibid.*

Externally, the Soviets were stepping up their ballistic missile defenses and China conducted two nuclear tests. At home, congressional pressure was growing and the professional military began to directly and openly dispute the defense secretary.

While the deployment decision was being postponed, the Army was making progress in developing the Nike-X system. The Army tested a short-range Sprint missile successfully for the first time in March 1965 after two years of development. The Sprint missile destroyed a mock enemy missile by using the “pop-up” method in White Sands, New Mexico.¹¹

There began surfacing the idea of a thin system, citing the Chinese threat. With the new threat of China emerging, the administration started to contemplate the possibility of having to build a defensive system not against massive Soviet attacks but a limited Chinese attack. It was less expensive than a large-scale system and technically more feasible. Nonetheless, Secretary McNamara argued that there was no immediate need for deployment since China would not be able to develop an operational ICBM capable of reaching the United States until the mid-1970s.

As the antiballistic missile was increasingly becoming a hot potato issue in political circles, it was also becoming more and more difficult for the Johnson administration to simply maintain the status quo and keep postponing a deployment decision. In this circumstance, the defense secretary and JCS presented their dissenting views directly to the president on December 9, 1966.¹²

While President Johnson, Defense Secretary McNamara and Secretary of State Rusk were trying to work out ways to begin arms talks with the Soviets, the Chairman of the Joint Chiefs of Staff, General Earl Wheeler, was unabatedly promoting the ABM deployment through every available conduit—before Congress, at forums, and to the media. For about two years, Chairman Wheeler had been telling Congress that the Joint Chiefs of Staff unanimously recommended the ABM deployment. Chairman Wheeler also actively exploited media events. In answering a question after a speech at the National Press Club in January 1967, the general reiterated his support for a small-scale Nike-X system at \$4 billion and went further to say it was possible to expand the scale “depending on what the other side does.”¹³

Chairman Wheeler’s statements were in contradiction with Secretary McNamara’s

¹¹ Associated Press, “Missile-Killer Test-Fired Successfully,” *Washington Post, Times Herald*, March 30, 1965; *Chicago Tribune*, “Army Reports 1st Success of Sprint Missile,” March 30, 1965, 7.

¹² Korb, “An Overview,” *The Joint Chiefs of Staff*, 9.

¹³ John Finney, “Johnson Backed on Missile Defense,” *New York Times*, January 18, 1967.

official position on ABM deployment. The public disputes between the military leadership and the civilian secretary of defense shed light on another issue in February 1967, this time regarding the Soviets' Tallinn system. Secretary McNamara, accepting the CIA's judgment, argued that the Tallinn system was an upgrade of a surface-to-air missile against US bombers. On the contrary, military intelligence regarded the system as an initial deployment of Russia's antiballistic missile defense. The Joint Chiefs squared off with the defense secretary, who trusted the CIA analysis and argued that the Russian Tallinn network was designed to encompass US missile passage routes to Russia.¹⁴ Chairman Wheeler said that the administration's view was "difficult to accept," flatly questioning the civilian chief.¹⁵ He also took his position supporting the deployment of an ABM system to NBC's *Today* Sunday talk show and argued that ABM was well worth the cost. The general made his case for ABM by elaborating that "deterrence is a combination of weapons and a state of mind" and continued that "I feel that a measure of defense adds to the posture of our deterrent."¹⁶ The Sunday talk show was a venue for pleading highly political issues. At the end, Chairman Wheeler outsmarted his boss in two important ways that helped the military win the political fight with the secretary of defense: the chairman was able to coalesce the three military services' support, and he also took advantage of the political climate for the deployment of an ABM system by taking his case directly to the public.

3.1.2 Secretary of State Dean Rusk

Secretary of State Dean Rusk was one of President Johnson's confidantes. Although Secretary Rusk and President Kennedy had a cordial, trusting, and mutually respectful relationship, it was kept at a distance and never extended beyond that of professionals. Dean Rusk admired President Kennedy for his intellect and ability to absorb details, but did not appreciate his management style. Rusk was particularly exasperated with Kennedy's direct dealings with mid-

¹⁴ George C. Wilson, "Joint Chiefs Challenge Stand on Anti-Missiles: Contend White House Underestimates Size of Russian System," *Washington Post*, February 22, 1967.

¹⁵ *Washington Post, Times Herald*, "Wheeler Hits U.S. Policy on ABM, February 23, 1967.

¹⁶ *New York Times*, "Wheeler Back Antimissile Net: Justifies Cost of System in Opposing McNamara," February 27, 1967; George C. Wilson, "Service Secretaries Back Joint Chiefs on ABM," *Washington Post, Times Herald*, May 4, 1967.

level State Department staff, sidestepping the secretary of state. In contrast, Secretary Rusk developed a tight kinship with President Johnson. Their personalities and backgrounds connected the two men easily. They had a lot in common. They were both from the South—Rusk grew up in a small town in Cherokee County in Georgia and Johnson was from rural Texas—with a humble upbringing and made their own way up in politics and government.¹⁷

Rusk's outlook on international security was typical of what was expected from the secretary of state. He strongly believed in arms control and nonproliferation, worked hard for the cause, and delivered productive records during his tenure as the secretary of state for Presidents Kennedy and Johnson. The United States signed the Limited Test Ban Treaty in 1963, the Outer Space Treaty three years later, and the Nuclear Nonproliferation Treaty in 1968. The seeds were also sown for the SALT negotiations, although the talk was only concluded years later under President Nixon's leadership.¹⁸

Secretary Rusk had faith in the MAD doctrine that Secretary McNamara contrived. He believed that US nuclear weapons should be used only in response to an enemy attack and ruled out any possibility of a first strike. He thought it was un-American to launch a nuclear attack first and that maintaining the conditions to satisfy MAD was critical to preserving peace. The US ABM, in his view, was potentially damaging to the MAD doctrine, technologically ineffective anyway against Soviets' efforts to offset it, and would provoke a pointless arms race.¹⁹

Dean Rusk was not a central figure in the ABM deployment decision making process since it was essentially a military decision. Also, the secretary's position was basically presented by Defense Secretary McNamara in the ABM debates. Meanwhile, the debates over ABM deployment were heating up between Secretary McNamara and the military within the Pentagon bureaucracy.

¹⁷ Richard Rusk, "The Rusks of Cherokee County," in *As I Saw It* (New York: W.W.Norton & Company, 1990), 33–44.

¹⁸ Rusk, "Arms Control and the Test Ban," and "Arms Control Under Johnson," in *As I Saw It*, 254–259, 340–345.

¹⁹ Ibid., "Arms Control Under Johnson," 349.

3.1.3 National Security Adviser Walt Rostow

President Johnson had two security assistants during his presidency. McGeorge Bundy from the Kennedy administration continued to serve President Johnson until Walt W. Rostow took over the job in March 1966. The ABM deployment debate intensified while Rostow was the president's national security assistant. The role of national security assistant is not to make policy but to coordinate and prioritize information arriving at the White House. Rostow recognized his responsibilities and mostly stayed within his job's realm.²⁰ One area in which he was later criticized for overstepping his authority and failing to present diverse, bureaucratic opinions to the president was the Vietnam policy. He was a hawk on this issue, and Rostow advised President Johnson to take a tough stance with North Vietnam. He was one of the main architects of the Vietnam policy and thus considered responsible for the failure in Vietnam.²¹

Rostow stuck by the primary responsibility of the national security assistant in other areas, including ABM policy, letting Secretary McNamara and Secretary Rusk perform their duties as the heads of the Pentagon and the State Department. Rostow understood the limits of his role. He insisted that his job was no more than coordinating and managing the flow of information for the president, and he was indeed careful not to step on anyone's toes, for example, by informing Secretary Rusk of his meetings when he met with foreign missions.²² There was one area where Rostow played a somewhat significant role in the ABM debate. When the Glassboro summit produced no promises of arms talks, it was Rostow who finally persuaded President Johnson that the Russians were not ready to enter arms talks. Rostow also surveyed the Soviets' response to the US ABM deployment, the perception of technical feasibility in Soviet studies, and the state of ABM technology to carry out the president's instructions. However, Rostow was preoccupied with the Vietnam War, and the Middle East and he did not

²⁰ Keith C. Clark and Laurence J. Legere, eds., "The White House National Security Staffs Since 1947," in *The President and the Management of National Security: A Report by the Institute for Defense Analyses*, (New York: Frederick A. Praeger Publishers, 1969), 85.

²¹ *New York Times*, "Voice of U.S. Policy: Walt Whitman Rostow," April 13, 1967; Drew Pearson and Jack Anderson, "Veto of Warsaw Blamed on Rostow," *Washington Post, Times Herald*, April 19, 1968; Chicago Tribune, "U.S. Was 3 Years Late in Viet: Rostow," January 5, 1969.

²² John Prados, "The Summit that Almost Was," in *Keepers of the Keys: a history of the National Security Council from Truman to Bush* (New York: Morrow, 1991), 186.

play a prominent role in shaping the Johnson administration's decision to deploy an antiballistic missile defense system.²³

3.1.4 President Lyndon Johnson

What role did President Johnson play in the 1967 decision to deploy an ABM system? On the surface, it seems reasonable to hypothesize that he was not a central figure in the ABM decision, and there are a couple of reasons for such an expectation. One of them is the prominence of his domestic policies. President Johnson was innovative and passionate about civil rights, the War on Poverty, and the Great Society programs, and his successes in these areas eclipsed other aspects of his presidency, permitting the impression that he was not as adept or interested in foreign policies as in domestic matters. Also contributing to this notion was the fact that, in the security arena, his best-known foreign policy legacy is the Vietnam War. The unpopular war was perceived as a testament to Johnson's ignorance in security matters. However, Johnson was not a stranger to the international affairs agenda. His abundant experience in Washington exposed him to a wealth of knowledge in foreign policy as well as domestic issues. As Johnson's national security assistant Rostow pointed out, in addition to the security briefings Johnson received as vice president, "he had already acquired wide practical experience of the world" through his service to the Senate Foreign Relations and Armed Services Committees and close consultation with the Eisenhower administration on defense and foreign policy subjects in his capacity as the Senate majority leader.²⁴ During his presidency, Johnson was intensely engaged in foreign affairs, and Vietnam was not the only issue in which he was greatly involved. Johnson took a hands-on approach to the foreign policies he was interested in. Arms control was one of the foreign policy issues he was dedicated to, and the accomplishment of NPT should not be overlooked.

The assertion that the US antiballistic missile defense policy under the Johnson administration was a product of an influential bureaucracy had validity at the beginning of his

²³ Morton H. Halperin, "The Decision To Deploy The ABM," 73.

²⁴ W.W. Rostow, "The Johnson Administration: The Organization of National Security Affairs," in *The Diffusion of Power: An Essay in Recent History* (New York: The Macmillan Company, 1972), 356.

presidency but not for the 1967 deployment decision. In the first couple of years, the president was shielded by Secretary McNamara from having to deal with the ABM deployment question as the defense secretary managed to mute the JCS position that was different from his own. For a period of time, he successfully dominated the decision making process within the Pentagon bureaucracy.

When the ABM debate became a contentious political and strategic issue after China joined the nuclear club, and a report surfaced that the Soviet Union was already making inroads in its ABM deployment, President Johnson began to take control over the ABM issue. He recognized the division between his defense secretary and the Joint Chiefs of Staff, and Johnson made deliberate efforts to hear both sides. The December 9, 1966, meeting was held precisely to avoid subjecting himself to a one-sided approach to the issue. Another meeting he convened in January 1967 was intended to acquire technical advice from scientific experts independent of bureaucracies' sway. By the time this meeting was held, President Johnson was already inclined to deploy an ABM system. The anticipated talk between President Johnson and Soviet Union Premier Aleksei Kosygin in Glassboro in 1967 revealed that there was faint hope for arms negotiations with the Soviet Union. At that point, Johnson determined that deployment of an ABM system was a political imperative so that he could prevent the ABM issue from being used against the Democratic Party in the upcoming 1968 election. In the end, President Johnson overruled his most trusted advisers, and made a decision based on his political judgment.

However, he left the specifics of the system to his defense secretary. This was not because President Johnson wanted to please different players as the bureaucratic politics perspective put forth, although the small-scale ABM certainly seemed a compromise between supporters and opponents of ABM, as supporters of ABM saw it as the first step toward a more comprehensive system and opponents consoled themselves by thinking that it limited the impact on the arms race with the Soviet Union. It was more because President Johnson saw the deployment of an ABM system in a political context. Whether his administration's ABM would be built against a small-scale attack from China or massive attacks from the Soviet Union was not as important as sending a message that he was committed to defending the United States.

3.1.5 Interplay

The purpose of this section was to evaluate the potency of the bureaucratic politics perspective in explaining the Johnson administration's decision to deploy a limited-scale ABM against China. The central elements to determine the validity of this claim required identifying key players, their positions, and whether they represented organizational interests and pushed for policies corresponding to their traditional values and bureaucratic prowess. Furthermore, this section examined how the players operated so as to win in the interagency and internal strife, and what President Johnson's role in this squabbling was. Did the president surrender to bureaucratic interests? Or, did he exercise his authority and make a decision based on his own assessment? Did he choose a decision that pleased multiple bureaucracies, essentially without choosing a real winner or loser in an attempt to calm the bureaucracies' complaints? Moreover, did the bureaucrats advocate the organizations' preferences?

The bureaucratic politics perspective predicted that the Department of Defense was the leading force behind the decision to deploy the Sentinel system against the State Department's opposition, and the two key cabinet members representing these two departments were expected to have contested over the deployment issue. Secretary Rusk's position was consistent with this expectation, but Secretary McNamara's actions were not. The schism over the issue emerged not between secretary of state and defense secretary but between Secretary McNamara and the Joint Chiefs of Staff within the Pentagon. The military's support for the ABM deployment and Secretary Rusk's reservations endorsed the bureaucratic politics perspective that bureaucrats support a policy choice that would advance their organizational interests. However, Secretary McNamara's opposition to ABM deployment was problematic to validating the bureaucratic politics perspective in its entirety. Secretary McNamara disagreed with the military's view that installation of an ABM system would enhance US ability to neutralize an enemy's nuclear attack. The defense secretary was more concerned with the ABM capability's effect on the arms race and the MAD doctrine. He intended to curb the endless arms race with the Soviet Union and to prevent any appearance of undermining the delicate balance that was the bedrock of deterrence by ensuring the United States' mutual vulnerability.

Why, then, did the military win the political game? The military's win over the defense secretary was attributable to more than one factor. It was partly thanks to circumstances other

than bureaucratic politics such as the strategic environment and congressional pressure, but JCS Chairman Wheeler's aggressive efforts to counteract Secretary McNamara's maneuvering played an important role. Chairman Wheeler harmonized the JCS stances prior to presenting their positions to Secretary McNamara. His use of the unanimous opinion among the three military services as a sales pitch in the public relations campaign turned out to be extremely successful. Certainly, it was great ammunition provided to the proponents of ABM in Congress. He also displayed his savvy political skills by exploiting television talk shows to make the military's position across the media and Congress.

Did President Johnson fall victim to the military leaders' political games? The answer is negative in that the president was fully aware of the controversies among his advisers since late 1966, when the deployment of an ABM system was under serious consideration. The meetings Johnson convened in December 1966 and January 1967 were aimed precisely at minimizing bureaucratic influence on his decision. To Johnson, the deployment option needed to serve his political purpose—not undermine his chance to be reelected (though he decided to withdraw from the Democratic nomination in spring 1968).

One final question was the significance of the executive branch, the Johnson administration, as a whole in the decision making process. Within the administration, it was demonstrated that the military leaders came out as the victors because President Johnson sided with the military. It was not, however, the president's favored strategic choice. President Johnson's faith in arms control did not fade away despite the reports that the Soviet Union was building up their nuclear weapons stockpile and their own ABM system around Moscow. The deployment decision was President Johnson's response to Congress and political opponents rather than his reaction to these strategic developments in China and the Soviet Union. His continuous desire for arms talks was further demonstrated when President Johnson still tried to begin arms talks with the Soviet Union even after he was rebuffed by Kosygin in the summer of 1967.

In sum, the Johnson administration's Sentinel decision was not a strong case for the bureaucratic politics perspective. The Department of Defense's position was mixed as its civilian head and the military leadership clashed. Secretary Rusk's attitude seemed supportive of the bureaucratic politics perspective, but it was overshadowed by the internal tussle within the Pentagon. President Johnson in the end adopted the military's position, but more because of the

pressure from opponents on the Hill than the pressure from the service chiefs. All these points undermine the bureaucratic politics perspective's central claim that bureaucracies were the main players in bringing the final decision.

3.2 THE NIXON ADMINISTRATION

President Nixon unsurprisingly, pursued deployment of ABM at the beginning of his term. He was a Republican president and well known for his views in favor of a strong defense. The conclusion of the Strategic Arms Limitation Talks (SALT) raises the credible possibility that bureaucrats influenced the conservative president. This section tests this hypothesis and examines whether the bureaucrats, most likely the State Department and the Arms Control and Disarmament Agency (ACDA), were the main players in the formulation and conduct of SALT.

The ABM Treaty is an interesting and important case study for the bureaucratic politics perspective since the analysis of the SALT can elucidate the political games pertinent departments played. Arms negotiation is a painstaking process requiring inputs from multiple government agencies, and for the bureaucrats to succeed in reaping the fruits of arms talks, they have to overcome the multitude of obstacles within their own bureaucracy and with competing bureaucracies, as well as differences with the counterpart country. The 1972 agreements were a remarkable achievement defeating all these odds.

In identifying key actors in SALT, the negotiations with the Soviet Union undoubtedly placed the State Department and ACDA at the center of activities. They were the primary agencies responsible for the missions of diplomacy and arms control. Due to its military implications, feedback from the defense secretary and JCS also had to be seriously considered. Like in the Johnson case study, the role of the national security adviser is also examined. The bureaucratic politics perspective posits that Secretary of State William Rogers or ACDA Director Gerard Smith influenced President Nixon to embark on the arms negotiations with the Soviet Union. It also puts forth that the content of the ABM Treaty was largely the product of the State Department and ACDA bureaucracy. Secretary of Defense Melvin Laird is expected to have

objected to putting ceilings on the offensive strategic weapons systems and limiting the scale of the ABM systems to be installed.

3.2.1 Secretary of Defense Melvin Laird

Considering the strategic nature of the SALT, the Defense Department was an integral party in making the treaty deal with the Soviet Union. In his detailed memoir of the SALT, Gerard Smith praised General Wheeler, who continued to chair the JCS, stating that he “deserves a good deal of credit for the progress made in SALT. His courageous advocacy of a policy that was unwelcome to his military colleagues was an outstanding example of placing national interest above perceived advantages for the military services” and ascribed the support to “a recognition by the military in the United States and perhaps by the counterparts in the USSR that, no matter what strategic concept a side might adopt, a level of some two thousand strategic offensive launchers of different types would be more than ample, especially as multiple warheads (MIRVs) were being developed.”²⁵

Smith attributed the military support for arms talks to the military’s recognition of existential deterrence. It was possible that the military thought the arms race with no end in sight would make little contribution to enhancing the US security interest. However, the military’s support for SALT was more than the acknowledgment of the futility of the arms race. There were other reasons for the military and the Pentagon to support the general SALT efforts. The military could not bluntly object to the will of the commander in chief and even less so against a Republican president like Nixon who had a reputation for being a defense hawk. The military leadership was also careful not to be seen as obstructionist to the principle of arms negotiations. If the military or Defense Department were to disagree with the administration in arms talks, the opposition had to be elaborated in specific strategic terms and there were several propositions to which Defense Secretary Laird and the generals objected during the SALT proposal discussions. The military was also preoccupied with the Vietnam War, and the political atmosphere about ABM at home had changed considerably from the end of the Johnson administration. The

²⁵ Gerard Smith, “Genesis” in *Doubletalk: The Story of the First Strategic Arms Limitation Talks* (Garden City, NY: Doubleday & Company, Inc., 1980), 27.

military's congressional allies demonstrated diminished support for the ABM plans due to their constituents' negative feedback, as opposed to only a year before when Chairman Wheeler was able to trump the ABM deployment debate under the Johnson administration.

While there were minor disagreements between the civilian chief and the Joint Chiefs of Staff, Secretary Melvin Laird's standpoint was largely in accordance with that of the military. The defense secretary was more often at odds with ACDA Director Smith than with the generals on many important issues, although the personal relationship between Laird and Smith was cordial. Secretary Laird was viewed by the arms control agency with suspicion and his position largely represented the military's judgment.

Two of the most controversial strategic issues for SALT were MIRV and ABM. Both the civilian analysts and the military within the Department of Defense were reluctant to support a MIRV ban and their opposition was reasonable. The US offensive strategic forces had been frozen for years (since the 1960s under Secretary of Defense McNamara) while the Soviets were beefing up theirs, and MIRV was the only clear advantage the United States had left with its ICBM capabilities. During internal discussions for SALT proposals to the Soviets, the Defense Department called for on-site inspection, if the MIRV ban was to be offered. The Pentagon was worried that the Soviets would exploit a MIRV ban to their advantage. The Soviets could conduct tests before a MIRV testing ban went into effect or they might disguise their MIRV experiment by conducting a test "at short-ranges, in space or with numerous other deceptive techniques." The Pentagon position was in contrast to the assessment by Smith, the State Department and the CIA that employing national technical means was sufficient to monitor the Soviets' compliance with a MIRV testing ban.²⁶ The military did not rule out the possibility that the Soviets might have already tested MIRV and try to surreptitiously deploy MIRVs. Thus, the military insisted that a MIRV ban could not be confidently verified against the Soviets' covert deployment without on-site inspection.²⁷

The Defense Department also opposed an ABM ban and clashed with Smith and Secretary of State Rogers on this issue. The State Department officials and the Smith team thought a ban on ABM was a more feasible goal than a MIRV ban in pursuit of achieving

²⁶ Gerard Smith, "The Great MIRV Mystery," *Doubletalk*, 173; John Newhouse, "The Grand Negotiation," in *Cold Dawn: the Story of SALT*, (New York: Holt, Rinehart and Winston, 1973), 180.

²⁷ Gerard Smith, "The Great MIRV Mystery," in *Doubletalk*, 173; Newhouse, "The Grand Negotiation," *Cold Dawn*, 180.

meaningful arms control measures. The military knew that Congress was not willing to fully support the Nixon administration's Safeguard program, but also realized that the Senate would be hesitant to ratify a treaty the military strongly rejected. The Army was most anxious about an ABM ban whereas the Navy and the Air Force did not have as much at stake with ABM. However, as the military services understood the benefits of presenting their positions in unity, they supported each other.²⁸ Even though a very limited level of ABM (at one or two sites) had little military value, particularly for the National Command Authority (NCA) in Washington, JCS wanted to keep the production line running for a faster resumption of operations if necessary.

Overall, on the general principle of arms talks, the Department of Defense conformed to President Nixon's political leadership. The specifics of the SALT proposal demonstrated the disagreements between the State Department and ACDA and the Pentagon. The Defense Department's resistance to a ban on ABM or MIRV was understandable considering the propensity of the organization, and it supports one of the expectations of the bureaucratic politics perspective that the Defense Department would be less willing to compromise its military capability in order to produce an arms control agreement. Another question is the extent to which the Defense Department bureaucracy wielded its influence in policy formulation in relation to its rival bureaucracies, the State Department and ACDA. The final outcome of the SALT agreements allowing MIRV and deployment of ABM systems in two locations presented the possibility that the Defense Department had prevailed. However, an examination of the White House policy apparatus centered in Henry Kissinger revealed the limit of the Pentagon officials' power (which is further discussed later in this chapter).

3.2.2 Gerard Smith: SALT Delegation Chief

One of the most important figures in the SALT process was undoubtedly Gerard Smith, the director of the Arms Control and Disarmament Agency. The agency was established in order to

²⁸ Korb, "The Battle of the Potomac," *The Joint Chiefs of Staff*, 115–116; Divine, *The Johnson Years*, 243–244.

focus on and coordinate arms control efforts.²⁹ Smith led the American delegation for SALT. The Arms Control Agency Law enacted in 1961 granted the ACDA director the authority to command such negotiations “under the policy guidance of the Secretary of State.”³⁰

Smith was more cautious about disarmament than typical arms controllers. He was a Republican with a wealth of government experience dealing with security issues, including arms control and atomic energy.³¹ At the onset of the SALT negotiation process, President Nixon declared that the stature and importance of ACDA was elevated and guaranteed the agency director’s direct access to the president. However, the promise was broken because of the White House’s distrust of the agency and its director. Despite his Republican credentials, President Nixon did not entirely confide in Smith since, in Nixon’s view, he represented the “woolly headed” bureaucracy pushing a naïve arms control agenda and lacking toughness in contending with the Soviets.³² Although ACDA was the primary institution charged with devising arms control proposals based on their technical and policy expertise, and Smith’s team was representing the United States at the negotiating table with its Soviet counterpart, the Smith team’s responsibility was largely undercut by Kissinger’s dominance throughout the entire SALT process. Kissinger not only tightly controlled the formulation of proposals but also began conducting his own diplomacy through a backchannel with Anatoly Dobrynin, Soviet ambassador to the United States.

The conflict between Smith’s delegation and the White House sharpened over specific policy options and negotiating tactics. Smith wanted to push for zero ABM and a MIRV ban, two issues regarded as key in curbing a further strategic arms race, reflecting the attitude of ACDA and believers of deterrence theory. As an interim step, Gerard Smith suggested a moratorium on MIRV testing until its full implication and the impact on SALT were reviewed.³³ When the two superpowers entered SALT, it was only the United States that had the MIRV capacity and the ability to deploy it, while the Soviet Union had yet to develop the technology. Once the Soviets acquired the MIRV technology, it was deemed extremely difficult to verify that

²⁹ Duncan L. Clarke, “The Executive Branch: Leadership and Cohesion,” in *Politics of Arms Control: The Role and Effectiveness of the U.S. Arms Control and Disarmament Agency* (New York: The Free Press, 1979), 15.

³⁰ Gerard Smith, “The Cast,” in *Doubletalk*, 44.

³¹ Clarke, “The Executive Branch: Leadership and Cohesion,” in *Politics of Arms Control*, 44.

³² Ibid., “The Executive Branch: Nixon–Ford –Carter,” in *Politics of Arms Control*, 64–65.

³³ Gerard Smith, “The Great MIRV Mystery,” in *Double Talk*, 162–163.

the other side was not violating a ban. The United States was in a position to dissuade the Soviets from feeling the need to match the US MIRV capability, by offering a proposal to ban further tests and deployment. The MIRV ban option was brought up but did not have a chance to be seriously negotiated during the SALT sessions. The White House instructed the Smith team to make an offer for a MIRV ban during the second round of SALT in August 1970, with a condition to conduct on-site inspections. The proposition guaranteed the Soviets' rejection, and the White House—President Nixon and Kissinger—anticipated the Soviets' reaction. The White House was not genuinely interested in a MIRV ban. The White House, specifically Henry Kissinger, purposely attached the on-site inspection condition knowing that the deal would be rejected by the Soviets. It was a tactic to avoid having arms control advocates blame the White House for not trying to ban MIRV by putting the ball in the Soviets' court.³⁴

The tension between Kissinger and Smith intensified over ABM. The Soviets were deemed more willing to agree on an ABM ban. However, the White House made a blunder in the course of the negotiations. The White House assumed that the Soviets were more interested in a zero- ABM option than the United States was since the US was already deploying its ABM, the Safeguard system. The White House wanted to use an ABM ban as leverage over other issues and extract concessions from the Soviets. Based on this calculation, the White House instructed the US delegation to begin with a choice that was less attractive to the Soviets of allowing deployment of ABM at one site around the capital city of each country, a National Command Authority (NCA) option—and then to propose the zero ABM option after the Soviets rejected the first offer. Before the US delegation had an opportunity to offer the zero ABM and use it as a bargaining chip, the Soviet team gladly accepted the National Command Authority option. The American delegation was put in an awkward position to offer the zero option after the Soviets already accepted the American team's first proposal. Even worse, the White House instructed the delegation to make yet another proposal, called the "four to one" option—allowing the United States four sites for point defense and permitting the Soviet Union one site for protecting Moscow. The precarious offers instructed by the White House hurt the American delegation's standing and weakened its position at the bargaining table.³⁵

³⁴ Ibid., 156.

³⁵ Gerard Smith, "ABM Only," in *Doubletalk*, 211.

Overall, how much influence did Gerard Smith wield in the SALT process? And what did his positions on various issues represent? Smith's preferences and efforts to ban MIRV and ABM were consistent with the organizational interests and leanings of the Arms Control and Disarmament Agency. In terms of his power, it turned out to be symbolic and became even more so as the arms negotiations were proceeding. Despite his authority to lead the talks as the SALT delegation head, and his statutory authority to lead the arms proposals as the director of ACDA, his role was severely restrained by the direct control of the White House.

3.2.3 Secretary of State William Rogers

Secretary of State Rogers was an old friend of President Nixon and the president asserted that Rogers was "the chief foreign policy adviser and the chief foreign policy spokesman of the Administration." Despite the president's public announcement, the role of secretary of state was awfully limited playing a somewhat prominent role only in the Middle East policies.³⁶

Nixon's appointment of Rogers as the secretary of state was based on their personal relationship rather than Rogers's foreign policy qualifications. Rogers was a capable lawyer who had reached the Attorney General position under the Eisenhower administration and was enjoying a very successful career practicing corporate law at the time of the appointment but he had little background in foreign affairs when he joined Nixon as the secretary of state.³⁷ Nixon thought Rogers would be loyal to his administration and that his lack of foreign policy experience was an advantage, not a drawback, for Nixon and Kissinger, who were determined to centralize the foreign policy decision making apparatus in the White House.³⁸ Rogers understood Nixon's expectation. Rogers, in his own admission, realized that President Nixon "wanted to be his own foreign policy leader and did not want others to share that role." Rogers was "prepared to play a subordinate role." He also recollected, "after all the man who ran for office and won deserves [to make his own decisions]. I knew that Nixon would be the principal

³⁶ I.M. Destler, "Strategies of Presidents," in *Presidents, Bureaucrats, and Foreign Policy: The Politics of Organizational Reform* (Princeton: Princeton University Press, 1974), 131.

³⁷ Seymour M. Hersh, "A New NSC System," in *The Price of Power: Kissinger in the Nixon White House* (New York: Summit Book, 1983), 32.

³⁸ William Burr, "Introduction: Henry Kissinger and American Power in a Multipolar World," in William Burr, ed. *The Kissinger Transcripts: the top secret talks with Beijing and Moscow* (New York: New Press, 1998), 8.

actor and, when Kissinger came along, I recognized that he would be a very valuable asset to the presidency.”³⁹

However, Rogers’s relationship with Kissinger was more tumultuous than with the president. Kissinger’s contemptuous attitude towards the secretary of state at both professional and personal levels offended Rogers, but he was “neither ruthless nor resourceful enough to mount effective challenge” against Kissinger. That was an accurate summation. Rogers was not as confident in the subject matter as Kissinger, nor did the secretary have the personality to compete with Kissinger.⁴⁰ To begin with, Rogers was lukewarm in defending his agency, which demoralized the Foreign Service officers and other professionals at the State Department. The limited attempts to preserve the State Department turf by Rogers were futile anyway since he was no match for Kissinger, who was far more erudite in the bureaucratic operation as well as the subject of world politics and had no qualms about playing Machiavellian political games.⁴¹

One way Kissinger was able to tightly control bureaucracy was by utilizing two interdepartmental committees created to coordinate policy issues among the State Department, DOD, the CIA, the White House, Agency for International Development (AID) and US Information Agency (USIA). Kissinger removed AID and USIA representatives from the Interdepartmental Regional Group and renamed it the Interdepartmental Group. Another group, the Senior Interdepartmental Group was replaced by the Under Secretaries Committee. Kissinger’s restructuring of these two groups brought changes to the chain of command. Previously, the Interdepartmental Regional Group had reported to the Senior Interdepartmental Group, and the senior group had reported to the secretary of state. Under the new system, both reported to the NSC Review Group without approval by the secretary of state. Kissinger was the chair of the Review Group, which revised and edited the two groups’ papers and analyses before they were presented to the president and the NSC. Through the Review Group, Kissinger directly dealt with bureaucrats at the assistant and under secretary levels, and he was able to rein

³⁹ Hersh, “A New NSC System,” in *The Price of Power*, 32.

⁴⁰ Burr, *The Kissinger Transcripts*, 8.

⁴¹ Walter Issacson, “Kissinger’s Empire: The Boss’s Power and How He Operated,” in *Kissinger: A Biography* (Simon & Schuster, 1992), 197; Hersh, “A New NSC System,” in *The Price of Power*, 33.

in bureaucracies without ostensibly infringing but effectively circumventing the authority of the secretary of state and other key players at DOD and the CIA.⁴²

On SALT, the initial contact leading up to the opening of the negotiations was the secretary of state. Rogers was the envoy to express the US's intention to embark on the long journey. However, he played a diminishing role in the SALT process once it began. The guidance for SALT mainly came from Kissinger, not the secretary of state as laid out by statute. He was sympathetic to ACDA Director Smith and represented the traditional State Department position on policies pertinent to SALT. Three salient issues during the course of the SALT debates were MIRV, ABM, and the Submarine Launched Ballistic Missile (SLBM). Rogers preferred a MIRV ban without the on-site inspection provision akin to Smith's position⁴³ and supported Smith's proposal for a ban on MIRV testing before the efforts were thwarted by the White House. He also backed Smith for a complete ABM ban when the issue was revisited later during the negotiations after the bewildering developments of the ABM proposals. The other issue during the debates near the end of the SALT negotiations regarded SLBMs. Both Smith and Rogers adamantly argued against Kissinger's proposed deal that would allow the Soviet Union close to 50 percent more missile-carrying submarines than the United States.⁴⁴

However, Rogers was a man with an aversion to confrontation who was sensitive to Nixon's feelings, and he was extremely reluctant to bring this bureaucratic wrangling to the president. Although the secretary of state shared views with Smith on a number of specifics for the SALT, Rogers warned Smith that "the President did not like to have personal confrontation between his defense and diplomatic advisers" at such meetings as the NSC, and suggested to avoid challenging other foreign policy advisers in the president's presence.⁴⁵ Secretary Rogers's policy position was another illustration for the bureaucratic politics perspective's claim that the State Department would be more eager to take drastic arms control actions. His penchant for a ban on ABM and MIRV, however, was not seriously extended to forceful political games against the Pentagon. It was because Rogers's interest in serving at the pleasure of the president

⁴² Destler, *Presidents, Bureaucrats, and Foreign Policy*, 121–128; Newhouse, "Skirmishing," in *Cold Dawn*, 157; Hersh, "A New NSC System," in *The Price of Power*, 33.

⁴³ Newhouse, "The Grand Negotiation," *Cold Dawn*, 180–181.

⁴⁴ *Ibid.*, 246.

⁴⁵ Gerard Smith, "The Home Front," *Double Talk*, 110.

overwhelmed his desire to promote his bureaucracy's interest, and Henry Kissinger's dominance deprived Rogers of such an opportunity.

3.2.4 National Security Adviser Henry Kissinger

No other national security adviser enjoyed as much power as Henry Kissinger did. Kissinger exercised influence well beyond the realm of the national security assistant position, which was designed for coordinating and bringing objectives to the policy options put forth by various government organizations. He had long lamented the sloth and incompetence of bureaucracy, and had been distrustful of bureaucrats. To Kissinger, policies were stonewalled by red tape, ineffective management, and leaks motivated by bureaucracies' own agenda. He was determined to rein in this bureaucratic animal and put a functional system in place to check and control government agencies. Kissinger reorganized existing institutions or created new ones, installing himself as chair to maximize his control over the bureaucracy.

He established the Washington Special Actions Group and the Defense Program Review Committee (DPRC). The former was to move away from an ad hoc approach and to set up an institutionalized committee to handle emergencies and crises. DPRC was of particular interest and importance in understanding the sphere of Kissinger's power. It was created to supervise "major defense, fiscal, policy and program issues in terms of their strategic, diplomatic, political, and economic implications." It meant Kissinger's influence was spilling over to military spending and economic policy outside of the traditional national security assistant role. He also chaired the National Security Council along with other senior boards, including the NSC Review Group (later renamed as the Senior Review Group), the Verification Panel, the 40 Committee for clandestine intelligence operations, and the Vietnam Special Studies Group.⁴⁶ The Review Group was a valuable instrument for Kissinger with which he was able to cull and whittle analyses and information supplied by bureaucracies and thereby control the flow of information to the president.

Another device besides organizational restructuring was Kissinger's use of formal policy memoranda, National Security Decision Memoranda (NSDM) and National Security Study

⁴⁶ Destler, *Presidents, Bureaucrats, and Foreign Policy*, 127–8.

Memoranda (NSSM). Kissinger defined foreign and security agendas for the State Department, CIA, ACDA, and the Pentagon, and tasked bureaucrats with agency studies for the agenda. On the positive side, the National Security Study Memoranda provoked fresh ideas from bureaucracies on major foreign policy issues. On the other hand, it also asserted Kissinger's power over the bureaucracies by prioritizing policy issues.⁴⁷ In addition, although Kissinger demanded a high volume of NSSM keeping bureaucrats occupied with preparing the studies, it was Kissinger's decision to present the papers to the president, and nobody was certain which studies and with what comments they were delivered.

Kissinger used the National Security Decision Memoranda (NSDM) to inform government agencies and officials, including cabinet members, of final decisions. NSDM were presidential directives to which Kissinger provided immense inputs. The use of NSDM was instrumental in foiling the NSC from acting as a decision making body. Kissinger announced policy decisions through NSDM, formalizing his choices irrespective of the discussions at the National Security Council.⁴⁸

With his predilection for secrecy and control, Kissinger dominated US foreign policy under President Nixon, and SALT was no exception. Neither President Nixon nor Kissinger had an eagerness for arms control. Kissinger was a realist doubtful of arms control. He thought SALT could be political leverage in solving other international problems, particularly the Vietnam War, when these issues were linked. From the beginning of the SALT talks, he tightly controlled the delegation by giving them strict instructions. Of the multiple NSC committees, issues related to SALT proposals were mainly dealt with at the Verification Panel meetings in addition to the NSC conference. Crucial decisions were often already determined by Kissinger, and formal meetings were merely perfunctory. Kissinger used these meetings to advance his plans to the bureaucracies, not for the bureaucracies to debate over their departments' concerns and perspectives so that various policy alternatives could be objectively explored and a best option could be chosen.

Kissinger's monopoly in the decision making process did not start at choosing an option. It included crafting policy alternatives and even conducting negotiations himself with the Soviet government. The SALT proposal development began in typical fashion. Relevant agencies

⁴⁷ Burr, *The Kissinger Transcripts*, 7.

⁴⁸ Gerard Smith, "The Home Front," in *Doubletalk*, 110–111.

provided various options and a SALT delegation bureaucrat, Raymond Garthoff from the State Department, was given responsibility by the White House to compress the numerous agency options to four, options A to D.

Table 4. SALT Proposal

	Option A	Option B	Option C	Option D	Option E
ABM	Twelve sites	Ban or One site	Ban or One site	Ban or One site	Ban or One site
MIRV	Permit	Permit	Ban (on-site inspection)	Permit	Permit
Offensive Launchers	Limit No reduction	Limit No reduction	Limit No reduction	Limit and reduction (100 ICBMs per year for seven years)	Limit No reduction
ICBM	1,054	1,054	1,054	1,054	1,054
SLBM	656	656	656	656	656
Bomber	-	-	-	-	190
Total	1,710	1,710	1,710	1,710	1,900

Sources: Isaacson, *Kissinger*, 319; Gerard Smith, *Doubletalk*, 118–119; Newhouse, *Cold Dawn*, 177; Garthoff, *Détente and Confrontation*, 155, 161, 165.

Option A would allow the Nixon administration's Safeguard plan to build an ABM system at twelve sites and place no limit on MIRVs. It would propose no reduction in offensive launchers but put a ceiling at 1,710 in total. It corresponded to the sum of the numbers of US ICBMs (1,054) and SLBMs (656). Option B was different from option A on ABM. It would either ban or allow ABM altogether at one site for the protection of each nation's capital. Option C was the only alternative with a ban on MIRV, and option D contemplated a reduction in the number of offensive missiles by 100 each year for seven years, going a step further from limiting to reducing in number.⁴⁹ It did not take long for Kissinger to deviate from the standard decision making process. The White House instructed the Smith team to offer option C and then option D at the second round of SALT taking place in Vienna. When no progress was made as the Soviets balked at both options the United States proposed, option E suddenly emerged in July 1970 without any prior discussions with the relevant agencies. It forwent a MIRV ban and the arms reduction previously included in option C and option D respectively. Instead, option E suggested 1,900 for a limit on strategic offensive weapons, adding 190 bombers in total.⁵⁰

⁴⁹ Gerard Smith, "The Homefront," *Doubletalk*, 118; Walter Isaacson, "SALT: Arms Control in the Back Channel," in *Kissinger: A Biography* (New York: Simon & Schuster, 1992), 319.

⁵⁰ Newhouse, "The Grand Negotiation," *Cold Dawn*, 186.

Whereas the other four options were the results of the compilation and summation of the bureaucracies' proposals, option E was a product of Kissinger and a handful of his staff, and it irked other foreign policy advisers. From early on when the four options were being honed, well before the sudden appearance of option E, the SALT bureaucracy was discontented with Kissinger's decision making style. The inclusion of the on-site inspection requirement attached to the MIRV ban for option C was not a conclusion drawn from the Verification Panel meetings but Kissinger's decision. President Nixon and Kissinger thought pursuing a ban or putting limitations on both ABM and MIRVs would arouse problems among conservatives and the military. Of the two, limiting ABM was deemed a more practical choice than limiting MIRVs. However, President Nixon and Kissinger did not want to seem halfhearted about arms control efforts. Offering a MIRV ban with an on-site inspection requirement was a brilliant political solution. The secretive Soviets loathed on-site inspections, and the intrusive measure guaranteed the Soviets' rejection. By proposing the MIRV ban with an unacceptable condition, President Nixon and Kissinger were able to shift the blame to the Soviets yet appear to have had made an effort for a MIRV ban. The fact that on-site inspection studies were completed two months after deciding to include this requirement in option C was evidence of Kissinger's insincerity and his unilateral management style.⁵¹

Formulating policies and giving the SALT delegation rigid instructions were not enough to satisfy Kissinger's desire for total control. After the third round of SALT, Kissinger began his back-channel negotiations in January 1971, completely circumventing the official channels at the State Department and the SALT delegation.

The White House's direct involvement with the Soviet government produced the May 20, 1971, statement and unlocked the stalemate by providing political impetus. Nonetheless, this kind of independent decision making process and backchannel diplomacy was bound to generate serious mistakes in dealing with extremely complicated and technical matters such as SALT, and there were acute errors.

The ABM proposal miscalculated the Soviets' position and overlooked the strategic disadvantage of the NCA-only option against the United States. When the White House instructed the SALT delegation to offer the NCA-only option first (option C), President Nixon

⁵¹ Smith, "The Great MIRV Mystery," *Doubletalk*, 168–177.

and Kissinger expected that the Soviets would reject this offer. The White House believed that the Soviets were so desperate to deploy their ABM systems at more than one location that they would counteroffer a limit on strategic offensive weapons in exchange for an option allowing multiple ABM sites. It turned out not to be the case.⁵² The Soviets gladly took the US offer. This one to one option, a fair proposition on the surface, would give the Soviets a substantial strategic advantage. The Soviet's Galosh systems could also cover about 300 Soviet offensive systems installed around the Soviet's NCA. The United States did not have strategic offensive systems around its NCA, located near the Atlantic Ocean.⁵³ Even worse, the NCA-option was to engender a political problem because it would give the public the impression that Washington was only interested in protecting itself. Congress would not endorse such a deal, denying funding for the ABM systems designed to protect the NCA in Washington and leaving the United States with no ABM at all, while the Soviets would be able to protect their National Command Authority as well as hundreds of offensive missiles. This intellectual blunder was caused by Kissinger's failure to consult with experts at ACDA and the Defense Department. Kissinger eventually managed to reverse the mistake through backchannel communications with Dobrynin, but in the meantime he instructed the American delegation to propose yet another offer in March 1971 at the fourth round of SALT. This time, Smith was ordered to propose to his Russian counterpart a "four to one option" preserving the existing US Safeguard systems and Soviet Galosh system. Kissinger treated the SALT delegation front channel as a ploy to earn time.

The May 20, 1971, statement also contained several significant predicaments. Kissinger retracted his earlier call for an equal number of strategic offensive weapons for both countries and agreed to let the Soviets have a higher number of strategic offensive weapons. Kissinger persuaded the Soviets to scrap the NCA-only proposal and drop their demand to include forward based systems (FBS) as part of the US strategic offensive systems, a major sticking point thus far in pursuing a comprehensive agreement covering both offense and defense. However, the accord left it vague as to whether SLBMs or strategic bombers belonged in the offensive strategic

⁵² Raymond L. Garthoff, "Opening an Era of Negotiation: Salt I, 1969-72," in *Détente and Confrontation: American-Soviet relations from Nixon to Reagan* (Washington, DC: Brookings Institution, 1994), 165.

⁵³ Newhouse, "The Grand Negotiation," in *Cold Dawn*, 185.

weapons category.⁵⁴ Inclusion of the SLBMs was a strategic necessity since the United States still maintained the numerical lead in SLBMs by 28 submarines. The Soviets had 22 operational submarines compared to 41 US boats, but 15 submarines were under construction and the Soviets were increasing their number by eight per year. At this rate, the Soviets would surpass the US number in five years. Kissinger's omission of SLBMs was a big problem to everyone from State, ACDA, and increasingly the DOD.

When Kissinger was working on a deal with Brezhnev to resolve deadlocks on ABM and SLBM, Brezhnev initiated solutions. His defense option presented one plus one ABM, i.e. the NCA plus another site. An SLBM memorandum specified the number of submarines at 62 and that of launchers at 950, which meant the Soviets would be allowed to have more boats and tubes than the US's 41 submarines and 656 SLBMs. Kissinger did not mind the asymmetry (there was even speculation that this number might have been suggested by him) but much-needed military support was in question since it meant that the military had to swallow a deal allowing Soviet superiority in number for both ICBMs and SLBMs.⁵⁵ It was absolutely critical to get the JCS support for an agreement to rebuff congressional opposition, and Kissinger and Nixon used the Trident submarine program as a lure. The White House promised Admiral Thomas Moorer, JCS chairman, to support acceleration of the Trident submarine program. Kissinger also persuaded Admiral Moorer by reminding him that the Soviets were projected to have over 80 submarines by 1978 without an agreement, and this level would surpass the number of Soviet submarines with an agreement.⁵⁶

Kissinger played extremely dexterous bureaucratic political games. He used various tactics such as sidestepping and manipulating bureaucracies at times and persuading them at other times. The emergence of option E and the entire back-channel negotiation were examples of Kissinger's eclipse of the State Department, ACDA, DOD, CIA, and most of all, Secretary of State Rogers and the SALT delegation head, Smith. In determining the MIRV on-site inspection requirement, Kissinger pitted one bureaucracy (DOD, which wanted on-site inspection) against the other (State and ACDA, which did not think it was necessary) and backed the bureaucracy with the same position as his. The SLBM issue was a hard sell to everyone but Kissinger

⁵⁴ Ibid., 222.

⁵⁵ Ibid., 247.

⁵⁶ Ibid., 246.

managed to convince Admiral Moorer by making the point that in the absence of an agreement the Soviets would have more submarines than the United States anyway and by half more than with an agreement. Kissinger also coaxed Moorer with his promise that the White House would support the Trident program the admiral wanted. Kissinger played an aggressive bureaucratic politics game, and he made a tremendous contribution to President Nixon's attempt to beat the bureaucratic maneuvering.

3.2.5 President Richard Nixon

Despite his strong anti-communist reputation, President Nixon's foreign policy constituted what was later summarized as *détente*. He visited the People's Republic of China and concluded the SALT negotiations with the Soviet Union, which produced the ABM Treaty and the Interim Agreement on the Strategic Offensive Arms. As a result of the ABM Treaty, his Safeguard program was severely limited to no more than 200 ABMs at two sites. Why did the Republican president, known for his hard line position on security, decide to curb his defense program? What was President Nixon's own view on the Soviet Union, arms control, and arms negotiations? Was the president convinced by bureaucracies of the need for an arms treaty? This section argues that President Nixon had clear ideas on the key foreign policy issues and made decisions largely based on his own judgment and that of his close adviser, Henry Kissinger.

Nixon spent most of his career in politics. His experience in Congress and as a vice president in the Eisenhower administration convinced him that bureaucracy was an untrustworthy establishment always trying to go its own way instead of following the president's mandates. The State Department and ACDA were among the worst full of people with liberal agendas, and Nixon felt a need to keep a tight grip on them. Nixon was confident in foreign policy dealings, and he was determined to take charge in foreign and security matters. As one way to implement his resolution, President Nixon restored the diminished stature of the National Security Council from the two previous administrations to that of the Eisenhower era and used the NSC as a main venue for policy discussions. One departure from the Eisenhower days was Nixon's determination to avoid bureaucrats' presentation of "agreed papers" which in effect deprived the president of an opportunity to freely choose an option. To Nixon, the papers

contained only policy options that had first been narrowed-down and compromised on by bureaucracies. Often the president's choice was limited to either accepting or vetoing the bureaucrats' recommendations. He wanted to be provided with diverse alternatives so that the president could genuinely contemplate all the different options without having to either accept or veto the bureaucracies' recommendations.⁵⁷

As was promised, the National Security Council gained elevated standing at the beginning of the Nixon presidency. The president convened frequent NSC meetings for foreign policy and national security discussions. During the first year of his presidency, Nixon held 37 NSC meetings, but the NSC soon became pro forma rather than a true decision making body and the number of meetings quickly plummeted to 21 in his second year. This trend continued.⁵⁸ This was partly because the decision making process was increasingly dominated by Henry Kissinger and the president himself, and partly because the president was not able to overcome the mutually antagonistic relationship with bureaucracies and his suspicion of his own cabinet members. Although Nixon was close to Secretary of State Rogers and Defense Secretary Laird, he thought they "occasionally carried on sensitive dealings and negotiations without coordinating them with the White House" sometimes due to inevitable circumstances but other times "to preclude Kissinger's or my own disapproval" or "to show themselves, their departments, and the press that they were capable of independent action."⁵⁹ President Nixon concluded that conducting his foreign policy through a trusted aide, Henry Kissinger, to circumvent bureaucracy was necessary.

Although their personalities and backgrounds were quite different in many ways, President Nixon and Henry Kissinger had similar views on foreign policy, and both believed that secrecy and tight control over bureaucracy were crucial elements in order to achieve their foreign policy goals. What reinforced Nixon's predilection for secrecy and control was the relentless leak problem. Within the first five months of his presidency, over 21 foreign policy stories were leaked to the newspapers, and Nixon was deeply disturbed by this pattern.⁶⁰ It was an old Washington problem aggravating all presidents, but it was particularly troublesome to an already

⁵⁷ Destler, *Presidents, Bureaucrats, and Foreign Policy*, 118–9.

⁵⁸ *Ibid.*, 124

⁵⁹ Richard Nixon, "The Presidency 1969–1972," in *RN: The Memoirs of Richard Nixon* (New York: Grosset & Dunlap, 1978), 433.

⁶⁰ *Ibid.*, 386.

exceptionally wary personality who believed that Washington was full of liberals in government and media hostile to the president.⁶¹ Keeping out bureaucracy by heavily relying on secrecy and only a trusted aide was an effective way to minimize the chances of a leak in addition to managing the unruly and incompetent bureaucracies. In this context, President Nixon bestowed on his national security adviser extraordinary power, and Kissinger played an important role during Nixon's presidency.

In the substance of policy, Nixon was impressed by Kissinger's intellect and agreed with his outlook on world politics. Even before Nixon took over the White House, he and Kissinger already talked about linkage. Believing that the Soviets were eager to enter SALT, the two thought SALT could be a political asset to solve other international problems in the Middle East and Vietnam.⁶² When the prospect of SALT was being vetted by the Nixon administration prior to committing itself to the talks, Nixon and Kissinger both thought the State Department and ACDA were becoming overly excited about the prospect of arms control, which confirmed their suspicion about the two agencies' liberal proclivity and the need to closely manage them.⁶³

SALT was an important issue to the president, and he was not planning to sit back and let a bureaucracy, especially a liberal agency such as ACDA, run the process. Before the delegation left for Helsinki for the first session of SALT, President Nixon requested Smith to directly write to the president the general impressions of the talks.⁶⁴ What was astonishing was an episode with Paul Nitze, a member of the SALT delegation representing the Department of Defense. President Nixon's suspicion of bureaucrats led him so far as to personally ask Nitze to report to the president through a back-channel line, set up by the Joint Chiefs of Staff and the White House, separate from the official delegation cable. Nitze refused to follow out of concern for the integrity of the team.⁶⁵ It was a remarkably manipulative gesture on Nixon's part.

On specific policy issues, Nixon was indisposed to ban MIRV or ABM and managed to achieve both goals at the end. He knew erecting the full-scale Safeguard system was a long shot considering the domestic political mood, and he understood the need to compromise by scaling it

⁶¹ Ibid., 251.

⁶² Garthoff, *Détente and Confrontation*, 128.

⁶³ Ibid., 130.

⁶⁴ Newhouse, "Origin," *Doubletalk*, 84.

⁶⁵ Hersh, "Consolidating Authority," in *The Price of Power*, 42.

down. However, the zero option was not in his interest, and he was even less interested in a MIRV ban.

The decision to enter SALT negotiations, the final outcomes of the ABM Treaty, and the Interim Agreement on the Strategic Offensive Arms fulfilled his objectives. These agreements were possible due to his effective management of bureaucratic maneuvering. Kissinger acted as Nixon's surrogate in defeating bureaucracies; execution and technical matters were left to Kissinger, while policy directions were determined under Nixon's guidance.⁶⁶ The Nixon administration brought dramatic changes and milestones in the US foreign policy realm, including the conclusion of the SALT agreements with the Soviet Union, rapprochement with the People's Republic of China, and withdrawal of US troops from Vietnam. President Nixon had clear foreign policy goals and was able to carry out those policies by circumventing the bureaucratic resistance. The ABM Treaty case was a significant refutation of the bureaucratic politics perspective's claim that bureaucracies overpower the president and dictate a decision making process.

3.2.6 Interplay

The milestone arms control agreement signed by President Nixon in 1972 marked a momentous and unexpected policy turn for US missile defense policy. Why did the conservative president change his ABM policy course? Was it an exemplar case showing the influence of bureaucracies? As the Strategic Arms Limitation Talks were unfolding, did the bureaucracies compete for a bigger voice representing their parochial interests? If so, whose view was mainly incorporated into the final agreements and why?

The bureaucratic politics perspective predicted that ACDA and State Department backed strong arms control measures whereas the Department of Defense tried to maintain their programs unimpeded by arms control agreements. The positions of these three bureaucracies during the SALT process generally satisfied this prediction. Secretary of State Rogers and Smith, the director of ACDA and head of the US delegation team for SALT, favored an extensive arms control deal that would have included banning ABM and MIRV or at least one of

⁶⁶ Burr, *The Kissinger Transcripts*, 7.

the two. The Pentagon realized that the Safeguard deployment proposal had little chance to be completely implemented for domestic reasons, and they had to cut back the scale of the ABM deployment plan but were adamant about keeping the ABM production line warm. On MIRV, the Defense Department was extremely reluctant to ban MIRV without an on-site inspection for verification.

That there was a successful agreement at all is deemed a win for the arms control community against the Pentagon. However, it was not a win ACDA or the State Department had earned. The official SALT team's authority was undercut by President Nixon and his National Security Assistant Henry Kissinger. Kissinger controlled almost every aspect of SALT, from formulating US proposals to conducting diplomacy through the back-channel talks with Dobrynin. The extent of his power was unprecedented. Smith's effort to ban ABM and MIRV did not even have a genuine chance to be seriously negotiated with the Soviets since the idea was against the White House's objective, and Kissinger steered the US negotiation team away from the ban. The Department of Defense could keep both ABM and MIRV as they had hoped, but the final deal was not satisfactory to them. The treaty allowed the Soviets a higher number of strategic offensive weapons, and the Safeguard program was significantly curtailed.

The apparent middle ground—concluding the arms agreements but without a ban on ABM or MIRV—might seem to be the outcome of bureaucratic compromise. In reality, the settlement was the result of President Nixon and Henry Kissinger's skillful operation exploiting the bureaucratic differences in their favor more than the bureaucrats' push to the president. Overall, the Nixon case largely supports the bureaucratic politics perspective that bureaucracies are most interested in protecting their organizational interests and ideas. However, on another prediction the bureaucracies' influence in the decision making process was disproved. President Nixon and Kissinger were the two main players in the foreign and defense policy making process for the ABM Treaty. The SALT agreements were the embodiment of President Nixon and Kissinger's visions. The two were not only effective and competent in dealing with bureaucratic wrangling but also adept in exploiting the differences among the government institutions and leading the negotiations to their preference.

3.3 REAGAN ADMINISTRATION

President Reagan gave the country a surprising speech on March 23, 1983, when he announced that his administration would reinvigorate antiballistic missile systems to protect the United States from nuclear attacks. What prompted President Reagan to change the principle of the US nuclear strategy for the past two decades? Was there any bureaucratic push behind the president's decision? Did the Department of Defense, potential beneficiary of an additional military program, convince President Reagan of the need for the decision? Did the State Department oppose the idea out of the concern that it would violate the ABM Treaty signed in 1972? This section identifies key players in President Reagan's monumental SDI speech and investigates the validity of the bureaucratic politics perspective's hypothesis that the Defense Department supported the president and the State Department tried to dissuade President Reagan from strengthening US missile defense policy.

Unlike the two previous cases examined in this chapter, President Reagan's decision had only a few prior policy discussions, which left few opportunities for the key players to reveal their positions on SDI. It is also remarkably distinguished from the Nixon case study in that, as much as the policy was an extraordinary departure from the existing policy on missile defense that was almost forgotten within the mainstream policy circle, it severely lacked the specifics of a plan. It was more a vision than a concrete policy. Therefore, the Reagan SDI case study reviews not only the main question on how the decision was made leading up to the speech, but also the bureaucracies' stances on the scheme after the SDI announcement. In terms of main players, the SDI case study extensively examines the role of outsiders and their interactions with the White House staff, in addition to the conventional players such as secretary of state, defense secretary, and national security assistant. It is necessary to include these others because President Reagan had discussions on the revival of missile defense with outsiders before he mentioned his new vision to the usual key players within his administration.

3.3.1 The White House Staff

The White House staff was deeply involved in President Reagan's decision to renew missile defense policy and the preparation of Reagan's speech in 1983. There had been two staff meetings on the subject of missile defense within the White House in the first year of the Reagan presidency. The first meeting took place on September 14, 1981, with seven participants: White House staff members, George Keyworth, Ed Meese, Martin Anderson, Edwin W. Thomas Jr., and three outsiders, Karl Bendesten, Edward Teller, and General Daniel Graham. The outsiders were supporters of missile defense, and the purpose of their meeting was to bring missile defense to the White House aides' attention. Ed Meese was the president's counselor (who later became attorney general), Martin Anderson was adviser to the president on economic and domestic policies, and Edwin W. Thomas was Anderson's aide. Of the four White House staffers, these three's responsibilities lacked pertinence to the topic of the meeting. Only Keyworth, the president's scientific adviser, had expertise based on his technical background for the subject of the discussion. The second meeting was held about a month later on October 12, 1981 with the same participants except Teller and Keyworth. It is remarkable that the first two meetings excluded the most important figure for the subject within the White House, then National Security Adviser Richard Allen.

After the two meetings between the White House staff and outsiders, the players interested in missile defense held another meeting on January 8, 1982, this time with President Reagan. Nine individuals joined the meeting with the president, and Teller and Graham were two of the five outsider participants. The four members of the White House staff present were Ed Meese, George Keyworth, Martin Anderson, and William Clark. Clark was the new national security adviser who succeeded Allen after his resignation in 1982 due to the FBI investigation for a Japanese reporter's bribery scandal. Anderson later reckoned this meeting as "a critical turning point" in which the president made up his mind about missile defense.⁶⁷

Months passed by and meanwhile, Robert McFarlane, whom Clark brought with him as his deputy, actively explored the feasibility of a missile defense system. In the first two years of the Reagan presidency, the administration was largely occupied with economic problems and the

⁶⁷ Martin Anderson, "Reagan's Vision: Star Wars," in *Revolution: the Reagan legacy* (Stanford, Calif.: Hoover Institution Press, 1990), 94–96.

MX deployment debacle in the defense area. McFarlane, a former Marine Lt. Colonel, became increasingly concerned about military programs and thought missile defense seemed a decent alternative to the troubled MX. He also thought missile defense could be used as a bargaining chip for arms negotiations with the Soviet Union.⁶⁸

President Reagan's speech on television was planned for March 23 in order to rally support for his defense budget and the embattled MX missile basing plan. The SDI part of the speech was kept with the utmost secrecy. Relevant cabinet members were unaware of the president's plan until a day or two before the speech, and secrecy prevailed even within the White House. David Gergen, White House communications director, was notified that there would be an insert to the budget speech but did not know the text until the day Reagan made the announcement. McFarlane wrote the draft with his own typewriter, and the manuscript was reviewed by Keyworth and Deputy National Security Adviser John Poindexter.⁶⁹

Anderson provided details of the White House's activities prior to the SDI speech so as to dispel a criticism that Reagan's SDI was "an impulsive, possibly dangerous gesture, a whim indulged in by an ignorant politician, irresponsibly taken without even cursory consultation with expert advisers."⁷⁰ His accounts showed that there was ongoing interest and discussion regarding missile defense, and the White House staff had contemplated the revival of missile defense policy well before spring 1983. However, Anderson's accounts also exposed that the deliberation on the revival of missile defense was not taking place among cabinet members or White House officials who were responsible for such a decision. The conversation was led by staff irrelevant to defense or security matters, especially before the second National Security Adviser William Clark and his deputy Robert McFarlane joined the White House. Even their expertise was limited since Clark had no prior background in foreign policy or security until he took the deputy secretary of state position a little over a year before taking over the national security adviser role, and McFarlane, though he had knowledge on military affairs, was not an expert on the strategic, diplomatic, and technological aspects of missile defense.

⁶⁸ Robert C. McFarlane with Zofia Smardz, "In the Reagan White House: Star Wars," in *Special Trust* (New York: Cadell & Davies, 1994), 227; Richard Reeves, "March 8, 1983," in *President Reagan: The Triumph of Imagination* (New York: Simon & Schuster, 1981), 142–3.

⁶⁹ McFarlane, *Special Trust*, 226–227.

⁷⁰ Anderson, *Revolution: the Reagan legacy*, 99.

The examination of the activities before the SDI speech demonstrated another White House-centered decision making process. President Reagan had no consultation with his cabinet members before the landmark speech. The White House staff with no or limited experience on the subject matter paved the way to the big decision as participants of the meetings in 1981 and 1982 indicated. The two White House staff members who attended all three meetings were Ed Meese and Martin Anderson, neither of whom held an official title for security.

3.3.2 Secretary of Defense Caspar Weinberger

President Reagan called for launching a buildup of new defense programs on an enormous scale. Particular beneficiaries from the new initiative would be dependent on the specifics of the policy direction. For example, an extension of the ABM system similar to the Sentinel or Safeguard ABM systems in the 1960s and 1970s would have increased the Army's authority and funding, whereas an emphasis on space technology would likely put the Air Force in charge of the new program. Regardless of the particular service or divisions of the DOD bureaucracy, considering the organizational interest, it was certain that the secretary of defense was deemed the most likely candidate pushing for renewed missile defense efforts. It is reasonable to hypothesize that the DOD bureaucracy was influential in President Reagan's SDI announcement.

However, the analysis of the DOD's involvement in President Reagan's decision making process challenged this expectation. President Reagan received one briefing from the military a month before his March 1983 speech, which helped strengthen his conviction in the grand plan. A more important point is that it was President Reagan who encouraged the military leadership to explore a possibility for missile defense, not the other way around. During one of the regular briefing sessions by the Joint Chiefs of Staff to the president in December 1982, President Reagan asked "What if...what if we began to move away from our total reliance on offense to deter a nuclear attack and moved toward a relatively greater reliance on defense?"⁷¹ The Joint Chiefs of Staff quickly realized that the president was seriously interested in missile defense and among the most attracted to the idea was Chief of Naval Operations Admiral James D. Watkins. As a Catholic, he felt emotional about the recent Catholic bishop's objection to nuclear weapons

⁷¹ Anderson, *Revolution: the Reagan legacy*, 97.

and found missile defense an appealing alternative with a higher moral ground to the existing strategic doctrine relying on nuclear annihilation.

Following up on the president's suggestion, Admiral Watkins directed his staff to prepare a briefing on this subject and garnered backing from other members of the JCS. The Joint Chiefs of Staff had its meeting on the subject on February 5, and Secretary Weinberger was later consulted on the JCS' decision to support the new direction. Although the defense secretary was not impressed with the new approach, he approved the JCS to present their support for renewed missile defense efforts to the president in the next meeting scheduled for February 11, 1983.⁷² The February 11 meeting began with the ongoing problem with the MX missiles. In the latter part of the briefing, JCS Chairman General John Vessey made a presentation on missile defense to the president mostly prepared by Admiral Watkins and his aides. The Joint Chiefs' backing of the renewed ballistic missile defense policy reinforced the president's faith and contributed to his decision.⁷³ What the military did not know was how soon the president would make a public announcement on this topic. The military leaders thought they were taking on a long-term project for preliminary analysis.

Secretary of Defense Weinberger had no input to President Reagan's missile defense decision. By the time the defense secretary attended the February meeting in 1983, President Reagan was already on his way to finalizing his decision. President Reagan's plan to publicly announce his decision in a televised speech was kept from the secretary of defense until two days before the speech. And, he traveled to Portugal to attend North Atlantic Treaty Organization (NATO) Nuclear Planning Group meetings during the speech.⁷⁴

Although the defense secretary had virtually no role in SDI, once the president's vision was announced, Weinberger and his department were in full support of SDI. Throughout his tenure, Secretary Weinberger, labeled as a "true believer," fiercely defended the president's initiative. A stronger institutional push within the DOD became apparent with the creation of an organization entirely dedicated to the mission of SDI. Secretary Weinberger established the Strategic Defense Initiative Organization (SDIO) for the overall management of SDI programs in

⁷² Donald R. Baucom, "Hail To The Chiefs: The Untold History of Reagan's SDI Decision," *Policy Review* (Summer 1990): 72.

⁷³ Caspar W. Weinberger, "The Strategic Defense Initiative," in *Fighting for Peace: Seven Critical Years in the Pentagon* (New York: Warner Books, 1990), 306.

⁷⁴ *Ibid.*, 306.

April 1984. The director of the SDIO had direct access to the defense secretary.⁷⁵ The organization's status independent from the other military services gave the SDIO a remarkable advantage in bureaucratic maneuvering. The Strategic Defense Initiative Organization was less subject to the intramural DOD fighting that usually played out among the three services. The new agency could afford to represent the sole interest of promoting strategic defense programs without having to worry about its impact on other programs within a service.

In sum, the defense secretary was in full support of the SDI programs, consistent with the bureaucratic politics perspective's proposition. However, the Defense Department's role in the inception of SDI was minimal. It was not a leading force in the restoration of an extensive missile defense program.

3.3.3 Secretary of State George Shultz

Two individuals served President Reagan as his secretary of state. The original cabinet member representing the State Department was a retired four-star Army general, Alexander Haig. His overconfidence and abrasive personality generated a lot of resentment within the Reagan administration, and not surprisingly, his tenure lasted less than two years. President Reagan replaced Haig with George Shultz. Shultz was highly regarded for his copious government and business experiences. He was a man with keen political sense and knew how to operate in Washington. President Reagan trusted the secretary, and Shultz emerged as an influential figure in the Reagan administration.

Nonetheless, Secretary Shultz was not part of President Reagan's decision making process for or the announcement of the initiative. The secretary of state became aware of President Reagan's SDI speech only two days before it was delivered to the nation. McFarlane informed under secretary for political affairs Lawrence Eagleburger, who subsequently relayed the message to Secretary Shultz. Renewing ballistic missile defense efforts implied a fundamental shift in the American nuclear strategy with tremendous implications for relations

⁷⁵ Senate Committee on Armed Services, *Hearings on Department of Defense Authorization for Appropriations for Fiscal Year 1985: Hearing before the Subcommittee on Strategic and Theater Nuclear Forces*, Statement of Lieutenant General James A. Abrahamson, Director, Strategic Defense Initiative, Department of Defense, Accompanied by Major General Elvin Heiberg, U.S. Army, Chief, Army Ballistic Missile Defense and others, 98th Cong., 2nd. sess., April 24, 1984.

with allies and enemies alike, yet the secretary of state had no say in the policy discussions. As secretary of state, Shultz could envisage negative ally reactions and he became awfully concerned with its repercussions for the ABM Treaty. It would have a profound impact not only on the US defense posture but also on the world scene. The new direction would, in his judgment, “not be seen as a peaceful gesture” but considered “destabilizing.”⁷⁶

Secretary Shultz strongly opposed the announcement plan but the decision was already made, and a small number of White House staff was working on the execution of the speech. Shultz was offended by William Clark and his deputy McFarlane. He thought they undermined the secretary and prodded the president into a course of action, a wrong action. He called Clark and candidly expressed his displeasure by saying “I’m in the dark, but I’m leery about such promises in the face of such uncertainty... I feel you guys are leading the president out on a limb and people will see it off.”⁷⁷ Shultz was not able to reverse the president’s plan but with his unyielding resolution against the White House staff, he managed to persuade the president to put add an important sentence to the draft composed by McFarlane reading “consistent with the ABM Treaty and recognizing the need for closer consultation with our allies.”⁷⁸ Shultz’s response was characteristic of the secretary of state whose first and foremost concern was the diplomatic consequences of such a policy turn. What was atypical was that the tension arose between Secretary Shultz and the White House staff, not the usual rival, the Defense Department.

Although Secretary Shultz had serious reservations about the March 23 speech, he supported the president after the announcement was made. The State Department’s most significant and strongest influence came from the purview of the State Department’s authority to interpret the ABM Treaty. Critics voiced their concern that SDI was heading toward abrogating the ABM Treaty and launched a movement to preserve the treaty. The most prominent effort was the “National Campaign to Save the ABM Treaty,” organized to influence Congress to refuse funding for SDI. The committee members included high-ranking former officials such as Defense Secretary Robert McNamara under presidents Kennedy and Johnson, retired Chairman of the JCS Gen. Maxwell Taylor, and former CIA directors Stansfield Turner and William

⁷⁶ George P. Shultz, “The Strategic Defense Initiative, Strategies Take Shape”, in *Turmoil and Triumph: My Years as Secretary of State* (New York: Maxwell Macmillan International, 1993), 249–250.

⁷⁷ Ibid., 250.

⁷⁸ Ibid., 250.

Colby.⁷⁹ The panel published their study in spring 1985 and the report warned that SDI would violate the ABM Treaty when it approached the deployment phase in a few years.⁸⁰

Ardent proponents of SDI were willing to go so far as abandoning the treaty and Secretary Weinberger was the highest profile figure in this category. For a while, the defense secretary evaded the sensitive question of treaty violation by emphasizing the research aspect of SDI, but he began hinting at a possible withdrawal from the treaty in fall 1985. The first such indication was during a television interview with Marvin Kalb, an NBC correspondent reporting on SDI technology in September 1985. Secretary Weinberger said, the United States “[has] to go beyond the ABM Treaty and renegotiate it” if the technology of destroying incoming missiles is deemed feasible.⁸¹

The State Department intended to maintain the ABM Treaty, but at the same time it was willing to tweak the treaty interpretation to allow for SDI. According to the narrowest construal of the treaty, Article V (1) forbade development and testing of the kind of space-based systems that SDI was aiming to obtain. The provision states “Each Party undertakes not to develop, test, or deploy ABM systems or components which are sea-based, air-based, space-based, or mobile land-based.” Paul Nitze who was involved in SALT negotiations, was serving the Reagan administration as a chief negotiator for the Intermediate-Range Nuclear Forces (INF) Treaty. He advised Secretary Shultz that research, development, and testing of new technologies could be permitted under the “other physical principles... in the future...would be subject to discussion” part of the Agreed Statement (D).⁸² Nitze also suggested that it would be best to collaborate with Soviet counterparts to broaden the interpretation before asserting this new interpretation. The

⁷⁹ *Washington Post*, “U.S. Close to Violating ABM Treaty, Panel of Security Specialists Says,” June 20, 1984.

⁸⁰ Charles Mohr, “Study Says Space Arms Plan Imperils ABM Pact,” *New York Times*, March 26, 1985.

⁸¹ David Ignatius, “U.S. Threatens to Renounce ABM Treaty to Develop Space-Based Missile Defense,” *Wall Street Journal*, September 10, 1984.

⁸² US Department of State, Anti-Ballistic Missile Treaty (ABM Treaty), Agreed Statements, Common Understandings, And Unilateral Statements Regarding the Treaty Between The United States of America And The Union of Soviet Socialist Republic On The Limitation of Anti-Ballistic Missiles. 1. Agreed Statements, [D] In order to insure fulfillment of the obligation not to deploy ABM systems and their components except as provided in Article III of the Treaty, the Parties agree that in the event ABM systems based on other physical principles and including components capable of substituting for ABM interceptor missiles, ABM launchers, or ABM radars are created in the future, specific limitations on such systems and their components would be subject to discussion in accordance with Article XIII and agreement in accordance with Article XIV of the Treaty, <http://www.state.gov/t/vci/trty/101888.htm>.

State Department legal adviser, Abe Sofaer, came up with the same conclusion and Secretary Shultz was delighted to endorse this broad interpretation.⁸³

Although the State Department interpreted the ABM Treaty in favor of allowing the space-based ABM technology notwithstanding objections from arms control advocates and former officials including Harold Brown and Gerard Smith, its approach was different from that of the more hawkish members of the Reagan administration. Secretary Shultz had hoped to focus on the US intention to research new technologies and earn time for a discussion with the Soviets on a plan to widen the interpretation of the treaty once SDI reached the deployment stage. However, others in the administration pulled the trigger. McFarlane, during an interview on “Meet the Press,” proclaimed that only deployment was prohibited under the ABM Treaty. The statement marked the public announcement of the Reagan administration’s position endorsing the broad interpretation of the treaty. This incensed the secretary of state. Shultz thought McFarlane went beyond his authority, commenting on the issue without consulting Shultz and unnecessarily making the administration vulnerable to critics at home and abroad. The secretary of state was also exasperated by Defense Secretary Weinberger’s position supporting the abrogation of the treaty, if necessary.⁸⁴ The tension between the two camps was not unexpected. The overall relationship between the two secretaries was one of the least amicable between defense secretary and secretary of state during the time periods this study examines, and the treaty matter only added to the clash between the two. It was in part the inevitable differences between the State Department and the Pentagon but also in part personality driven. Secretary Shultz was a shrewd pragmatist whereas Secretary Weinberger’s style was more ideological.

The bureaucratic politics perspective projected that the State Department would oppose reviving missile defense because of worries about the potential damage to the ABM Treaty and the signal that renewed missile defense efforts would send to the world. The State Department was completely shut out of the decision making process and its secretary was deprived of opportunities to make a case about SDI. The State Department’s role became important after President Reagan’s speech, and the center of attention for the department was how to reconcile the collision between the ambitious missile defense policy and the ABM Treaty. Unlike some in

⁸³ Shultz, “Rocks on the Summit Road,” *Turmoil and Triumph*, 578–579.

⁸⁴ Ibid.

the administration who had expressed their willingness to pull out of the treaty, the State Department preferred the preservation of the treaty but in a compromising way. The State Department responded to the trouble by proposing a fresh interpretation of the treaty. After the speech, the State Department—spearheaded by Secretary Shultz, Paul Nitze and Abe Sofaer—claimed that the space-based system would not violate the ABM Treaty, defying the conventional interpretation. The attitude of the State Department was troublesome from the bureaucratic politics perspective.

3.3.4 Outsiders

Outsiders played an exceptional role in the launching of SDI. While Reagan administration officials shared President Reagan's conservative views on defense and demonstrated their unequivocal support for the missile defense plan after the president revealed his ambition, none had seriously proposed the idea to the president. A handful of White House staff members, particularly McFarlane, were somewhat instrumental for the president to renew missile defense, but outsiders worked diligently to capture the president's attention to change the status quo and revive missile defense.

A leading outside figure was Dr. Edward Teller, a prominent nuclear physicist. His scientific knowledge allowed him to speak about technical aspects of missile defense with authority. Also known as the father of the H-bomb, Teller was influential in establishing the Lawrence Livermore Laboratory in California, which turned into the primary research institution for missile defense technology. The laboratory manufactured nuclear warheads used in the Johnston Atoll test in 1962 and developed the nuclear X-ray laser, kinetic energy weapons, and direct energy weapons throughout the 1970s and 1980s.⁸⁵ These futuristic technologies were later proposed to be incorporated into SDI.

Teller's contribution to SDI was as much political as it was scientific. Several years after setting up the Livermore Laboratory in the early 1950s, Teller turned his focus to cultivating political and bureaucratic interests for missile defense, leaving the scientific work to young conservative scientists. In the 1960s, Teller convinced the Joint Chiefs of Staff of the need for a

⁸⁵ David Baker, "The Making of 'Star Wars'," *New Scientists*, July 9, 1987, 36–37.

missile defense system. In the 1970s, he found another supporter, General George J. Keegan, Jr., head of US Air Force Intelligence.⁸⁶ Teller's tenaciousness intersected with a crucial figure at a significant juncture in January 1983, none other than Admiral Watkins, who was about to provide the Pentagon's view on missile defense to President Reagan. The admiral had his own interest in missile defense but was not certain of its technological feasibility. That changed at a meeting with outside advisers on January 20, 1983. Among the participants was Edward Teller, who offered the admiral extremely optimistic prospects for the new technologies. Teller gave Admiral Watkins much needed relief about the admiral's concern over technology.⁸⁷

Teller's ties were not limited to officials at the Pentagon but extended to the president. By the time Reagan became the 40th president, Teller had already known Reagan for over ten years. He invited Reagan to the Livermore Laboratory in 1967, when Reagan was newly elected as the governor of California.⁸⁸ Teller's influence was shown with his installation of George Keyworth as the president's science adviser. Keyworth was a scientist from Los Alamos Laboratory in New Mexico not Teller's Livermore, but he was Teller's protégé and shared the same idea about missile defense.⁸⁹ Teller actively sought opportunities to meet President Reagan to directly lobby him for a stronger missile defense posture, and his efforts paid off. One of them was the aforementioned meeting with the president in January 1982. After waiting for months without hearing any response on his proposal other than a perfunctory follow-up letter from the White House, Teller publicly expressed his wish to meet the president during an on-air interview with respected conservative commentator William Buckley in June 1982. Shortly after, Teller was invited to the White House for a meeting with President Reagan on September 14, 1982. Teller again tried to convince President Reagan on missile defense by advocating the laser technologies, but Teller believed that his performance was not great.⁹⁰

Another key person for SDI was General Daniel Graham, former director of the Defense Intelligence Agency under the Ford administration between 1974 and 1976. He developed a concept called High Frontier and set up a company with the same name, *High Frontier Inc.*,

⁸⁶ Ibid., 38.

⁸⁷ Baucom, "Hail to the Chiefs," 71.

⁸⁸ Patrick E. Tyler, "War in Space: Hardware and Politics of an Idea That's No Joke: How Edward Teller learned to love the nuclear-pumped X-ray laser," *Washington Post*, April 3, 1983.

⁸⁹ Baker, "The Making of 'Star Wars,'" 37.

⁹⁰ Peter Goodchild, "Building up the Props," in *Edward Teller: The Real Dr. Strangelove* (Cambridge, Mass.: Harvard University Press, 2004), 342–3.

dedicated to advancing missile defense technology in 1981. Graham worked for Reagan as a campaign adviser in 1976 and 1980, and had suggested revisiting missile defense to Reagan in 1980 in this capacity. The idea was buried, though, as key Reagan campaign advisers rejected it for political risks.

Although Teller and Graham shared the same goal to revive missile defense, the two individuals had their differences in what type of technologies should be employed. Whereas Teller was pushing for futuristic technologies such as nuclear X-ray lasers, Graham favored applying existing technologies for speedy deployment. The retired general also opposed using nuclear detonation to destroy enemy missiles and instead advocated interceptor rockets in space. Not able to overcome these differences, Graham eventually parted from Teller's group and found a new sponsor, the Heritage Foundation. This conservative think tank was well organized for an advocacy campaign and had already established a strong network to circulate their conservative cases to the media and lawmakers. The Heritage Foundation published Graham's High Frontier concept and raised the profile of Graham's idea among conservatives.⁹¹

The outsiders' influence on the Reagan administration's strategic defense plan was uniquely influential. The advocates lobbied the president for an idea that was considered out of the norm by the security and bureaucratic establishment. The radical change in US nuclear strategy was possible thanks in part to the outsiders who were not bound to the customary judgment or political calculations.

3.3.5 President Ronald Reagan

There had been speculated several reasons as to what led President Reagan to take a huge step altering US nuclear strategy. Some attributed this move to the political circumstances that President Reagan was facing and others ascribed it to the president's idiosyncrasy. The political challenges were the MX basing schemes that had been repeatedly rebuked by Congress and the growing peace movement demanding a nuclear freeze. Weinberger's MX programs had traumatic failures in rallying support from Congress, and the administration increasingly looked

⁹¹ Karsten Zimmermann, "Decision in March: The Genesis of the "Star-Wars" Speech and the Strategic Defense Initiative (SDI)," in Helga Haftendorn and Jakob Schissler, ed., *The Reagan Administration: a reconstruction of American strength?* (Berlin; New York: de Gruyter, 1988), 148–149.

like it was drifting in establishing its core strategic policy. Meanwhile, the Catholic bishops' organized activities against nuclear weapons carried heavy political weight, not the sort that could be brushed off as a marginalized radical clamor. Strategic defense, away from the horrendous foundation of the MAD doctrine, seemed an ideal solution to the political problem surrounding the MX missile impasse and the nuclear freeze movement.

At a more personal level, many close to the president cited his experience at the North American Aerospace Defense Command (NORAD) and his detestation of the existing MAD strategy. While he was campaigning for the presidency, Reagan visited NORAD on July 31, 1979. There the future president learned of the vulnerability of the United States to nuclear attacks. He responded to the briefing and said "We have spent all that money and have all that equipment, and there is nothing we can do to prevent a nuclear missile from hitting us." He also lamented that the only option a US president would have upon a nuclear attack was "to press the button [to launch retaliatory nuclear weapons] or do nothing. They're both bad. We should have some way of defending ourselves against nuclear missiles."⁹² The president was deeply disturbed by the destructive premise and wanted a new strategy that would envision a defense against the devastating nuclear weapons. Martin Anderson wrote a memo delineating this idea under the label "develop a protective Missile System." Though it did not attract much attention at that time, the general idea for missile defense was endorsed by the Republican National Committee and included in the 1980 Republican platform.⁹³

President Reagan's own accounts attributed his ambitious plan to his abhorrence of the MAD doctrine. In his memoir, President Reagan depicted his reaction to the inhumane principle and the moral superiority of missile defense to MAD.⁹⁴ Only Reagan himself knew his true inspiration, and all other speculations would remain as speculations. Although it remains uncertain why, it is clear who was determinant in proposing the renewed missile defense efforts, and it was not bureaucracy as the bureaucratic politics perspective's argument put forth. President Reagan had long pondered changing the fundamentals of the US nuclear strategy moving away from its heavy reliance on offensive weapons to defense. Besides the JCS Chairman General John Vessey's briefing shortly before the March announcement, there was no

⁹² Anderson, *Revolution: the Reagan legacy*, 83.

⁹³ *Ibid.*, 85–87.

⁹⁴ Ronald W. Reagan, "Arms Control: From Geneva to Reykjavik, Moscow to Washington," *An American Life* (New York: Simon & Schuster, 1990), 547–548.

proactive push from the bureaucracies for the revival of missile defense, and even the military did not anticipate that President Reagan would announce a profound turn on the nation's strategic posture so soon. It was also clear that President Reagan was attracted to the prospect of new technologies for missile defense without using nuclear warheads. His aversion to nuclear weapons can explain why he resisted Teller's advice to employ nuclear pumped X-ray lasers to detonate incoming warheads. Teller's close relationship did not suffice to convince the president who wanted to provide an alternative vision to the 1960s and 1970s antiballistic missiles. Instead, the president chose Graham's space-based interceptors that encapsulated his high moral ground of removing nuclear weapons from missiles intended for defense purposes.

Reagan also had a tight grip on his announcement of the plan. McFarlane suggested that President Reagan inform Speaker of the House Tip O'Neill, other key members of Congress, and NATO allies out of political courtesy before the speech. Concerned that possible leaks and subsequent attacks from critics might preemptively thwart his plan, President Reagan ordered McFarlane to keep it confidential, refusing the aide's recommendation. The events surrounding President Reagan's famous speech in spring 1983 suggest that the bureaucrats' influence on the decision itself and the manner in which the speech was delivered was minimal. Strategic Defense Initiative was President Reagan's grand scheme for taking the nation in a different direction, and the decision to launch the new project was determined without an extensive policy analysis done by the bureaucracy.

3.3.6 Interplay

This section examined the bureaucrats' influence on President Reagan's decision to build up the US missile defense policy and their role in the 1983 speech announcing the new plan. One of the essential claims of the bureaucratic politics framework lies in the ability and responsibility of the bureaucrats to set an agenda for a critical decision. The Reagan case study defied this argument in a serious way. It was not a bureaucracy-initiated decision. In fact, the bureaucrats had practically no significant input to the decision making process. There was no forum in which the competing bureaucracies could make their cases one way or the other regarding a decision that would not only increase resources and commitment to missile defense but also fundamentally alter the nation's long-held nuclear strategy of over twenty years. The only glimpse of the

bureaucratic politics model prior to President Reagan's decision and his speech was the Joint Chiefs' support for the renewed missile defense effort and Secretary Shultz's insistence on adding a sentence in an attempt to tame international concerns over the US policy turn. The military expressed its support for the new direction, but only after being nudged by the president. The secretary of defense was present at the crucial meeting in February but had not yet developed his position, and the final decision came out irrespective of the defense secretary's view. The secretary of state and defense secretary were not even informed of the announcement of the landmark decision until a couple of days before, let alone given an opportunity to provide much feedback.

While the Nixon-Kissinger pair manipulated the bureaucrats during the SALT process, President Reagan simply discounted his cabinet members in making one of the most important strategic decisions of his two terms. It was an intriguing case because the unique lack of participation by bureaucrats before the decision was made and also because of the outsiders' influence exceeded that of bureaucrats. Their weight should not be overstated since the outsiders needed contacts and support from the White House and the Pentagon. They were able to convey their messages to the president only thanks to the opportunities President Reagan's White House staff offered. Nonetheless, the outsiders understood the possible bureaucratic resistance and played a savvy political game, taking their idea directly to the White House with persistence. Their efforts, at a minimum, reassured President Reagan when he mulled over taking such a drastic step and may have rekindled the president's attention to missile defense.

However, it was ultimately President Reagan who made the decision. He did so mainly by exercising his own judgment instead of leveraging the bureaucrats' expertise or opinions. He wanted to provide a new solution to replace MAD's reliance on nuclear annihilation, and his strong commitment to this goal led him easily to overrule Teller's suggestion to use nuclear detonators. The top-down management style was visionary but held little regard for bureaucratic vetting or coordination.

Another test was whether bureaucrats competed for an option best suited for their bureaucratic proclivity and interest. The Reagan case was mixed on this hypothesis as well. Secretary Weinberger became an ardent supporter of SDI, but it was after the decision was already announced. When the Joint Chiefs of Staff informed him of their plan to recommend a more aggressive missile defense policy to the president, the secretary's response was lukewarm.

Secretary Shultz was concerned about the new policy's impact on the ABM Treaty but willing to circumvent the ABM Treaty by reinterpreting it. Taken together, President Reagan's SDI did not strongly corroborate the bureaucratic politics perspective. The two most pertinent bureaucracies, the Defense Department and the State Department, were largely ignored in the decision making process for SDI.

3.4 BUSH ADMINISTRATION

The 1991 Missile Defense Act is chosen as a case for review for two reasons: the legislation allocated over \$4 billion for SDI, the largest amount approved thus far, and for the first time since the launch of SDI, it stated the US policy to deploy missile defense with a specific timeline. It was a reversal of the original trend under the Bush administration. The legislation mandating deployment of a limited-scale missile defense system was mainly a product of Congress. The legislative activities behind the passage of the 1991 Missile Defense Act are thoroughly investigated in the congressional chapter. The foci of the Bush case study in this section are the overall attitudes of the major players in the Bush administration on missile defense policy.

3.4.1 Secretary of Defense Dick Cheney

What was Secretary of Defense Dick Cheney's position on SDI? Was he a strong supporter of SDI? If so, was he effective in persuading his colleagues and President Bush for the SDI efforts within the administration? Throughout his tenure, Secretary Cheney acted as a reliable advocate for SDI, but his influence was limited. Cheney was known for his hardliner stance on defense from his work in the House of Representatives. He was a congressman from Wyoming and had been just elected minority whip a couple of months before he took the position of secretary of defense under President Bush after Bush's first nominee, John Tower, failed to be confirmed by the Senate.

When President Bush succeeded President Reagan, the changes taking place in Eastern Europe and the Soviet Union reshaped the traditional views of US defense policy-makers and strategic planners. Coupled with a weak economy and swollen federal deficit during the Reagan presidency, the defense budget was under great pressure to be tightened. The most interesting observation made on Cheney was that his strong pro-defense proclivity contributed to his unwavering support for strategic over conventional programs, which meant he was willing to sacrifice conventional weaponry in order to protect strategic forces.

Behind his staunch support for SDI and strategic programs at large was a profound mistrust of the communist countries, his dark view of the world, and his conviction in missile defense technology for limited protection. While many in the Bush administration were exultant about the transition in Eastern Europe and the movements in the Soviet Union, Cheney was the voice of warning, and his pessimism persisted from the first to the last years under President Bush. For Cheney, there was nothing comforting about the developments in the Soviet Union. The mammoth rival was still a formidable nuclear power, and the political turmoil only added more reasons for concern. Thus, he did not think changes unfolding in the Eastern bloc should bring about a significant reduction in defense forces. He argued that downsizing the defense programs significantly in response to the alteration on the world scene would be comparable to “[giving] away their overcoats on the first sunny day in January.”⁹⁵ His skepticism was founded on classic realists’ view that material capability should be a key factor in determining the security equation. He could not overlook the Soviet nuclear capability. He pointed out that the Soviet Union was the “only one nation in the world capable of destroying [the United States].”⁹⁶ While acknowledging the need for trimming down the defense budget due to budgetary pressures and the easing tensions between the two superpowers, he was indisposed to restructure the fundamentals of the US military strategy and insisted that any streamlining should be done “carefully,” “cautiously,” and “deliberately.” Even when he proposed a smaller defense budget

⁹⁵ Molly Moore, “Cheney Lambastes House on Defense Budget Cuts; Politics, Over-Optimism Said to Harm Defense,” *Washington Post*, August 24, 1989.

⁹⁶ Molly Moore, “Hill’s Ax Poised Over Defense; Budget Battle Could Be Toughest in Years,” *Washington Post*, February 12, 1990.

than the previous year after adjusting for inflation, Secretary Cheney wanted to spare strategic programs from a huge budget cut and proposed \$4.5 billion for SDI spending.⁹⁷

As relations between the East and the West were moving further forward and the progress was widely acknowledged by most decision makers, Secretary Cheney was forced to shift DOD's focus away from the Soviet threat to regional conflicts. However, Cheney's doubts on the communist country remained unchanged. During a House Armed Services Committee (HASC) hearing, he rhetorically asked "Five years from now, who will control the Soviet nuclear arsenal? Will there still be a central government in charge? Or will the Russian republic have taken over that responsibility? Or will the four republics that currently have strategic nuclear weapons on their soil each have its own independently controlled arsenal of nuclear weapon in the future?" In the wake of the failed coup d'état attempt in the Soviet Union, Secretary Cheney wanted to highlight the possibility that political instability in the Soviet Union could create various security problems such as refugees, civil war, and most importantly, a lack of command and control of strategic weapons.⁹⁸ The loose control of nuclear weapons in the Soviet republics was a compelling reason for the United States to be equipped with a missile defense system against an accidental or unauthorized launch of a nuclear weapon.⁹⁹

Soon after he became secretary of defense in spring 1989, he commented that President Reagan's SDI was "oversold" but at the same time confirmed that the Bush administration resolutely supported the deployment of an antiballistic missile defense system. Appearing on major television shows, Secretary Cheney repeatedly said the United States would deploy missile defense "at some point," invoking both the "third country argument" and the enhanced deterrence argument.¹⁰⁰ Secretary Cheney's comments reflected his standpoint on SDI. He had been supportive of SDI while in the House,¹⁰¹ but Cheney became more confident in its technology with the latest architecture and his visit to a major SDI research and development lab. Just around the transitional time from the Reagan administration to the Bush administration, the

⁹⁷ Melissa Healy and John M. Broder, "Defense Budget Spares Key Weapons Systems Pentagon: Bush takes the first step toward scaling back the military," *Los Angeles times*, January 30, 1990.

⁹⁸ John Lancaster and Barton Gellman, "Citing Soviet Strife, Cheney Resists Cuts; Possible Civil War, Famine Noted by Pentagon Chief," *Washington Post*, August 30, 1991.

⁹⁹ Ibid.

¹⁰⁰ George C. Wilson, "SDI Was 'Oversold,' Cheney Says; Defense Chief Backs Some Form of System," *Washington Post*, March 29, 1989.

¹⁰¹ *Time*, "Five who fit the bill," May 29, 1991, 137, no. 20: 18.

new concept of the Brilliant Pebbles surfaced and Secretary Cheney endorsed the idea.¹⁰² The Phase I deployment plan was deemed infeasible due to technical difficulties, and the launching of a new architecture gave the administration a legitimate reason to delay a deployment decision without admitting the technical shortcomings of SDI. Another occasion that encouraged Secretary Cheney's assessment on the SDI technology was his visit to the Lawrence Livermore Laboratory, where he observed research efforts on SDI technology in September 1989.¹⁰³ Whatever misgivings Secretary Cheney might have had on Reagan's large-scale SDI, they were not comparable to his deep distrust of a total reliance on MAD or the potential menace of the Soviet Union. While he thought an infallible SDI system might be unrealistic, he saw value in a limited-scale missile defense system, which he believed would improve deterrence against the Soviet Union and provide doable protection from small-scale attacks launched by Third World countries.

Armed with a hawkish ideology and boosted confidence in the latest technology, he was ready to combat opponents of SDI in Congress. From early on in the Bush administration, Secretary Cheney severely clashed with members of Congress over prioritization of the military programs and often directly attacked them in an unabashed manner as if he was on a political stump. When the House decided to slash funding for the strategic programs and restore conventional weapons programs in its FY 1990 Defense Authorization bill, Secretary Cheney accused Congress of "using the defense budget as a jobs program" while speaking to the audience at a national convention of Veterans of Foreign Wars. The defense secretary also criticized Congress for being too optimistic about the Soviet Union and sacrificing "critically important strategic programs" in order to "protect jobs in selected home districts."¹⁰⁴

Exerting his power as defense secretary, Cheney was not hesitant to threaten to recommend a veto to President Bush in protest against a congressional move reorganizing the administration's budget priority. This was the case when the Senate and the House were meeting to reconcile their FY 1990 defense authorization bill¹⁰⁵ and also when the House passed its

¹⁰² John M. Broder, " 'Brilliant Pebbles' a Last Hope? 'Star Wars' Stakes Future on Mini-Missile Concept," *Los Angeles Times*, April 29, 1989.

¹⁰³ Gerald F. Seib, "Prodded by Quayle and Cheney, Bush Becomes Fervent Supporter of Strategic Defense Initiative," *Wall Street Journal*, February 23, 1990.

¹⁰⁴ Molly Moore, "Cheney Lambastes House on Defense Budget Cuts; Politics, Over-Optimism Said to Harm Defense," *Washington Post*, August 24, 198.

¹⁰⁵ Melissa Healy, "Cheney Threatens He'll Urge Veto if 'Star Wars' Is Cut," *Los Angeles Times*, October 13, 1989.

version of the defense authorization bill for FY 1991, in which the House cut the SDI budget almost by half and ended the B-2 bomber program.¹⁰⁶ This pattern supports one of the bureaucratic politics perspective's predictions that the Defense Department would try to expand or protect SDI.

Secretary Cheney's position throughout the Bush administration was typical for the head of the Defense Department with regards to SDI. He tried to preserve SDI and struggled to make a case to Congress that it was crucial to maintain a strong missile defense program despite what was happening in the Soviet Union and Eastern Europe. His effort was largely futile as Congress routinely slashed SDI funding. The exception was the Missile Defense Act of 1991, and it was not initiated by Secretary Cheney's leadership or anyone else in the administration but by Congress. The Defense Department came up with the GPALS concept. It was similar to the program elements delineated in the Missile Defense Act of 1991, but there was one key area where the two differed. The legislation originally omitted the Brilliant Pebbles program. It was the conservatives in the Senate who came to the rescue and succeeded in keeping the space-based interceptors, not Secretary Cheney.

How effective was the defense secretary within the administration in promoting missile defense? Secretary Cheney's role in missile defense policy during the Bush administration was modest. In spite of the seemingly amplified fervor for missile defense compared to the beginning of the Bush administration, GPALS was a scaled-down version of SDI. Secretary Cheney was one of a few staunch supporters of SDI within the administration. He carried out his duty as defense secretary but his desire to shape the Bush administration's SDI or his ability to do so was tame for a practical reason, due to his idiosyncrasy. At the personal level, he was a team player and reluctant to undermine the president's authority or challenge others in the administration. Although Secretary Cheney's view was gloomier than other top aides to the president, he avoided directly contradicting other officials' comments. In a practical matter, his access to the president was limited, and thus, so was his ability to lead SDI policy.

¹⁰⁶ Paul Houston, "House Support Arms Cut, Shifts \$ 1 Billion to Gulf," *Los Angeles Times*, September 20, 1990.

3.4.2 Secretary of State James Baker

James Baker had been a Washington insider well before President Bush appointed him secretary of state. He had served as secretary of treasury in the Reagan administration and also the chief of staff to President Reagan. During the eight years of the Reagan presidency, he earned a reputation as a shrewd politician and pragmatist. His political instinct and wealth of Washington experience enabled him to rein in the State Department and to emerge as the key policy adviser in the Bush administration's foreign policy circle.¹⁰⁷

An SDI question most pertinent to the State Department was the interpretation of the ABM Treaty. Although the Bush administration was hesitant to explicitly announce its position on this issue, the Bush administration continued the Reagan administration's broad reading of the 1972 treaty. Its stance was revealed when the Soviets made an overture to settle the debates. Soon after President Bush succeeded Reagan, the Soviet Union made a proposal to gauge the new administration's attitude on US-Soviet relations using missile defense. In May 1989, the Soviet officials told a US official that the construction of the Krasnoyarsk radar was a mistake and expressed their willingness to dismantle the controversial radar system if the United States agreed to reinstate the traditional interpretation of the ABM Treaty. Secretary Baker declined the offer, and his rejection implied that the Bush administration would not denounce the Reagan administration's approach.¹⁰⁸ Also, Secretary Baker and the Bush administration as a whole were cautious in dealing with Gorbachev and shunned making a premature commitment. While Gorbachev's move was encouraging, the Bush administration understood the uncertainties and risks associated with such a transition. There were many nagging questions such as whether Gorbachev was sincere in his reform efforts, and if so, whether he would be able to push through his ideas against opposition in Soviet domestic politics.

The Soviets made another enticing proposal several months later by hinting that they would consider breaking the linkage between SDI and the Strategic Arms Reduction Treaty (START). The Soviets had long insisted that disputes on SDI should be resolved before embarking on strategic offensive weapons talks. The offer was made while the two countries' foreign chiefs were meeting in September 1989. Secretary Baker invited Soviet Foreign Minister

¹⁰⁷ William Safire, "Bush's Cabinet Who's Up Who's Down," *New York Times*, March 25, 1990.

¹⁰⁸ Michael R. Gordon, "Kremlin Offers to Destroy Disputed Siberian Radar," *New York Times*, May 14, 1989.

Shevardnadze to his ranch in Wyoming for diplomatic talks in September 1989, and the Soviets' shifted position on the linkage surfaced during the talks.¹⁰⁹ Many officials in the State Department believed that the new development was a huge step forward in arms talks. In a characteristic contrast, the Pentagon was more skeptical. Some officials in the Defense Department did not think the Soviets' offer contained any meaningful compromise on their end, and some of their new demands were unacceptable. While the Soviets unlinked the start of the strategic offensive arms talks and SDI, they set forth a condition that would allow them to freely leave the arms talks on strategic offensive weapons if the ABM Treaty was determined to have been violated. In addition, Gorbachev's letter suggested, "the two sides clarify what research and testing on space weapons constitutes an ABM violation."¹¹⁰ It meant that the Soviets wanted to resolve the dispute over the interpretation of the ABM Treaty. Despite problems raised by skeptics, Secretary Baker evaluated the Soviets' gesture positively. He praised their new stance as a major concession, and the change "removes a key obstacle to a START treaty while enabling us to proceed with our SDI [Strategic Defense Initiative] plans."¹¹¹

Having watched the rapidly acquired cordial relationship between President Reagan and Gorbachev up-close during the last days of the Reagan presidency, Baker was mindful of not catching the same eagerness. However, the secretary of state quickly developed a close working relationship with Soviet Foreign Minister Eduard A. Shevardnadze, and he became increasingly invested in the success of Gorbachev-Shevardnadze. The de-linking relieved the secretary of state from having to confront one of the thorniest issues for START, and Baker became excited with the prospect of beginning arms talks. The START negotiations proceeded, and as its course was advancing, the stakes for Baker were getting higher. Although Secretary Baker supported SDI by endorsing the broad interpretation of the ABM Treaty, he was not willing to spoil the dialogue with the Soviets for SDI. His supported SDI only lest it damage the improving US-Soviet relationship.

¹⁰⁹ Thomas L. Friedman, "Soviets, in Apparent Shift, Remove Barrier to Strategic Arms Treaty," *New York Times*, September 23, 1989.

¹¹⁰ R. Jeffrey Smith, "Debates Erupt Over Soviet Arms-Control Proposal," *Washington Post*, October 1, 1989.

¹¹¹ Don Oberdorfer, "Baker Sounds Positive Note In Arms Talks," *Washington Post*, October 24, 1989.

3.4.3 National Security Adviser Brent Scowcroft

A judicious man with intelligence and expertise in security and foreign affairs, retired General Brent Scowcroft played an adequate role as coordinator and adviser. Though he was a protégée of Henry Kissinger, Scowcroft did not try to manipulate or outfox cabinet members, as his mentor was notorious for. Scowcroft provided the president with the diverse perspectives of the competing bureaucracies and the implications for different options.

Although the Bush foreign policy team showed exceptional unity and abstained from publicly displaying the kind of dramatic clashes among key foreign policy makers that were visible under President Reagan, Secretary Baker, Secretary Cheney, and Scowcroft certainly had contrasting views. One issue that obviously showed the division among the three was the prospect of the Soviet reform efforts. Scowcroft's position was in between the greatly optimistic Secretary of State Baker and the extremely skeptical Defense Secretary Cheney. The national security adviser's middle stance was helpful in checking the secretary of state from being carried away with the excitement over a new superpower relationship on the one hand, and preventing Defense Secretary Cheney's firm suspicion of the Soviets from stalling progress between the United States and the Soviet Union, on the other hand.

While reviewing Secretary Baker's draft speech, Scowcroft cautioned the secretary of state not to be overly "euphoric." Conservatives gleefully interpreted the former general's comment as a vindication of Baker's overexcitement for Gorbachev's moves, but Scowcroft was not completely skeptical, either.¹¹² He was convinced that the US-Soviet relationship could very well improve dramatically and that the Soviet leadership was genuinely transforming their political system. His hopes for the Soviets' change were hinted at when asked about the de-linking of the offensive and defensive strategic arms. Scowcroft took the offer seriously, if nothing else, for his belief that the Soviets were running out of other options, rather than the view that the proposal was the Soviets' political gimmick as some in the Pentagon warned against. The national security adviser said, "[the Soviets] no longer have the leverage they thought they had" in trying to halt SDI, and later added another reason, arguing that the

¹¹² Rowland Evans and Robert Novak, "...And Scowcroft Among Skeptics," *Washington Post*, October 27, 1989.

downsized scale of SDI also contributed to the Soviets' de-linking of the two issues on "Meet the Press."¹¹³

Scowcroft did not act as a front man in the Bush administration. On the surface, Secretary Baker was the leading figure, and the secretary of state was indeed the face of the Bush foreign policy.¹¹⁴ However, Scowcroft's scant public appearances should not be mistaken for a lack of influence on President Bush. He was a trusted aide to President Bush, as the two men shared many affinities that strongly bonded them. President Bush and Scowcroft were about the same age, both were WWII veterans, and they had moderate and pragmatic views on foreign and defense policies.¹¹⁵ National Security Adviser Scowcroft was an important behind-the-scenes player who had the president's ear, and he was described as "more a trusted counselor than a central operator, more genuine adviser than player at the power table."¹¹⁶ His influence was especially prominent in arms control and in the Gulf War strategy. The START and the Treaty on Conventional Armed Forces in Europe contained the distinct fingerprints of Scowcroft, resembling his long-championed plans. He was also the key architect of the US decision not to oust Saddam Hussein from power in Iraq during the 1991 Iraq war.¹¹⁷

On missile defense, Scowcroft was not a strong champion of SDI, and conservatives labeled him as an SDI skeptic. Although Scowcroft never denounced SDI, the loyal SDI proponents' branding of him had a grain of truth. He was not entirely convinced of the ambitious mission of SDI, and was never too impressed with the space-based program. The general's outlook was remotely satisfying to SDI enthusiasts. Scowcroft lacked the kind of "faith" SDI supporters demanded from a national security adviser under a Republican president. The general's view on missile defense was based on a strategic approach, not ideology. In an interview with a little-known publication, the *New Perspectives Quarterly*, published in 1985, Scowcroft revealed much of his strategic thinking on arms control, deterrence, and SDI specifically. He was a reluctant disciple of deterrence who understood skeptics' unease with its destructive premise yet considered deterrence an effective nuclear strategy. Departing from

¹¹³ David Hoffman, "Bush, in U.N. Speech, to Press Global Ban on Chemical Arms," *Washington Post*, September 25, 1989.

¹¹⁴ Martin Anderson and Gary L. Bauer, "Sophomore Slump," *Policy Review* Winter 1991, no. 55: 32–40.

¹¹⁵ Priscilla Painton, "Brent Scowcroft: Mr. behind-the-scenes," *Time*, October 6, 1991 138, no. 14, 24–28.

¹¹⁶ William Safire, "Bush's Cabinet Who's Up Who's Down," *New York Times*, March 25, 1990.

¹¹⁷ Painton, "Brent Scowcroft: Mr. behind-the-scenes," 24–28.

hawks in the defense establishments, Scowcroft was not cynical of arms control. He argued that “arms control with the Soviet Union” accompanied with proper US “procurement programs” could improve strategic stability. On the strategic value of SDI, Scowcroft said a missile defense system could be “harmful or helpful depending on what kind of defense it is,” reflecting his strategic approach to this issue that incisively understood the difference between population defense and point defense.¹¹⁸

His position on the ABM Treaty issue was most irritating to conservatives. Before joining the Bush administration, he had said that the traditional reading of the treaty “provided the United States with sufficient flexibility to carry out its ‘Star Wars’ anti-missile testing program for an extended period,” and in essence endorsed the strict reading of the treaty.¹¹⁹ However, Scowcroft represented the administration’s position without showing any dissonance to the players outside the White House, as his correspondence to Senator Howell Heflin (D-Ala.) demonstrated. In response to Senator Heflin’s letter urging the Bush administration to deploy SDI systems compliant with the ABM Treaty, Scowcroft wrote that the administration was committed to deploying both the land-based and more controversial space-based program of GPALS, although he personally was not thrilled with the idea.¹²⁰ Scowcroft had little role in promoting GPALS or the enactment of the 1991 Missile Defense bill, largely because SDI was a low priority issue for Scowcroft. He was preoccupied with devising the overall blueprint for START and the Gulf War strategy and SDI failed to attract significant attention from him.

3.4.4 Vice President Dan Quayle

Dan Quayle enjoyed unusual prominence as a vice president due to his outspokenness. In the White House, to the surprise and dismay of some Bush officials, the vice president was not hesitant to interject his own views in policy discussions on various issues ranging from tax cuts to defense matters. To the outside world, the vice president was the administration’s messenger to the right wing of the Republican Party, compensating for President Bush’s moderate image.

¹¹⁸ New Perspective Quarterly, “Interview: General Brent Scowcroft,” 1 no. 4, Fall-Winter of 1984–1985.

¹¹⁹ Rowland Evans and Robert Novak, “Marshal Akhromeyev’s Mark on Congress,” *Washington Post*, July 28, 1989.

¹²⁰ Letter, Brent Scowcroft to Howell Heflin, August 6, 1991, ID# 253818, ND018, WHORM: (Subject File), Bush Presidential Record, George Bush Presidential Library.

He lived up to his reputation as a reliable conservative and there were a number of occasions on which the vice president resonated hardliners' positions in the foreign policy area. When President Bush, Secretary Baker and National Security Adviser Scowcroft regarded the success of Gorbachev's reform efforts as a vital interest of the United States, and contemplated ways to help the Soviet leader, Vice President Quayle made much more skeptical assessments on the dynamics of Soviet politics. Disputing Secretary Baker's rosy scenario for the Soviet Union, Vice President Quayle wrote in *Policy Review* magazine that, "despite formal and informal proclamations to the contrary, the Soviets' [missile] modernization...demonstrates that they will retain their first strike orientation well into the twenty-first century." He also told an audience in California, "the partial liberalization of Communist societies is not irreversible," revealing his skepticism on the future of Soviet reform.¹²¹

Vice President Quayle was not shy in contradicting even the president. In the wake of the first summit between President Bush and Soviet President Gorbachev in Malta in December 1989, President Bush touted Soviet President Mikhail Gorbachev for his "new thinking" on politically sensitive issues, such as the Soviet satellite countries' move for independence and Gorbachev's open-minded position on Soviet troop reduction in Europe. In stark contrast, Vice President Quayle said, "the new thinking and real reform is in the area of economics" and went on to say that the United States was "still dealing with a totalitarian government." The White House tried to be diplomatic about the differences. National Security Adviser Scowcroft played down the discrepancy between the mainstream White House position and the vice president's, saying that it was simply "a slight difference in perspectives," and that the fundamental policy towards the Soviet Union remained the same.¹²²

Vice President Quayle was an important and rare ally in the White House for the proponents of SDI. He was the first key figure in the administration to publicly praise the Brilliant Pebbles concept when he called the new architecture "the wave of SDI's future" in March 1989. Since his remark came before the Bush administration's public endorsement, it raised the eyebrows of other administration officials, including Scowcroft.¹²³ Vice President

¹²¹ Evans and Novak, "...And Scowcroft Among Skeptics."

¹²² David Hoffman, "Summit Remarks Illustrate Quayle's Role as Envoy to the Right," *Washington Post*, December 6, 1989.

¹²³ Ann Devroy, "Quayle, Unlike Predecessor, Speaks Out in Policy Debates: For Vice President, a More Ideological Line," *Washington Post*, March 28, 1989.

Quayle's lobbying effort was not limited to the president. Quayle was also the one who persuaded Defense Secretary Cheney to visit the Lawrence Livermore Laboratory in California on September 21, 1989. Cheney was already a supporter, but his trip to the primary research lab for SDI technology deepened his conviction in SDI.¹²⁴

The only blemish in his otherwise almost impeccable conservative credentials on SDI was when he described Reagan's SDI as a "political jargon." Although the remark irked staunch SDI backers such as General Daniel Graham, it was hardly an indication of his diminishing support for SDI. His comment was made in a context to justify the reorientation for SDI that scaled back the Reagan's ambitious strategic goal.¹²⁵

Despite the minor verbal gaffes, Vice President Quayle was undoubtedly the loudest voice for SDI in the White House and he did carry weight in President Bush's stance on SDI, albeit it largely cosmetic rather than substantive. The most noticeable such influence was shown in President Bush's state of the union addresses. Vice President Quayle, along with other powerful Republican members of Congress including Newt Gingrich, urged President Bush to mention SDI during the 1990 speech.¹²⁶ Taking this advice, President Bush stated that "...we must sustain our own strategic offense modernization and the Strategic Defense Initiative."¹²⁷ The vice president's influence was even more prominent in the 1991 state of the union address. President Bush introduced and promoted GPALS in detail, and behind the decision to extensively discuss the latest architecture of SDI was Vice President Quayle's prodding.¹²⁸

The Office of the Vice President was the conduit for conservative Republicans to convey their concerns and seek assurance that the Bush White House was not straying away from their core principles. A number of leading SDI proponents—from Daniel Graham to Ed Meese—chose the vice president's office to express their alarm over the Bush administration's policy or urge stronger commitment to SDI. The VP office offered consolation to the anxious SDI supporters that the Republican administration was serious about SDI. Vice President Quayle's key aide William Kristol, also a well-known conservative, dealt with the conservatives'

¹²⁴ Gerald F. Seib, "Prodded by Quayle and Cheney, Bush Becomes Fervent Supporter of Strategic Defense Initiative," *Wall Street Journal*, February 23, 1990.

¹²⁵ James Gerstenzang, "'Star Wars' Cuts Confirmed by White House," *Los Angeles Times*, September 8, 1989.

¹²⁶ Gerald F. Seib, "Prodded by Quayle and Cheney.

¹²⁷ President George H.W. Bush, *Address before a Joint Session of the Congress on the State of the Union*, January 31, 1990, http://www.c-span.org/executive/transcript.asp?cat=current_event&code=bush_admin&year=1990.

¹²⁸ Fred Barnes, "Brilliant Pebbles," *New Republic* 204, no. 13: (April 1, 1991):10–11.

grievances in an effort to reassure the supporters of SDI.¹²⁹ Vice President Quayle was an important player in the Bush administration for SDI, as he was one of few true believers in the system. Although Quayle's influence in policy formation was limited, his presence and tough statements were recognized as helpful to the Bush presidency.

3.4.5 President George H.W. Bush

During the four years of the Bush presidency, he showed growing support for SDI. Despite his earlier reservations on SDI, Bush seemed to have gradually embraced the idea of protecting the United States from ballistic missiles attacks, and missile defense policy under the Bush administration coincided with President Bush's own stances at various points. At the beginning of his term, President Bush scaled back the overall scope of military programs and funding levels, including those of SDI. It was hardly surprising considering President Bush's moderate streak and the changes taking place on the world scene. However, President Bush demonstrated an invigorated support for SDI in his second year of presidency. He requested a 25 percent increase for SDI funding, began mentioning deployment decision timelines, and asserted a strong need for missile defense, using the Third World threat argument during various speeches, including one at the nation's leading SDI research center, the Lawrence Livermore lab.¹³⁰

Among the most important of President Bush's changed views on SDI was the introduction of GPALS during his speech to the nation in 1991. The announcement was significant in that it marked a departure from President Reagan's SDI. President Bush put forth a missile defense program of his own. It was a political statement that the Bush administration was moving beyond merely continuing President Reagan's legacy. Did the Bush administration's acceptance of GPALS signify a victory of a particular bureaucracy or player, or was it largely President Bush's own decision? A crucial meeting in January 1991 demonstrated that President Bush did not heavily rely on bureaucrats in endorsing GPALS. President Bush made sure it was affordable within the budgetary constraints. Secretary Baker was relieved to

¹²⁹ One such example was the meeting between Ed Meese III, a former Reagan administration official and a senior fellow at conservative think tank, the Heritage Foundation.

¹³⁰ Ann Devroy, "Defending Military Budget, Bush Calls For Cautious Response to Soviet Shifts," *Washington Post*, February 8, 1990.

hear that the new plan would not distress the Soviets, since GPALS was directed against terrorists or smaller countries. National Security Adviser Scowcroft remained unconvinced but did not strongly object to GPALS, either. President Bush readily approved the plan before bureaucratic struggles for or against GPALS ever began. This was partly because SDI was not able to attract considerable attention from the major players.¹³¹ It was also because President Bush, with his abundant experience and familiarity with foreign and security subjects, had a clear idea of what he was comfortable with. The proposed GPALS was commensurate with President Bush's level of confidence in its strategic goal, technical viability, and cost.

The reorientation of SDI's strategic goal suited President Bush's foreign policy aspirations. One of the top priorities of the Bush administration in the foreign policy area was successful arms reduction talks. President Bush did not want to make the same mistake as President Reagan by adhering to SDI at the expense of jeopardizing arms negotiations—as many in the arms control community blamed SDI for the failed 1986 Reykjavik summit. The revised goal of GPALS—moving away from defending the United States against a massive attack such as from the Soviet Union under SDI, to protection against threats from terrorists and smaller countries—was less intimidating to the Soviet Union. The conservative Soviet leaders could certainly refuse to accept such a premise. Nonetheless, the new strategic goal spelled out enemies other than the Soviet Union, and it was a stance more accommodating to Gorbachev's efforts to reach out to President Bush and his own domestic opposition in the Soviet Union. Also, the limited magnitude of the proposed GPALS was less expensive, with improved technical feasibility.

To President Bush, the key missile defense question was how to walk the fine line between not offending the already discontented conservative Republicans and maintaining a cordial relationship with the Soviet Union. President Bush lacked confidence in or commitment to SDI, but he had to prove that he was a reliable Republican president to the strong supporters of SDI. The newly introduced GPALS satisfied both.

¹³¹ Barnes, "Brilliant Pebbles."

3.4.6 Interplay

The focus of the 1991 Missile Defense Act case study in this chapter is to understand the extent of the influence of bureaucracies. The analysis of the key players within the Bush administration suggested that the bureaucracies' input to the passage of the legislation was insignificant. It was largely a result of legislative activities in Congress, and the key foreign policy decision makers within the administration, including Secretary Baker, National Security Adviser Scowcroft, and President Bush, were detached from the controversies surrounding the language of the legislation. The strife was more prominent among members of Congress over the inclusion of the space-based system than among the players within the Bush administration. The Bush officials and the president were occupied with the ongoing strategic arms talks with the Soviets and managing the relationship between the two countries.

The Bush administration was not terribly committed to the cause of the Missile Defense Act of 1991, but the rejection of the legislation would have incurred serious political damage for the Republican administration, especially in the aftermath of the successful Gulf War during which the Patriot missiles' performance improved technical optimism. It would have angered conservatives on security matters since it had become a popular defense program on the Hill with new supporters even among Democrats. On the question of the role of bureaucratic interests in policy making debates, the general debates over SDI within the administration demonstrated that each participant acted in a predictable way—Secretary Baker was mostly concerned with the US-Soviet relationship whereas Secretary Cheney showed his solid support for SDI. Secretary Baker was extremely keen on succeeding with START and wanted to maintain a good diplomatic relationship with the Gorbachev camp. However, the secretary of state defied the conventional perception, deviating from a preferred State Department position, and continued to champion the broad interpretation of the ABM Treaty. Secretary Cheney performed a more expected role as the defense chief, trying to maintain SDI against congressional resistance. He strongly and consistently supported SDI, but Cheney was not a powerful figure in the Bush administration, as he never garnered a close personal relationship with President Bush. Nor did he try to sway the president. He refrained from playing the kind of bureaucratic games engaged in McNamara or Kissinger to enhance his own agenda. Secretary Cheney's limited influence and eagerness did

little to help SDI to sustain a high level of visibility in funding or policy statements except for the 1991 legislation, which was largely attributed to Congress.

Missile defense policy debates during the Bush administration included an unusual key player, Vice President Quayle. The vice president spoke his mind freely and he often made statements contradicting the administration on various issues, particularly START and SDI. Nevertheless, this was not evidence of the White House's failure in controlling its messages to the outside. President Bush saw value in his vice president's bluntness. Vice President Quayle's disagreement served Bush by helping to ward off criticism from more conservative quarters of the Republican Party. The chasm between Vice President Quayle and other Bush foreign policy team members was not a sign of infighting that would damage Bush's operatives but a signal comforting the conservatives in the Republican Party, who never fully trusted President Bush on SDI.

What is most interesting in understanding the Bush administration's own policy stamp on missile defense is GPALS, announced in January 1991. The new SDI scheme was initiated by Pentagon officials, but it incorporated various elements that were extremely appealing to the president. It was limited in scale and not directed against the Soviet Union. GPALS included space-based elements, which would satisfy conservative Republicans. President Bush's decision on key foreign policy issues was not an outcome of bureaucratic maneuvering. The GPALS was not the spoils of the Department of State or the Department of Defense. It was a symbol of compromise at all levels, rather than an emblem of victory to one bureaucracy over the other. Being a Republican administration that merely continued President Reagan's SDI almost as a token effort, there was not fierce contention over the Bush administration's missile defense policy. The lackluster competition among bureaucracies offered a new dimension in understanding the bureaucratic politics perspective. It should be recognized that, the role of bureaucracies was not meaningful for or against missile defense policy in all cases, and the Bush administration's case is one such example.

3.5 CLINTON ADMINISTRATION

The Clinton administration's missile defense policy was debated and vetted among the standard players in the decision making circle for security and foreign policy issues: the secretary of state, defense secretary, and national security adviser. During the eight years of his two-term presidency, President Clinton had a number of secretaries of defense and state and national security advisers. Since the case chosen for analysis under President Clinton took place in 1999, this section examines the role of his key advisers during his second term with one exception. For the defense secretaries, all three under President Clinton are studied, as they were responsible for molding the direction of missile defense policy and bore particular importance in understanding the missile defense policy changes that occurred during the Clinton administration. Like the Bush administration case, the National Missile Defense Act of 1999 was a congressional product. Although the language of the 1999 legislation was more dilute than that of the 1991 Missile Defense Act, without referring to any specific timeline, the tension between the Clinton administration and Congress was far more acute. Also intense was the debate among officials within the Clinton administration after the passage of the 1999 National Missile Defense Act.

If President Bush's announcement of GPALS was a significant event for the Bush administration preceding the 1991 Missile Defense Act, comparably important for President Clinton was his Georgetown University speech in 2000 in response to the 1999 Missile Defense Act, in which he deferred the missile defense deployment decision to the next president. Thus, this section focuses on the debates within the Clinton administration as to whether he should introduce a deployment plan, postpone making a specific commitment for deployment, or reject any commitment, as well as internal discussions leading up to the enactment of the legislation. This course analyzes whether the major policy advisers recommended competing policy alternatives to President Clinton. If so, did their recommendations reflect the interests and traditional views of their respective bureaucracies? At the end, who won the bureaucratic political games and why? What was the role of President Clinton in this contentious process?

3.5.1 Secretaries of Defense Aspin, Perry, and Cohen

President Clinton had three defense secretaries, and their policies reflected the individual secretaries' predispositions on the missile defense issue. The first defense secretary, Les Aspin was no stranger to military affairs or missile defense; he had served the House Armed Services Committee as the panel's chairman and had exercised tremendous power over missile defense policy during the Reagan and Bush administrations. His term as defense secretary lasted just over a year due to the Somalia disaster among several controversies surrounding him, but his decisions laid the groundwork for the Clinton administration's missile defense policy. They illuminated the diminished support for national missile defense from the Democratic administration on the one hand, and on the other hand reflected Secretary Aspin's cautious approach on the topic as well as his belief that a limited-scale missile defense system against small-scale attacks was necessary.

Secretary Aspin renamed the Strategic Defense Initiative Organization the Ballistic Missile Defense Organization (BMDO) and demoted its status in the spring of 1993. The restructuring ended the SDIO chief's direct access to the secretary of defense and instead required the missile defense organization's director to report to the under secretary for acquisition and technology. During the announcement of the reorganization of the SDIO, Secretary Aspin declared the end of the "Star Wars" era.¹³² Despite this rhetoric, the new defense secretary was careful not to choke off the missile defense funding in a substantial way, nor did he hasten to eliminate the national missile defense program. His first defense budget proposal for FY 1994 kept the missile defense funding at the same \$3.8 billion level appropriated for FY 1993, and the secretary reserved his decision on the missile defense plan until a comprehensive review of the nation's defense posture was finalized. The assessment, the Bottom Up Review (BUR) completed in the fall of 1993, showed that the new administration's Department of Defense was more skeptical of national missile defense than the two previous Republican administrations'. One such indication was the distribution of the missile defense funds: two-thirds of the funds were allocated for theater missile defense. The other clue was that

¹³² Associate Press, "Aspin declares 'Star Wars' finished," *Chicago Tribune*, May 13, 1993; R. Jeffrey Smith, "Threat Gone, 'Star Wars' Is Banished; Aspin Eulogizes Antimissile Shield," *Washington Post*, May 14, 1993.

there was no commitment to the deployment of the national missile defense system, challenging the momentum for the deployment of a nationwide missile defense system that carried on through the missile defense legislation in 1991. However, Secretary Aspin did not completely abandon NMD as some other Democrats had hoped. Three billion dollars were allocated for NMD, and another \$3 billion were earmarked for follow-on technologies that included the controversial space-based programs, Brilliant Eyes or a similar system.

It was a realistic compromise between the political and strategic environments and the defense secretary's own view on national missile defense. It was only a couple of years after the collapse of the Soviet Union and however serious a Third World ballistic missile threat was, the perceived risk seemed to have leveled off with the end of the Cold War. Democrats were in control of the White House and both houses of Congress, and there was little support Secretary Aspin could count on for a strong missile defense policy. It would have been a hard press to push for NMD and persuade Democrats to support a national missile defense program, and it also would have created an unnecessary conflict within his own party. The technology was still a work in progress anyway, and it was wise for Secretary Aspin to keep the NMD plan low profile.

After Secretary Aspin's resignation, his deputy, William Perry, assumed the defense secretary position. Secretary Perry was least supportive of the national missile defense policy among the three defense secretaries under President Clinton. His position against national missile defense became apparent after the Republican victory in the 1994 elections. The clash between Secretary Perry and the newly empowered Republican Party began in December 1994, even before the Republican members officially took the majority in Congress. The Republican members vocalized their goal to deploy a national missile defense system. During his press conference explaining the budget plan for the next fiscal year, Secretary Perry, while supporting vigorous TMD programs both sea-based and ground-based, categorically denied the Republicans' demand for NMD deployment and said, "what we will not have in the program is a robust program leading to deployment of a continental missile defense system..." and he rightly predicted that that would be the dispute in the Congress.¹³³

¹³³ Associated Press, "Perry Rejects Calls to Revive Star Wars," *Chicago Tribune*, December 8, 1994.

After a prolonged and acrimonious political battle between the Clinton administration and the Republican-controlled Congress in 1995, both realized that the political fight was a no-win situation for either party. To avoid repeating such confrontation and to placate the Republican members' dissatisfaction, Secretary Perry came up with a restructured plan and upgraded the Clinton administration's national missile defense policy from a technology readiness program to a deployment readiness program. The new plan focused on an effort to develop national missile defenses for three years and then to deploy the system in the next three years if a threat warranted.

Although Secretary Perry proposed a stepped-up plan, it was not from a change of heart. He continued to insist that the United States did not need an NMD system. Perry was a believer in deterrence, and from his standpoint, NMD deployment policy would weaken the foundation of deterrence, undercut relations with Russia, and resume an arms race.¹³⁴ He thought the first casualty of the NMD deployment would be the START II Treaty awaiting ratification by the Russian Duma. Secretary Perry's approach was based on a world-view which set him apart from his predecessor, Secretary Aspin. Aspin had been originally skeptical of the need and technology of national missile defense when SDI was first introduced in the 1980s. When he was serving in Congress, Aspin acted as a strong opponent of missile defense, particularly in contrast to his counterpart, Sam Nunn, chairman of the Senate Armed Services Committee. However, after witnessing the eruption of the Persian Gulf War and the performance of the Patriot missile, he took the Third World threat seriously and also gained confidence in the technology, becoming a supporter of President Bush's GPALS. His changed view was reflected in a white paper, "A New Kind of Threat: Nuclear Weapons in an Uncertain Soviet Union," that he circulated to his colleagues. Aspin pronounced the end of the Cold War and called for a new approach supplementing deterrence. He articulated a small but high-risk threat from accidental or unauthorized nuclear attacks.¹³⁵

Aspin's policy initiatives as Clinton defense secretary, such as the restructuring of the SDIO and budget blueprints, corresponded to his beliefs. Secretary Aspin did not fully embrace

¹³⁴ Bill Gertz, "Perry: Missile Defense unnecessary; Says GOP Plans imperil treaties," *Washington Times*, April 26, 1996.

¹³⁵ K Scott McMahon, "Surge for the Shield: The Post-War Consensus for BMD," in *Pursuit of the Shield: The U.S. Quest for Limited Ballistic Missile Defense*, foreword by Senator John Warner (Maryland: University Press of America, Inc., 1997), 106–107.

the idea of national missile defense against an all-out attack. He believed that the world had moved away from the competition between the two superpowers, and the Strategic Defense Initiative was an obsolete defense posture in a new era. However, he was convinced that the Third World threat was serious and imminent. Secretary Perry, to the contrary, recognized the potential threat from the Third World but also thought it would take another decade for small countries to acquire technology to build long-range missiles or weapons of mass destruction, and national missile defense policy would do more harm by destabilizing the relationship with Russia.

Secretary Cohen was most important for the Clinton administration case study. During his tenure as the defense secretary, the National Missile Defense Act was passed in 1999. He was also responsible for providing President Clinton crucial advice on the deployment decision in the summer of 2000, following the 1999 legislation. Prior to joining the Clinton administration, Cohen had served on the Armed Services Committee in the Senate. Although he was a Republican, Cohen demonstrated his independent and moderate propensity on defense and foreign affairs issues. He was not dismissive of arms treaties, distinguishing himself from other Republican colleagues in the Senate. He was not enthralled by the Strategic Defense Initiative and thought preserving arms treaties with Russia was important. When the Reagan administration announced its decision to free the United States from the limits set by the SALT II Treaty pending the ratification of the Russian Duma in May 1986, Cohen was the only Republican senator on the Armed Services Committee siding with Democrats, and he voted for attaching a nonbinding amendment that insisted that the administration continue to respect the SALT II.¹³⁶ Cohen also shared his skepticism on SDI with SASC Chairman Sam Nunn and cosponsored an amendment to cut SDI funding by \$487 million and to redirect the amount to other DOD research programs.¹³⁷ Senator Cohen broke ranks with his party again in 1987 when he joined Democrats on the SASC, supporting the traditional interpretation of the ABM Treaty.¹³⁸

It was obvious that for years he had been in support of arms control, and he had reservations on the futuristic technologies and space-based elements of the Strategic Defense

¹³⁶ Edward Walsh and Walter Pincus, "Reagan Dealt Setbacks on SALT, SDI," *Washington Post*, June 20, 1986.

¹³⁷ Walter Pincus, "'Star Wars' Request Under Attack: Pro-Pentagon Senate Committee Cuts \$1.56 Billion off SDI Figures," *Washington Post*, June 21, 1986.

¹³⁸ Helen Dewar, "Senate Committee Endorses 'Star Wars' Limits," *Washington Post*, May 6, 1987.

Initiative. Up until the spring of 1990, Senator Cohen had considered the SDI as an area where the defense budget could be further trimmed. He was dissatisfied with the Bush administration's overall defense strategy. After the administration's failure to further reduce defense spending, Senator Cohen, together with another moderate Republican, Senator John McCain, devised their own plan to overhaul the defense strategy. The plan included freezing funding for SDI.¹³⁹ Operation Desert Storm during the Gulf War reshaped Cohen's outlook on threat and the prospect of missile defense technology. Like Aspin, Cohen was impressed with the Patriot missile and convinced of the need for deploying a limited defense system against small-scale attacks. He recognized the dangers from Third World countries and gained confidence in the technology after the Gulf War experience. Nonetheless, he was still critical of other elements of SDI and rejected the Bush administration's space program. Senator Cohen, in a letter also signed by Senator Warner, demanded that the Bush administration focus on a "ground-based system against limited, accidental or unauthorized missile attacks." In a speech on the Senate floor, Senator Cohen called on the Bush administration to negotiate with the Soviet Union to allow the United States to build ground-based missile defense systems.¹⁴⁰

The Clinton administration's national missile defense was boosted as William Cohen succeeded to the secretary of defense position in 1997. The new secretary added \$3.5 billion for missile defense in February 1997. Much of it was to be spent on accelerating THAAD. More significantly, Secretary Cohen put an extra \$2 billion solely to the national missile defense system over five years for a possible deployment in 2003, as the three plus three strategy intended.¹⁴¹

In spite of his inclination to keep the ABM Treaty, Secretary Cohen believed that providing a defense against limited attacks from small countries was more important. Secretary Perry devised the three plus three plan partly as a way to earn time until the Clinton administration had to decide on deployment. By the end of 1998, the time had arrived for the administration to face the issue if it did not want to be seen as dragging its feet. The new and unsettling strategic developments in 1998, as well as mounting congressional pressure, all compelled the Clinton administration to confront the issue. In dealing with the deployment part

¹³⁹ Helen Dewar, "GOP Senators Propose Doubling Bush's Defense Cuts," *Washington Post*, April 6, 1990.

¹⁴⁰ Jeffrey Smith, "3 GOP Senators Oppose SDI Speedup; Letter to Bush Dooms Chances for Broad Support of Budget Request," *Washington Post*, June 13, 1991.

¹⁴¹ Bill Gertz, "Arms-control chief says pact allows missile defense," *Washington Times*, May 2, 1997.

of the three plus three strategy, Secretary Cohen realized that the technology was not mature enough to be able to keep on the original plan and be ready for deployment by 2003. In response, the Pentagon formulated three options: adhering to the three plus three plan and proceeding with deployment as originally planned despite technological challenges, delaying the deployment by two years, and allowing even more time to 2007. Secretary Cohen chose the second option to give an additional two years for deployment.¹⁴² After deciding on the second option, Secretary Cohen announced his plan in January 1999 to add an extra \$6.6 billion over five years to achieve the goal of building a national missile defense system by 2005 instead of 2003. During the announcement, Secretary Cohen for the first time mentioned the possibility of pulling away from the ABM Treaty if the United States and Russia failed to amend the treaty for permission to deploy a US national missile defense system.¹⁴³ His comment was at odds with the White House. Only a week before, National Security Adviser Samuel Berger reaffirmed President Clinton's commitment to the ABM Treaty.¹⁴⁴ Later, the Clinton administration officials tried to talk down Cohen's remarks and told reporters that President Clinton had already relayed the defense secretary's announcement to Russian President Yeltsin. The administration had not made a definite decision on the deployment question or changed its attitude on the ABM Treaty.¹⁴⁵ Secretary Cohen's effort to step up national missile defense by adding more money and his willingness to abandon the ABM Treaty were not mere gestures to ease tensions with the Republicans in Congress. He genuinely felt it was urgent to build an NMD system against countries such as North Korea and Iran. It was the first hint shown of the schism between Secretary Cohen and the other Clinton administration officials, and the rift grew as the Clinton administration was forced to act on the national missile defense deployment decision after Congress passed the National Missile Defense Act in spring 1999.

Three tests were scheduled before President Clinton's announcement on the deployment decision in the summer of 2000. Two of the three tests had to be successful for Secretary Cohen

¹⁴² Steven Komarow, "U.S. to build missile defenses: Pentagon announces 2005 plan," *USA Today*, January 21, 1999; Dana Priest, "Cohen Says U.S. Will Build Missile Defense; Weapon to Be Pursued Despite '72 ABM Treaty," *Washington Post*, January 21, 1999.

¹⁴³ Komarow, "U.S. to build missile defenses,"; Priest, "Cohen Says U.S. Will Build Missile Defense."

¹⁴⁴ Bill Gertz, "Pentagon postpones missile defense system decision expected in 2000," *Washington Times*, January 21, 1999.

¹⁴⁵ Priest, "Cohen Says U.S. Will Build Missile Defense."

to recommend a deployment option.¹⁴⁶ Of the three tests, the BMDO had only one hit in October 1999. The second test conducted three months later was a failure. The third test was delayed from April to May and again from May to June. The test schedule slipped yet again, and BMDO finally conducted its crucial test in July 2000. The crucial test disappointed Secretary Cohen when it failed.¹⁴⁷ Although the test results did not meet the requirement for recommending deployment, Secretary Cohen insisted that the technology was ready enough still to be considered for deployment. Cohen wanted to recommend at least the beginning of very rudimentary preparations for construction so that the next president could roll out the deployment plan, if he chose to deploy an NMD system, without having to wait another year until weather permitted and for the slow bureaucracy to move forward.¹⁴⁸

Usually in tune with other officials in the Clinton administration, Defense Secretary Cohen parted with them on the site preparation question. The administration was leaning towards recommending that the president delay the decision, and that was where Secretary Cohen split from the rest of the Clinton administration. The Defense Secretary understood that it was not feasible for President Clinton to announce a deployment decision at a politically sensitive time, especially considering the disappointing test failures that gave opponents ammunition. Secretary Cohen, however, was resolute to begin the construction, and he did his best to convince the president. In the end, however, the technological problems and political circumstances swayed the president to delay the decision.

The three secretaries of defense marked distinct styles of leadership over the national missile defense issue. Their policies towards national missile defense clearly reflected their worldviews and strategic assessments. Secretary Cohen's stance was consistent with the conventional wisdom. He represented the mind of the Department of Defense in the Democratic administration as best as he could. At the beginning of his term, he managed to step up the national missile defense plan as well as accelerate the theater missile defense programs while increasing funding for the programs. Although Secretary Cohen's voice was marginalized on the

¹⁴⁶ Bill Gertz, "Cohen welcomes test of missile defense system seen as 'positive development,'" *Washington Times*, October 4, 1999; Bradley Graham, "Anti-Missile Test Marks a Measure Step; Interceptor's Reliability Still in Question," *Washington Post*, October 3, 1999.

¹⁴⁷ Roberto Suro, "Missile Defense Fails in Key Test; Miss Could Shelve Interceptor Plan," *Washington Post*, July 8, 2000.

¹⁴⁸ Graham, "Cohen's Last Stand," in *Hit to Kill*, 322–324.

Clinton administration's most important missile defense decision, the defense secretary pushed hard for an intensified antiballistic missile policy that set him apart from Secretary of State Madeleine Albright or National Security Adviser Sandy Berger.

3.5.2 Secretary of State Madeleine Albright and ACDA

One of the biggest issues for the State Department over national missile defense policy was the interpretation of the ABM Treaty. After President Nixon signed the treaty in 1972 and until the mid-1980s when President Reagan announced the Strategic Defense Initiative, it was understood that the United States and the Soviet Union were not allowed to build a missile defense system designed to protect the entire country. This was in contrast to the goal of President Reagan's SDI, and the State Department under the Reagan administration solved the predicament by providing a new legal interpretation of the ABM Treaty and expanding what the United States could do under the ABM Treaty. The treaty interpretation became a major question for the State Department and the Arms Control and Disarmament Agency in the national missile defense policy debates up to this point. The State Department returned to the narrow reading of the ABM Treaty. In response to the request for clarification on the Treaty interpretation issue raised by Claiborne Pell (D-R.I.), Thomas Graham, the acting director of the Arms Control and Disarmament Agency, sketched out a new position on the Treaty interpretation that returned to the traditional approach.¹⁴⁹ It was a way for the Democratic-controlled Congress to prod the Clinton administration to announce the policy shift regarding this issue. With the Republican capturing of Congress in 1994, the Clinton administration had to be subtler in promulgating its views on the ABM Treaty. To avoid a fierce political confrontation, ACDA director John Holum told the Senate subcommittee that amending the ABM Treaty was in consideration, essentially to accommodate the concerns of the Republican supporters of national missile defense.¹⁵⁰

After Madeleine Albright assumed the top position at the State Department in the second term of the Clinton administration, the new secretary of state was actively engaging in

¹⁴⁹ Associated Press, "Clinton Reserves GOP Policy on ABM Treaty," *Chicago Tribune*, July 15, 1993.

¹⁵⁰ Bill Gertz, "Arms-control chief says pact allows missile defense," *Washington Times*, May 2, 1997.

diplomatic efforts with Russia. Preserving the ABM Treaty was an important part of materializing the ratification of the START II by Russia and embarking on a new round of arms talks. The Clinton administration had an ambitious goal in arms control. When President Clinton and Russian President Boris Yeltsin met in Helsinki in March 1997, the two leaders agreed to extend the terms of the START II requiring the implementation of the treaty to cut nuclear warheads to 3,000–3,500 from January 1, 2003, to December 31, 2007.¹⁵¹ More prominently, President Clinton and President Yeltsin issued a joint statement that took the meaning of arms control to a new level. The two nations pledged to destroy warheads instead of simply dismantling and storing them.¹⁵² Breaking away from the ABM Treaty was a spoiling factor when the Clinton administration and Yeltsin's government were trying to convince the Duma to approve START, extend the terms of START II, and begin a new round of negotiations for START III.

At the beginning of Clinton's second term, it was the development and deployment of theater missile defense that Albright was most concerned with in the US-Russia relationship. Republicans tenaciously pushed for national missile defense deployment, but they had not been able to overcome the Democrats' obstruction in Congress. The Clinton administration did not realize that the tide would soon change and the administration would be pushed to confront the deployment issue in a couple of years.

After being sued by staunch Republican proponents of missile defense in 1996, the Clinton administration was forced to take a more vigorous approach on TMD policy through the use of sophisticated technology. Long-range and high-speed TMD technology raised concerns for the Clinton administration that the US TMD effort might be perceived as a violation of the ABM Treaty, and the Clinton administration agreed to clarify the definition of the theater defense capability in a separate joint statement. Another missile defense related vow was not to "develop, test or deploy space-based TMD interceptors."¹⁵³

¹⁵¹ Treaty with the Russian Federation on Further Reduction and Limitation of Strategic Offensive Arms (THE START II Treaty), Message from the President of the United States, 103th Congress, 1st Session, SENATE Treaty Doc. 103-1, http://www.fas.org/nuke/control/start2/text/start2a_a.htm.

¹⁵² Jeffrey R. Smith; Bradley Graham, "Destroy Warheads? This Is The START of Something New," *Washington Post*, March 22, 1997.

¹⁵³ Ibid.

The specifics of the demarcation were determined in September 1997, when Secretary Albright and Russian Foreign Minister Yevgeny Primakov signed an accord that limited the scope of theater missile range at 2,200 miles and its velocity at three miles per second.¹⁵⁴ Amid these diplomatic efforts to preserve the ABM Treaty, incentivize Russia to ratify the START II Treaty, and embark on further arms negotiations, Secretary Albright was extremely sensitive to how the upgraded US missile defense policy would be perceived by Russia. Moreover, the US national missile defense decision had a far-reaching impact on the relationship not only with Russia but also with NATO allies and upcoming powers such as China. Secretary Albright was keenly aware of the objections to US NMD policy by Russia, China and European allies.

In sum, Secretary Albright's position on missile defense and foreign policy in general was typical for the secretary of state. She supported the traditional or narrow interpretation of the ABM Treaty, was dedicated to achieving additional arms treaties, and had serious reservations about national missile defense. There were a number of circumstances that demonstrated Secretary Albright's attitude against missile defense. When key foreign policy advisers including Secretary Cohen and National Security Adviser Sandy Berger, were discussing the missile defense funding increase in December 1998, Secretary Albright replied that it would send a misleading message to the world on the national missile defense deployment decision and wanted to be assured that the funding increase did not mean the United States had decided to deploy an NMD system.¹⁵⁵ An even more exemplar episode showing Secretary Albright's discomfort with NMD was her response to the Senate's passage of the 1999 National Missile Defense Act. The State Department sent cables signed by Secretary Albright to the US embassies abroad in an attempt to downplay the effect of the legislation. According to a media account, the State Department contended, "despite Senate approval of the National Missile Defense bill, the administration did not have to deploy such a system."¹⁵⁶ It demonstrated Secretary Albright's anguish over the impact of missile defense on diplomacy. Secretary Madeleine Albright was an emblematic Democrat and representative of the State Department.

¹⁵⁴ John M. Goshiko, "U.S., Russia Reaffirm Nuclear Pact; Leader Sign Accords to Preserve ABM Treaty and Boost START II," *Washington Post*, September 27, 1997.

¹⁵⁵ Bradley Graham, "Shooting for 2005," in *Hit to Kill: The New Battle Over Shielding America From Missile Attack* (New York: Public Affairs, 2001), 94–95.

¹⁵⁶ Bill Gertz, "U.S. missile defense deployment won't be required, cable argues State Department envisions loophole," *Washington Times*, March 26, 1999.

She acknowledged the spread of nuclear or other WMD capabilities but also believed that diplomacy, not missile defense, was the answer to the growing proliferation problem.

3.5.3 National Security Adviser Sandy Berger

Sandy Berger ascended to the national security adviser position when Anthony Lake left the Clinton administration after serving four years during Clinton's first term. Berger's view on the national missile defense issue was similar to that of Secretary Albright. He shared the belief that deterrence was the underpinning of the strategic stability between the United States and Russia. Like Secretary Albright, Berger and his team in the White House were occupied with the prospects of launching a new round of arms control talks with Russia.

Although the administration had hoped that the three plus three plan would alleviate congressional demand to deploy a national missile defense system, it did little to reduce Congress's concern or discontent. Republican lawmakers continued to propose national missile defense bills. Berger had consistently expressed the president's opposition to congressional attempts to mandate the deployment of a national missile defense system. Reacting to the National Missile Defense Act proposed in Congress again in the spring of 1999, Berger sent a letter to a key Republican senator, John Warner, to reiterate President Clinton's objection to the bill. Nonetheless, the Senate Armed Services Committee passed the bill in February 1999, clearing its way to the Senate floor for the first time.¹⁵⁷

Congress overwhelmingly passed the National Missile Defense Act by a 97–3 vote in the Senate and by 317–105 in the House. The votes were solidly veto-proof. Even after the bill was cleared by Congress in May which created a distinct possibility for the United States to break away from the ABM Treaty, Berger still tried to work out a deal to avoid such a scenario when Russia signaled that it might agree to modify the ABM Treaty. During the G-8 summit held in June 1999, President Clinton met with Russian President Yeltsin again, and Yeltsin indicated his willingness to consider a revision of the ABM Treaty that would allow the US national missile defense plan. Berger was elated with the prospect and appraised it a “significant” development. He told reporters that “for the first time, Russia has agreed to discuss changes in the ABM Treaty

¹⁵⁷ Bill Gertz, “Panel OKs Bill on Missile Defense; Democrat backs it,” *Washington Times*, February 10, 1999.

that may be necessitated by a national missile defense system—were we to decide to deploy one.”¹⁵⁸ Berger also explained that the administration would make a final decision on the national missile defense matter in the summer of 2000. The Republicans took issue with Berger’s statement and argued that once signed, the law required the United States to deploy the system and there was no “if” the United States would deploy the system. According to this view, the decision was already made and enunciated in the law, and the administration should keep the option of withdrawing from the Treaty, if the change did not follow.¹⁵⁹

Intense discussions ensued in reaction to the National Missile Defense Act of 1999, after the bill was passed and before President Clinton’s announcement on deployment in summer 2000. After the National Missile Defense Act was endorsed by Congress, President Clinton articulated that he would make a final decision on the deployment matter based on four criteria: threat, cost, technology, and diplomatic relations. In theory, the options would have been deploying the national missile defense system, delaying the decision, or not deploying the system. In reality, a deployment decision was not a practical option for the existing political environment. A presidential election was just around the corner, and a decision to deploy a missile defense system would anger arms controllers and other Democratic bases. It had potential risk to generate criticism even from some Republicans who argued that it would severely limit the next president’s option in terms of the scale and type of systems. A decision not to deploy a national missile defense system could be exploited by the Republicans portraying the Democratic Party as weak on defense during presidential campaigns.

Security advisers had already determined that President Clinton would defer the deployment decision to the next president. Essentially, the key Clinton advisers pondered three more delicate options: (1) announcing a simple deferral, (2) delaying the decision but authorizing contracts for site preparation, or (3) postponing the decision with skepticism.¹⁶⁰ The usually harmonized national security team revealed their differences over this issue. The well-known unity among the three top defense and foreign policy advisers, Albright, Berger, and Cohen, also known as “ABC,” broke as Secretary Cohen wanted to propose undertaking preliminary

¹⁵⁸Bill Sammon, “Russia Eases Resistance to Missile Defense U.S. Willing to Discuss Cuts in Nuclear Arsenals,” *Washington Times*, June 21, 1999.

¹⁵⁹ Bill Gertz, “Battle brewing on missile defense: Berger – Decision is a year away,” *Washington Times*, June 22, 1999.

¹⁶⁰ Graham, “Cohen’s Last Stand,” in *Hit to Kill*, 322.

construction work for installing a radar on Shemya Island, Alaska. Cohen thought deployment was a question of when, not whether, and the United States was losing precious time. Secretary Albright and Sandy Berger preferred a simple postponement of the deployment decision.

The variation among these options was nuanced and minimal in nature, but the implication was not. If the second option was chosen, even if the initial work were as simple as pouring concrete on the radar site at Shemya, it would have been recognized as a step toward deployment. Such a move would contradict the principle of delaying a deployment decision, and the Clinton administration would appear disingenuous.

Berger was keenly aware of his role as a mediator and faithfully performed his duty. When the division emerged among the three, Berger was determined to draw a consensus and bring Secretary Cohen on board for simple deferral. Despite Berger's repeated personal appeals to the defense secretary, Cohen was unmoved.¹⁶¹ Berger was deferential to the defense secretary, and Cohen took his case directly to the president. Ultimately, President Clinton agreed with Berger and Albright.

3.5.4 President Bill Clinton

The defense or foreign policy arena was not a strong suit for Bill Clinton. While campaigning for the presidential election, Clinton largely focused on the economy. During his presidency, domestic policies continued to be his priority. He lacked an interest and expertise in foreign policy, and the post-Cold War era afforded him the opportunity to do so. Did he play any role, then, in 2000 when he announced that he would defer the NMD deployment decision to the next president? Or was he manipulated or swayed by an influential aide?

Defense secretaries were the main architects of missile defense policies during the Clinton presidency. Although he was known for his micromanagement style, missile defense policies under the Clinton presidency resembled the three defense secretaries' distinct individual views at the respective times, suggesting that he largely left the policy formulation to his defense chiefs.

¹⁶¹ Ibid., 322–326.

Missile defense policy at the beginning of his tenure proceeded smoothly as the president preferred with little controversy, but after the midterm election in 1994, the Clinton administration was pushed to strengthen its missile defense policy. The relationship with Congress became extremely hostile and, at times, paralyzing with his veto against the 1997 defense authorization bill and lawsuit by the congressional Republicans. When Secretary Perry revealed his decision to leave the administration, President Clinton nominated Republican Senator William Cohen in an effort to restore the much-damaged relationship with Congress.

Secretary Cohen accelerated missile defense planning and took other steps to assuage the congressional Republicans' criticism, but the Republicans were not satisfied with any plan short of declaring deployment. After years of attempts, the Republican supporters of national missile defense finally triumphed in 1999. President Clinton approved the bill but not without caveats. He issued a signing statement in which the president reiterated the administration's position that the final decision would be made based on four criteria—threat, technology, cost, and the progress in amending the ABM Treaty, practically identical to the four conditions previously mentioned by Berger.¹⁶²

President Clinton faced the most important missile defense policy decision in 2000, and he received divided advice from his cabinet members and national security adviser. The central issue in contention was whether he would announce a simple delay, as most of his key advisers recommended or allow site preparation following Secretary Cohen's advice. Secretary Cohen passionately tried to persuade President Clinton to endorse site work at Shemya. The defense secretary understood that, given the test failures and political circumstances of the election year, it was unrealistic to push for a decision to deploy the system. However, he genuinely believed that the United States needed to deploy a limited ballistic missile defense system soon, and time was running out to meet the 2005 deployment deadline if the next president chose to deploy the system.¹⁶³ President Clinton understood Secretary Cohen's concerns and was sympathetic to him. The defense secretary laid out his arguments to the president, hoping to be able to persuade him. President Clinton seriously considered Secretary Cohen's option but, at the end, determined that a straight deferral was the right choice, overruling Cohen's plea. President

¹⁶² Bill Gertz, "Clinton signs bill for missile defense; Says he's not required to deploy it," *Washington Times*, July 26, 1999.

¹⁶³ Graham, "Cohen's Last Stand," in *Hit to Kill*, 323.

Clinton was worried about the intricate diplomatic relationship with Russia and the sensitivity of the timing, only months before a presidential election. He announced the postponement of the deployment decision, citing the uncertainty of the technology. Technology was deemed most objective and detached from politics in its evaluation, and the two flight test failures provided a reasonable justification for the deferment. President Clinton relied on his own political instinct for the final decision.

3.5.5 Interplay

The focus of the Clinton case study is the US declaration of its intent to deploy a nationwide missile defense system. It marked a significant policy turn from the Clinton administration's consistent objection and resistance against NMD deployment for over six years, especially despite the mounting pressure in the previous couple of years. The bureaucratic politics perspective's claim that the executive branch is the main party for a policy decision is challenged by the fact that the decision was forced upon the Clinton administration by Congress, as the legislature asserted the policy by enacting a law. The 1999 National Missile Defense Act was passed with more than two-thirds of the votes both in the House and the Senate, which shackled the president's ability to reject the bill. The National Missile Defense Act passage by a veto-proof margin exhibited Congress trouncing the executive branch in decision making. The significant margin also left no room for bureaucrats' political fights for or against veto recommendations to President Clinton. However, the discussions over the actions in compliance with the 1999 National Missile Defense Act offered an opportunity to look into the struggles among the key bureaucrats.

The Clinton administration was reluctant to undertake deploying an NMD system. However, unable to refuse the congressional mandate, it procrastinated for a year and finally announced its plan to let the next administration decide whether and when to begin the deployment. Between the time of the legislation in 1999 and when President Clinton announced his deferment of the deployment decision in the summer of 2000, there was a serious contest among key policy advisers to President Clinton. Secretary Cohen wanted the Clinton administration to begin at least site preparation in Alaska for system deployment, while Secretary

Albright and National Security Adviser Berger opposed the idea. The competition among them was earnest and more technocratic than political, since the participants acted in a transparent and fair manner. National Security Adviser Sandy Berger did not try to thwart Secretary Cohen from any opportunity to personally persuade the president, and Secretary Cohen was up-front with his intent. In the end, Cohen lost his argument not because he was outsmarted by the other players in the political games but because he failed to persuade the president. On the power of the president, Clinton was exposed to the competing views and he made the final call on the site preparation issue, rejecting another proposition the bureaucratic politics perspective put forth.

On the question of whether bureaucrats represent the interests of their organizations, the examination of the Clinton administration's missile defense policy demonstrated it was the dominant pattern but not always the case. During the second term of the Clinton presidency, Secretary of State Albright clearly favored a policy advancing the US-Russia relationship and the prospect of successful arms treaties. She objected to any move that appeared to strengthen missile defense, concerned with its negative effects on her preferred policies. Secretary Cohen was convinced of the necessity to deploy a small-scale NMD system against Third World threats. He increased missile defense funds and engaged in a lone fight against other Clinton aides over site preparation. National security adviser Berger had a typical Democratic view but did not try to overshadow cabinet members or to exert more authority than given to his position. The first two defense secretaries under President Clinton showed varying degrees of support for missile defense. Secretary Perry had a more skeptical view on NMD than Secretary Aspin, and Perry was least supportive for missile defense among the three. This shows the limit of the bureaucratic politics perspective's argument that bureaucrats cultivate their organizations' points of view.

3.6 CONCLUSION OF THE CHAPTER

The study of the five missile defense cases in this chapter offered insights on the behavior of players within the executive branch. First, the power of the executive branch in the decision making process varied a great deal. Of the administrations examined in this study, President

Reagan's SDI was one definite decision driven by the executive branch. President Johnson's decision to deploy the Sentinel system and the ABM Treaty signed by President Nixon were sealed by the executive branches' actions, but there was an underlying weight that forced the two presidents to be devoted to these two decisions. Johnson's refusal to deploy an ABM system was deemed to be a potential political liability in the upcoming election, and President Nixon became interested in limiting his original Safeguard network as he realized that Congress would not fully fund his program anyway. The two missile defense legislations under President Bush and President Clinton squarely contradicted the bureaucratic politics perspective's assertion that the executive branch is the main player in missile defense policy decisions. On the whole, the five cases demonstrated that the executive branch is often not the determinant actor.

The second question is whether bureaucrats choose a policy option that best represents their organizational interests and ideas. The analyses for the five missile defense cases revealed a significant problem for this hypothesis. The positions of the heads of the relevant bureaucracies in this regard were inconsistent. Secretaries Laird, Weinberger, and Cheney were all extremely supportive of strong missile defense policies, but not defense secretaries McNamara and Perry. The latter two opposed missile defense deployment, an option typically preferred by the Pentagon. The military leadership did not consistently back the deployment of the ABM system either. During the Johnson administration, the military chiefs dissented from their civilian boss to push for ABM deployment, but similar opposition to the defense secretary was not seen during the earlier years of the Clinton administration. The variation in attitude was also witnessed at the State Department. The State Department under the Johnson administration and the Clinton administration, and to some extent under President Nixon, fit the forecast of the bureaucratic politics perspective, but not under the Reagan and Bush administrations. Secretaries of State Shultz and Baker showed only qualified support for the ABM Treaty and in maximizing the departmental interest. This observation leads to the point that high-ranking officials' positions on missile defense policy is often more aligned with their loyalties to a given political ideology or political leadership than to their organizations.

Within the executive, did bureaucrats play games with each other and were any of them able to sway the president in their favor? The influence of bureaucrats and individual departments differed significantly from administration to administration. Although the character of the cases this study examined all consistently required defense secretaries' input, their power

or contribution to the key policy decisions fluctuated. Secretary McNamara under President Johnson and President Clinton's three defense secretaries largely determined the principle direction of missile defense policy. For the specific missile defense decisions at issue, Secretary McNamara was one of the central figures in the intramural fighting within the Defense Department before the Sentinel deployment decision. Similarly, Secretary Cohen tried to resist pressure to give up site preparation for NMD. Although both failed to advance their preferred policy prescriptions in the end, the two defense secretaries were deeply involved in the critical deliberation part of the process. In contrast, the other three defense secretaries under Nixon, Reagan and Bush had limited influence. They mainly followed the will of the president they served without engaging in serious bureaucratic tussle. Secretaries of Defense Laird, Weinberger, and Cheney were marginalized respectively in the 1972 ABM Treaty negotiations, before President Reagan's announcement to renew missile defense efforts, and during President Bush's speech for GPALS as well as the passage of the 1991 Missile Defense Act.

Such irregularity in participation was also witnessed among the secretaries of state. Of all the five cases, the secretary of state was predicted to have the strongest role in the conclusion of the 1972 ABM Treaty. Yet even with the treaty negotiations, the secretary of state was sidestepped by President Nixon and his national security adviser, Henry Kissinger. The national security adviser position was never intended to be influential in the decision making process. It was designed to coordinate interagency activities and to provide the president with objective assessments of diverse views from multiple agencies. However, this study demonstrated that national security advisers could overshadow cabinet members, and no one more than Henry Kissinger had such a tremendous power in the foreign and security policy domain, seriously undermining the bureaucracies' authority. This study also found that players who are not typically anticipated to have significant influence can wield remarkable power and, at times, undercut bureaucrats' authority. They include outsiders such as Edward Teller and Daniel Graham during the Reagan administration and Vice President Dan Quayle during the Bush administration. In short, the premise of the bureaucratic politics perspective that at least "a" bureaucracy takes a vital role in decision making was not affirmed.

Who within the executive branch played a crucial role in determining the policy outcome? For Sentinel deployment, it was the military that became the victor in the bitter debate with its own boss, Secretary McNamara. In the Nixon case, no bureaucracy could declare a

decisive victory as Kissinger emerged as the key actor through his backchannel diplomacy for SALT. Both cases repudiated the hypothesis that bureaucracies diminish the president's authority in the decision making process. President Johnson heard from McNamara against ABM deployment and from the Joint Chiefs for the deployment and ultimately made his own decision. Henry Kissinger's exceptional role was espoused by President Nixon, and Kissinger's dominance served the president well, since President Nixon was extremely suspicious of bureaucracies. Kissinger was an ideal surrogate for Nixon. The launch of SDI exemplified the president's authority. President Reagan sought almost no consultation from bureaucrats for his speech or his decision to strengthen the missile defense program. The examination of the five cases demonstrated that the bureaucrats often engaged in playing political games with their competitors.

What factors, then, influenced the presidents' final decisions? Political consideration was part of their calculations. President Reagan wanted an alternative to MAD in nuclear strategy, but the MX basing impasse and the anti-nuclear movement certainly exacerbated the domestic political problem, thus demanding an innovative solution. President Johnson had long been content with the MAD doctrine that was dependent on offensive, not defensive, strategic capabilities, but there was increasing congressional outcry for ABM deployment and a presidential election was approaching. President Nixon also had problems in Congress in obtaining funding for his Safeguard program. President Clinton, like President Johnson, had to deal with electoral politics when he publicly announced that he would defer the deployment decision in 2000.

In sum, the five missile defense policies examined in this chapter turned out to be frail cases for the bureaucratic politics perspective. Bureaucrats' roles were often limited, and they did not always support the bureaucratic interests. These factors helped to show the strength of the presidents' power. Most importantly, four out of five cases, except for Reagan's SDI, showed that the executive branch was compelled to take a policy position because Congress was able to affect the executive branch.

4.0 CONGRESSIONAL PERSPECTIVE

The last of the three perspectives this study examines is the congressional perspective. Congress is another major actor in the decision making process, balancing the executive branch of the US government and sharing powers with the administration by endorsing or rejecting the administration's policies. Congress also can propose a policy. It is the goal of this chapter to test the central argument of the congressional perspective that the legislative branch plays a determining role in the decision making process. Again, the five missile defense cases are each tested against this claim.

In an effort to test the validity of the congressional perspective, this chapter puts forth the following questions: what was the preferred policy option by Congress? How independently did Congress act from the executive branch in the missile defense decision making process? What determined the policy choice of Congress? Did Congress prevail over the White House in the decision making process when it disagreed with the president? Was Congress able to win political battles against the executive branch? And if so, what was the reason behind the congressional victory?

4.1 JOHNSON ADMINISTRATION

What was Congress's preferred missile defense policy option around the period when President Johnson made a decision to deploy an ABM system in September 1967? How independent was the position of Congress from that of the Johnson administration on this question? Did Congress have the power to impose its view on the Johnson administration? Was Congress able to win political battles against the Johnson administration? If Congress won, what contributed to its

success? The Democratic Party controlled both chambers of Congress while Johnson was president. Did the Democrat-dominated Congress support the president? What persuaded the Democratic Congress to agree or disagree with the Johnson administration's missile defense policy?

The case study on President Johnson suggests that Congress had substantial influence on the Johnson administration's ABM decision making process and contributed to reversing the administration's original stance against deployment. Supporters of ABM deployment in Congress used China's nuclear bomb tests and the Soviets' ABM deployment as reasons to sharpen their criticism of the Johnson administration's ABM policy and employed legislative tactics such as urging ABM deployment in congressional reports and providing additional funds to the ABM programs for deployment. Also, both parties in Congress were motivated by political calculations—the Republicans' desire to exploit the ABM issue in the looming election, and the Democrats' effort to avoid such circumstances.

4.1.1 Resisting Congressional Pressure

Republicans, as expected, had been arguing for deployment of the Nike-X system for some time in the 1960s. Republicans had been traditionally more wary of the adversary's capability and its impact on American security, offered gloomier interpretations of enemy intent, and preferred increasing defense capability to diplomacy or negotiations in dealing with threats. This traditional approach extended to the Republicans' position on ABM during the Johnson administration; they were suspicious of China's nuclear tests and viewed Soviet ABM deployment as a sign of Soviet intimidation towards the United States. The GOP members of Congress were extremely discontented with the Johnson administration's policy and accused Defense Secretary McNamara of downplaying the significance of these threats and delaying an important decision.

However, it was not only Republicans who demanded the Johnson administration to accelerate action for ABM. Many key Democratic members were also unconvinced of the wisdom of Johnson's ABM policy. Senator Richard B. Russell from Georgia was the chairman of the powerful Senate Armed Services Committee and emerged as one of the strongest

supporters of ABM deployment, arguing the need for the United States to build defense systems against threats from China as well as the Soviet Union.

By the mid-1960s, it became evident that Congress wanted to impose its resolve on ABM policy through legislative measures. In the Senate, Senator Strom Thurmond (a Democratic senator from South Carolina who later switched to the GOP) was one of the leading advocates of ABM deployment and one of the earliest and most vocal critics of the Johnson administration. He had long complained about Secretary McNamara's judgment on missile defense policy and argued for the urgency of building a missile defense network. In 1963, he went so far as to shut down the entire Senate for a closed session discussion and push for more ABM funding, citing the Soviets' missile defense system. Senator Thurmond was unsuccessful in persuading his fellow senators despite the dramatic parliamentary method. However, he swayed his colleagues in the SASC to add more money to the antiballistic missile program in 1966. The Senate Armed Services Committee added \$167.9 million to the Johnson administration's request for ABM in order to accelerate Nike-X deployment, and the additional funding was subsequently approved by the full House and the Senate.¹ The House broke away even further from the administration. L. Mendel Rivers was an ambitious new House Armed Services Committee chairman who took over the panel in 1966 from Representative Carl Vinson. The Georgia congressman declared the independence of his committee from the administration and altered McNamara's decisions in several key areas of strategic interest. The House Armed Services Committee added \$931 million to the defense budget for two extra atomic frigates, a new strategic bomber, and the production of ABM.²

Unnerved by this congressional move, the Johnson administration made two attempts to placate Congress. In November 1966, about two months before the Johnson administration sent its spending plan to Congress for the upcoming fiscal year, McNamara confirmed the rumor that the Soviets were building their own ABM. During the press briefing at President Johnson's ranch in Texas, Secretary McNamara also revealed that the administration would deploy Poseidon, an upgraded version of the submarine based Polaris missiles in response to the Soviet

¹ Chicago Tribune, "Senate Group Urges: Hike Missile Defense," April 22, 1966; John G. Norris, "Senate Panel Pushes Missile Defense," *Washington Post*, April 22, 1966.

² John G. Norris, "Fight for Curbs on McNamara Opens in House," *Washington Post*, May 18, 1966; John G. Norris, "House Panel Fights for A-Frigates," *Washington Post*, May 4, 1966.

move.³ The administration chose boosting offensive capability as an alternative to Nike-X deployment in handling the Soviet Galosh installation. It was a tactic to ward off Congress from again imposing ABM deployment.

This plan, more a political solution devised to deflect congressional pressure to deploy ABM than a strategic solution to the new developments in the Soviet Union, did not impress the supporters of ABM deployment. Reacting to Secretary McNamara's announcement on the Soviet ABM system, Senator Thurmond lamented that it was a belated admission of the Soviet threat by the Johnson administration and argued that "evidence of the Soviets' commitment to a full scale, third-generation ABM deployment has been available more than two years." The senator further criticized Secretary McNamara's Poseidon option as erroneous since it was decided without sufficient information substantiating the missiles' capability against the Soviet system.⁴

As another preemptive measure to mute Congress, the Johnson administration included \$377 million for deployment of the Nike-X system, contingent on progress in arms negotiations with the Soviet Union, in its budget submission to Congress in January 1967.⁵ Members of Congress, particularly Foreign Relations Committee members, welcomed President Johnson's gesture for talks with the Soviets. All seven members of the Senate Disarmament Subcommittee commended the president's plan to begin talks with the Soviets to forgo deployment of the ABM systems, although the Republican members of the subcommittee felt that the administration was not treating the deployment issue as an urgent matter.⁶ Moreover, both Senate majority and minority leaders Mike Mansfield (D-Mont.) and Everett M. Dirksen (R-Ill.) supported President Johnson's attempt to begin arms talks with the Soviets to discuss the ABM deployment issue. Congress was willing to give the administration a chance, but that was not unconditional support for the president. While some members including Senator James W. Fulbright (D-Ark.), Chairman of the Foreign Relations Committee, were eager to see successful arms negotiations through, others were running out of patience.⁷

³ George C. Wilson, "McNamara Stressing Offense in Missile," *Washington Post*, November 12, 1966.

⁴ George C. Wilson, "Senate Missile Fight Likely," *Washington Post*, November 24, 1966.

⁵ *Washington Post*, "Senate Group Favors Early Start on ABM," March 17, 1967.

⁶ John W. Finney, "Johnson Backed on Missile Pact," *New York Times*, January 18, 1967.

⁷ *Washington Post*, "Mansfield, Dirksen Back an Antimissile Accord," January 16, 1967.

During another cycle of authorization and appropriations debates in 1967, Congress reaffirmed its demand for ABM deployment. The Senate Armed Services Committee unanimously recommended a start on ABM if no progress was made with the Soviets in negotiating arms limitations.⁸ By the summer of 1967, members from both parties were becoming more frustrated with the indecision of the Johnson administration over the ABM deployment issue. SASC Chairman Richard Russell repeatedly expressed his concern over the China threat and urged deployment of an antiballistic missile defense system. Senator Russell harshly criticized Secretary McNamara, saying that the “will of one man” was holding up the United States from deploying the necessary Nike-X system. House Armed Services Committee Chairman Rivers shared similar sentiments and commented, “We can’t wait for the decision of those who fiddle while Americans could burn.” Another influential member of the Senate, Senator Henry M. Jackson (D-Wash.), who chaired the Joint Atomic Energy Committee, also argued that the United States could no longer postpone the decision citing the China threat.⁹

One of the disputes between supporters and opponents of ABM deployment against the China threat centered on how soon China would acquire missiles capable of reaching the United States. Secretary McNamara claimed China was several years away from developing such technology, but a congressional group later disputed this assessment. Contradicting the administration’s estimate, the Joint Atomic Energy Committee released its own assessment on China’s threat. The committee estimated China’s capability to threaten the United States would come by 1972, a couple of years sooner than the administration’s estimation.¹⁰ Concern over the China threat permeated Congress, and appropriators joined the effort to push for ABM deployment without further delay. The Senate Appropriations Committee approved \$970 million in total for the ABM systems, including almost \$500 million for deployment. The amount appropriated for deployment was well over the \$377 million the administration requested for such a contingency.¹¹ The committee’s accompanying report to the appropriations bill was approved in early August 1967.

⁸ *Washington Post*, “Senate Group Favors Early Start on ABM,” March 17, 1967.

⁹ George C. Wilson, “Hill Sees Red China as Serious Military Threat,” *Washington Post*, June 20, 1967.

¹⁰ Russell Freeburg, “G.O.P Leaders Urge Missile Defense Plan,” *Chicago Tribune*, August 10, 1967.

¹¹ John A. Goldsmith, “Senate Committee Urges Deployment of Ballistic Missile Defense,” *Washington Post*, August 6, 1967; *Los Angeles Times*, “Senators Ask Action Now On Missiles,” August 6, 1967; George C. Wilson, “Pentagon on the Grill,” *Washington Post*, August 7, 1967.

It was curious that Congress set forth policy goals in conflict with the president although it was controlled by the president's own party by a large margin. In the 89th Congress between 1965 and January 1967, the Democrats occupied 295 seats in the House of Representatives and 68 seats in the Senate. The Democratic Party lost seats in the 1966 elections but maintained a majority in both chambers by 247 to 187 in the House and 64 to 36 in the Senate. Why, then, did the Democratic Congress part ways with the Johnson administration and the traditional party position by insisting on ABM deployment?

There were three elements prodding the Democrats' defection from President Johnson's position: strategic developments, electoral politics, and a lack of progress in arms talks. The strategic situation worsened and made it hard for the Democrats to further resist ABM deployment. China's atomic test in late 1964, the Army's successful Sprint test in spring 1965, and speculations that the Soviets were deploying their ABM systems to protect Moscow from ICBM attacks fueled the call for the ABM deployment decision. As discussed earlier, the Johnson administration tried to play down the China threat and pointed out the high cost of the system as reasons for why it was unwilling to deploy ABM. Senator Russell, who diverged from the Johnson administration on the China threat assessment, did not agree with Secretary McNamara's cost estimate of the ABM systems, either. Secretary McNamara had been arguing that the ABM system, its costs estimated to be at \$40 billion, would not be effective. Senator Russell, on the other hand, argued that it could be achieved at a lower cost. Senator Russell and his fellow members of the SASC steered the Senate to authorize the ABM system to be deployed unless an agreement with the Soviets was reached.¹²

Meanwhile, China conducted its second nuclear test in 1965, which further invigorated the desire for deployment in Congress. Nonetheless, strategic reasons were not the only cause for Democrats to separate from President Johnson. As was analyzed in the security perspective, assessing the possibility of Chinese or Soviet aggression was more than a function of their capability. Other factors, such as their intent, also had to be considered in evaluating threat levels from these countries. Would the Soviet Union launch a nuclear attack on the United States despite the formidable US second strike capability? Would China dare to attack the United States knowing the United States could destroy China with much larger nuclear forces?

¹² *New York Times*, "Senate Approves \$21-Billion Arms," March 22, 1967.

The answers to these questions were only conjecture, but what was certain was that these two countries' recent developments were deemed detrimental to US security by many defense hawks, and this issue could well be exploited by the Republican Party against the Democratic Party. Democrats were not willing to risk their political stake and made moves to prevent that from happening.

The Republican Party was not disposed to sit back when the members of Congress from the president's own party began to criticize the Johnson administration. Months before the November elections in 1966, Representative Melvin R. Laird (Wis.), who chaired the House Republican Conference, challenged the secretary of defense and questioned the fundamental assumptions of the McNamara defense policy point by point. The Republican Party charged that the Democratic administration's assessment of easing tensions between the United States and the Soviet Union was questionable, and this "dubious" assumption led to improper decisions on weapons production including ABM. The GOP also contested a core assumption of the MAD principle: that Communists would abhor nuclear war just as the United States did. The Republican Party disputed the administration's argument that US efforts to restrain its capability would curb the arms race and reduce tension.¹³

House Minority Leader Gerald Ford (Mich.) also spearheaded Republican efforts to capitalize on the Democrats' weakness on this issue for campaign purposes. Minority Leader Ford continued to criticize the Johnson administration and stated that his party would endorse the ABM program. Another key operative in the Republican Party, John Rhodes, a representative from Arizona who chaired the Republican Policy Committee, joined the criticism in a concerted effort to take political advantage.¹⁴

The last stroke for Congress, particularly to Democrats, was the stalemate in arms talks between the Johnson administration and the Soviets. The Johnson administration was already beleaguered by the Vietnam War, and Secretary McNamara had been perceived as an extremely controversial defense secretary few in Congress were willing to support. Progress in the arms negotiation with the Soviet Union could have provided ammunition to the Democrats, but unfortunately, the Johnson administration was not able to even enter talks. The political risk was

¹³ Ted Sell, "GOP Fights McNamara on Policy Assumptions," *Los Angeles Times*, July 11, 1966.

¹⁴ Russell Freeburg, "G.O.P Leaders Urge Missile Defense Plan," *Chicago Tribune*, August 10, 1967.

too high for the Democrats to support the delay of ABM deployment and prompted the congressional Democrats to push the Johnson administration.

4.1.2 Deployment Decision

After years of refusal and delay of the ABM deployment decision, President Johnson realized that he had no grounds to go on with his ABM stance. Secretary McNamara announced the administration's decision to deploy the Sentinel system against limited attacks from countries such as China in September 1967. The immediate response from Congress following McNamara's announcement was positive. Key panel members of both chambers including Senators Jackson and John Pastore (D-R.I.) and Representatives Mendel and George H. Mahon (D-Tex.), chairman of the Appropriations Committee, all commended Secretary McNamara's statement, though they were not entirely satisfied with the scale of the proposed ABM system. Rivers said he was "delighted that the Secretary of Defense has finally seen the wisdom" of erecting an ABM system. Two important senators, however, argued that the administration's plan to build a smaller-scale ABM system against a Chinese threat should eventually lead to a much bigger system. Senator Jackson said that "the problem will not rest with a program directed solely at the Chinese," and that the United States needed to develop a system to fend off the Soviet threat. Similarly, Senator Pastore portrayed the administration's ABM deployment plan as "a step in the right direction" towards building "an over-all system" against the Soviets.¹⁵

Surprisingly, the mood in Congress changed quickly. Only months after the announcement, Congress began legislative activities in an effort to limit the very ABM systems it once pushed for deployment, and that trend amplified entering the Nixon administration. One of the earlier such actions was the Senate coalition's decision to delay commencement of the ABM deployment. Republican Senator John Sherman Cooper (Ky.) was a prominent leader of the coalition.¹⁶ Senator Cooper proposed an amendment to defund the deployment portion of the ABM budget in mid-April 1967 while the defense authorization bill was being debated, and the

¹⁵ John W. Finney, "Congressmen Asks 'Heavy' Defense," *New York Times*, September 19, 1967.

¹⁶ John W. Finney, "Senate Coalition Seeks to Block New Missile Net," *New York Times*, June 14, 1968; *Washington Post*, "Sen. Cooper Fights ABM Plan," Associated Press, June 14, 1968.

amendment was defeated by only three votes.¹⁷ To curb the growing budget deficit, Congress mandated a \$6 billion cut that took a toll on programs across the board. Senator Cooper, this time with Democratic Senator Phillip Hart (Mich.), sponsored another amendment to the appropriations bill to delay deployment for at least another year.¹⁸

The reality was that ABM funding would deprive resources from domestic problems, and China had not tested its Intercontinental Ballistic Missiles (ICBMs) despite the intelligence estimates the year before as some had speculated that China might have done by 1967. In addition, growing concerns about exacerbating the arms race prompted Congress to reposition its approach to the issue. After the Johnson administration's Sentinel program was revealed, opponents revisited economic and technical aspects of the plan, and organized to oppose the Sentinel deployment. Experts deemed it technically uncertain, if not impossible, to build a system to track and destroy multiple missiles at once.¹⁹ Most pressing, however, was a political problem the members of Congress did not anticipate. The Johnson administration's Sentinel system was planned to be built around big cities to protect major population centers against small-scale attacks from the likes of China. The residents of the first three areas slated for Sentinel deployment near Boston, Chicago, and Seattle were enraged by the Pentagon's plan. Many community citizens' groups insisted the sites be moved elsewhere for fear of accidental explosions, and many Congressmen were pressured by angry constituents to block the Sentinel plan. The Pentagon asserted the safety of these weapons, but it did not convince the local residents.²⁰ The quick shift from Congress, which first pressured the Johnson administration to make a decision to deploy ABM and only a year later passed legislation to discourage the same policy it advocated, shows its sensitivity to the political need to calm constituents' anger over the deployment decision.

Also, public confidence in the government had been seriously deteriorating. Anti-war sentiment was mounting as the Vietnam War lingered on. By 1967 about 500,000 American troops were in Vietnam. American casualties were growing and the Tet Offensive in 1968 revealed the brutality of the war. Meanwhile, signs of government decay emerged. Corroding

¹⁷ Rudy Abramson, "Antimissile Plan May Be Dropped in Senate," *Los Angeles Times*, June 17, 1968.

¹⁸ Philip Dodd, "Senate Votes Anti-missile System Start," *Chicago Tribune*, June 25, 1968.

¹⁹ *Wall Street Journal*, "Some Kind of Sentinel System Will Be Built Despite Wide Opposition, Pentagon Hints," February 19, 1969.

²⁰ Ibid.

military discipline in Vietnam, the government's dishonesty as disclosed in the Pentagon papers, inflation and social turmoil all became roots of public disappointment in the government and its foreign policy.²¹ In this circumstance, ABM was not deemed a worthy political cause for the members of Congress to throw their unwavering support toward.

4.1.3 Summary of the Sentinel Deployment Case

The Johnson administration was not interested in building an ABM system, and its position was clear from the administration's policy. For years, withstanding congressional pressure, the Johnson administration maintained its original ABM policy emphasizing research and development efforts but tried to avoid making any commitment to deployment. When President Johnson changed his policy and decided to deploy the Sentinel system, behind the decision was mounting congressional pressure. There was a growing demand for ABM from Congress, including members of his own party. Congress added money to the president's ABM plan, and the members also bluntly requested the administration to act on ABM. President Johnson realized that it was politically untenable to simply adhere to his policy. He was a seasoned politician and appreciated the power of Congress. He did make efforts to appease the congressional criticism, but his political tactics could only prolong the deployment decision just so far. Without any progress on the prospect of the arms talks with the Soviets, and with the election approaching, the pressure was too great to overcome. President Johnson could not help considering the negative consequences of refusing ABM deployment on his Democratic Party in the election. Therefore, President Johnson gave in to political needs and shifted his policy towards deployment.

²¹ Alan Brinkley, "The Ordeal of Liberalism," and "The Crisis of Authority," in *The Unfinished Nation: A Concise History of the American People* (New York: McGraw-Hill, 2000), 934–4, 960–962; Terry Deibel, "Power and Public Opinion in the Post-Vietnam Era," in *Presidents, Public opinion, and Power: the Nixon, Carter and Reagan years* (New York: Foreign Policy Association, 1987), 9.

4.2 NIXON ADMINISTRATION

Nixon advocated strategic superiority and deployment of the ABM system during his election campaign. He continued to advance that position when he succeeded Johnson in January 1969, and he kept his promise at the beginning of his term. The ABM Treaty he signed a few years later, however, was not only a sharp turn from his original position on missile defense, but also marked a momentous commitment to seriously restrain the US missile defense effort beyond his administration. Nixon understood the obstacles he faced in achieving these military goals. In this section, President Nixon's decision to conclude the ABM Treaty is evaluated in terms of Congress's role, and the following questions are asked.

What missile defense policy option did Congress endorse around the time when President Nixon signed the ABM Treaty in May 1972? Did Congress support or oppose President Nixon's Safeguard plan? A parallel question is, did Congress demand President Nixon to initiate and/or conclude an agreement to ban or limit ABM deployment? If so, why did Congress prefer an arms treaty over ABM? How did Congress project its position? Did Congress have the power to impose its view on the Nixon administration? Was Congress able to win political battles against the Nixon administration? If Congress won, what contributed to its success?

4.2.1 Safeguard Proposal and Cold Reception in Congress

Following a review of the Sentinel plan, President Nixon announced his decision to deploy an antiballistic missile system less than two months after his inauguration.²² Having watched the political fallout and how Congress quickly changed its position partly in response to its constituencies' objections, Nixon shifted Johnson's focus on the light defense of major US population centers to a point defense approach for protecting US ICBMs from an attack by the Soviet Union.²³ His proposal was to begin construction of a revised Sentinel system called the

²² *New York Times*, "Text of President Nixon's Announcement on Revised Proposals for Sentinel Antiballistic Missile Program," March 14, 1969.

²³ William Beecher, "White House Debates Whether to Expand ABM in Budget Due in January," *New York Times*, December 21, 1969; Henry Kissinger, "Defense Policy and Strategy, 1969: The Start of the Journey," in *White House Years* (Boston: Little Brown, 1979), 209; Henry L. Trewhitt, "Building a strategy" in *McNamara* (New York: Harper & Row, 1971), 131–132.

Safeguard at Grand Forks Air Force Base in North Dakota and Malmstrom Air Force Base in Montana.²⁴ The Pentagon expected the first two sites to be ready for deployment by 1974.²⁵ A complete Safeguard system, according to the proposal, would require twelve sites.²⁶ The administration's plan to begin the Safeguard buildup at only two remote air force bases in North Dakota and Montana was a cautious strategy to dodge such problems as local protest that would set off congressional opposition.²⁷ The congressional challenge seemed even grimmer to President Nixon, a Republican president who was facing a Congress dominated by the rival party. The 91st Congress that began with President Nixon's term was divided by 243 Democrats and 192 Republicans in the House of Representatives, and 68 Democrats and 32 Republicans in the Senate.

President Nixon and his team were well aware of the sentiment in Congress and the potential opposition from the legislative body. After he announced the Safeguard ABM policy, the White House launched an active public affairs campaign in Congress. From a survey, the White House determined that about 40 senators opposed the system, another 40 favored it, and the other 15 to 20 were unresolved.²⁸ President Nixon himself engaged in this campaign through personal conversations with the members of Congress who had not announced their positions on the issue. Bryce N. Harlow, the president's assistant for congressional relations, and Kenneth Belieu, Mr. Harlow's aide, were assigned to the lobbying efforts. Mr. Belieu and his staff prepared materials on the subject, coached administration witnesses, and looked for arguments by pro-Safeguard scientists.²⁹

Despite these efforts, the Safeguard program had a bumpy start in Congress, especially in the Senate. Senator Margaret Chase Smith proposed a drastic amendment that would have prohibited any spending on Safeguard. The amendment was easily defeated in an 89 to 11 vote. Senators John Sherman Cooper and Philip A. Hart introduced a less extreme amendment that would have supported the Research and Development (R&D) activities for the Safeguard

²⁴ Robert B. Semple Jr., "Nixon's Aides Insist They Will Not Compromise on Safeguard," *New York Times*, April 28, 1969.

²⁵ John W. Finney, "Mansfield Urges ABM Compromise: Links a Delay in Deployment to Start of Arms Talks," *New York Times*, May 14, 1969.

²⁶ William Beecher, "Dr. Foster Sees a Lag in Missiles: He Says Soviet Program Is Moving Faster Than U.S. Leaders Had Expected," *New York Times*, May 13, 1969.

²⁷ Semple, "Nixon's Aides Insist."

²⁸ Ibid.

²⁹ Ibid.

program but foiled any emplacement of the two initial complexes in North Dakota and Montana. The Cooper–Hart amendment failed in a close vote of 49 to 51.³⁰

The Safeguard plan did not go through such a challenge in the House but some congressmen expressed their strong discontent. Ten members of the House included “Separate Views on the Safeguard ABM” in the House Report accompanying the appropriations bill, in which they supported the R&D activities but fervently opposed deployment.³¹

We favor the appropriation of \$400.9 million for RDT&E.³² We are opposed to the appropriations for procurement, operations, and maintenance and personnel, all of which total \$359.5 million and all of which are related to deployment of the Safeguard. The controversy over the ABM has raged for more than a year now and there is little that can be added to the technical and strategic arguments that have been so exhaustively outlined already.

The statement reflected the growing budgetary concern caused by the waste in military spending as well as the high costs of the Vietnam War. Defense expenditures had been criticized for frequent cost overruns and reports of waste.³³ Congress was pressuring the Nixon administration to enter arms talks with the Soviet Union and it was politically more expedient for the Democratic-controlled Congress to make demands on the Republican administration than pushing their own Democratic president.

More troubling to the administration was a growing demand to enter arms talks with the Soviet Union from the Republican members of Congress, even if that meant challenging the administration’s nuclear weapons program. At the center of the contention was the development of the Multiple Independently Targeted Reentry Vehicle (MIRV). Representative John B. Anderson (R-Ill.), the third-ranking leader of the Republican Party in the House, publicly announced his opposition to the testing of MIRV. He stated that “the time has come to call a

³⁰ Warren Weaver Jr., “ABM Foes Beaten: Agnew Acts to Break a Tie Even Though His Aid Is Unnecessary,” *New York Times*, August 7, 1969. Prior to the vote on the Cooper–Hart amendment, the Senate rejected another amendment that would have prohibited the administration’s plan to deploy the Safeguard system and any research and development efforts for “advance” programs by a 50–51 vote. The final vote included Vice President Spiro Agnew’s tie-breaking vote, although his vote was unnecessary to defeat an amendment per Senate rule.

³¹ House of Representatives, “Separate Views on the Safeguard ABM,” Report No. 91–698, *Department of Defense Appropriations Bill, 1970*, 91st Cong., 2nd sess., December 3, 1969, 85.

³² RDT&E denotes Research, Development, Testing, and Evaluation.

³³ Ibid.

halt to this insane nuclear version of keeping up with the Joneses” and he urged the administration to step up arms control efforts.³⁴ Also in the Senate, various bills to oppose the MIRV development were introduced. Senator Clifford P. Case (R-N.J.) took a proactive approach introducing legislation to suspend MIRV flight tests unless the Soviets conducted a test.³⁵ Senator Edward W. Brooke (R-Mass.), along with 36 cosponsors, introduced a similar resolution asking President Nixon to “urgently propose to the Russian government” a halt of MIRV flight testing.³⁶ The Soviet Union was a step behind in the development of missiles with multiple warheads, focusing its effort on multiple reentry vehicle without an independent targeting capability. The concern for the opponents of MIRV development was that once the Soviet Union mastered MRV and advanced to MIRV technology, there would be no effective curb without on-site inspection, and there was only a small window of time left to ban MIRV on both sides when the Soviet Union was still trailing the United States in MIRV technology.³⁷

In this environment, President Nixon announced the second phase of the Safeguard program during his news conference on January 30, 1970. It was an expanded scheme not only to protect the Minuteman ICBMs as originally emphasized but also to provide area defense against small-scale missile attacks mainly from communist China.³⁸ While more details of the plan were to be introduced about a month later, it was reported that the DOD and the Army recommended building two new deployment facilities and preparing three additional sites. One of the two additional sites at Whiteman Air Force Base in Missouri was to protect Minuteman missiles. A second complex in upper Washington State was proposed to protect cities against missiles from China. In addition, site acquisition and preparation of a defense was proposed for protecting the capital from surprise Soviet attack on D.C. Southern New England and the Michigan-Ohio area were chosen as deployment sites for an ABM system intended to defend against a Chinese attack. The Pentagon would request \$1.5 billion for the seven sites in total, and \$600 million of it was for the expansion.³⁹ These expansions, officials said, would be

³⁴ John W. Finney, “G.O.P House Aide Asks Moratorium on MIRV Testing: Anderson and Senate Group Urge Nixon to Seek Arms Accord With Russians,” *New York Times*, June 17, 1969.

³⁵ *Ibid.*

³⁶ *Washington Post, Times Herald*, “37 Senators Urge Halt in MIRV Tests,” June 18, 1969.

³⁷ *Ibid.*

³⁸ Chalmers M. Roberts, “Nixon Decides To Go Ahead On ABM Plan,” *Washington Post*, January 31, 1970.

³⁹ William Beecher, “President Seeks Expansion of ABM: \$600- Million to Be Included in Budget for Work on 5 Additional Missile Sites,” *New York Times*, January 30, 1970.

stepping stones to nationwide protection. If a decision to go ahead with the complete deployment at twelve sites would be made the next year, it could be fully operational by 1977 or 1978 at a total cost of approximately \$11 billion.⁴⁰

When President Nixon proposed an expansion of the ABM program, it drew serious criticism from key members of Congress. Mike Mansfield, the Senate majority leader, charged the administration with changing the justification for the program, referring to the administration's initial 1969 proposal to deploy ABM systems in two complexes mainly to protect the US Minuteman silos.⁴¹ Two leading Democratic defenders of Safeguard, Senator Henry Jackson and Senator John O. Pastore, deserted their earlier support for the program to ensure their reelection as Democrats. They were both well-respected on nuclear matters, and they contributed significantly to giving the administration a narrow victory for the initial deployment plan in 1969.⁴²

Senator Jackson argued that he might have supported the expansion plan if it did not dilute its emphasis on point defense. He said that “providing a defense for the retaliatory missile forces against the growing Soviet missile threat” was a higher priority since the Chinese missile program had been reportedly delayed. Senator Pastore was against any expansion at all until the first two stations were brought to “a state of perfection.” He said that the first sites should be used as “pilot plants” to provide the necessary research and technology before expanding the program.⁴³ Behind these publicly given strategic reasons was their political concern. Both Democratic senators were up for reelection and had to justify their decision to constituents in a complicated context of national priorities, social programs versus defense expenditures, and overall spending.⁴⁴ In a private talk, Senator Pastore said, “People in my state wonder why more

⁴⁰ In his written statement, Deputy Defense Secretary Packard disclosed that the cost for the complete system would be approximately \$10.7 billion, increased sharply by \$1.6 billion due to inflation, design changes and deployment delays. Senate Report 91-1392, Accompanying Department of Defense Appropriations Bill for FY71, 91st Cong., 2nd sess.; William Beecher, “Expansion of ABM to 3d Missile Site Is Sought By Laird: Pentagon Also Wants to Buy Land and Do Preliminary Work at 5 Other Bases,” *New York Times*, February 25, 1970; Robert Keatley, “Laird Presents Modified ABM Expansion, Requesting Only One More Site for Now,” *Wall Street Journal*, February 25, 1970.

⁴¹ *New York Times*, “Mansfield Opens Attack on Proposal to Expand ABM,” February 5, 1970.

⁴² John W. Finney, “2 Key Senators Express Doubts on Expanded ABM: Pastore Against New Bases—Jackson Would Stick to Defense Minuteman,” *New York Times*, February 24, 1970.

⁴³ Finney, “2 Key Senators Express Doubts.”

⁴⁴ John W. Finney, “Missiles 1: Tide Shifts Against Expansion Of ABM,” *New York Times*, March 1, 1970.

money for education is inflationary while more money for Safeguard is not.”⁴⁵ Senator Jackson also confessed that he wanted to take a moderate position on the Safeguard expansion to avoid it becoming a major issue during the Democratic Party primary.⁴⁶

Fearing a failure to pass the expansion plan in Congress, the Pentagon decided to scale down the original proposal. This “Modified Phase II Safeguard Defense” plan added only one more antiballistic missile deployment location at Whiteman Air Force Base in Missouri and proposed five other sites for seeking permission to begin site survey, land acquisition, and preliminary site work for area defense.⁴⁷ Only Warren Air Force Base in Wyoming was determined with certainty as one of the five sites, and the other four locations—somewhere near Washington, D.C., in the southern New England area, in the Pacific North-west, and in the Michigan-Ohio region—were yet to be picked. Washington state was no longer slated for deployment. Instead, it was a likely location for the Pacific North-west area.⁴⁸

Table 5. Safeguard Proposal

	Site	Goal
1969 Phase I	Grand Forks (ND) and Malmstrom (MT)	Point Defense against Soviet Union ICBMs / deployment
1970 Phase II: 2 additional deployment sites + 3 site preparations	Grand Forks (ND), Malmstrom (MT) + Whiteman Air Force (MO), Upper Washington State	Point Defense and City Protection against China or Third World country attacks, capital protection against surprise Soviet attacks/ deployment
	Washington, D.C., southern New England and Michigan-Ohio area	Site preparation
1970 Modified Phase II: one additional deployment site and five additional sites for land acquisition and preliminary work	Whiteman Air Force Base (MO) Washington, D.C., southern New England, Washington State, the Michigan-Ohio area and *Warren Air Force Base (WY)	Point Defense/Deployment Area defense/Site preparation * For possible defense of a Minuteman base/Site preparation

⁴⁵ Finney, “2 Key Senators Express Doubts.”

⁴⁶ *New York Times*, “Safeguard May Help to Defend a Senate Seat as Well as Country’s Missile Sites,” February 26, 1970.

⁴⁷ William Beecher, “Expansion of ABM to 3d Missile Site Is Sought By Laird: Pentagon Also Wants to Buy Land and Do Preliminary Work at 5 Other Bases,” *New York Times*, February 25, 1970; Robert Keatley, “Laird Presents Modified ABM Expansion, Requesting Only One More Site for Now,” *Wall Street Journal*, February 25, 1970.

⁴⁸ Robert Keatley, “Laird Presents Modified ABM Expansion, Requesting Only One More Site for Now,” *Wall Street Journal*, February 25, 1970; Peter Braestrup, “3d Site For ABM Asked: Laird Seeks Base in Mo., Plan for D.C.,” *Washington Post*, February 25, 1970.

The authorization process in Congress illustrated how the members of Congress reached a decision. Upon receiving the administration's revised Safeguard expansion plan, the House permitted the Pentagon to begin preliminary work on five sites and financed \$1.9 billion for beginning construction at the radar site in Missouri as well as facilities at the initial two locations.⁴⁹ This upgraded plan met tougher resistance in the Senate. The Senate Armed Services Committee also approved the third Minuteman site in Missouri but rejected additional planning for other sites allowing preliminary site preparation work at only the Wyoming site.⁵⁰ The opponents of Safeguard in the Senate argued that even this curtailed approval would be too much concession to the administration and introduced amendments to further trim down the administration proposal.⁵¹ One of the amendments, proposed by Senator Brooke, provided the full \$1.3 billion as long as it was not to be used for expansion, giving the administration flexibility to redirect the \$322 million for the initial two sites. Senators Cooper and Hart proposed to withdraw \$322 million earmarked for the expansion, posing a bigger problem to the Nixon administration's plan. The Senate decided to support the Cooper-Hart amendment,⁵²

Thankfully for the administration, the Cooper-Hart amendment was defeated in a 52 to 47 vote. The five-vote margin was a surprising result for both supporters and opponents of the expansion plan considering that construction of the two sites was approved by only one vote in 1969. Why did the Senate decide to reject the measure despite its earlier move that seemed to indicate its interest in impeding the expansion plan? Their concern for the progress for SALT was the key factor in their decision making.

Kenneth E. Belieu distributed to members of Congress a telegram from Gerald G. Smith, head of the delegation in Vienna. The communication suggested that support for ABM expansion was essential to the success of the negotiations. Learning of the telegram, some members of Congress believed that their vote against the administration's expansion plan could

⁴⁹ Robert Smith, "House Panel Votes A 3d Site for ABM," *New York Times*, April 17, 1970; Marjorie Hunter, "House Votes \$345-Million for ABM," *New York Times*, June 12, 1970.

⁵⁰ *Wall Street Journal*, "Senate Panel Clears Safeguard Expansion But Curbs Long-Term ABM Planning Funds," June 18, 1970.

⁵¹ John W. Finney, "ABM's Opponents Select Strategy: Agree on Work at 2 Sites with a Ban on Expansion," *New York Times*, July 31, 1970.

⁵² Senators Mike Mansfield (D-Mont.), John Sherman Cooper (R-Ky.), Philip A. Hart (D-Mich.), Edward Kennedy (D-Mass), Edmund S. Muskie (D-Maine), J.W. Fulbright (D-Ark.), Jacob K. Javits (R-N.Y.), Charles H. Percy (R-Ill.), George D. Aiken (R-Vt.) were among those agreed to prevent the expansion. John W. Finney, "ABM's Opponents Select Strategy: Agree on Work at 2 Sites With a Ban on Expansion," *New York Times*, July 31, 1970.

undermine the US negotiation team's position against the Soviet delegation and decided to vote against the amendment. Senators Thomas J. McIntyre (D-NH) and James B. Pearson (R-Kansas), for example, said that they changed their position and voted for the administration's expansion plan because of Mr. Smith's message.⁵³

President Nixon intended to continue a modest Safeguard defense in 1971. He sought \$1.28 billion to build defense systems around the three previously authorized sites in Grand Forks in North Dakota, Malmstrom in Montana, and Whiteman in Missouri and permission either to begin construction in Wyoming or to do preliminary site surveys around Washington. The choice would depend on progress in the arms negotiations with the Soviet Union.⁵⁴ Congress authorized continuation of construction at only two initial sites, preparation of new sites in Wyoming and Missouri and cut \$161 million from the requested amount.⁵⁵

Contrasted with the narrow approval of the administration's Safeguard plan in the first two years, the Senate showed its growing support for Safeguard when it defeated a measure, introduced by Senator Harold E. Hughes (D-Iowa), that would have cut \$748 million from the Safeguard budget by a vote of 64 to 21. This unusually strong support for Safeguard in the Senate was partly because of the earlier Senate Armed Services Committee's decisions. The Senate panel had already scaled down the deployment sites to two from the administration's proposal of four. The Senate also accepted the "bargaining chip" justification. The administration convinced senators that an agreement allowing limited antiballistic missiles was important for the US position at the negotiation table with the Soviets. Even Senator John Sherman Cooper, who had strongly opposed Safeguard, said, "I believe it best that we do not alter the basis upon which negotiations are taking place."⁵⁶

Congress and the White House displayed a political adroitness with the ABM issue. Even the opponents of ABM did not want to be blamed for weakening the US bargaining position by rejecting the administration's ABM plan, yet they did not endorse a missile defense program so large that it would break the arms negotiations with the Soviets. Once the Nixon

⁵³ John W. Finney, "Expansion of ABM Backed by Senate by 52-to-47 Vote," *New York Times*, August 13, 1970.

⁵⁴ William Beecher, "Nixon to Propose Option on 4th Site in Missile Shield: Would make a Choice Later Between Defending Capital or Complex in Wyoming," *New York Times*, February 27, 1971.

⁵⁵ *Wall Street Journal*, "Military Budget Of \$21.3 Billion Passes Conferees: Sum Down \$906 Million From Fiscal '72; Pentagon Wins All Major Weapons Asked," October 22, 1971.

⁵⁶ John W. Finney, "Senate Refuses To Slash Funds for ABM and F-14: Rejects Efforts to Prevent Deployment of Safeguard in Defeat for Hughes," *New York Times*, September 30, 1971.

administration began the arms negotiations with the Soviets, they were determined to succeed. President Nixon and National Security Adviser Henry Kissinger practically ran the negotiations through backchannels and the conclusion of the arms talks was largely owed to the two (although the legitimacy of such a practice and whether it was the best deal for the United States are subject to debate). In short, the administration was the main player in the conduct and conclusion of the SALT.

The role of Congress in the eventual achievement of the ABM Treaty was in swaying the Nixon administration to take the SALT negotiations seriously. The Nixon administration was facing a Congress controlled by the opposition party, and Nixon knew very well what political obstacles would lie ahead, having been in Congress himself. Each year, obtaining necessary funding from Congress would have been a major fight, and the Nixon administration was quick to foresee the challenges from the experience in its first year. Even with the president's personal lobbying efforts, his Safeguard plan was passed by an extremely slim margin.

In addition, public opinion was against Nixon's ambition for ABM. The Vietnam War was problematic for the Nixon administration not only for the public resentment against the war, but also for economic reasons. The war spending, coupled with Johnson's Great Society programs, caused increasing inflation in the late 1960s and put the U.S. economy under great pressure. By July 1969, federal mandatory spending was up by \$2.5 billion from its earlier forecast only three months before.⁵⁷ Despite Nixon's effort to control inflation through austere fiscal policy, the economy remained sluggish, unemployment was worsening, and other social programs were being foiled by the harsh budgetary reality.⁵⁸

Vietnam War critics seized this moment of public discontent and called for reshuffling the "national priorities" of foreign and social policies. Defense programs were the center of the focus in this movement, and ABM was one of the six defense programs under assault.⁵⁹ According to Gallup polls in the late 1960s and early 1970s, the majority of Americans thought the government was already spending too much on defense. Surveys also showed that the public was largely detached from the ABM debates. Three surveys conducted by Gallup in 1969 after President Nixon proposed the Safeguard plan on March 15 revealed that only one in four

⁵⁷ Edward L. Dale Jr., "When Inflation Takes a Seat in the Military Councils," *New York Times*, August 24, 1969.

⁵⁸ Max Frankels, "Nixon vs. Inflation: A Quiet but Vital Contest," *New York Times*, December 4, 1969.

⁵⁹ Kissinger, *White House Years*, 199.

supported ABM but about 60 percent of the respondents were not even aware of the program or had not made up their minds.⁶⁰

Table 6. Public Opinion on ABM (1969)

	March 28–31	May 16–19	July 11–14
Favor	25%	24%	23%
Oppose	14%	14%	18%
Undecided	1%	2%	1%
Subtotal	40%	40%	42%
Unaware of program or have not made up minds	60%	60%	58%
Total	100%	100%	100%

Source: *New York Times*, “Poll Shows Most Unsure Over ABM: 58% in U.S. Are Undecided or Uninformed on Plan,” July 27, 1969.

Scientists were even more critical of Safeguard. According to a survey conducted at the American Physical Society meeting in April 1969, 76 percent of 1,216 physicists opposed the ABM deployment while only 21 percent supported the plan. The rest gave no opinion.⁶¹ With the unpopularity of the Vietnam War growing, President Nixon realized that he would not be able to engage in a political battle with Congress from a position of strength. The Democrats would not be reticent about painting President Nixon as a threat to peace and using Safeguard as an example of his perilous security policy.⁶² In addition, considering the public’s disinterest in ABM, there was no political capital he could leverage against Congress for Safeguard. The Nixon administration concluded that Congress would support the administration plan only for bargaining chip purposes and that Congress would not approve the twelve-site ABM network required for the full-scale Safeguard system.

4.2.2 Summary of the ABM Treaty Case

While President Nixon and his National Security Adviser Henry Kissinger were the two major players in the conduct of the Strategic Arms Limitation Talks, through the back-door diplomacy

⁶⁰ Deibel, *President, Public Opinion and Power*, 17.

⁶¹ *New York Times*, “Poll of 1,216 Physicists Finds 76 % Against ABM System” May 1, 1969.

⁶² Nixon, *RN: Memoirs of Richard Nixon*, 415–418, 522–523.

which produced the ABM Treaty, Congress contributed to the ABM Treaty by convincing President Nixon that an arms treaty was necessary. President Nixon and his adviser Kissinger both had confidence in the capability of an ABM system and certainly preferred to deploy an antiballistic missile defense network. The strategic value could have been realized only when the United States built a network of a dozen missile defense systems, not a few. The political course in 1969 indicated that Congress was not going to easily endorse the administration's comprehensive plan, and the chance that the administration would be able to complete the twelve sites was uncertain at best. Without an arms treaty, it seemed that the United States would have been left with an incomplete network of Nike-X missiles that conferred no defense advantage over Soviet missiles while the Soviets continued upgrading their own offensive capabilities.

How was Congress able to sway President Nixon for the need to conclude an arms treaty? The political circumstances were all against the Nixon administration. Democrats controlled both the House and Senate, and if the White House and Congress clashed over the ABM issue, the administration would have been all alone against Congress. The Vietnam War was a huge problem to the Nixon administration. Funding for the war and other military programs took a tremendous amount of persuasion and effort for the administration. It was particularly difficult when the economy was weak and public confidence in government was low. President Nixon and National Security Adviser Kissinger were politically sensible enough to realize that they could not railroad their policy over these obstacles. Members of Congress were also responsive to the political landscape in the 1960s and early 1970s. They had been dealing with the agony of war for years, and backing an expensive and robust defense posture was not a politically popular choice. Congress was not, however, interested in completely shutting down the proposed Safeguard ABM system while the SALT was in progress. They understood the value of the ABM issue for the American negotiation team and carefully voted not to undermine the US position. This demonstrated that political demands were critical for Congress in their decision making process but lawmakers were also cognizant of strategic calculations. With the success of the ABM Treaty came acceptance of the MAD doctrine. This became even more evident when Congress eventually closed down the ABM deployment site in 1976, although it was allowed under the ABM Treaty.

4.3 REAGAN ADMINISTRATION

President Reagan's SDI program marked a fundamental change in the post-ABM Treaty strategic thinking. Although he was known for his hawkish stance on defense, Reagan did not make ABM a prominent issue on his campaign agenda for the White House in 1980, and there was no overt sign that he had an interest in reviving ABM during the first two years of his presidency. Does this mean that President Reagan's sudden announcement of his idea later known as SDI was an outcome of the legislative body's influence as the congressional perspective argues? Investigating the power of Congress in the SDI decision making process is the main purpose of this section. What was the role of Congress in reintroducing missile defense policy in 1983? Was there any demand from Congress to reinstate the moribund missile defense policy in the ABM Treaty era? If so, were they Republican members of Congress and were they instrumental in persuading President Reagan for his speech in March 1983? What was the reaction from Congress after the historic speech? Why did Congress approve his proposal despite initial skepticism regarding its technical feasibility, high costs, and strategic implication?

This study argues that the role of Congress in the inception of SDI was minimal. An examination of the congressional activities prior to President Reagan's speech in March 1983 leads to a conclusion that Congress as a whole paid little attention to the missile defense issue. However, their inattention to missile defense prior to the launch of SDI did not mean that Congress was not important in determining the viability of President Reagan's proposal. Congress endorsed the ambitious program, ultimately paving the way for SDI to be firmly established as an untouchable defense program for decades to come. In addition, missile defense became one of the core security policy issues that distinguished the Republican Party from the Democratic Party, especially later in the 1990s.

4.3.1 The Role of Congress: Prior to President Reagan's Speech in 1983

What was the role of Congress in President Reagan's 1983 speech on missile defense? Few members of Congress had an interest in revising the US ABM policy. It was deemed politically radical since resumption of the ABM program would not only mean challenging the ABM Treaty and the consensus built within the defense establishment across the Pentagon and in Congress.

There was one member of Congress proactive in making a case for missile defense: Wyoming Senator Malcolm Wallop. The Republican senator despised the MAD doctrine and had a strong conviction in the concept of protecting the United States from enemy attacks. As a member serving on the Select Intelligence Committee, he had a keen interest in and expertise on security matters and had already begun his crusade for missile defense well before President Reagan's 1983 speech, in fact, even before Reagan became the president of the United States. He published an article urging revival of antiballistic missile defense in the summer 1979 issue of *Strategic Review*. The Wyoming senator also advised the Reagan team in 1980 to raise missile defense as a campaign issue—without success since Reagan's chief campaign advisers considered it politically too risky.⁶³

The lone senator tried to add funds for laser programs with potential application for missile defense and submitted several amendments to authorization and appropriations bills in 1981 for extra funding or to mandate deployment of missile defense. However, neither John Tower (D-Tex.), chairman of the Senate Armed Services Committee, nor John Warner (R-Va.), chairman of the Nuclear and Strategic Forces Subcommittee, lent much support to Wallop. His bills were never incorporated into the final legislation as the two key committee chairmen dropped the Wallop provisions during negotiations with the House. When Senator Wallop attached his amendment to the appropriations bill to circumvent Tower's opposition, the SASC chairman warned the Pentagon not to obligate the funding.⁶⁴

Though some members were more sympathetic to the cause, missile defense failed to galvanize support within Congress. There was no congressional pressure on President Reagan or his administration for more aggressive missile defense policy. Antiballistic missile program was a non-issue to the majority of Congress until President Reagan's speech. To congressional members, missile defense was one of many issues they were dealing with. In this circumstance, the power of key members in defense matters was critical, and they were preoccupied with other, higher-profile issues such as the overall strategic modernization plan and MX basing problems.

⁶³ Angelo Codevilla, "A Leap in the Dark?" in *While Others Build: The Commonsense Approach to the Strategic Defense Initiative* (New York: The Free Press, 1989), 66–67.

⁶⁴ Codevilla, 77–84.

4.3.2 Power of the Purse

How did Congress react to President Reagan's speech reviving the nation's missile defense policy? It certainly captured the attention of congressional members. The general response of Congress to the missile defense portion of the president's speech was summarized as skeptical at best. Democrats criticized the announcement and described President Reagan's initiative as a ploy to distract attention from the embattled MX program and to defend increasing military spending. Democratic leaders of Congress, House Speaker Thomas P. (Tip) O'Neill Jr. (D-Mass.) and Senate Minority Leader Robert C. Byrd (D-W.Va.), were among these critics. The Reagan administration's various MX basing plans had been rejected by Congress, and the administration was also having an increasingly difficult time justifying its growing defense budget. President Reagan's speech was designed to give a political boost to the FY 1984 defense budget. His speech took place just 33 minutes after the House approved the FY 1984 budget, which contained only a four percent increase from the FY 1983 amount, far less than the 10 percent increase the administration had requested.⁶⁵ Senator Edward Kennedy of Massachusetts lambasted the speech and called it "misleading Red-scare tactics and reckless Star Wars schemes" and the two Democratic presidential candidates, Alan Cranston (Calif.) and Gary Hart (Colo.), issued similarly critical statements.⁶⁶

Republicans did not criticize the speech as harshly as Democrats, but nor did they react with excitement. House Minority Leader Robert H. Michel (R-Ill.) and Senator John H. Chafee (R-R.I.) were taken by surprise and were uncertain about the effect of the speech on the ongoing budgetary battle. Senator Michel said, "I frankly don't think it had the impact the president might have liked." Senator Chafee said, "I don't think the blitz has blitz" and "...the part of the speech that dealt with the ABM antiballistic missile was not helpful. It diverted attention from a constructive speech on defense."⁶⁷ Senator Mark Hatfield (R-Oreg.) went further in casting doubts on President Reagan's idea and was concerned that the president's speech had effectively

⁶⁵ Steven R. Weisman, "Reagan Proposes U.S. Seek New Way to Block Missiles," *New York Times*, March 24, 1983; Lou Cannon, "President Seeks Futuristic Defense Against Missiles," *Washington Post*, March 24, 1983.

⁶⁶ Cannon, "President Seeks Futuristic Defense Against Missiles."

⁶⁷ Lou Cannon and Margot Hornblower, "'Warmonger' Image Resurfaces; Reagan Defense Push May Backfire," *Washington Post*, April 7, 1983.

begun “the militarization of the last great hope for international cooperation and peace—outer space.”⁶⁸

While remarks offered by individual lawmakers illustrated their sentiment, it was congressional activities that had a tangible effect on the future of SDI, and legislative actions show that Congress played a part in the establishment of SDI by approving significant amounts of funding for the SDI program during the remainder of the Reagan administration.

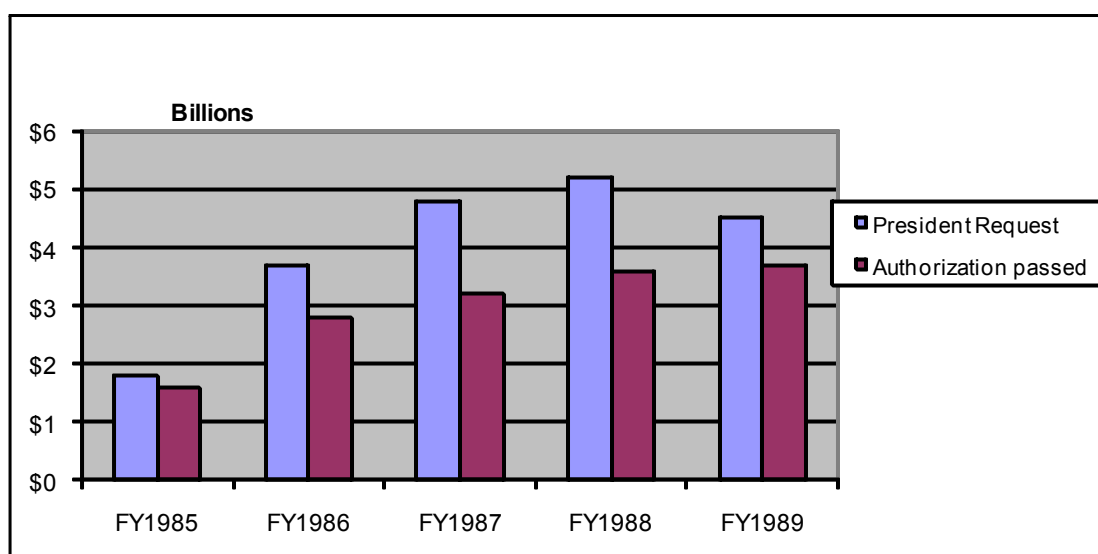


Figure 2. SDI Funding: Request vs. Congressional Approval

Source: Historical Funding for BMD FY85-FY09, Missile Defense Agency, <http://www.mda.mil/mdalink/pdf/histfunds.pdf>.

Why did Congress go along with President Reagan and support his ambitious program in spite of the initial skepticism? First, the Reagan administration devised an adept strategy to soften congressional assails by avoiding drastic measures or funding requests to Congress. Although the 1983 speech stirred up political debates and enhanced its visibility, the Reagan administration was mindful of political risks and smart in controlling the pace of the program. They went slowly with pushing SDI before the quickly approaching presidential election cycle

⁶⁸ Joseph Fromm with Robert S. Dudney, “Behind Reagan’s Star-Wars Strategy,” *U.S. News & World Report*, April 4, 1983.

so that it would not be a political target for Democrats. The first couple of years were consumed with conducting basic studies and outlining plans for the grand idea, keeping SDI mainly a research program, and Reagan officials avoided any more hardline policy proposals without making a clear statement on deployment. The program's research status and low profile helped it draw support from Congress.

For example, in the wake of President Reagan's announcement, the National Security Decision Directive (NSDD 6-83) was issued ordering two studies with respect to missile defense, one concerning a technology assessment and the other for a strategic evaluation. As mentioned earlier, the Defensive Technologies Study team, led by James Fletcher, the former head of the National Aeronautics and Space Administration, investigated technical feasibility.⁶⁹ The goal of the Fletcher report was not to decide the type of weapons or other elements of the potential system but to select the research and technologies that the program would be focused on. While the report acknowledged uncertainties, it concluded that advanced technologies could offer an effective defense in the long term. The team recommended a multi-tiered system that would engage in the four phases of a ballistic missile's trajectory: boost phase, post-boost or bus deployment, midcourse phase, and terminal phase. The multiple attempts would increase the success rate of intercepting an incoming missile. The Fletcher panel assessed the direct energy weapons to be the most promising for boost phase intercept in which decoys and multiple independently targeted reentry vehicles would be deployed. The committee members all agreed that central management for the program would be essential.⁷⁰

A second study group, the Future Security Strategy Study team, was convened for strategic analyses including the implications of the SDI on arms control, relations with allies, and Soviet responses. Dr. Fred Hoffman of the Institute for Defense Analysis chaired the group. The study recommended that the United States combine the offensive and defensive strategic measures to enhance deterrence and focus on the development of a limited defense.⁷¹

⁶⁹ Rodney W. Jones, Steven A. Hildreth, "Designing a Credible Strategic Defense; Star Wars: Down to Earth, or Gleam in the Sky?" *Washington Quarterly* 7, no. 4 (Fall 1984): 104.

⁷⁰ The Strategic Defense Initiative: Defense Technologies Study, Department of Defense (Washington, DC: Government Printing Office, April 1984), 4-6.; Senate Armed Services Committee, Richard D. DeLauer, 2910-2917; Senate Armed Services Committee, James C. Fletcher, 2917-2920.

⁷¹ Fred Hiatt, "Limited ABM Is Urged To Protect U.S. Missiles," *Washington Post*, March 8, 1984.

It was not until almost a year later in January 1984 when President Reagan issued National Security Decision Directive (NSDD 119) and formally commenced the SDI program. When President Reagan issued the NSDD 119, the administration was well aware of the concerns in Congress that the new missile defense program might violate the ABM Treaty. In an effort to ease the fear, the administration officials carefully avoided such terms as “ABM,” “development” or “test” and instead called President Reagan’s project the Strategic Defense Initiative, emphasizing the research aspect of the program.⁷²

The Reagan administration also well understood that members of Congress were sensitive to spending tax dollars on programs they were not certain about. Thus, for fiscal year 1985, President Reagan “low-keyed” SDI, as a senior official put it, so that it would not be a political scapegoat. The official emphasized that the budget decision did not reflect “a lessened interest because he does believe it’s a moral imperative.” He continued that Reagan would renew his advocacy and ask for “at least twice as much [funding] next year,” which he did.⁷³ The Reagan administration’s first SDI budget request was \$1.77 billion, and it was a mild increase compared to the amount requested for the next four years at between \$4 billion and \$5.8 billion (including the Energy Department portion). It is quite customary, though not certain, for Congress to trim the administration’s budget request since more often than not the country experiences a budget deficit and struggles to balance the federal budget. The House Armed Services Committee cut 25 percent of the \$1.77 billion, by about \$400 million. The Republican-controlled Senate Armed Services Committee was more supportive of SDI than the House and recommended a \$150 million reduction. Reconciling the difference, the conferees agreed to the Senate cutting \$150 million and gave the administration \$1.62 billion for the program.⁷⁴ The Republicans had no strong incentives to fight against a rather moderate increase in SDI funding, and the House was pleased to trade the extra \$250 million for SDI in exchange for concessions on other issues. The conferees of the two chambers, as the House wanted, banned further production of the multiple warheads missile and provided \$1.5 billion for the MX. This amount

⁷² Michael Getler, “Reagan Sets Missile-Defense Research in Motion,” *Washington Post*, January 26, 1984.

⁷³ Fred Hiatt, “Low-Key Push Due ‘Star Wars’; President Plans Redoubled Effort If He Is Reelected,” *Washington Post*, June 19, 1984.

⁷⁴ Eliot Brenner, “Washington News,” *United Press International*, September 25, 1984.

was well below the funding level required for the 40 MX missiles the Reagan administration had requested and would provide no more than 21.⁷⁵

The outcome of the November 1984 election left the majority of both houses of Congress and the presidency unchanged. President Reagan enjoyed a historical victory over Walter Mondale, and the Republicans and Democrats maintained their control in the Senate and House respectively.⁷⁶ Free from electoral politics concerns, President Reagan pursued SDI more aggressively in his second term just as he vowed and asked for \$3.7 billion for fiscal year 1986, a more than one 100 percent increase from the FY 1985 funding level.⁷⁷

When the administration requested a massive funding increase in 1985, Congress resisted the sharp budget growth. Many considered the amount excessive and, as such, there were a number of attempts to significantly reduce SDI funding. The Senate Armed Services Committee cut the requested amount to \$2.95 billion. The reduction was still unsatisfactory to many senators. Several amendments were introduced to fund SDI at between \$1.4 billion and \$2.8 billion, but the amendments were all defeated preserving the SASC recommendation. Most of these amendments not only further slashed the SDI budget but also included policy statements requiring oversight of the program or limiting testing that might violate the ABM Treaty.⁷⁸ The legislative activities pointed to the concerns in some quarters in Congress with respect to the SDI programs, yet at the end, Congress as a whole more or less approved the direction of the administration.

The Republican-controlled Senate approved the full \$2.95 billion recommended by the panel and the Democratic-dominated House authorized \$2.5 billion, \$400 million less than the amount approved by the Senate. Eventually, the two chambers compromised at \$2.75 billion, midway between the House and the Senate figures and a billion dollar increase from the previous year.⁷⁹

Its research program status was one of the main reasons for SDI to escape further budget cuts. Members of Congress tend not to oppose a weapons program since such a move could

⁷⁵ Lee Byrd, "House, Senate Negotiators Settle On Defense Plan," Associated Press, September 25, 1984.

⁷⁶ Howell Raines, "Reagan Talking 49 States and 59% of Vote, Vows to Stress Arms Talks and Economy," *New York Times*, November 8, 1984.

⁷⁷ Peter Grier, "Crossing swords over defense budget," *Christian Science Monitor*, July 1, 1985.

⁷⁸ George C. Wilson, "Senate Refuses to Slash 'Star Wars' Funding," *Washington Post*, June 5, 1985.

⁷⁹ Sara Fritz, "President Signs \$368-Billion Funding Bill," *Los Angeles Times*, December 20, 1985.

easily brand them as obstructionist to national security. It was particularly hard for Congress to deny what was claimed as a defensive system during the Cold War, and President Reagan cleverly ignited this line of argument for missile defense. In addition, the Strategic Defense Initiative program began without a clear objective and program definition, which ironically helped its survival. The opponents of SDI found the ambiguities troubling but could not flatly deny research efforts that might lead to security benefits. The bluntest expression of this sentiment was by Democratic Senator David H. Pryor. The Arkansas senator said, “we are suckers for research” in commenting on the failure of the amendments to cut SDI funding. One of the authors whose amendment was proposed in an effort to slash the SDI budget was William Proxmire. The Democratic senator from Wisconsin believed that the research phase of SDI helped defeat all these amendments on the floor.⁸⁰ Another leading opponent of SDI, Republican Senator Larry Pressler from South Dakota also later acknowledged in his book that “on a complex national security issue such as the SDI, Congress usually opts for the ‘conservative hard-line’ position. That is, when there is much uncertainty about a presidential defense initiative, Congress will critically debate, but almost inevitably err on the side of spending more rather than less. This is especially true if the defense initiative is defined as ‘research.’”⁸¹

Nineteen eighty-six was an important year for SDI that highlighted Reagan’s commitment to the program. Since Reagan took office, the Defense Department enjoyed the president’s strong support for the modernization of the military and funding increases for those efforts. However, the federal deficit was growing and predicted to reach \$220 billion in 1986. Congress was anxious about the ballooning budget deficit and passed the Gramm–Rudman–Hollings bill in December 1985. The legislation mandated federal agencies to downsize their spending in order to balance the budget by fiscal year 1991.⁸² As a first step to this remedy, federal agencies were subject to a \$11.7 billion cut from the FY 1986 budget. The Pentagon’s share in this reduction was approximately \$5.8 billion and SDI would have faced a \$135.2

⁸⁰ George C. Wilson, “Despite Senate Support, SDI’s Future Is Cloudy: Backers Say Missile Defense Goals Unclear,” *Washington Post*, June 9, 1985.

⁸¹ Larry Pressler, “The Role of Congress in Assessing A New Strategic Program,” in *Star Wars: the Strategic Defense Initiative Debate in Congress* (New York: Praeger, 1986), 157.

⁸² Karen Tumulty and James Gerstenzang, “Budge Cuts Will Spare ‘Star Wars’; But Pentagon Trims To Hit MX, Readiness Funds,” *Los Angeles Times*, January 15, 1986.

million cut from the \$2.75 billion approved by Congress.⁸³ Though all other expenditures were squeezed, President Reagan spared two military programs—SDI and the military personnel program.⁸⁴ The SDI program escaped further cuts from the Gramm–Rudman–Hollings Act in its first implementation of the measure owing to strong support from the Reagan administration.

The new budget for fiscal year 1987 submitted to Congress in early February reaffirmed the president’s devotion to SDI. The proposal requested \$4.8 billion (DOD portion only) for the SDI program, an approximately 74 percent increase from the amount Congress endorsed for FY 1986. It made SDI President Reagan’s top military research priority.⁸⁵ Many members of Congress felt troubled by this and demonstrated their discontent in a bipartisan letter to the Senate Armed Services Committee leadership. Forty-six senators expressed their concern that the goal of SDI was still not clearly defined and the program did not show sufficient progress in research yet was being rushed to a premature development decision. They urged that funding for the SDI program be increased no more than three percent from the amount approved for the existing fiscal year after adjusting for inflation, which would be about \$3 billion. The senators thought a 75 percent increase in funding was extreme, especially when the overall defense budget was to be frozen.⁸⁶ The 46 senators’ effort to forestall the typically generous Senate Armed Services Committee funding level showed the difficult time SDI was facing in Congress. Despite the pressure from colleagues in the Senate, its Armed Services Committee panelists recommended \$3.6 billion. After contentious debates, the Senate defeated two amendments that would have cut the SDI budget to lower levels by 50 to 49 votes and endorsed the SASC funding recommendation.⁸⁷

Congressional pressure was not limited to the budget. Legislative activities evidenced the increasing role of Congress in policy formulation. The defense authorization bill passed by the Senate unveiled its dissatisfaction with Reagan’s defense policy. In addition to the deep cuts from SDI funding, the bill reoriented its goal to focus on limited defense and suggested Reagan

⁸³ David Hoffman and Helen Dewar, “Blueprint of First Cuts Issued Under Budget Act,” *Washington Post*, January 16, 1986.

⁸⁴ George C. Wilson, “Reagan Exempts ‘Star Wars,’ Personnel From Cuts: Other Defense Programs Must Absorb Deeper Reductions Under Gramm-Rudman-Hollings,” *Washington Post*, January 16, 1986.

⁸⁵ Bill Keller, “No. 1 Weapon In 1987 Budget Is Missile Shield,” *New York Times*, February 5, 1986.

⁸⁶ George C. Wilson, “46 Senators Seek Slash In ‘Star Wars’ Funding; Goals Are Unclear, Coalition Says,” *Washington Post*, May 23, 1986.

⁸⁷ Helen Dewar and Edward Walsh, “Senate Sanctions Battle Delays Defense Debate,” *Washington Post*, August 6, 1986.

be more protective in arms control measures. The Senate urged the president to continue adhering to the unratified SALT II, challenging his decision to scrap it, and resume negotiations on the Comprehensive Nuclear Test Ban Treaty (CTBT).⁸⁸ The Democratic-controlled House passed a comparable but stricter bill. It eliminated funding for nuclear weapons deployment beyond the limits set by the SALT II Treaty.⁸⁹

The political reality provided sobering reasons for the proponents of SDI to be nervous. The 1986 election changed the majority of the Senate, and President Reagan had only two years left for his second term. The “true believers” of SDI wanted to make sure the newly invigorated missile defense program would not be pushed back by the next administrations. They calculated that it would be extremely controversial to scale back a program already in its full development and deployment phases and pursued deployment of a rudimentary defense system despite technical uncertainties. According to Attorney General Edwin Meese III, the Reagan administration should begin to deploy the SDI systems “so it will be in place and not tampered with by future administrations.”⁹⁰ As Reagan officials were pursuing SDI more assertively, the confrontation between the Reagan administration and Congress heightened and the Reagan administration’s move toward near-term deployment encountered huge setbacks in Congress. The Armed Services Committees of both chambers passed a provision to limit the testing of the space-based SDI system within the traditional interpretation of the ABM Treaty. Congress also mandated the Defense Department to report the costs of the full life cycle of the space-based SDI system.⁹¹

The Pentagon requested \$5.2 billion in funding for SDI. The House Armed Services Committee recommended \$3.3 billion, but the House approved \$3.1 billion for a tactical reason. Prior to the House floor vote, the Senate Armed Services Committee endorsed a much higher amount of \$4.2 billion. The House cut an additional \$200 million to \$3.1 billion to bring down the final number during the House and Senate conference. For the total SDI funding that

⁸⁸ Helen Dewar, “Senate Overwhelmingly Approves \$295 Billion for Defense Package,” *Washington Post*, August 10, 1986.

⁸⁹ Jonathan Fuerbringer, “House, 239 To 176, Decides To Reduce ‘Star Wars’ Money: Backs Limits of ‘79 Pact,” *New York Times*, August 13, 1986.

⁹⁰ *Washington Post*, “Meese Calls for Speedup in Deploying 1st Stage of ‘Star Wars’ Defense,” January 15, 1987; R. Jeffrey Smith, “Offensive Taken for Partial SDI Deployment; Efforts Seems Aimed at Preventing Rollback on System by Future Administration,” *Washington Post*, January 18, 1987.

⁹¹ Colin Norman, “Outline of a defense budget,” *Science* 238 no. 4831 (November 27, 1987): 1225.

included the Energy Department, the budget was settled at \$3.6 billion, a compromise between the \$3.1 billion approved by the House and the \$4.5 billion passed by the Senate.⁹²

The vigor for SDI was waning as President Reagan was entering the last year of his presidency. The departure of Secretary Weinberger owing to the repercussions of the Iran Contra affair and Assistant Secretary Perle, two high-ranking officials who stood by Reagan's idea with their utmost loyalty, also contributed to the discouraging atmosphere for SDI. The new Secretary of Defense, Frank Carlucci, requested \$4.5 billion for SDI, a considerably reduced amount from the \$6.3 billion originally recommended for FY 1989 under Weinberger's leadership in the Pentagon.⁹³ The House and Senate negotiators completed the final bill in July 1988, which included \$4.1 billion for SDI. Some Republicans were dissatisfied with the policy direction the bill took. In addition to cutting about half a million from the SDI budget request, the bill significantly restricted the Phase I program by stipulating that no more than \$85 million of the \$330 million could be used for the early deployment option.⁹⁴ The bill also specifically required the Defense Department to keep the ground-based weapons program intact. The Democratic-controlled Congress also included arms control measures to observe the ABM Treaty and the unratified SALT II.⁹⁵ The GOP members' discontent, compounded by election year politics, prompted President Reagan to veto the defense authorization bill in August. After a series of closed-door meetings, the administration and Congress compromised to ease some of the restrictions put on the early deployment program. The deal was to drop the \$85 million limit on deployment but keep the overall funding level at \$4.1 billion.⁹⁶

The five years of legislative activities in Congress indicated that the legislative body gradually endorsed President Reagan's new approach to nuclear doctrine and defensive networks despite the cold reaction at the beginning. The evolution of the SDI debates revealed clues as to

⁹² John H. Cushman Jr., "House Cuts Funds for 'Star Wars' in Tactical Move; Votes \$3.1 Billion for '88," *New York Times*, May 13, 1987; Helen Dewar, "Senate Backs SDI Funding by 51-50; Bush Breaks a Tie Over Reagan's Antimissile Program," *Washington Post*, September 23, 1987.

⁹³ R. Jeffrey Smith, "Hill Negotiators Scale Back Rise in SDI Budget; Authorization Measure Would Direct Much of 3.73 Billion to Long-Term Research," *Washington Post*, June 26, 1988.

⁹⁴ Tim Ahern, "Bush Urging Reagan To Veto Pentagon Budget Bill," Associated Press, August 2, 1988.

⁹⁵ Ahern, "Bush Urging Reagan To Veto Pentagon Budget Bill,"; R. Jeffrey Smith, "Hill Negotiators Scale Back Rise in SDI Budget; Authorization Measure Would Direct Much of 3.73 Billion to Long-Term Research," *Washington Post*, June 26, 1988.

⁹⁶ Tim Ahern, "Congress, White House Near Agreement on Defense Budget," Associated Press, September 26, 1988; Thom Shanker, "Star Wars' Funding Apparently In Budgets To Stay, Experts Say," *Chicago Tribune*, October 17, 1988.

why Congress came to the decisions it made. The fact that SDI was a defensive weapons system and a research program, and its value as a bargaining chip at the arms talks with the Soviets, made it possible for President Reagan's vision to be accepted in Congress.

Members of Congress who promote a strong defense posture always have an advantage in advocating their position, and SDI was an exemplar case. Congress is where proponents and opponents make their cases, and the messages conveyed by supporters of President Reagan's SDI were easier to understand and more popular with the public. Although deterrence had its share of followers in Congress, there were skeptics as well. The MAD doctrine is a complicated nuclear strategy, heavily relying on the assumption that an enemy is as reasonable and benign as the United States, and many did not agree with that premise. SDI also had psychological appeal to the public since it was seeking "mutual assured survival" through defense as opposed to "mutual assured destruction." It was a political slogan hard to reject, especially before an election.⁹⁷

President Reagan's new approach of dealing with nuclear peril by emphasizing defensive instead of offensive action appeared to commend a higher moral authority. In addition, taking actions to protect the United States instead of relying on the mercy of the enemy was far more attractive to defense hawks in Congress as well as the public. Such sentiment was easily heard by members of Congress. During SDI director Abrahamson's testimony, Senator Ted Stevens (R-Ala.), who was the chairman of the defense subcommittee of the Senate appropriations committee, said, "This program is designed to see if we can develop a program to negate an enemy's nuclear weapons. I can't envision a human being on this globe who wouldn't support a program to reduce the effectiveness of nuclear weapons." He continued, "I personally intend to support this program to the nth degree."⁹⁸ Another influential member, Senator Tower (R-Tex.), reversing his original hesitance on missile defense, also supported SDI, arguing that the Soviets had similar programs. He urged arms control groups' support for the effort because "they are systems that kill weapons, not people."⁹⁹

⁹⁷ Edward Reiss, "Part 2 Construction: 1983-1985, Context," in *The Strategic Defense Initiative* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1992), 55.

⁹⁸ Aviation Week & Space Technology, "Project Chief Asks Full Funds For Strategic Defense Initiative," May 21, 1984.

⁹⁹ Tim Ahern, Associated Press, June 14, 1984.

The bargaining chip argument was a popular reason for Congress to support a strong missile defense policy in the 1960s and 1970s, and it emerged again in the 1980s. Many feared that congressional actions to limit SDI would jeopardize the arms negotiations with the Soviets. Senator John W. Warner warned that slashing SDI funding would “jerk the chairs from beneath our negotiators” in Geneva. Senator J. James Exon (D-Neb.) made the bargaining chip argument more pointedly by saying “The only reason that the Soviets are at the arms [negotiation] table is SDI.”¹⁰⁰

Members of Congress saw SDI as one of many issues that they were juggling, and thus they were less ideological about it than the administration. The pattern of the House and Senate funding levels clearly demonstrated that the House members were less supportive of SDI than their counterparts in the Senate. Nonetheless, they agreed to provide the full amount the Senate proposed in exchange for approving a lesser number of MX missiles during the two chambers’ conference in 1984. Many Republicans supported severe funding cuts to SDI when they felt budget pressure. Many Democrats were hesitant to squarely challenge the popular President Reagan on a security issue. Members of Congress often united when arms negotiations were in progress, believing that their support would give the president leverage over the Soviets.

It is interesting to examine the developments in Congress after the 1986 election that granted the Democrats a majority in the Senate. Despite the change in leadership, little change was observed in the behavior of the Senate. It continued to approve higher funding levels than the House, and the two compromised in the middle as usual. At an individual level, Senator Sam Nunn was extremely instrumental for SDI. He had concerns over the specifics of the program, such as his preference for a ground-based program versus Reagan’s space based technology. However, Senator Nunn, who was tremendously influential in national security matters as the ranking member and later chairman of the Senate Armed Services Committee, was more sympathetic to SDI than many of his Democratic colleagues. When his amendment to further slash SDI funding failed in 1985, Senator Proxmire complained that “When you oppose the president of the United States, and you oppose the Republican leadership and when you have Nunn, who is viewed by most people in our [Democratic] party as the last word on defense,

¹⁰⁰ George C. Wilson, “Senate Refuses to Slash ‘Star Wars’ Funding,” *Washington Post*, June 5, 1985.

against you, it's pretty hard to get 38 votes.”¹⁰¹ His amendment, co-sponsored by Senator Dale Bumpers (D-Ark.), proposed to cut SDI funding to \$1.9 billion from the \$2.95 billion recommended by the SASC and to establish an independent review group. The amendment garnered only 38 votes, with 59 votes against the measure.¹⁰²

These actions do not mean that members of Congress were not involved in partisan struggle. Both Republicans and Democrats fought when supporting or opposing SDI policy was deemed politically valuable. The fierce partisan battles in 1988 that resulted in President Reagan's veto of the defense authorization bill clearly demonstrated this point. The debates over SDI among lawmakers indicated that Congress made its decisions in a more practical manner than the Reagan administration in that they were not as dogmatic in making decisions on the funding levels or policy directions of SDI. Many members of Congress showed flexibility in supporting or opposing SDI after taking into consideration various factors such as budgetary constraints, developments in arms talks, and the political atmosphere. In doing so, they also revealed their diverse political needs, motivations, and views on security.

President Reagan's SDI left an important legacy for the missile defense debates. He raised the political profile of the missile defense system. Public opinion polls conducted after President Reagan announced his ambitious program showed that more than half of the American public supported the program.

Table 7. Public Opinion on SDI

	1983	1985	1986	1987	1988
Positive	67%	59%	64%	54%	51%
Negative	25%	31%	26%	31%	39%
No opinion	8%	10%	—	—	11%

Sources: Graham and Kramer in *Public Opinion Quarterly*; *Time*; *Hotline*. The exact questionnaires and response choices varied.¹⁰³

¹⁰¹ George C. Wilson, “Despite Senate Support, SDI's Future Is Cloudy: Backers Say Missile Defense Goals Unclear,” *Washington Post*, June 9, 1985.

¹⁰² George C. Wilson, “Senate Refuses to Slash ‘Star Wars’ Funding,” *Washington Post*, June 5, 1985.

¹⁰³ CBS/New York Times, April, 1983 and Los Angeles Times, January, 1985 in Thomas W. Graham and Bernard M. Kramer, “The Polls: ABM and Star Wars: Attitudes Toward Nuclear Defense, 1945–1985,” *Public Opinion Quarterly*, 50 (1986): 130–131; *Time*, “Assessing the Summit,” 128, no. 17 (October 27, 1986); Bryan Brumley,

Various surveys indicated, however, that many respondents were not familiar with the issue. According to the polls conducted in 1984 and 1985, most of the time, less than one-third of the respondents answered that they were following SDI closely, and the rest either had a casual interest or were not well aware of the program.

Table 8. Public Knowledge on SDI

	1984 (July)	1985 (January)	1985 (February)	1985 (October)
Follow closely	27%	16%	32%	15%
Follow casually	43%	51%	42%	46%
No attention / not sure	30%	33%	26%	39%

Sources: Roper Center at University of Connecticut, conducted by Roper Organization (July, 1984 and January, 1985) and Gallup Organization (January, 1985 and October, 1985): The exact questionnaires and response choices varied.¹⁰⁴

Scientists were more skeptical about the idea than the general public. In the fall of 1986, the Cornell Institute for Social and Economic Research surveyed members of the National Academy of Science in physics and mathematics. Seventy-eight percent of the respondents answered that they doubted SDI would be deployed within the next 25 years.¹⁰⁵ It is interesting to observe that the idea of missile defense after the introduction of SDI became more popular among the public but even less attractive to scientists than during the Nixon administration.

4.3.3 Summary of the SDI Case

The core question for the SDI case study was whether Congress was instrumental in renewing missile defense policy under the Reagan administration. Analysis of the congressional activities prior to President Reagan's 1983 speech indicates that Congress as an institution did not pay

"Poll: American Say Gorbachev Different but Still Don't Trust Soviets," Associated Press, December 1, 1987; *Hotline*, "Americans Talk Issues: That's a Nice Feeling of Security," March 28, 1991.

¹⁰⁴ Roper Center at University of Connecticut, conducted by Roper Organization, Beginning date: July 7, 1984, Ending date: July 14, 1984; Roper Center at University of Connecticut, conducted by Gallup Organization, Beginning date: January 25, 1985, Ending date: January 28, 1985; Roper Center at University of Connecticut, conducted by Roper Organization, Beginning date: February 4, 1985, Ending date: February 23, 1985; Roper Center at University of Connecticut, conducted by Gallup Organization, Beginning date: October 11, 1985, Ending date: October 14, 1985.

¹⁰⁵ Associated Press, "Doubt Cast on Missile Shield," *New York Times*, October 31, 1986.

close attention to the missile defense issue. Although a number of members of Congress were doubtful of the MAD doctrine and the wisdom of suppressing ABM to avoid destabilizing the balance of power that was necessary to maintain the MAD doctrine, Congress as a collective body did not attempt to alter the underpinning of the US nuclear strategy. Only a few members of Congress, such as Senator Wallop, made serious attempts to break the status quo, but they were quashed by leaders in Congress. There was no congressional pressure delivered to the administration for a renewal of US ABM policy. It was largely President Reagan's decision to embark on the grand idea. However, congressional approval was vital to the survival of SDI. The legislative body was quick to embrace the president's ambitious plan and willing to invest a huge amount of money for the program. Congress authorized over \$3 billion since 1985, establishing SDI as the largest research program within the Defense Department.

Although Congress went along with President Reagan in funding SDI, members of Congress were not entirely comfortable with the administration's direction. Immediately after President Reagan's speech in March 1983, many members of Congress expressed their uneasiness with the potential impact of the invigorated missile defense effort on the arms race and the ABM Treaty. Most concerned were Democrats, members of committees dealing with international relations, and moderate Republicans such as Senators John Warner and William Cohen. Despite the skepticism, Congress gave President Reagan the benefit of the doubt. However, over the years, SDI exposed a series of problems in the process of transforming the idea into concrete policy. As the Strategic Defense Initiative was going into its second and third year, the program revealed more problems that made it vulnerable to attacks by opponents in Congress. Administration officials offered conflicting objectives and requested costs deemed too burdensome to bear in a record high budget deficit period, and the technologies boasted by proponents were discredited by the Office of Technology Assessment (OTA) reports and other reviews. In order to redress these problems, Congress began its own policy formulation during the authorization process, dictating the substance of the SDI policy. One such example was when Congress mandated redirecting the goal of SDI from providing infallible protection to a limited defense in 1986. Congress virtually stifled the early deployment plan proposed by the administration in 1987. Congress's exercise of its power not only in funding but also in policy formulation was a pattern to be continued in the Bush administration.

4.4 BUSH ADMINISTRATION

The 1991 decision to deploy a missile defense system was an unexpected policy turn. President Bush was known for his lack of enthusiasm for SDI, and developments in the late 1980s and early 1990s pointed to reduced tensions between the United States and the Soviet Union. Many in the defense community predicted that President Reagan's cherished SDI would be one of the casualties of a new political and strategic reality. Defying all these odds, SDI remained a robust program although it suffered a setback in the first two years of the President Bush's term with funding cuts and deflated support among decision makers. A defining event for missile defense programs under President Bush was when the 1991 Missile Defense Act directed it to go beyond research and development efforts.

What was the push behind the decision? This section argues that Congress played a determinant role in the Bush administration's missile defense deployment decision. Not only was the policy stipulated by legislation, but also it was formulated to represent the specific preferences of Congress. The Missile Defense Act of 1991 was an illumination of the mood in Congress after the Gulf War experience. Many in Congress found it necessary to support SDI in the wake of the Persian Gulf War, which made them realize that the end of the Cold War did not mean the end of conflict. The image of Patriot missiles blasting Iraqi Scuds also eased many lawmakers' doubts on the technical feasibility of such a system. The passage of the 1991 Missile Defense Act proved the resilience of missile defense policy and cemented another layer in its long run.

4.4.1 Skeptical Congress and Eroding Support for SDI

By the time President Bush came to the White House, the relationship between the United States and its rival the Soviet Union was improving with Soviet President Gorbachev's conciliatory policy towards the West. A consensus was being forged among decision makers that the United States needed to reevaluate its defense posture in the new era. Although it was agreed that the new direction would aim for downsizing the Cold War scale military in terms of equipment and personnel, there remained a divergence among the members of Congress as well as between the

administration and Congress regarding the scope and manner of restructuring the nation's military posture.

Throughout the Bush administration, especially at the beginning of Bush's term, the Democrat-dominated Congress was eager to reduce military spending more than the level the administration had proposed. In the first year of President Bush's term, the administration requested \$299.2 billion for the Department of Defense, about six billion less than the original plan for FY 1990 under President Reagan.¹⁰⁶ Congress and the Bush administration reached an agreement to limit overall defense spending to \$295.6 billion, but the compromise did not prevent contentious debates over the priorities in the reduction plan. Defense Secretary Cheney preferred to make deep cuts from conventional programs, whereas Congress thought strategic programs should be the first targets to be trimmed. Secretary Cheney slated several major programs for severe cuts or elimination. His list included the Marine Corps' V-22 Osprey aircraft and the Navy's F-14D Tomcat fighter plane. Conversely, the secretary's plan strongly supported strategic programs, the most controversial of which were the B-2 Stealth bomber and SDI.

It was apparent that Congress disagreed. The legislative activities in the first year of the Bush presidency seemed to prognosticate a gloomy future for SDI. Many in Congress were suspicious of the technologies touted by President Reagan when he first introduced SDI, and they remained skeptical given the lack of technological breakthroughs. Making matters worse, administration officials had repeatedly changed the principal architecture of SDI and its strategic goals over the past six years, so lawmakers were losing their patience. The initial plan was to use space-age particle beams and laser weapons but those technologies turned out to be difficult to implement. In 1986, engineers instead advocated nuclear-generated X-ray lasers, but the next year they changed the scheme yet again, this time to ground- and space-based sensors and interceptor rockets. The latest bet was called the Brilliant Pebbles concept.¹⁰⁷ In explaining the objective of SDI, Bush administration officials also contradicted President Reagan's ambitious goal to build an Astrodome-like shield. Secretary Cheney said the idea that SDI would provide a

¹⁰⁶ Thom Shanker, "Bush plans to cut 'Star Wars' funding," *Chicago Tribune*, April 24, 1989; Andy Pasztor, "Reagan's Last Defense Budget Requests \$305,b Billion, Up 2.1 % From Fiscal '89," *Wall Street Journal*, January 6, 1989.

¹⁰⁷ Bruce Van Voorst, "Will Star Wars Ever Fly?; Not at this rate, despite six years of research and \$17 billion," *Time*, June 26, 1989.

leak proof defense was hyperbole and “an extremely remote proposition.”¹⁰⁸ The constant changes in the system and the goal of SDI made it vulnerable to criticism in Congress. Representative Barbara Boxer called SDI a “chameleon program” that “lacks a coherent mission except as a threat to arms control.”¹⁰⁹ Even usually supportive Senator Nunn was frustrated and complained that its objectives were “elusive and vague,” and that the two Republican administrations had “changed the program so many times.”¹¹⁰

The implications for arms control were a subject heavily weighing on decisions makers’ minds when dealing with SDI. The breakdown of the much anticipated Reykjavik talks in 1986, a failure that arms controllers blamed on SDI, was still vivid in their memory. Judging from these sentiments, it was believed that SDI was facing an uphill battle in the coming years on Capitol Hill.

Not surprisingly, the spending conscious and Democratic-controlled Congress slashed the Bush administration’s defense budget. HASC cut \$1.4 billion from the Pentagon’s request for development of its two top research programs, the B-2 bomber and SDI, while keeping the Marine Corps’ V-22 Osprey aircraft and Navy’s F-14 fighter programs that Defense Secretary Cheney had recommended for termination.¹¹¹ The full House, going further against the administration’s will, reestablished four of the nine conventional warfare systems that the Bush administration proposed to cancel, including the F-14, EA-6B Prowlers, and E-2C Hawkeyes, cutting \$1.8 billion from SDI and \$1 billion from the B-2 Stealth bomber to fund the restored conventional programs.¹¹²

The Senate Armed Services Committee’s budget cut for SDI was moderate compared to that of the House. It reduced the SDI budget to \$4.3 billion, which was thereafter approved by

¹⁰⁸ George C. Wilson, “SDI was ‘Oversold,’ Cheney Says: Defense Chief Backs Some Form of System,” *Washington Post*, March 29, 1989.

¹⁰⁹ Helen Dewar and Tom Kenworthy, “Senate Gives Conditional Go-Ahead on B-2 Bomber; House Slashes Proposed Spending for SDI,” *Washington Post*, July 26, 1989.

¹¹⁰ David Rogers, “Senate Rejects Effort by White House To Restore Cuts for Trident Missile, SDI,” *Wall Street Journal*, September 27, 1989; Helen Dewar, “Panel Votes \$305 Billion Defense Bill; SDI Funding Cut; Two B-2s Approved,” *Washington Post*, November 3, 1989.

¹¹¹ Andy Pasztor, “House Panel Votes To Cut \$1.4 Billion In Defense Funds,” *Wall Street Journal*, June 28, 1989; Mark Tran, “Congress votes out Bush defence plans: With talks underway in Geneva, US military strategists are getting a thumbs down from politicians and a warning from Moscow,” *Guardian*, July 29, 1989.

¹¹² Stephanie Saul, “Offense on Defense; Bush, irked at House, counting on Senate for Pentagon budget,” *Newsday*, July 29, 1989.

the full Senate in August 1989.¹¹³ The ensuing actions in the Senate attested to lawmakers' confusion and mixed feelings about SDI. The Defense Subcommittee of the Senate Appropriations Committee broke away from its usual practice in dovetailing defense spending to the amount authorized by the Armed Services Committee, and approved only \$3.7 billion for SDI. Supporters of SDI introduced an amendment to increase SDI funding by \$300 million, but it fell short by a 66 to 34 vote.¹¹⁴ The failure of the amendment to pass the Senate by a large margin was a sign of waning support for SDI.

Among the key reasons for declining support was the continuing budget deficit. Defense programs were under intense scrutiny as they were competing for limited resources. This challenging budgetary environment was recognized by Majority Leader George Mitchell (D-Maine). He said, "I think there is a growing recognition...that we have to reduce our expectations and level of resources committed to it."¹¹⁵ On the strategic front, a possibly negative effect on arms negotiations with the Soviets was a concern for lawmakers, not only Democrats but also moderate Republicans. Senator John McCain, a Republican senator from Arizona, believed that the Soviets' latest move on arms negotiation discouraged his colleagues from adding money to the controversial SDI programs. This was also a factor that Eduard A. Shevardnadze, the Soviet Foreign Minister, announced a week before the Senate voted for the SDI program that the Soviets would no longer link SDI with the START Treaty so long as the United States abided by the ABM Treaty. It was a significant adjustment of the long-standing Soviet attitude that reduction of offensive weapons should come only after an agreement restricting the testing of space-based ABM systems had been achieved. Members of the Senate wanted to reciprocate the Soviets' more hospitable approach to the arms negotiations and refused to provide an extra \$300 million for SDI.¹¹⁶

Then, a surprising turn of events showed the power of key members of Congress. Two days after the amendment to add \$300 million was defeated, the Senate passed another

¹¹³ Saul, "Offense on Defense"; Eliot Brenner, "Senate passes defense spending bill," United Press International, August 2, 1989; Associated Press, "House Democrats Stand by Star Wars cuts," October 28, 1989.

¹¹⁴ Donna Cassata, "Senate Rejection Seen as Blow to Star Wars," Associated Press, September 28, 1989; David Rogers, "Senate Rejects Effort by White House To Restore Cuts for Trident Missile, SDI," *Wall Street Journal*, September 27, 1989.

¹¹⁵ Cassata, "Senate Rejection Seen as Blow to Star Wars."

¹¹⁶ Andrew Rosenthal, "Star Wars' Funds Cut in the Senate," *New York Times*, September 27, 1989.

amendment to increase SDI funding twice as much as the earlier attempt, adding \$600 million to \$3.7 billion and matching the \$4.3 billion approved in the authorization bill. This increase occurred thanks to the persuasion of the influential Armed Services Committee members including Chairman Nunn and ranking member Warner. The leaders of the SASC warned Senate colleagues that \$3.7 billion for SDI would weaken the Senate position at the Senate-House conference leading to a low SDI budget that would in turn undermine the US delegates' position during arms negotiations with the Soviets.¹¹⁷ The Senate reversed its previous opposition and approved the \$4.3 billion SDI budget by a 53–47 vote.¹¹⁸ The two senators swayed their colleagues by employing a bargaining chip argument for negotiations with the House as well as with the Soviets.

The pressure to cut back the defense budget was even greater in 1990 due to the dramatic events in the world scene and President Bush's political commitment to balance the federal budget. The collapse of the Berlin Wall and political reform in the Soviet Union signified the erosion of the Cold War. As these changes rapidly lessened the chance of hostilities between the East and the West, the security threat to the United States also seemed to recede. Consequently, the Bush administration reexamined its foreign policy objectives and shifted its goal from deterring Soviet expansionism to creating mechanisms for peace in global hot spots, especially in the Middle East.

Bush administration officials and members of Congress recognized that a huge reduction in military spending was inevitable, and the notion of a "peace dividend" became a new catchphrase among policy makers. Accordingly, the administration put forth a reduction plan that swept from military manpower to procurement to research areas. It proposed to eliminate two Army divisions, cut the number of active duty military personnel by 38,000, close over 50 small military installations, decommission two battleships, and retire 14 B-52 bombers. Nevertheless, it had little impact on the administration's penchant to preserve strategic forces. In the FY 1991 budget submission, the administration kept virtually all the triad strategic programs,

¹¹⁷ Helen Dewar, "Senate Reverses. Adds Funds for 'Star Wars'; Protection From House Cuts Sought," *Washington Post*, September 29, 1989; Donna Cassata, "Senate Restores \$600 Million To Star Wars," Associated Press, September 28, 1989.

¹¹⁸ Cassata, "Senate Restores \$600 Million to Star Wars."

proposing \$5.5 billion for the B-2 bomber program, \$3.2 billion for the Trident submarine, and \$2.8 billion for the MX basing scheme. For SDI, the administration requested \$4.5 billion.¹¹⁹

Democrats believed the plan fell short of an adequate reduction level and that the \$295 billion Pentagon budget plan could be further slashed. Senator Nunn argued that Cheney's budget proposal failed to reflect the "dramatic and unprecedented changes in Eastern Europe and the Soviet Union." Likewise, Rep. Ronald V. Dellums (D-Calif.) said, "This is a budget that still looks backwards."¹²⁰ The administration's \$4.5 billion SDI budget request was almost a billion dollars larger than the amount authorized for FY 1990. Many lawmakers considered it excessive and laid their eyes on SDI along with other strategic programs as the main targets for further cuts. It was not only Democrats demanding a smaller defense budget. Two influential Republican members of the Senate Armed Services Committee, Senators William S. Cohen and John McCain, criticized the administration and the Democratic leadership in Congress for being unable to outline a long-term strategy in a post-Cold War era and instead proposed their own plan. It was designed to save \$50 billion more than the Bush plan in the next five years by reducing US troops stationed in Europe, limiting the costly B-2 program, and seeking zero growth for SDI.¹²¹

As expected, legislators made harsh decisions on SDI. The House Armed Services Committee cut the administration's SDI funding by about 35 percent to \$2.9 billion, and even the traditionally supportive Senate Armed Services Committee cut it to \$3.7 billion. The Senate concluded its actions on the authorization bill in early August. Particularly discouraging to the Bush administration was the Senate's resistance to support the legacy of President Reagan's SDI successor, Brilliant Pebbles. Senator Jeff Bingaman (D-N.Mex.) offered an amendment putting off the possible early-deployment plan the Bush administration was contemplating, and endorsed only \$129 million of the \$329 million requested for Brilliant Pebbles. The Senate passed the Bingaman amendment by a 55 to 44 vote, making a significant political statement by rejecting

¹¹⁹ Melissa Healy, John M. Broder, "Defense Budget Spares Key Weapons Systems Pentagon: Bush takes the first steps toward scaling back the military. But lawmakers promise to pursue even deeper cuts," *Los Angeles Times*, January 30, 1990.

¹²⁰ Molly Moore, "Hill's Ax Poised Over Defense; Budget Battle Could Be Toughest in Years," *Washington Post*, February 12, 1990; Healy and Broder, "Defense Budget Spares Key Weapons Systems Pentagon."

¹²¹ Helen Dewar, "GOP Senators Propose Doubling Bush's Defense Cuts," *Washington Post*, April 6, 1990.

the Bush administration's priorities and redirecting its focus away from the Brilliant Pebbles concept.¹²²

Near the completion of the defense authorization bill, however, a monumental event took place. Iraq invaded Kuwait in August 1990. Supporters of missile defense highlighted the event to substantiate their point that threats were still persistent despite the seemingly improving security ambiance. President Bush demanded support from Congress for his strategic weapons programs such as SDI, the MX, the B-2 Stealth bomber and the Minuteman ICBMs citing the Gulf conflict. Members of Congress were not won over. Critics on the Hill including Rep. Aspin, pointed out that the Gulf situation demonstrated the need for upholding their decision to curtail funding for strategic weapons in light of this decidedly non-strategic situation.¹²³ The House finalized the funding debate after returning from a summer recess. For SDI, the House cut an additional \$600 million from the amount recommended by HASC, approving \$2.3 billion and providing only half of the president's request.¹²⁴ The Senate and House conferees agreed to fund \$2.9 billion for SDI, around midway between the two chambers' recommended amounts.

The low funding level for SDI did not mean that Congress was oblivious to the crisis, but that the lawmakers had a different interpretation and a solution to the situation. Their response to the outbreak of the Gulf War was supporting theater missile programs. Congress increased theater missile defense funding to \$180 million—\$36 million more than what Secretary Cheney had requested.¹²⁵

Missile defense policy in the first two years of President Bush's term showed a declining trend, and Congress largely contributed to this trend. Lawmakers became more skeptical of the need for a ballistic missile defense program. The Cold War was ending, and the administration had not shown any impressive technological developments. Although the eruption of the Gulf War reminded lawmakers of the persistent danger, it helped little to convince members of Congress to boost SDI. The congressional decision to fund SDI at the lowest level in its six-year history, even in the face of the ongoing crisis in the Gulf region, seemed indicative of the

¹²² Donna Cassata, "Senate Approves Defense Spending Bill," Associated Press, August 4, 1990.

¹²³ Michael Kranish, "Bush, Critics Invoke Gulf In Battle Over Defense Cuts," *Boston Globe*, August 21, 1990.

¹²⁴ David Rogers, "House Votes to Cut Spending for SDI to \$2.3 Billion," *Wall Street Journal*, September 19, 1990.

¹²⁵ Patricia A. Gilmartin, "Compromise Defense Bill Preserves B-2 But Future Production Uncertain," *Aviation Week & Space Technology* 133, no. 17 (October 22, 1990): 23.

further erosion of support for SDI. Contrary to such expectations, 1991 turned out to be the height of SDI efforts since it began.

4.4.2 Missile Defense Act of 1991

The year 1991 marked the zenith of SDI since its inception. The funding level was the highest in its history, and the decision to deploy the system was a bold move even by the Reagan administration's standards. What contributed to this policy turn? Behind the significant boost for SDI was proactive effort by Congress. The lawmakers approved over four billion dollars in SDI funding, and Congress passed the Missile Defense Act of 1991, which mandated the defense secretary to develop for deployment an ABM system by 1996.

An ensuing question is what caused the opponents in Congress to change their minds? The answer is found in the Gulf War experience and the Patriot missile. During the Bush administration, proponents raised many reasons to deploy missile defense systems. Though they agreed that the possibility of a deliberate Soviet attack on US soil had diminished, proponents argued that political instability in the Soviet Union still posed a risk to the United States. Opponents of SDI continued to doubt strategic needs for such a system. The outbreak of the Persian Gulf War reinforced the conviction of SDI proponents. After Iraq invaded Kuwait in the summer of 1990, the Bush administration was quick to make the argument that the invasion evinced the presence of persistent threats, illustrating the need to preserve strategic programs rather than downsize them. The event in itself, however, did not change skeptics' minds. To the opponents of SDI, the regional conflict in the Middle East strengthened their decision to put a higher priority on conventional weapons over strategic weapons.

More vital was the Patriot missile. For SDI proponents, the performance of Patriot missiles during the Persian Gulf War proved the technical feasibility of SDI. Critics dismissed the optimism generated by the success of the Patriot missiles, claiming that it was not applicable to SDI given the level of technical complexities and program management. Former Defense Secretary Harold Brown emphasized the technical differences between the Patriot missile and the proposed SDI system. He said "The people who say the Patriot's success shows that SDI works don't know what they're talking about," and continued on that the Scuds were "very unsophisticated old stuff—easy to see, relatively easy to hit, compared with the Soviet

intercontinental ballistic missiles SDI is supposed to intercept...it is clear that the Scud missile itself cannot be attacked from space.”¹²⁶ Opponents of SDI also pointed out that the Patriot missile program was an Army program and was never funded under the SDI. In fact, the Patriot missile system was “deliberately kept out of the [SDI] program” according to former Assistant Secretary of Defense Richard Perle.¹²⁷

More importantly, the performance of the Patriot missile during the Persian Gulf War was later disputed. General H. Norman Schwarzkopf, the commander in chief of allied forces during Operation Desert Storm, touted that the Patriot missile was 100 percent successful at the beginning of its use during the conflict. After the war, the Army announced that the success rates of the Patriot missile were 80 percent in Saudi Arabia and 50 percent in Israel. However, MIT scientists George N. Lewis and Theodore A. Postol disputed the Army’s assessment, and as a result, the Army dropped the success rates by 10 percent in each location. A year later, a General Accounting (later Accountability) Office report evaluating the performance of the Patriot missile in 1992 recalibrated the success rate to only nine percent.¹²⁸

Despite lingering misgivings among SDI opponents, the technical or management details were not as compelling as the image of Patriot missiles destroying Iraq Scud missiles. This powerful picture also garnered public support, which lawmakers could not afford to ignore and which eventually brought around enough skeptics, including HASC Chairman Les Aspin, to change the tone in Congress.

The Missile Defense Act of 1991 was part of the FY 1992 defense authorization bill, which provided funding guidance for the appropriators as well as policy direction. The debates over the SDI budget request underwent a familiar course—the defense secretary’s budget submission to Congress, each chamber trying to shrink the amount (with the Senate being more generous than the House), and a political compromise sought during conference meetings of the two chambers.

Defense Secretary Cheney proposed \$278.3 billion for DOD spending in Fiscal Year 1992. The budget outlined a multiyear savings plan by reducing six active army divisions, retiring three naval carriers, and cutting force ships by almost 20 percent. The number of

¹²⁶ Bruce Ingersoll, “The Gulf War: Star Wars Defense Backers Take Heart As Patriot Missile Score Hits in the Gulf,” *Wall Street Journal Europe*, January 30, 1991.

¹²⁷ Fred Kaplan, “Patriot: For all involved, a war hero,” *Boston Globe*, April 23, 1991.

¹²⁸ *Christian Science Monitor*, “Success of Patriot Missile Still in Question,” October 8, 1992.

strategic bombers was to be cut from 268 to 181. Manpower was scheduled to be reduced by almost 25 percent, and 86 bases were slated for closure.¹²⁹

In contrast to the significant reductions proposed for the overall military forces, Secretary Cheney continued to save many strategic programs from downsizing. His request for the Stealth bomber was \$4.8 billion, \$600 million more than the amount approved by Congress the last year.¹³⁰ For SDI, the administration proposed \$4.6 billion, a more than 60 percent increase from the previous year's \$2.9 billion. An additional \$603 million was earmarked for theater missile defense systems. The budget for the tactical missile defense program was a three-fold increase from the \$218 million of FY 1991.¹³¹ In terms of policy direction, the Bush administration modified its SDI plan and proposed the GPALS system directed towards destroying up to 200 missiles. Like Phase I of the SDI architecture, it outlined a layered system, including both space and ground-based capabilities. However, the SDIO deferred development and deployment of kinetic energy systems and direct energy systems that had been included in Phase I.¹³²

Upon submission of the FY 1992 defense budget, Secretary Cheney argued that the application of strategic weapons systems during the Gulf War justified his request, referring to the Patriot's success in swatting down Scud missiles. The secretary also praised the accuracy of the F-117 Stealth fighter's laser-guided bombs used during the Gulf conflict.¹³³ The House Armed Services Committee's decision showed that Congress was hesitant to buy his claim. Although the Patriot missile impressed and ultimately won over many members of Congress in their increased support for TMD, the HASC was still suspicious of SDI. Chairman Aspin and other HASC members clearly showed their displeasure with the space-based system. They approved \$2.7 billion for SDI and eliminated the space-based program. The committee authorized another \$857 million for theater missile defense with the specific requirement that the

¹²⁹ Eliot Brenner, "Bush proposes smaller defense budget, though more for high tech," United Press International, February 5, 1991; Richard Cheney, *Report of the Secretary of Defense to the President and the Congress* (Washington, DC: Superintendent of Documents GPO, January 1991), 23.

¹³⁰ Fred Kaplan, "Plan includes a \$3.7b military cut Gulf war costs are left out; SDI is given a big increase," *Boston Globe*, February 5, 1991.

¹³¹ Andy Pasztor, "The 1992 Budget: Blueprint for Wartime—Some Gulf War Weapons Are Targeted for Deep Cuts," *Wall Street Journal*, February 5, 1991; Fred Kaplan, "Plan includes a \$3.7 b military cut Gulf war costs are left out; SDI is given a big increase," *Boston Globe*, February 5, 1991.

¹³² House Committee on Armed Services, *Statement of Douglas R. Graham, Deputy Assistant Secretary of Defense for Strategic Defense, Space and Verification Policy, Department of Defense: Hearing before the Research and Development Subcommittee*, 102nd Cong., 1st sess., April 18, 1991.

¹³³ Kaplan, "Plan includes a \$3.7b military cut," *Boston Globe*.

theater missile defense program be placed under the Army's jurisdiction. Despite President Bush's veto threat, the House adopted the HASC recommendations approving all these measures on SDI.¹³⁴

In the Senate, however, a serious endeavor to build up US commitment to SDI was underway. Senators Warner and Cohen circulated a white paper on the deployment of missile defenses. The paper, "The Future of Ballistic Missile Defenses and the ABM Treaty: A Basis for Consensus" argued the need for deployment of missile defense. The specifics called for deploying a ground-based system at multiple sites designed to provide a limited defense. The senators were inclined to preserve the ABM Treaty, but not at the expense of sacrificing the deployment option. They urged arms talks with the Soviets to amend the treaty and allow greater flexibility in deploying missile defense.¹³⁵

The SDI proponents' effort went beyond convincing their colleagues in Congress. Senators Warner and Cohen, joined by Senator Richard Lugar from Indiana, another influential Republican in foreign affairs, lobbied even the White House. The senators met with President Bush in order to promote the idea explained in their white paper and wrote a follow-up letter signed on June 7, 1991. In the letter, the three senators suggested the administration consider adopting the missile program delineated in the white paper that would "provide the nation...an effective defense... against limited ballistic missile strikes" and also urged President Bush to seek negotiations on the ABM Treaty modification to allow deployment of "ground-based interceptors with space-based sensors (but not interceptors)".¹³⁶ Sam Nunn readily espoused the basic concept of the white paper, although he represented the other side of the aisle. It was not surprising considering that he had suggested a similar program years earlier.

Although there seemed to be an impetus building for SDI on the Hill, with the House completely eliminating the Brilliant Pebbles portion of SDI and the Senate also poised to concentrate on a ground-based system, the Brilliant Pebbles concept seemed in grave jeopardy. However, conservative Republicans who considered the space-based system a centerpiece of SDI

¹³⁴ *Los Angeles Times*, "House Votes to Slash Missile Defense Funding Despite Veto Threat," May 21, 1991; Associated Press, "Panel Votes 'Star Wars' Cuts," *New York Times*, May 9, 1991.

¹³⁵ McMahon, *Pursuit of the Shield*, 98–99.

¹³⁶ Letter, Richard Lugar, John Warner, and William Cohen to George Bush, June 7, 1991, ID # 244809, ND018, WHORM: Subject File, Bush Presidential Record, George Bush Presidential Library.

put up a hard fight against its elimination and saved the program by threatening SASC chairman Nunn to withhold their support for the B-2 bomber. The future of the B-2 Stealth bomber had been in serious doubt due to other Democrats' strenuous opposition.¹³⁷ To appease the revolt from the conservative Republicans and secure the Stealth bomber purchase, Senator Nunn kept Brilliant Pebbles and allowed \$625 million.¹³⁸ These compromises were incorporated into the FY 1992 Defense Authorization bill.

Another contentious issue in completing the FY 1992 defense authorization bill was the section under "the Missile Defense Act of 1991." The gist of this portion of the bill directed the secretary of defense to "develop for deployment by fiscal year 1996 a cost-effective and operationally-effective and ABM Treaty-compliant anti-ballistic missile system at a single site."¹³⁹ The Senate Armed Service Committee cleared the bill by 16 to 4. The four senators who opposed the measure were Democrats but the other seven Democratic senators joined nine Republicans in endorsing the measure. The clause specifically calling for an ABM treaty-compliant system helped persuade Democrats.¹⁴⁰

The dramatic step the SASC took mandating deployment did not go unchallenged in the full Senate. Senator Tom Harkin (D-Iowa) proposed an amendment to strike out the deployment date from the authorization bill, but his motion was tabled by 64 to 34 and the Senate passed the bill including the 1991 Missile Defense Act section.¹⁴¹ The comfortable margin of the vote reflected senators' growing support for missile defense, and showed Senator Nunn's authority in the Senate. Despite criticism from other Democrats including Senator Al Gore (D-Tenn.), Nunn was determined to pass through a bill he coauthored with Republicans, and the chairman of the SASC wanted to recover his "pro-defense" reputation. His credentials were damaged when he opposed the use of forces in favor of sanctions while debating US' military action against

¹³⁷ New York Times News Service, "Star Wars wrangle delays defense vote," *Chicago Tribune*, July 13, 1991.

¹³⁸ New York Times News Services, "Star Wars wrangle delays defense vote."; *National Defense Authorization Act for Fiscal Years 1992 and 1993*, S.1507.ES, Title II, Part B. Sec. 211. Missile Defense Act of 1991, 102nd Cong., 1st. sess., <http://thomas.loc.gov>.

¹³⁹ *National Defense Authorization Act for Fiscal Years 1992 and 1993*, S.1507.PCS, Title II, Part (B) Sec. 211. Missile Defense Act of 1991, 102nd Cong., 1st. sess., <http://thomas.loc.gov>, McMahon, *Pursuit of the Shield*, 99–100.

¹⁴⁰ Fred Kaplan, "Senate panel calls on US to alter 1972 ABM Treaty," *Boston Globe*, July 22, 1991.

¹⁴¹ S.AMDT.981 to S.1507, *To strike the deployment date in Section 211, the "Missile Defense Act of 1991,"* Proposed by Senator Harkin, 102nd Cong., 1st sess., <http://thomas.loc.gov>.

Saddam Hussein.¹⁴² Senator Nunn's stature in the Senate, the compromise made to assure that the missile defense system would not violate the ABM Treaty (though some did not think it was practical), and the optimism on technology after the Patriot missiles' success all contributed to the passage of the 1991 Missile Defense Act in the Senate.

The real challenge for the Missile Defense Act was whether it would survive the conference with the House whose version of the defense authorization bill did not contain a similar provision. During the Senate and House conference, House conferees opposed the Missile Defense Act portion mandating deployment of land-based defense systems. The survival of the missile defense deployment section was owed to the House's leading negotiator, Rep. Les Aspin. The HASC chairman gladly conceded to the Senate for two reasons. First, Chairman Aspin was one of the decision makers who was converted to a believer in missile defense technology after witnessing the Patriot missiles' execution during the Gulf War. Second, the concession to accept the Senate's Missile Defense Act portion served a political purpose for the House as the Senate made a compromise on the B-2 and gave up the purchase of four additional B-2 bombers. Instead, the conferees agreed to provide \$1.8 billion only to keep the Northrop Corporation's B-2 production line open, with a possibility of one more purchase if Congress approved it by a specific vote, which was close to the House's plan to buy none. The final bill approved \$4.15 billion in funding for SDI, closer to the \$4.6 billion approved by the Senate.¹⁴³ After these political compromises, the Missile Defense Act was cleared by both chambers of Congress and signed by President Bush.

The enthusiasm for the Strategic Defense Initiative somewhat abated as questions emerged about the performance of the Patriot missile, new strategic developments, and revived doubts on technology. Recognizing the technical uncertainties, the Defense Authorization bill for fiscal year 1993 postponed the deployment of the limited defense system to 2002 instead of 1996 as initially mandated in the Missile Defense Act of 1991.¹⁴⁴ Lawmakers saw optimism in the security environment with the conclusion of arms negotiations and the demise of the Soviet

¹⁴² R. Jeffrey Smith, "Antimissile Defense Plan Displays Democratic Rift; Nunn Fends Off Party Members' Challenges," *Washington Post*, August 2, 1991.

¹⁴³ Associated Press, "Senate OKs \$270-billion defense bill; Congress," *Los Angeles Times*, November 24, 1991; Helen Dewar, "Hill Finishes \$ 291 Billion Defense Bill; B-2 Bomber Falls, but SDI Survives in Measure Sent to Bush," *Washington Post*, November 23, 1991.

¹⁴⁴ *Aerospace Daily*, "Conferees delay SDIO deployment deadline to 2002," 164, no. 3 (October 5, 1992): 20.

Union. After more than nine years of negotiations over two US administrations, Presidents Bush and Mikhail Gorbachev concluded the Strategic Arms Reduction Talks (START) and signed off on the Reduction and Limitation of Strategic Offensive Arms in July 1991 during the US-Soviet summit in Moscow.¹⁴⁵

The treaty required 25 to 35 percent cuts to each party's offensive weapons, which would reduce US nuclear warhead numbers from 12,000 to 10,000 and the Soviet's weapons from 11,000 to 8,000 over a seven-year implementation period.¹⁴⁶ It was the first accord between the two superpowers to reduce, not simply limit, their strategic arsenals, and moderate Republicans as well as Democrats did not want to throw cold water on this historic achievement. Another historic incident occurred on December 25, 1991, when the Soviet Union was dissolved, marking the official end of the Cold War.¹⁴⁷ Reacting to these promising events, Congress required SDIO to design the missile defense architecture within the limits of the ABM Treaty so as not to provoke Russia.¹⁴⁸

Reflecting these significant changes in the security environment, President Bush pledged a \$50 billion defense budget reduction over the next five years during his state of the union address. The FY 1993 defense proposal was in synch with this promise. The Pentagon's budget plan kept the "base force plan" from 1991—to reduce the number of active Army divisions from 18 to 12, the number of Navy aircraft carriers to 13, and cut heavy bombers by 87 from 268 to 181. The budget content slightly accelerated the reduction of active military personnel by an additional 27,000 by FY 1997.¹⁴⁹

¹⁴⁵ Gerald F. Seib, "Bush and Gorbachev Agree on Nuclear Arms Reduction," *Wall Street Journal Europe*, July 18, 1991.

¹⁴⁶ After the dissolution of the Soviet Union, the United States negotiated with Ukraine, Belarus, and Kazakhstan. These three Commonwealth of Independent States (CIS) turned into nuclear powers as Russia lost control over the old Soviet territory. In a supplementary agreement, the three states agreed to either destroy or move their nuclear weapons to Russia.

¹⁴⁷ *Business Week*, "Deep-Six The Missile Defense Act," August 19, 1991; Michel McQueen and Gerald F. Seib, "Bush and Gorbachev Agree on Nuclear Arms Reduction," *Wall Street Journal*, July 18, 1991; Melissa Healy, "Treaty to Stabilize Nuclear Balance, Decrease Incentive for War Defense: Levels of U.S. and Soviet weapons under the START pact remain virtually the same as nine years ago, But the configurations will change," *Los Angeles Times*, July 29, 1991.

¹⁴⁸ *Aerospace Daily*, "Conferees delay SDIO deployment deadline to 2002," 164, no. 3 (October 5, 1992): 20.

¹⁴⁹ John Lancaster, "White House Outlines Vision of New Military; Plan Includes Sharply Reduced Purchase of Advance Weapons but No Added Personnel Cuts," *Washington Post*, January 30, 1992.

For weapons programs, the budget plan suggested capping B-2 bomber procurement at 20, down from the original number of 75, and terminating the Seawolf submarine after purchase of one vessel. The biggest Army budget item, the Comanche helicopter, was also cancelled. An exception to this trend was DOD's \$5.4 billion funding request for the SDI program—more than a 30 percent increase from the \$4.1 billion approved in the previous year.¹⁵⁰ In accordance with the Missile Defense Act of 1991 emphasizing the deployment of ground systems, SDIO proposed \$2.3 billion for GPALS. It constituted 43 percent of the total SDI budget request, up from 31 percent before the Missile Defense Act.¹⁵¹

On the Hill, the debates over SDI funding were unfolding in an atypical way. In the past three years under the Bush administration, the HASC made substantial cuts from the SDI funding request and recommended amounts less than what was available for the existing fiscal year. Departing from the committee's usual practice, HASC recommended \$4.3 billion, a three percent increase from the \$4.1 billion approved for FY 1992 spending that already marked the largest funding amount for SDI.¹⁵²

Meanwhile, in the Senate the SASC also recommended \$4.3 billion. Ardent opponents of SDI, Senators Jim Sasser (D-Tenn.) and Dale Bumpers (D-Ark.), introduced an amendment to cut an additional \$1 billion from the \$4.3 billion figure. SDI proponents tried to derail the Sasser-Bumpers amendment, but the attempt was defeated in a 49 to 43 vote, and a billion dollar cut from the \$4.3 billion earmarked for SDI seemed like a distinct possibility. To prevent such a sharp cut, Senator Malcom Wallop (R-Wyo.) and other loyalists of SDI blocked the entire authorization bill.¹⁵³ The Senate Armed Services Committee chairman Nunn proposed a compromise to Senators Sasser and Bumpers at \$3.8 billion but did not convince them.¹⁵⁴ Unable to reconcile the difference, the Senate failed to complete the defense authorization bill

¹⁵⁰ Richard Cheney, "Defense Resources: Budget," in *Annual Report to the President and the Congress* (Ft. Belvoir: Defense Technical Information Center, February 1992), 25; Melissa Healy, "Several Weapon Systems Feel Pinch of Defense Spending Cuts Military: Pentagon budget proposal halts production of B-2 bomber and Seawolf submarine. More funds are sought for 'Star Wars,'" *Los Angeles Times*, January 30, 1992; Los Angeles Times, "Pentagon Plans 15-Year, \$90-Billion, 'Star Wars' Budget, Study Reports," March 7, 1992.

¹⁵¹ Senate Appropriations Committee, *Statement of Henry F. Cooper, Director, Strategic Defense Initiative Organization. Hearing on the Department of Defense Appropriations for Fiscal Year 1993, Before the Subcommittee of the Committee on Appropriations*, 102nd Cong., 2nd sess., April 9, 1992.

¹⁵² R. Jeffrey Smith, "Star Wars Lives on—Expensively," *Washington Post*, May 20, 1992.

¹⁵³ Steve Gerstel, "Senate resume battle over 'Star Wars' funds," United Press International, September 17, 1992.

¹⁵⁴ Ibid.

before August and left for a long recess. When the Senate came back and resumed its business in the fall, proponents of SDI lobbied their colleagues intensively and succeeded in switching four votes against the Sasser-Bumpers amendment. The Senate finally compromised at \$3.8 billion.¹⁵⁵ It was the first time the Senate allowed a smaller amount of money for SDI than what was endorsed by the House.

The conferees of the House and Senate compromised to authorize \$4.1 billion for SDI, midway between the amounts approved by the two chambers. This time, the over \$4 billion budget allocated to SDI was thanks to the House. As Chairman Aspin had become a new supporter of SDI, the House Armed Services Committee was no longer hostile territory to SDI, and the full House approved the HASC recommendation in June 1992.¹⁵⁶ In spite of the fact that gusto for SDI had somewhat subsided since 1992, the Gulf War experience as well as the Patriot missiles' performance caused a profound change in the views of decision makers. Many in Congress turned around to support a missile defense system against the accidental or unauthorized launch of ballistic missiles from terrorists or rogue countries.¹⁵⁷

An interesting finding is that the public was lukewarm on SDI throughout the Bush administration. As the visibility of SDI faded after President Reagan's departure from the White House, so did the interest for gauging the public opinion on SDI. However, the University of Connecticut surveyed public attitudes on SDI spending in 1989 and 1990. About one-third of the respondents answered that the existing spending level should be maintained, and two thirds of the respondents preferred the existing spending level on SDI.

¹⁵⁵ Helen Dewar, "Senate Votes to Halve Its 'Star Wars' Funding Cut," *The Washington Post*, September 18, 1992.

¹⁵⁶ John D. Morrocco, "House Defense Spending Bill Cuts Funding for Overseas Deployments," *Aviation Week & Space Technology* 136, no. 24(June 15, 1992): 34.

¹⁵⁷ R. Jeffrey Smith, "Star Wars Lives on—Expensively," *Washington Post*, May 20, 1992.

Question: Do you favor Congress maintaining the same spending level on...Strategic Defense Initiative or S.D.I. (Star Wars)...or do you think the amount spent on that should be cut?¹⁵⁸

Table 9. Public Opinion on SDI

	1989	1990
Maintain same spending levels	33%	33%
Cut spending levels	61%	63%
Not sure	6%	3%

Source: Roper Center at University of Connecticut, conducted by Luis Harris and Associate.

Interestingly, although the members of Congress were enthused by the potential for SDI in the aftermath of the Persian Gulf War, the public's support for the missile defense program was not impressive. *Los Angeles Times* survey conducted between January 31 and February 3, 1992, showed that only about one-third of the respondents favored the development of SDI.¹⁵⁹

4.4.3 Summary of the Missile Defense Act Case

Missile defense policy during the Bush administration proved to be a strong case for the congressional perspective's argument that the legislative body has considerable power in the decision making process. There was a turning point in Congress's attitude on missile defense, and Congress managed to be quite successful in materializing its goals both before and after the crossroads.

In the first two years of the Bush presidency, Congress was at odds with the administration over the prioritization of US military forces. The late 1980s and early 1990s was a time of transition, and policy makers both in the legislative and executive branches felt it necessary to downsize the nation's defense forces. What the two did not agree on was which defense programs should be the primary targets for substantial reductions. The Bush administration preferred making major cuts in the conventional weapons systems and military

¹⁵⁸ Roper Center at University of Connecticut, Source Document, conducted by Luis Harris and Associates, Beginning date: August 18, 1989, Ending date: August 22, 1989; Roper Center at University of Connecticut, Source Document, conducted by Luis Harris and Associates, Beginning date: April 26, 1990, Ending date: May 1, 1990.

¹⁵⁹ Ken Kollman, "Appendix C: Opinion Questions," in *Outside Lobbying: Public Opinion and Interest Group Strategies* (Princeton, NJ: Princeton University Press, 1988), 191.

personnel while Congress favored cuts in strategic programs. Congress tried to salvage conventional weapons, and routinely redirected funds requested for strategic programs that were slated for cancellation or reduction. It was in this context that Congress significantly reduced SDI budgets in the first two years of the Bush administration. Many in Congress were much more interested in saving jobs and military bases in their districts than upgrading strategic weaponry. Also, ideologically, the Democratic-controlled Congress was not interested in encouraging a missile defense system that was considered a renouncement of the deterrence doctrine and a possible cause of the arms race.

The central question for this section was how significant the role of Congress was in reinvigorating US will in 1991 to deploy a missile defense system. The analysis of legislative activities suggests that Congress played a key role. The important policy statement to deploy an ABM system by 1996 was a product of Congress's initiative and legislative effort. Congress reversed its own trend of the previous two years when it provided generous funding for SDI. Lawmakers demonstrated their commitment to ABM and approved an increase of over a billion dollars in SDI funding by passing the Missile Defense Act. Why did Congress change its position on missile defense? Saddam Hussein's invasion of Kuwait was one factor. It was a sober reminder that the dangers of the Cold War had been replaced by a new kind of threat in the New World. The eruption of the crisis, however, was not sufficient to garner meaningful support for an expensive and technologically uncertain missile defense system. The crucial episode was the success of Patriot missiles destroying Iraqi Scud missiles. The two elements together gave the doubters of missile defense a new outlook on the idea with elevated optimism. Certainly, there remained opponents of SDI in Congress who were still highly skeptical of the effectiveness and strategic need of a missile defense system. They introduced various amendments to chip away the renewed congressional support. However, the popularity of missile defense had already permeated Congress.

4.5 CLINTON ADMINISTRATION

The Clinton administration's missile defense policy is an extremely interesting case from the congressional perspective. He was a Democratic president in the post-Cold War era, and it was

predicted that missile defense deployment and funding would be scaled down under his administration. President Clinton, meeting these expectations at the beginning of his term, diminished the stature of the SDIO and rejected any commitment to building a nationwide missile defense system. However, missile defense policy was gradually reinforced over time and it experienced a definite turn in course with the enactment of the National Missile Defense bill in 1999.

What caused the change in administration policy? As was explored in the security perspective, several strategic events preceding the passage of the National Missile Defense Act in 1999 suggest the possibility that the shift might have been a result of security developments. The problem with the security perspective was its inability to explain the timing of the legislation. Even after India, Pakistan, North Korea, and Iran conducted nuclear or ballistic missile tests, President Clinton adhered to his position and repeatedly threatened to veto measures requiring the deployment of nationwide missile defense systems. This chapter focuses on the activities of Congress and argues that the legislative branch played a determinant role in renewing missile defense policy in the late 1990s.

4.5.1 Missile Defense under the Democratic Administration and Congress

The political landscape had become hostile to SDI a decade after President Reagan introduced his grand vision in 1983. The Democratic administration had little confidence in the technology and did not find it terribly convincing to continue the expensive missile defense programs without urgent threats to the United States. Reflecting this attitude, the Clinton administration changed the name of the Strategic Defense Initiative Organization to the Ballistic Missile Defense Organization and demoted its status. The head of the newly configured BMDO would no longer have direct access to the secretary of defense. Instead, he would have to report to the under secretary for acquisition and technology. However, the administration's funding request for missile defense remained at the same level as the amount approved for the existing fiscal year 1993 at \$3.8 billion. Opponents of missile defense in Congress were not pleased with the request. Senator Dale Bumpers derided the Clinton administration's reorganization effort as

comparable to “the witness protection program” and complained that the threat to the United States was the budget deficit, not the Soviet missiles.¹⁶⁰ Congressman John Conyers called the budget request for missile defense “the least justified program in the defense budget” and accused the administration of trying to “camouflage this mismanaged mishmash with a new name.”¹⁶¹

One of the reasons for the Clinton administration not to immediately cut back the scale of the missile defense program or its funding level was a long-term strategy review due later in the year. Secretary Les Aspin was hesitant to make any major modifications until a comprehensive study on US defense posture, the Bottom Up Review (BUR), was completed. The review was released in the fall. On missile defense, the Pentagon report put forth a technology readiness program to protect the United States from a limited attack without commitment for deployment. To fund the readiness program, the DOD proposed \$18 billion for multiyear funding between FY 1995 and FY 1999. It was a significant reduction from the Bush administration’s \$39 billion spending plan for the same period. For the theater missile defense programs, the BUR recommended the PAC-3, Navy lower-tier TMD system, and the Theater High Altitude Area Defense (THAAD) program. In addition, the administration kept both the Navy Upper Tier TMD and the Marine Corps SAM system until it could finally choose one of the two.¹⁶²

The significance of the Clinton administration’s missile defense budget proposal was its composition. Although the missile defense funding request remained high at almost \$4 billion, the NMD portion constituted less than one-third of the total amount, and almost half of the request was for various TMD programs. Of the \$3.8 billion request, \$1.8 billion was earmarked for TMD and \$1.2 billion was allocated to NMD. Protecting the US continent from ballistic missile attacks had been the principal goal of missile defense policy for almost half a century. With the Clinton administration’s priorities on TMD and reducing the NMD budget level to the pre-SDI era, national missile defense was no longer the core of US missile defense policy.¹⁶³

¹⁶⁰ R. Jeffrey Smith, “Threat Gone, ‘Star Wars’ Is Banished; Aspin Eulogizes Antimissile Shield,” *Washington Post*, May 14, 1993; Melissa Healy, “‘Star Wars’ Era Ends as Aspin Changes Focus,” *Los Angeles Times*, May 14, 1993.

¹⁶¹ Associated Press, “\$30 billion later, Star Wars is dead,” *Chicago Tribune*, May 14, 1993; Paul Quinn-Judge, “For SDI, new name and smaller mission,” *Boston Globe*, May 14, 1994.

¹⁶² *Aerospace Daily*, “DOD slashes BMDO budget; NMD to be technology demonstration,” 167, no.45 (September 2, 1993): 371.

¹⁶³ Paul Quinn-Judge, “SDI alive and costing; Taxpayers will be charged another \$30B by end of century,” *Boston Globe*, June 21, 1993.

Apparently the Democrat-dominated Congress agreed with the administration's direction but did not think it was enough. It went further in restricting the NMD program and approved only \$650 million for the limited national missile defense system while distributing \$1.5 billion for TMD.¹⁶⁴ In total, Congress approved \$2.6 billion for the missile defense account in 1994. The next year, the administration requested \$3.3 billion, only \$600 million of which was sought to continue the NMD program. For the total missile defense budget, Congress approved a slight increase of \$2.8 billion but merely \$400 million for NMD.

In addition to the budget cut for missile defense, Congress encouraged the administration to protect the ABM Treaty. The lawmakers nudged the administration to review the ABM Treaty's interpretation, prompting Clinton officials to reverse the previous two Republican administrations' stance and codify a narrow interpretation of the treaty based on the Clinton administration's position. Analysis of the FY 1994 defense authorization bill indicated that members of Congress recognized the potential for disputes over whether the much improved TMD capability violated the ABM Treaty. Congress suggested that the president negotiate with Russia and the other former Soviet states for clarification between TMD and ABM.¹⁶⁵ The FY 1995 defense authorization bill intensified congressional demands for the administration to comply with the ABM Treaty, requiring the secretary of defense to review treaty implications for specific programs including the Brilliant Eyes and Navy Upper Tier system.¹⁶⁶ In addition, Congress amended the 1991 Missile Defense Act and enunciated that deployment of NMD was an option, no longer a mandate.¹⁶⁷

During the first two years of the Clinton administration, the Democratic-majority Congress scaled back the overall missile defense policy even more than the administration had proposed, supported the administration's decision to emphasize TMD, and took measures in an attempt to ensure that US missile defense policy was in compliance with the ABM Treaty. National missile defense, as a result, suffered a precipitous setback.

¹⁶⁴ Associated Press, "Defense Budget Conferees Restrict Policy on Gays," *Washington Post*, November 7, 1993; *Aerospace Daily*, "Authorization conference settles on 261 billion for fiscal 1994," 168, no. 26 (November 8, 1993): 233; *National Defense Authorization Act for Fiscal Year 1994*, H.R. 2401, 103rd Cong., 1st. sess., Subtitle C. Ballistic Missile Defense, <http://thomas.loc.gov>.

¹⁶⁵ Ibid.

¹⁶⁶ Ibid.

¹⁶⁷ Ibid.

However, the troubled days for NMD were short-lived. The political dimensions changed considerably with the 1994 midterm election. The Republican Party took control of Congress in both the Senate and the House. It was the first time for the GOP to hold the House majority in forty years. The newly empowered Republicans squarely challenged the president's policies and successfully altered missile defense policy to their predilection.

4.5.2 National Missile Defense on the Rebound

The most divisive part of the missile defense program among the members of Congress was nationwide missile defense. The Democrats were more willing to support a theater missile defense system although some of the TMD programs became highly contentious in the Republican controlled Congress following midterm elections. By 1993, even the Democratic Party recognized that missile defense had become an entrenched program, and the proposal to eliminate the program was considered radical. Although the Clinton administration was certainly not interested in going so far as to terminate the R&D effort, the new administration moved away from the kind of ambitious programs that the two former Republican presidents, Reagan and Bush, had pursued. In doing so, the Clinton administration prioritized theater missile defense programs such as PAC-2 and PAC-3 Patriot missile upgrades and Theater High Altitude Area Defense (THAAD) while downgrading the stature of the agency in charge of missile defense efforts.¹⁶⁸ The Democratic administration deemphasized missile defense, particularly national missile defense, and was able to carry on with few obstacles in the first two years of Clinton's presidency.

The Republican victory in the November 1994 election paved the way for Congress to eventually trump the Democratic administration's policy course. Missile defense debates provided many opportunities for the Republican members of Congress to differentiate themselves from the Democrats. In fact, the 1999 Missile Defense Act was the culmination of relentless efforts by the Republican Party.

¹⁶⁸ Aerospace Daily, "Aspin describes \$ 1.56 billion of budget 'adds' for new missions," 165, no. 59 (March 26, 1993): 481.

The sharp ideological contrast between the Democratic leadership in the White House and the Republican-controlled Congress was clearly shown soon after the 1994 election as the Republican members challenged the president's policies. The clash between the two branches of government came into plain view immediately after the Republicans took over the majority. Contention over the Republicans' pursuit of the "Contract with America" led to President Clinton's veto over the FY 1996 defense authorization act.

The "Contract with America" was an important political manifesto for the Republican Party during the 1994 campaign. The party platform, designed by two prominent GOP members, Representative Dick Armey of Texas and Representative Newt Gingrich from Georgia, had ten points. Many of its promises resembled those of President Reagan including deep tax cuts, increased defense expenditure, limited use of US forces for UN peacekeeping operations, and antiballistic defense system deployment. Then House Minority Whip Newt Gingrich (R-Ga.) rallied the Republican candidates to sign the "Contract" and more than 300 candidates seeking a seat in the House signed on to the platform.¹⁶⁹

Determined Republicans quickly began to carry out the "Contract," and by January 1995, they had already drafted a bill containing the pledges in defense and foreign policy. Their National Security Revitalization Act reduced US financial contributions to UN peacekeeping missions and severely limited American troops' participation in peacekeeping operations.¹⁷⁰ The act called on the administration to build a national missile defense system "at the earliest possible date" and to deploy advanced theater missile defense systems. Also, the defense secretary was required to submit a deployment plan to Congress within 60 days.¹⁷¹

Democrats in Congress put up a tough fight against the NMD deployment requirement. Rep. John M. Spratt (D-S.C.) introduced an amendment attaching more conditions to water down the provision. The conditions were: (1) improving the military's readiness level should be a higher priority than building missile defense systems; (2) NMD should not be deployed before the TMD systems are fielded; and (3) the NMD system should be land-based, thus ruling out

¹⁶⁹ Kenneth J. Cooper, "GOP Offers a 'Contract' To Revive Reagan Years," *Washington Post*, September 28, 1994; Eric Pianin, "Some in GOP Don't Buy the 'Contract'; Critics Compare Gingrich Plan With Faults of Supply-Side Economics," *Washington Post*, September 30, 1994.

¹⁷⁰ Bill Gertz, "House GOP seeks creation of nationwide missile defense; Bill would order Pentagon to finish project 'at earliest possible date,'" *Washington Times*, January 9, 1995.

¹⁷¹ Ibid.

space-based interceptors. The amendment passed the House in a 218 –212 vote,¹⁷² but the passage became pointless as the defense authorization process was proceeding. During its committee markup for the defense authorization bill, the Research and Development Subcommittee of the House National Security Committee put in language declaring that the US missile defense policy was to deploy both regional and national missile defenses “at the earliest practical date.” The Subcommittee further added \$450 million to the \$370 million requested by the Pentagon for NMD.¹⁷³ The House voted for the authorization bill that increased overall defense spending for FY 1996 by more than \$9 billion and added \$628 million for various missile defense programs to the \$2.9 billion recommended by the administration.¹⁷⁴

Similarly in the Senate, Republican lawmakers were propping up missile defense both in funding and in the policy establishment. The Senate Armed Services Committee added \$300 million for NMD and used the FY 1996 Military Construction Authorization bill to require the Pentagon to build a national missile defense system against long-range ballistic missile attacks at multiple sites by 2003.¹⁷⁵ The bill also created a cruise missile defense initiative, required the establishment of a select committee to review the ABM Treaty, and defined strategic missiles that were subject to the ABM Treaty limitations as those with a flight range of over 3,500 kilometers and faster than 5 kilometers per second.¹⁷⁶ Senator Byron L. Dorgan (D-N.Dak.) proposed to cut back the \$300 million addition for NMD, but his amendment failed to pass in a close 48 to 51 vote.¹⁷⁷

Although Democrats tried to block the GOP effort to revive NMD deployment, they were not able to overcome the majority Republican vote. Congress passed the FY 1996 Defense Authorization bill with controversial provisions including the NMD deployment mandate. As expected, President Clinton vetoed the final authorization bill, citing the NMD deployment provision and constraints on US troops for UN peacekeeping missions as his reasons for the veto. Clinton stated that such a [deployment] plan would “waste tens of billions of dollars and force us to commit prematurely to a specific technological option.” He also pointed out that it would

¹⁷² Ibid.; Art Pine, “House Approves a Modified GOP Defense Bill,” *Los Angeles Times*, February 17, 1995.

¹⁷³ Bill Gertz, “House panel OKs funding rise for missile defenses,” *Washington Times*, May 24, 1995.

¹⁷⁴ Eric Schmitt, “House Votes Big Increase In Military Budget for ‘96,” *New York Times*, June 15, 1995.

¹⁷⁵ Bill Gertz, “Bill boosts missile-defense funds Senate establishes panel to study quitting ABM pact,” *Washington Times*, July 1, 1995.

¹⁷⁶ Bill Gertz, “Ballistic-missile defense system survives attack by Democrats,” *Washington Times*, August 4, 1995.

¹⁷⁷ Helen Dewar, “Senate Backs Missile Defense Network,” *Washington Post*, August 4, 1995.

breach the ABM Treaty.¹⁷⁸ Another mandate President Clinton strongly objected to was the restriction imposed on US military involvement in UN actions. He considered it an infringement of his authority as commander in chief.¹⁷⁹

The House Republicans attempted to reverse the president's veto, but the 240-156 vote fell short of the two thirds majority necessary for overriding.¹⁸⁰ The Republicans realized that the president had a political advantage having already passed the defense appropriation bill. The House and Senate conferees cleared the compromised bill in September 1995,¹⁸¹ and the president signed it into law on December 1, 1995. Therefore, except for new policies, the Pentagon could be funded for its operations regardless of the completion of the authorization bill, thus weakening the Republican's maneuvering ability.¹⁸² As such, Republicans dropped the two key mandates that led to the president's veto—the NMD deployment language and the prohibition against putting US troops under UN command.¹⁸³ After months of delay, the FY 1996 authorization bill was finally signed by the president and became law in February 1996.¹⁸⁴ Supporters of NMD in Congress had to make a compromise to unlock the president's veto, but they were still able to add about \$600 million to the requested \$2.9 billion for missile defense. The Pentagon received more funding than it requested for the missile defense programs, and this pattern repeated itself during most of the rest of President Clinton's term.

President Clinton's veto of the Defense Authorization Act in 1995 could have been avoided if 1996 were not an election year. During the duel between the Republican-controlled Congress and President Clinton, Democrats warned that the bill would not survive in the White House and Republican leaders acknowledged the possibility. To avoid the president's veto, four senior senators from both parties held behind-the-scenes meetings. After days of negotiations, Senators William Cohen (R-Maine), John Warner, Carl M. Levin (D-Mich.), and Sam Nunn

¹⁷⁸ Todd S. Purdum, "Clinton Vetoes Military Authorization Bill," *New York Times*, December 29, 1995.

¹⁷⁹ Other reasons included the restriction placed on the president's authority to order a troop deployment under U.S. command and discharging HIV-positive personnel from the military; Todd S. Purdum, "Clinton Vetoes Military Authorization Bill," *New York Times*, December 2, 1995; Aerospace Daily, "Hill's choices on veto: a quick fix or possibly no bill," 177, no. 1 (January 2, 1996): 3; John Diamond, "GOP Leaders Drop Demands on Missile Defense, Peacekeeping Restrictions," Associated Press, January 20, 1996.

¹⁸⁰ *Defense Daily*, "House GOP Fails to Muster Votes to Override DoD Bill Veto," 190, no. 2 (January 4, 1996).

¹⁸¹ Bill Gertz, "Hill negotiators agree to double funding for missile defense," *Washington Times*, September 26, 1995.

¹⁸² Rowan Scarborough, "GOP pulls missile defense system from military bill," *Washington Times*, January 7, 1996.

¹⁸³ John Diamond, "GOP Leaders Drop Demands on Missile Defense, Peacekeeping Restrictions," Associated Press, January 20, 1996.

¹⁸⁴ Associated Press, "Clinton Signs Defense Bill, Blasts AIDS Provision," *Washington Post*, February 11, 1996.

reached an agreement. The compromise replaced the NMD deployment language and stipulated a new operational requirement date of 2003. The actual deployment decision would rely on cost-effectiveness, threat assessment, and the potential treaty implications.¹⁸⁵ The authorization bill passed the Senate by a 64 to 34 margin in early September 1995.¹⁸⁶ The compromise, however, was in jeopardy as Republican conferees were backing away from it after Senator Dole wrote to SASC Chairman Strom Thurmond. In the October 2 letter, Senator Dole urged that the conferees should mandate that the NMD system be fielded by 2003. His strong push for NMD deployment was an attempt to create a campaign issue for the 1996 presidential election. Senator Dole was the prospective candidate of the Republican Party.¹⁸⁷ The Senate conferees broke the earlier compromise made on NMD and gave in to the House bill, which required both regional and national missile defense systems to be deployed.¹⁸⁸ The House and Senate finally concluded the frustrating and exhausting negotiations in December, but it was obvious that the bill would incur the president's veto. The final version of the authorization bill put back the original language for NMD deployment. The Pentagon was directed to deploy NMD systems to shield all 50 states from ballistic missile attacks, a provision which would violate the ABM Treaty. Another key compromise in the Senate was scrapped. The abandoned provision would have allowed the administration to negotiate with Russia for modification of the ABM Treaty as a way to settle the disputes over theater and strategic missiles.¹⁸⁹

After the tough fights with the Republican Congress, the Clinton administration put forth a plan in hopes of appeasing Republican complaints. During a press briefing in February 1996, Secretary Perry announced a restructuring of missile defense that would promote the NMD program from a technology readiness to a deployment readiness program and focus on two TMD programs, PAC-3 and Navy lower-area TMD programs, while delaying THAAD and Navy upper-tier.

¹⁸⁵ Associated Press, "Senators Offer Missile Defense Compromise," *Washington Post*, August 12, 1995; Bradley Graham, "Congress to Push For a National Missile Defense," *Washington Post*, September 5, 1995.

¹⁸⁶ Art Pine, "Senate OKs \$265-Billion Defense Bill Despite Clinton's Veto Threat," *Los Angeles Times*, September 7, 1995; Bill Gertz, "Senate votes for missile defense; Compromise orders development but not deployment," *Washington Times*, September 7, 1995.

¹⁸⁷ *Aerospace Daily*, "Republicans push Dole's mandatory NMD plan, but Dems resist," 176, no. 20 (October 30, 1995): 173 A.

¹⁸⁸ Bradley Graham, "Defense Conferees Narrow Differences; Agreement Elusive as Process Transform Spending and Policy Roles," *Washington Post*, November 4, 1995.

¹⁸⁹ *Aerospace Daily*, "White House turns down NMD compromise, Hill sources say," 176, no. 44 (December 6, 1995): 364.

The technology readiness plan in the Bottom Up Review (BUR) previously outlined that “the NMD program focused on maturing the most challenging technical elements—often called the ‘long poles’ of the NMD system” without any commitment for deployment.¹⁹⁰ In contrast, the deployment readiness program, also known as “three plus three,” put heavier weight on fielding the NMD system. In the first three years, the US government would plan, develop, and test the various elements of an initial NMD system. After the three years, the United States would assess the ballistic missile threat, and if there was a credible threat it would enter the acquisition and deployment phase in the second three years.¹⁹¹ This shift was Clinton officials’ preemptive tactic to avoid another showdown with Congress over the NMD deployment. The Department of Defense was well aware of Republican members’ discontent with the existing technology readiness program.¹⁹² The deployment readiness plan would give the administration a three-year time period without any commitment to either policy, thereby providing great flexibility to deploy or not to deploy NMD depending on the technical, military, and political circumstances. It was a hedge against congressional pressure. Such political calculation was revealed quite clearly from the Clinton administration officials’ own accounts. In a written statement for the Senate Defense Appropriations Committee, Gen. O’Neill stated, “the Department is sensitive to Congressional interest in a shift to a more system-oriented approach which would provide for the balanced development of all elements necessary for the initial deployment.”¹⁹³

Despite the Clinton administration’s intent to assuage Republican concerns, the proponents of missile defense continued to take issue with both TMD and NMD policies. Republicans were enraged that the Clinton administration was planning to delay the development of THAAD and Navy upper-tier and eventually choose only one of the two TMD systems.¹⁹⁴ Among others, Senator Robert C. Smith (R-N.H.) harshly criticized the TMD plan and said,

¹⁹⁰ Senate Appropriations Committee, *Statement by Lt. Gen. Malcolm R. O’Neill, Director, Ballistic Missile Defense Organization, Department of Defense, before the Subcommittee on Strategic Forces, Armed Services Committee, Department of Defense Authorization for Appropriations for FY 97*, 104th Cong., 2nd sess., March 25, 1996.

¹⁹¹ *Ibid.*

¹⁹² *Aerospace Daily*, “BMDO seeks ‘harder look’ at proliferation, offers new NMD options,” 174, no. 9 (April 13, 1995): 70.

¹⁹³ Senate Appropriations Committee, *Statement by Lt. Gen. Malcolm R. O’Neill, Director, Ballistic Missile Defense Organization, Department of Defense, before the Subcommittee of the Committee on Appropriations on Department of Defense Appropriations for Fiscal Year 1997*, 104th Cong., 2nd sess., March 20, 1996, 43–64.

¹⁹⁴ Bill Gertz, “Pentagon delays missile defense Congress wants; Two of four systems must wait,” *Washington Times*, February 17, 1996.

“there were areas of defense that we felt strongly about and we had a terrible time getting language to be with on missile defense, and now I just see us walking away from it as if it wasn’t worth the paper it’s written on.”¹⁹⁵

Soon after announcement of the plan, the Pentagon submitted its formal budget request for FY 1997 to Congress. The \$242.6 billion total was a six percent decrease from FY 1996 after adjusting for inflation.¹⁹⁶ For ballistic missile defense, the DOD requested \$2.8 billion, about \$550 million less than the amount approved by Congress in the previous year. Of the total amount, \$2.1 billion was for TMD research, development, and procurement efforts, \$508 million for NMD, and \$226 million for other supporting technologies.¹⁹⁷ Republican lawmakers considered this NMD funding level inadequately low, and it exacerbated Republicans’ growing disenchantment with the Pentagon’s proposal to support only two of the four TMD programs. Senator John W. Warner (R-Va.) complained that “we’re sitting around here worrying about budgets when we should be going full bore on these systems, because that’s what the American people want...I’m just very discouraged at the level of funding and what we’re doing in this area right now.”

The staunch proponents of missile defense took a radical step in response to the defense secretary’s restructuring plan to delay the deployment of the THAAD and the Navy lower-tier systems by several years.¹⁹⁸ The new TMD plan announced by Defense Secretary Perry would cut \$2 billion from THAAD and shift the Navy area-wide funding appropriated by Congress for FY 1996 to the next fiscal year while adding \$300 million to the PAC-3 and \$150 million to the Navy lower-area systems.¹⁹⁹ Forty-one members of Congress, spearheaded by Representative Curt Weldon (R-Pa.) and Senator Jon Kyl (R-Ariz.), sued the administration for failing to comply with the FY 1996 Defense Authorization Act. The Congressional Budget Control and

¹⁹⁵ Bradley Graham, “Pentagon Plan to Delay Antimissile Programs Draws Heated Opposition on Hill,” *Washington Post*, March 7, 1996.

¹⁹⁶ Bradley Graham, “\$242.6 Billion Sought For defense in 1997; Clinton Proposal Represents 6 Percent Drop,” *Washington Post*, March 5, 1996.

¹⁹⁷ Senate Appropriations Committee, Lt. Gen. Malcolm R. O’Neill Statement.

¹⁹⁸ Bill Gertz, “Pentagon delays missile defenses Congress wants ; Two of four systems must wait,” *The Washington Times*, February 17, 1996; Defense Daily, “O’Neill Outlines Priority, Unfunded Missile Defense Efforts,” 190, no. 46 (March 8, 1996).

¹⁹⁹ Bradley Graham, “Pentagon to Focus on Defense Against Short-Range Missiles,” *Washington Post*, February 17, 1996.

Empowerment Act allowed Congress to sue the president if the president did not spend the appropriated funding without a reprogramming approval.²⁰⁰

Senator Kyl hoped the court would force the administration to implement THAAD and the Navy-upper-tier systems by the mandated date. In the suit, Senator Kyl and Representative Weldon stated, “the refusal to restructure THAAD and Navy Upper Tier in accordance with the statutory mandated milestone violates...President Clinton’s constitutional duty to ‘take care that the laws of the United States be faithfully executed.’ Said violations have precluded Congress from exercising the powers vested in it by the Constitution of the United States to provide for the common defense, to override a presidential veto.”²⁰¹ Section 234 of the FY 1996 Defense Authorization Act (PL 104-106) required the THAAD system to achieve “a user operational evaluation system (UOES) capability not later than fiscal year 1998 and a first unit equipped (FUE) status not later than fiscal year 2000.” For the Navy theater-wide system, the act called for “a user operational evaluation system (UOES) capability during fiscal year 1999 and an initial operational capability (IOC) during fiscal year 2001.”²⁰² The Pentagon defended its decision and argued that the delay was due to technology and not because of insufficient funding.²⁰³

The federal judge in the District of Columbia dismissed the lawsuit on the ground that it was premature for judicial resolution. Judge Stanley Sporkin wrote that “The funds appropriated for the THAAD and NTW (Navy Theater Wide) remain available for obligation until September 30, 1997 and the ongoing dialogue between the Department of Defense and the Congress suggests that the two branches of government may yet have a meeting of the minds.” However, the judge warned the executive branch in a statement, “The Court does not believe that the executive can blatantly defy the Congress where the national security interest may be at stake.” Representative Weldon was satisfied with the judge’s statement since it agreed with the supporters of THAAD that the administration was obligated to implement the law. The

²⁰⁰ *Aerospace Daily*, “Lawsuit filed against White House on TMD plan,” 179, no. 13 (July 19, 1996): 100.

²⁰¹ Rowan Scarborough, “Two on Hill set to sue Clinton to get missile defense,” *Washington Times*, July 11, 1996.

²⁰² *National Defense Authorization Act for Fiscal Year 1997*, Public Law 104-106, *US Statutes at Large* 110 (1996): 228–231.

²⁰³ Scarborough, “Two on Hill set to sue Clinton to get missile defense.”

statement also acknowledged the future possibility of the court's involvement in the matter on behalf of Congress.²⁰⁴

On national missile defense, Representative Robert Livingston (R-La.) and Senator Robert Dole introduced the "Defend America Act of 1996" on March 21, 1996, to each chamber. The bill called for the deployment of the NMD system by 2003, a secretary of defense report on the NMD system components by March 1997, and negotiations with the Russians to modify the ABM Treaty in such a way that it would allow for national missile defense or withdrawal from the treaty if negotiations did not succeed after one year.²⁰⁵ However, the bill made no progress as the Republicans ran into an unexpected problem. One day before the scheduled vote in May, the Congressional Budget Office (CBO) released a report on the cost of the NMD system that baffled the proponents of NMD. According to the CBO estimates, the costs would range from \$31 billion to \$60 billion. Even the most conservative amount was over six times greater than Republicans had estimated. Bewildered by the unexpectedly higher price tags, the House canceled the scheduled vote.²⁰⁶ Nonetheless, Senator Bob Dole, running against President Clinton, was determined to use the NMD issue to charge the incumbent Democratic president with being soft on defense and reintroduced his bill later in June before he left for the 1996 presidential campaign. Democrats, however, blocked the vote and Senator Dole could not muster 60 votes to end the filibuster.²⁰⁷

Although Republicans failed to mandate NMD deployment, they increased the Pentagon's missile defense funding request by \$914 million to \$3.7 billion. Of those additional amounts, \$350 million was allotted for NMD.²⁰⁸ They also managed to attach a requirement to convene an independent group for reviewing the National Intelligence Estimates in the FY 1997 Defense Authorization Act. Administration officials and opponents had been using the NIE as its basis for arguing that the threat to the United States was improbable in the next 10 or 15

²⁰⁴ Sheila Foote, "Judge Dismisses Missile Defense Suit," *Defense Daily*, 193, no. 9, October 11, 1996.

²⁰⁵ Bill Gertz, "Dole accuses Clinton of being soft on need for a U.S. missile defense," *Washington Times*, March 22, 1996.

²⁰⁶ John F. Harris, "Clinton Warns GOP On Missile Defense; Proposed System Is Premature, President Says," *Washington Post*, March 23, 1996; *Boston Globe*, "The missile flap," May 23, 1996.

²⁰⁷ Helen Dewar, "Democrats Thwart Dole on Missile Plan; Senate's Nearly Party-Line Vote Blocks Proposed National Defense System," *Washington Post*, June 5, 1996.

²⁰⁸ Greg Caires, "House and Senate Conferees Boost Missile Defense Funding," *Defense Daily*, 192, no. 22, August 1, 1996; David Hess, "Accord reached on budget: Cease-fire called in two-year battle," *Denver Post*, September 29, 1996.

years. Some Republicans disputed the accuracy of the estimates which they considered too optimistic. The defense authorization act also called for a Quadrennial Defense Review (QDR) to evaluate force posture and modernization plans in fiscal year 1997.²⁰⁹ These requirements clearly demonstrated the Republicans' distrust in the Clinton administration's judgments on potential threats and their disagreement with the administration's missile defense policy direction. The congressionally mandated review by an independent group, the Rumsfeld Report, later became a milestone for NMD supporters in faulting the Clinton administration's threat assessment and justifying NMD deployment.

President Clinton easily defeated his opponent Senator Dole in November 1996. When Clinton was reelected, Defense Secretary Perry notified the White House that he did not want to continue his job as secretary of defense. President Clinton chose William Cohen to succeed Perry, hoping a moderate Republican senator from Maine would revamp the much damaged image of the Clinton administration in security matters, as well as improve the contentious relationship between the administration and the Republican members of Congress.²¹⁰ The Quadrennial Defense Review (QDR) was the first major policy statement endorsed by the new secretary. It maintained the win-win strategy to deal with two major regional conflicts and slightly reduced the number of military personnel. The review's overall recommendation was designed to downsize the military's force posture with the exception of missile defense.²¹¹ The Pentagon blueprint proposed a two billion dollar increase to NMD spending over the following five years.²¹² For the upcoming FY 1998, the Pentagon requested \$2.97 billion for the entire ballistic missile defense program. The TMD share of the total was \$1.83 billion, leaving \$504 million for NMD and the other \$250 million for support technologies.²¹³ The Republican-

²⁰⁹ David A. Fulghum and Paul Mann, "Military Modernization Wins Budget Boost," *Aviation Week & Space Technology* 145, no. 14 (September 30, 1996): 28.

²¹⁰ Bill Gertz, "Perry to relinquish position after military forces review; Had told Clinton recently; Nunn, Deutsch on list," *Washington Times*, November 7, 1996.

²¹¹ Aerospace Daily, "THAAD slips two years in QDR; NMD stays on track," May 16, 1997.

²¹² Bill Gertz, "Single-site missile defense leaves Alaska, Hawaii naked," *Washington Times*, May 9, 1997.

²¹³ Senate Armed Services Committee, *Prepared Statement by Gen. Lester L. Lyles for the Department of Defense Authorization for Appropriations for Fiscal Year 1998 and the Future Years Defense Program before the Subcommittee on Strategic Forces*, 105th Cong., 1st sess., February 27, 1997.

dominated Congress continued to increase the missile defense budget, authorizing \$3.68 billion for BMDO.²¹⁴

The Clinton administration's diplomatic effort to keep the ABM Treaty became another source of contention between the Republican members of Congress and the White House. During the Helsinki summit in March 1997, President Clinton and Russian President Boris Yeltsin issued a "Joint Statement on Parameters on Future Reductions in Nuclear Forces." The deal extended the deadline for implementation of START II and committed the countries to begin talks on START III as soon as the Russian Duma ratified START II. However, it was a separate agreement—which prohibited development, test, or deployment of the space-based TMD system and agreed to establish boundaries to distinguish TMD from NMD—that riled Republicans. Speaker Newt Gingrich, and Representatives Robert Livingston (La.), and Christopher Cox (Calif.) expressed their opposition to this stipulation, claiming that it would hamper technological breakthroughs.²¹⁵ Despite the Republicans' uproar, the Clinton administration went ahead and sealed the agreement. Secretary of State Madeleine K. Albright and Russian Foreign Minister Yevgeny Primakov signed accords in September 1997. The most controversial issue was the TMD demarcation, which set the terms of regional missile defense systems as those being against missiles with a velocity less than 5 kilometers per second or with a flight range shorter than 3,500 kilometers. A leading advocate of missile defense, Rep. Weldon, criticized the agreement and said, "The ABM Treaty was not designed to impose limits on our theater missile defense systems, only on national defense systems."²¹⁶ The Republicans in Congress were displeased, but they did not have an effective option to rebuke the Clinton administration's deal since it was an executive agreement that did not need the Senate's ratification.

Supporters of missile defense also had a problem with the administration's NMD proposal. The "three-plus-three" plan was designed to allow for the construction of a national

²¹⁴ Paul Mann, "Hill Ups NMD, Caves in on B-2s," *Aviation Week & Space Technology*, 147, no. 14 (October 6, 1996): 25; "National Defense Authorization Act of Fiscal Year 1998," Conference Report to accompany H.R. 1119, H.rpt.105-340 (Washington, DC: GPO), 1997, 589.

²¹⁵ R. Jeffrey Smith and Bradley Graham, "Destroy Warheads? This Is the START of Something New," *Washington Post*, March 22, 1997; *Washington Times*, "House Speaker Gingrich blasts ABM deal," March 24, 1997.

²¹⁶ *USA Today*, "Helsinki proves a win-win summit for U.S., Russia," March 24, 1997; Smith and Graham, "Destroy Warheads?"; John M. Goshki, "U.S., Russia Reaffirm Nuclear Pact; Leader Sign Accords to Preserve ABM Treaty and Boost START II," *Washington Post*, September 27, 1997.

missile defense system in compliance with the ABM Treaty. With the existing plan to build a single site at Grand Forks, North Dakota, the NMD system would not be “optimal against threats to Alaska and Hawaii.” For the coverage of all fifty states, a second site was required which the Clinton administration had not factored into its budget request. Accordingly, new Defense Secretary Cohen added \$2 billion to the budget for the next five years. Representative Floyd D. Spence (R-S.C.) called it “an astounding error of approximately 100 percent”²¹⁷

While the Clinton administration was anxious to maintain the ABM Treaty and improve the diplomatic relationship with Russia, GOP missile defense supporters’ continued push for the deployment of NMD gained little traction in the off-year election cycle. Senate Majority Leader Trent Lott introduced a bill requiring the Pentagon to deploy a national missile defense system by 2003. While it received a positive reaction from SASC, no floor action was taken.²¹⁸

The year 1998 was full of security events that surprised the Clinton administration. It began with India’s nuclear test in May, the Iranian missile Shahah-4 test, and North Korea’s missile test later that summer. After a flurry of arms race activities between India and Pakistan in the spring of 1998, Senator Thad Cochran (R-Miss.) introduced an “American Missile Protection Act of 1998” in May, but it did not survive the Democrats’ filibuster in a close 59–41 vote. Senator Cochran insisted that the bill was not dead yet and vowed to reintroduce the bill. With the release of the Rumsfeld Report and North Korea’s missile test in the summer of 1998, Senator Cochran introduced his bill again in September, strongly believing these developments would help his bill to pass this time. However, the bill failed again by the same 59–41 vote, one vote short for cloture.²¹⁹

Until 1998, the White House had repeatedly threatened a veto against legislation containing the NMD deployment clause, and Democrats in Congress managed to derail NMD bills before they reached the White House. Then, in 1999, came a landmark for the US national missile defense effort. Senator Cochran’s national missile defense bill sailed through the Senate by 97 to 3, and its companion bill sponsored by Representative Weldon, was also approved by

²¹⁷ Bill Gertz, “Single-site missile defense leaves Alaska, Hawaii naked,” *Washington Times*, May 9, 1997.

²¹⁸ A bill to establish a United States policy for the deployment of a national missile defense system, and for other purposes, S.7, 105th Congress, 1st session, <http://thomas.loc.gov>.

²¹⁹ Helen Dewar, “Missile Defense System Speed-Up Beaten In Senate Backers Cite Nuclear Test in India,” *Washington Post*, Times-Picayune, May 19, 1998; A bill to state the policy of the United States regarding the deployment of a missile defense system capable of defending the territory of the United States against limited ballistic missile attack, (S.1873), 105th Congress, 2nd session, <http://thomas.loc.gov>.

the House in a 317–105 vote, both with solid veto-proof margins.²²⁰ The White House gave up its veto threat in the spring of 1999 as the Democrats’ support for the White House eroded.²²¹ President Clinton signed the bill in July 1999.²²²

What triggered such a spectacular change in congressional attitude, especially in the Senate where Democrats previously filibustered similar bills? It was partly because of the watered-down language of the bill. The 1999 version of the NMD bill stated that “it is the policy of the United States to deploy as soon as technologically possible an effective National Missile Defense system.” Unlike the previous NMD bills, there was no timeline for deployment and no mention of specific system architecture. The simplicity made the bill less controversial and easier to attract Democrats’ votes.²²³ Another legislative maneuver that helped the passage of the bill was the addition of two amendments. Senator Cochran clarified that the NMD program would go through yearly legislative processes for authorization and appropriations. The other amendment, sponsored by Democratic Senator Mary Landrieu (D-La.), declared that “it [was] the policy of the United States to seek continued negotiated reductions in Russian nuclear forces.”²²⁴ The two amendments were the Democrats’ face-savers. The seemingly inconsequential language allowed Democrats to claim that the NMD deployment was not a foregone decision since it would still be facing yearly congressional scrutiny. Democrats also argued that the provision on arms negotiations with Russia implied a commitment to preserve the ABM Treaty, considering Russia’s insistence on entering arms reduction talks only on the basis of the continuation of the ABM Treaty.²²⁵

Most important, however, was some Democrats’ anxiety over their continuing opposition to missile defenses despite the troubling strategic developments. Democrats’ filibuster of the Cochran bill had been maintained by the slimmest margin. Minority Leader Tom Daschle kept

²²⁰ Helen Dewar, “Senate, 97-3, Endorses a Commitment to Deploy Anti-Missile System,” *Washington Post*, March 18, 1999; Sean Scully, “House Democrats follow Senate on defense; OK bill for shield against missile attacks,” *Washington Times*, March 19, 1999; The Senate bill (S.257) was incorporated to the House Bill (H.R. 4).

²²¹ Sean Scully, “House Democrats follow Senate on defense; OK bill for shield against missile attacks,” *Washington Times*, March 19, 1999.

²²² Paul Mann, “Support Gathers Steam For National Missile Defense,” *Aviation Week & Space Technology* 150, no. 12 (March 22, 1999): 29.

²²³ Graham, “A Political Tipping Point,” in *Hit to Kill*, 102–103.

²²⁴ Ibid.; S.AMDT.72 to S.257, *National Missile Defense Act of 1999*, 105th Cong., 2nd sess., *Congressional Record* (March 16, 1999): S2779, <http://thomas.loc.gov>, See Appendix IV.

²²⁵ Graham, “A Political Tipping Point,” in *Hit to Kill*, 110.

the Democratic senators on the party line through Carl Levin, Joe Biden (Del.) and Robert Kerrey (Neb.), three prominent Democratic members in defense, foreign, and intelligence matters. The weakening unity surfaced when Senator Landrieu missed the Senate Armed Services Committee markup session on the Cochran bill in February 1999. When Kerrey informed Senator Daschle he would support the missile defense bill, the Democratic leadership realized that they could no longer hold the tenuous coalition. One defection was enough for enabling cloture against the Democrats' filibuster. Once the coalition collapsed, several other junior senators from conservative states such as Evan Bayh from Indiana and John Edwards from North Carolina were likely to cross the party line. The final vote count for the bill was a powerful testament to the notion that a policy making process is a multifaceted reality. The move of the Senate votes exposed the partisan politics between the Republican Party and the Democratic Party, the power struggle between the White House and Congress, and the political calculations of individual senators. However, it is significant to note that the disturbing security developments by North Korea, Iran, India, and Pakistan in the end triumphed over the political coalition.

Upon signing the bill, President Clinton announced that his administration would make the deployment decision in the summer of 2000 based on four criteria: technology, cost-effectiveness, threats, and the implications for arms control.²²⁶ In September 2000, President Clinton announced that he would defer the deployment decision to his successor, largely attributing the delay to technical uncertainties. During his speech at Georgetown University, President Clinton said "...I simply cannot conclude, with the information I have today, that we have enough confidence in the technology and the operational effectiveness of the entire NMD system to move forward to deployment."²²⁷ President Clinton passed on the deployment decision to the next president. It was an extremely delicate political maneuver in the election year. His announcement was made only a couple of months before the election when there was no time for his critics in Congress to pressure him to make a deployment decision, with existing legislative measures in process and members of Congress, especially the House members, distracted by running their reelection campaigns.

²²⁶ William Clinton, "Statement on signing the National Missile Defense Act of 1999.

²²⁷ Roberto Suro, "Clinton Defers Missile Defense; Deployment Decision Left to Successor; Technical Woes, Diplomatic Costs Cited," *Washington Post*, September 2, 2000.

It was probably a wise political decision. Numerous polls conducted in the year 2000 prior to President Clinton's NMD deployment decision indicated that the American public was supportive of the general idea of defending the United States against missile attacks although with very little knowledge on the subject. For example, according to an *ABC News* poll, 60 percent of respondents answered that it would be worthwhile to deploy missile defense as soon as possible.²²⁸ A *CBS News/New York Times* poll also showed that almost 60 percent favor the United States continuing to try to build a missile defense system. However, it also revealed that the majority of them did not even know whether the United States already had a missile defense system or not.²²⁹

Question: From what you know, do you think the United States currently has or does not have a missile defense system to protect against nuclear attacks?²³⁰

Table 10. Public Knowledge on Missile Defense

	2000 (September)
Has	58%
Does not have	28%
Don't know/No answer	14%

Source: Roper Center at University of Connecticut, conducted by *CBS, New York Times* poll

Another survey conducted by USA TODAY/CNN/Gallup in 2000 showed that 53 percent of the respondents supported the deployment of National Missile Defense. Similar to the CBS/New York Times poll, 56 percent responded that they were not familiar with the issues involved with missile defense.²³¹

²²⁸ The other 24 percent answered that the United States should wait to deploy until the missile defense system would be able to destroy 100 percent of all attacking missiles. The other 15 percent either did not know enough about missile defense or refused to answer. Deborah Acomb, "Poll Track for April 8, 2000," *National Journal* 32, no. 15 (April 8, 2000): 1149.

²²⁹ Roper Center at University of Connecticut, conducted by *CBS, New York Times* poll, Beginning date: May 10, 2000, Ending date: May 13, 2000.

²³⁰ Roper Center at University of Connecticut, conducted by *CBS, New York Times* poll, Beginning date: September 9, 2000, Ending date: September 11, 2000.

²³¹ Andrea Stone, "Interest in missile defense is hardly a direct hit." Most Americans favor building shield, but few follow debate," *USA Today*, July 19, 2000.

A study conducted by the Sandia National Laboratories on various national security issues, including missile defense, revealed similar survey results. An overwhelming percentage of the respondents supported the deployment of an NMD system. However, both in 1991 and 2001, surveys showed that over 60 percent of the respondents mistakenly believed that the United States had an NMD system.²³²

4.5.3 Summary of the National Missile Defense Act Case

The three distinct missile defense plans under the Clinton administration were the technology readiness program outlined in the 1993 BUR, the deployment readiness plan in 1996, and the 1999 National Missile Defense Act. The Clinton presidency began with Democratic Party dominance in both policy-making branches of the government, and the Clinton administration's first defense policy statement in 1993 reflected the party doctrine. However, the Clinton administration gradually strengthened its missile defense plan, particularly national missile defense policy, with the introduction of the three-plus-three strategy in 1996 and, ultimately, the signing of the legislation requiring NMD deployment in 1999.

Was the policy change due to the security environment in the late 1990s? Several developments in the Middle East and Asia during that time lend credibility to such an argument, but the lag time between the summer of 1998 when the security events unfolded and the passage of the legislation in 1999 revealed that those events were important but not sufficient for the administration to change its view. The Clinton administration was not interested in making a deployment statement and resisted Congress's attempts to mandate NMD deployment.

The Clinton administration's policy shift was political in nature because it was a result of congressional pressure. The most important political development during the Clinton administration was the Republicans' victory in the 1994 midterm election. After the bitter political battle with the Republican-controlled Congress in 1995, the Clinton administration decided to compromise and accommodate the wishes of NMD supporters by developing the

²³² Sandia National Laboratories, *Comparing Public Views on Security*: Volume II: Trends in U.S. Perspectives on Nuclear Security, Terrorism, and Energy, U.S. National Security Surveys: 1993–2002, Hank C. Jenkins-Smith and Kerry G. Herron, Sandia Report, SAND 2002–2401P, Unlimited Release Printed July 2002, 39–40.

deployment readiness plan. However, the updated NMD plan did not satisfy the skeptical Republicans. The Republicans, controlling both chambers of Congress, exercised their power of the purse by allocating more funds than the Defense Department requested for the missile defense programs. They also relentlessly pushed for deployment of a nationwide missile defense system through legislative activities. Most attempts were futile and unable to overcome their Democratic colleagues' filibuster or President Clinton's veto (or threat of such), but they eventually achieved their goal, mandating deployment of a missile defense system for the protection of the entire country. It is important to observe that the Democrats' coalition against the NMD bill was weakened, and the security developments in the mid- to late 1990s contributed to that flagging unity. President Clinton's veto threat was withdrawn because he realized that further objection would no longer be possible. Similar to the previous Missile Defense Act enacted in 1991, the National Missile Defense Act of 1999 is a strong case for the congressional perspective. The policy statement would not have been proclaimed without the influence of Congress.

4.6 CONCLUSION OF THE CHAPTER

The congressional perspective emphasizes the role of Congress in the decision making process. The analyses of the five missile defense decisions essentially support the congressional perspective, though to varying degrees. The two strongest cases were Johnson's ABM deployment decision and the 1999 National Missile Defense Act. This study found that, in both cases, the presidential administrations were reluctant to make a deployment decision, yet Congress forced them to finally take a policy turn and adopt deployment policies. The two Democratic presidents believed in deterrence and had little confidence in the technology or strategic wisdom of deploying an antimissile defense system. They both tried to alleviate congressional concerns by upgrading their missile defense policies—President Johnson by embedding a contingent deployment cost in his FY 1968 budget plan, and President Clinton with the deployment readiness plan among others—but to no avail. In terms of the timing of the decision turns, both took place the year before a presidential election. The political risk of continuously refusing deployment of an antiballistic missile system was too big to ignore.

Presidents Johnson and Clinton did not want their lack of commitment to missile defense to be exploited against the Democratic Party in the upcoming election.

Another strong example for supporting the congressional perspective was the Missile Defense Act of 1991 under President Bush. It was not as strong as the above two decisions because it did not demonstrate a congressional victory over a hesitant president. In fact, President Bush was glad to approve the legislation. Nonetheless, the commitment to deploy a missile defense system was led by Congress.

The Strategic Arms Limitation Talks that ultimately yielded the ABM Treaty were also pushed by Congress. President Nixon and his national security adviser Kissinger clearly favored the deployment of antiballistic missiles and pursued an ABM network at twelve sites, but they quickly grasped the political reality in which the likelihood of constructing a complete system was remote. Without the antiballistic missiles, the strategic gap between the United States and Soviet Union seemed to be widening to the Soviets' advantage since the United States ceased to expand its offensive weaponry. Congressional pressure on the Nixon administration was subtler than on the two Democratic administrations, but it was apparent. The game Congress played was more sophisticated and measured than under the two Democratic administrations, as Congress walked a fine line between pressuring the Nixon administration and at the same time trying not to undermine the US position at the negotiating table with the Soviets.

President Reagan's SDI was not a strong case for the congressional perspective in that the influence of Congress on the inception of SDI was minimal. It was largely President Reagan who was determined to revive the almost forgotten agenda. Although the launch of SDI cannot be credited to Congress, the survival of the program can be. Congress endorsed SDI by providing several billion dollars for the effort.

This study discovered a number of interesting findings, and one of them was the reluctance of the executive branch in changing the course of its missile defense policy. In contrast, the legislative body was shown to be less dogmatic in considering policy changes. Members of Congress showed more willingness to adjust their positions depending on political, security, budgetary, and technological conditions. This was the case in the 1960s when Congress began to push the Johnson administration for deployment after China's nuclear tests, when Congress reined in the Nixon administration's Safeguard plan after constituents' protests, when the traditionally resistant HASC took a supportive role for missile defense funding after the

Persian Gulf War experience, and when an overwhelming number of Democrats switched sides and voted for the 1999 National Missile Defense Act in the wake of North Korea's ballistic missile tests.

Another finding was the increasingly partisan nature of missile defense debates. It was true that even during the 1960s the missile defense argument displayed a party streak. The Johnson administration's initial opposition to the deployment of an antiballistic missile system and the Nixon administration's plan to deploy Safeguard ABM systems in the 1960s were cases in point. The discussions in Congress over the funding level and deployment also generally followed the party line, with Republicans strongly supporting missile defense and Democrats less so. However, there were members of Congress who were more open to changing their minds or siding with the other party's position. Senators Henry Jackson and Sam Nunn and Representative Les Aspin were among those who were willing to cross the party line as they felt necessary. By the mid-1990s, however, congressional members' loyalty to their political party had deepened, and the extent of animosity between the White House and Congress became extraordinary. This animosity was illustrated by President Clinton's veto of the FY 1996 Defense Authorization bill and Republican lawmakers' lawsuit against the Clinton administration in 1996 over the implementation of the missile defense programs outlined in legislation by Congress.

This study also found that between the 1960s and 2000, Congress gradually became more involved in the details of missile defense policy. The legislature's role was no longer limited to simply approving or cutting the presidents' missile defense budgets but directing the administration to specific policy prescriptions on the matter, such as system architecture, strategic objective, and compliance with the ABM Treaty. Congress began to make such concrete policy recommendations for missile defense in the last years of Reagan's term. During the Bush administration, Congress showed its growing confidence in dealing with the details of the missile defense issue. Most notable was the Missile Defense Act of 1991, in which Congress mandated compliance with the ABM Treaty and instructed the Bush administration to focus on the ground-based system instead of the space-based Brilliant Pebbles system. Congress's commanding position in policy making was even more obvious in the 1990s. The Republican-dominated Congress clashed with the Clinton administration over such minutiae as what range

and speed constituted TMD versus NMD, and which specific program elements should be selected.

Congress's deepening involvement in policy formulation is thanks to the professionalization of the institution—lawmakers' careerism, longer terms in Congress, and the development of the committee system. Until the 1950s, lawmakers served part-time and Congress was in session less than six months a year. By the late 1990s, Congress held its legislative sessions for about ten months a year due to increasing workload.²³³ Another trend was the lengthening of lawmakers' terms in office. Until the beginning of the 20th century, 44 percent of the House members and 65 percent of the senators served only one term, two years and six years respectively, and only three percent of the House members and 11 percent of the senators served longer than twelve years. By the year 2000, about one-third of the members in the House and Senate served longer than twelve years.²³⁴ Lawmakers' longer terms meant more experience and expertise, which helped members to keep up with the executive branch in dealing with policy questions. Congressional committees played an extremely important part in policy debate. They have been "the centers of policy making, oversight of federal agencies, and public education."²³⁵ The number of standing committees peaked at more than sixties in each chamber in 1919, and the passage of the Legislative Reorganization Act of 1946 significantly downsized the number of standing committees to the current level—about twenty standing committees in each chamber. The 1946 Act, however, led to an exponential growth in the number of subcommittees. The House had over one hundred subcommittees and the Senate had more than eighty subcommittees by 1964. The number of subcommittees has fluctuated, but there were around seventy and ninety in the House and the Senate respectively in the late 1990s.²³⁶ Also increased was the number of committee staffers. The presence of congressional staff has provided the legislative body with the know-how and ability to compete with the executive branch.²³⁷ The number of committee staff members swelled in the early 1970s by three times in

²³³ Roger H. Davidson and Walter J. Oleszek, "Evolution of the Modern Congress," in *Congress and Its Members*, (Washington, DC: CQ Press, 2000), 31.

²³⁴ *Ibid.*, 36.

²³⁵ *Ibid.*, 197.

²³⁶ Steven S. Smith and Christopher J. Deering, "Committee Leaders, Subcommittees, and Staff," in *Committees in Congress*, 2nd. ed., (Washington, DC: CQ Press, 1990), 24–27, especially, 25; Congressional Quarterly, "The Committee System," in *How Congress Works*, 3rd ed., (Washington, DC: Congressional Quarterly Inc., 1998), 124.

²³⁷ Smith and Deering, 150.

the House and by 80 percent in the Senate. Individual members' staffers increased in number from several hundred in the early 20th century to over ten thousand by the end of 1980s. Congressional staff has been instrumental in setting up hearings, working on markups, and producing reports.²³⁸ With regard to missile defense policy, members of Congress acquired knowledge and experience over time. When missile defense debate resurfaced in 1983, lawmakers were unfamiliar its with strategic, budgetary, and technological implications. However, members of Congress became more confident in the issue as they delved into missile defense, especially key members of Congress serving on the Armed Services Committees in the House and Senate. This confidence and familiarity facilitated lawmakers' increasing role in policy making.

Answering the core question of the congressional perspective, the analyses of the five administrations' missile defense policies demonstrated that Congress was a crucial participant in formulating missile defense policy. In the 1960s and 1970s, lawmakers exerted their power by controlling the missile defense budget and pressuring the White House. In the late 1980s and early 1990s, Congress effectively utilized its authority in law making, going beyond the power of the purse and political gestures. Congressional attitudes on missile defense during the Bush and Clinton administrations went through a transformation, around half way through the four years under Bush, and after 1994 during Clinton's first term. In both cases, Congress was initially reserved in supporting missile defense but later turned around to support it. The reasons why the legislative body changed its positions differed. During the Bush era, the members of Congress were impressed by the Patriot missiles and extrapolated its success to a nationwide missile defense system. The latter case was due to the changed political landscape with the Republicans' dominance in both chambers of Congress after the 1994 midterm election. This pattern showed that Congress set its policy goals with respect to missile defense independent of the administration, and it was largely successful in pushing those goals. Most importantly, this study demonstrated that except for Reagan's SDI speech, the decision turns could not be justified without considering the actions of Congress. Four of the five specific missile defense policy decisions that were chosen as the subject of the case study can be explained in a more complete way only by inserting Congress's role.

²³⁸ Davidson and Oleszek, 219.

5.0 CONCLUSION

The United States has pursued missile defense for over half a century. A rudimentary study of missile defense began in the 1950s, and research efforts continued throughout and beyond the Cold War. This study explained why the US missile defense program has been maintained despite dramatic changes in the strategic environment over time.

This research question could be effectively answered by examining and explaining the fluctuations of US missile defense policy, specifically, the decision to increase or reduce support for missile defense research and deployment efforts. In this attempt, five cases were selected where a significant policy turn was witnessed without a transition in the presidency. These cases were the Johnson administration's decision to deploy the Sentinel ABMs, the Nixon administration's decision to limit ABM deployment to two sites with 100 antiballistic missiles each by signing the ABM Treaty, President Reagan's bold move to launch SDI, and the resolve to deploy a nationwide missile defense system as expressed in the 1991 Missile Defense Act under President Bush and the 1999 National Missile Defense Act under President Clinton.

Three competing models were tested against these five cases in an attempt to explain the policy turn in each case: the security perspective, the bureaucratic politics perspective, and the congressional perspective. The security perspective takes into consideration threat, technology, and cost. These factors are the foundations of strategic calculations that are essential in evaluating a defense program. The second and the third perspectives explore the domestic political aspects of the decision making process. There are a number of players—including the president, bureaucrats, the media, scientists, and Congress—involved in missile defense policy debates, but two institutions stand out as the most important. The executive body and the legislative branch of the US government are central to the missile defense debate since these two institutions are tasked with formal decision making responsibilities. Thus, the bureaucratic politics perspective examines the power of the president and high-ranking officials within the executive branch, and the congressional perspective investigates whether lawmakers led changes to missile defense policy.

5.1 SECURITY DEVELOPMENT: THE TRIGGER

The analysis of the security perspective demonstrated that among threat, technology, and cost, the level of threat or new developments in the strategic environment was the most powerful factor in shifting US missile defense policies. The success or failure of ABM tests certainly enhanced or dampened support for missile defense efforts. However, technology was not a central element in missile defense debates because operational capability in the future could not be predicted, and judgments of achievability proved to be a function of expectation. Cost was an important variable, but the five cases showed that political resolve eclipsed budgetary concerns.

On threat, while the proposition that new security developments trigger a policy turn performed well and there was a clear correlation between latest events and changes in US missile defense policy, there were also weaknesses. For example, President Johnson claimed that his administration decided to deploy the Sentinel system in order to cope with China's nuclear developments. China acquired not only an atomic bomb but also more detrimental H-bomb technology in the 1960s, and the Johnson administration's policy shift was thought to be a response to the new threats posed by the communist country. What the security perspective failed to explain was why China's nuclear tests did not promptly convince President Johnson to abandon his original stance against building an ABM system, and this challenged the validity of the security perspective.

The Johnson administration had previously objected to ABM, citing strategic calculations based on the MAD doctrine. Did President Johnson's policy shift mean that the president had reevaluated the value of the MAD doctrine in dealing with a threat other than one from the Soviet Union? It did not seem so. Defense Secretary McNamara put forth the argument that deploying a small-scale ABM system would not destabilize the MAD doctrine that guided the US-Soviet strategic relationship because it was a small ABM network designed against China, not the Soviet Union. However, the defense secretary was not able to elaborate how the small-scale ABM system would avoid undermining the fundamentals of MAD, one of which was maintaining the vulnerability of the United States to incoming missiles when an ABM system against Chinese missiles could be also used against Soviet missiles. This was where the imperfection of the security perspective emerged. Only domestic political factors could fill the

void left by the security perspective in explaining the Johnson administration's behavior. Those domestic factors included the upcoming presidential election and congressional pressure.

The security perspective was well able to explain the Nixon administration's pursuit of the ABM Treaty. The United States and the Soviet Union had been mired in the arms race for a decade, and it was projected that the Soviet Union would surpass US capabilities eventually. The Soviet Union was rapidly expanding its nuclear arsenal while the United States capped the number of its ICBMs at 1,054 and SLBMs at 656 since the mid-1960s.

Even more problematic for the United States, the growth of the Soviet offensive strategic capability was accompanied by the deployment of its ABM, Galosh. The Nixon administration was uncertain whether Congress would fund the administration's Safeguard program, and a strategic analysis showed that the Nixon administration's original Safeguard ABM network would do little to improve the US second strike capability, anyway. This strategic calculation, along with the lingering uncertainties about technology, and the high cost estimate, contributed to the Nixon administration's decision to reconsider the plan for deploying the Safeguard ABM complex.

President Reagan's decision to launch SDI could be rationalized by the Soviets' aggressive strategic modernization plan and suspicions that the Soviet Union had violated the rules under the ABM Treaty. However, the weakness of the security perspective in defending SDI as an outcome of security conditions was the absence of a scrupulous examination delineating clear objectives and strategic implications for the renewed missile defense effort. It did not seem that the Reagan administration ever systematically weighed the three variables of the security perspective before announcing SDI. Not only did SDI lack such important reviews prior to its introduction, but it also continued to lack lucid goals even after the large effort began. It was difficult to defend the Reagan administration's strategic calculations when they were not clearly presented. President Reagan's SDI seemed to somewhat support the security perspective because it was a response to a disturbing trend, the growing strategic capabilities of the Soviet Union. However, it could not be considered as a solid case for the security perspective due to the lack of rigorous strategic reckoning.

The Missile Defense Act of 1991, which displayed US willingness to deploy a missile defense system, was caused by the 1991 crisis in the Persian Gulf as well as growing confidence in missile defense technology. Iraq's use of Scud missiles contributed to the perception of an

increased threat that certainly facilitated the urgent need to deploy an ABM system against small-scale attack. In addition, the success of the Patriot missile system in intercepting those Scud missiles seemed to indicate the growing maturity of missile defense technology. These two factors set the stage for the 1991 act.

The last case study also showed that a policy shift followed security developments. The Clinton administration signed the 1999 National Missile Defense Act on the heels of nuclear tests in India and Pakistan, and North Korea's missile test. The concerns over missile and nuclear proliferation caused President Clinton to accept a policy that called for building a nationwide missile defense system in 1999. As with the first Bush administration, external factors were important contributors to the policy turns. However, there was one serious problem that the security perspective could not explain: why did the Clinton administration continue to oppose similar legislations and threaten to veto them even after all the troubling developments took place? Similar to the Johnson administration's Sentinel case, this study demonstrated that the Clinton administration did not respond purely to external events; President Clinton's decision to sign the 1999 National Missile Defense could be fully explicated only when domestic factors were included. In summary of the security perspective, this study found that cost and technology played a role but were not determining factors. The development of a new threat was a critical variable in causing policy changes.

5.1.1 Level of Threat and Policy Adoption

This study summarized how strategic developments preceded the five significant missile defense policy turns and argued that an external threat played a key role in missile defense policy. Disagreement on its strategic value has continued between those who believe that missile defense increases security and those who believe that missile defense only intensifies tensions with US adversaries, jeopardizing deterrence. It is worth noting that the level of threat did not settle whether ABM was the right or most strategic answer to those developments, but threat assessment is innately involved with uncertainty, and this quality tends to facilitate decisions to fortify missile defense capabilities when new developments occur. In other words, though a high level of threat did not necessarily invite a strong missile defense policy following new security

developments, decision makers were disposed to bolster missile defense as a result of the latest events.

In four of the five cases examined, US decision makers enhanced their support for missile defense in the wake of a perceived increase in the level of threat. An exception to that was the ABM Treaty case. The rivalry between the United States and the Soviet Union in the early 1970s was intense not only because of the two countries' contest in strategic capabilities but also over larger geopolitical competition in Vietnam and the Middle East. Yet this was precisely when the US decisions makers chose to negotiate and compromise with the Soviet Union and curb US ABM capability. That the level of threat did not always induce a more aggressive missile defense policy becomes clear when viewed from a historical perspective. Although the threshold for deploying a missile defense system and increasing funds for missile defense programs is a point of contention, it can be agreed that the level of nuclear threat during the Cold War was higher than in the post-Cold War era. Nevertheless, decision makers committed more funds to the missile defense program in the 1990s at an average of \$3.5 billion per year compared to an average of less than \$2 billion per year during the Cold War. Moreover, the United States bookended the first post-Cold War decade, in 1991 and 1999, with legislation that expressed its intent to deploy a missile defense system.

5.2 WEAK BUREAUCRACY, STRONG PRESIDENT

The second model tested was the bureaucratic politics perspective. There are three central arguments put forth by this perspective. First, the executive branch, as opposed to external security developments or Congress, is the main force behind a policy decision. Second, within the executive branch, high-ranking bureaucrats drive the decision making process, and they engage in political games in order to promote their bureaucrats' interests. Third, in the process of playing political games, bureaucrats' influence overshadows that of the president's.

Among the five cases this study examined, President Reagan's SDI was the strongest case for the first hypothesis that the executive branch led the decision but SDI was not a strong case for the second or third hypotheses. The other four cases were moderate at best or weak in

validating the three claims put forth by the bureaucratic politics perspective. The Johnson administration's case demonstrated that the executive branch made the decision to deploy the Sentinel system in reaction to political demands from Congress. Within the executive branch, bureaucrats exhibited highly visible political infighting. The clearest division among officials of the Johnson administration was between Defense Secretary McNamara and the professional military staff. General Earl Wheeler was an important figure in convincing President Johnson, but the JCS chairman was not the only primary reason for the successful policy shift. Given the political climate, President Johnson was already inclined to seriously consider ABM deployment by the time he sought JCS advice.

President Nixon and his national security adviser, Henry Kissinger, dominated the SALT process that eventually led to the conclusion of the ABM Treaty. Arms negotiation is an inherent prerogative of the executive branch that could have substantiated the first argument of the bureaucratic politics perspective. However, the weakness of the Nixon ABM Treaty case in justifying the bureaucratic politics perspective argument lies in the observation that the White House was originally not interested in limiting ABM deployment. President Nixon and Kissinger became serious about arms negotiations and reducing the scope of the Safeguard plan only after the president and his national security adviser realized that their preferred option to build the Safeguard ABM network was not politically feasible, and a partial ABM complex would not accomplish meaningful strategic merit. On the claims that a policy option is an outcome of bureaucratic politics and that bureaucrats endeavor to expand their organizational interests, the Nixon case proved to be weak. The State Department and the Arms Control and Disarmament Agency often clashed with the Department of Defense on the ABM ban and the on-site inspection condition, if MIRV were to be banned. This pattern corroborated the argument that government agencies are biased for the mission of their organizations. However, the actual effect of their influence was diminished by the dominance of Henry Kissinger. This point also sternly rejected the premise that president is a victim of bureaucratic politics. In Nixon's case, the president, with the assistance of his aide, had almost total control of the arms talks with the Soviet Union and closed the deal as President Nixon and Kissinger favored. The duo was in control throughout most of the negotiations process.

The Strategic Defense Initiative, as discussed, is the strongest case among the five for only one of the three hypotheses of the bureaucratic politics perspective in that it was an

executive-driven decision, and Congress had no input on the launching of SDI. President Reagan was the central figure in the SDI decision making process. Several outsiders and White House staff encouraged the president, but it was a case in which the president determined the policy course. At the same time, the president-centric decision making process undercut the other two claims of the bureaucratic politics perspective: that bureaucrats pushed a new missile defense policy to augment their organizational interests, and that the policy option was a product of bureaucratic maneuvering. Secretary of Defense Casper Weinberger and Secretary of State Schultz were involved in a tense standoff over the interpretation of the ABM Treaty, exhibiting different levels of support for missile defense. Weinberger became a staunch supporter of SDI after President Reagan had already made the decision. However, prior to the SDI announcement, neither was instrumental in introducing the idea to revive missile defense nor were they properly informed of the plan for the public statement.

The last two cases under Presidents Bush and Clinton are most damaging to the bureaucratic politics perspective's central claim that the executive branch is the main force behind a policy change. The pronouncements that the United States was determined to deploy a nationwide missile defense system were the products of legislative actions in both cases, directly challenging the executive power. Between the two, the 1999 National Missile Defense Act was a bigger problem to the bureaucratic politics perspective since the Clinton administration had adamantly opposed similar legislative initiatives earlier. At least for the 1991 Missile Defense Act, although it was not led by the administration, President Bush was glad to support the congressional action.

The next part of the bureaucratic politics perspective dealt with which policy options bureaucracies or bureaucrats tried to advance, and whether their favorite option represented their organizations' traditional views and interests. If this question focused on whether the defense secretaries supported increased efforts for missile defense R&D and deployment, it showed a mixed outcome. Secretary McNamara under President Johnson and Secretaries Aspin and Perry under President Clinton were not champions of missile defense efforts. An important aspect in understanding this finding is the fact that these three defense secretaries, who showed hesitance in fully supporting missile defense, were all under Democratic presidents. It hints at the strong possibility that their political ideologies weighed more in shaping their policy stances than their position as the head of the Defense Department. This inference holds when the secretaries of

state are compared as well. Secretaries Schultz and Baker showed that their primary interest was stabilizing the relationship with the Soviet Union, and they were less enthusiastic about missile defense than their counterparts in the Defense Department, Secretaries Weinberger and Cheney. However, when Secretaries Schultz and Baker dealt with the interpretation of the ABM Treaty, they backed a broad construal of the treaty against the traditional view of the State Department. This contrasted with Secretary Albright and other high-level State Department officials' acceptance of a narrow reading of the ABM Treaty, which was more faithful to the spirit of arms control that the State Department typically espouses. Again, political leanings—not just their interest in representing the State Department—seemed to have shaped the views of the secretaries of state.

The five cases demonstrated the limit of bureaucrats' influence on the decision making process, and the consequential power of the president (when compared to bureaucrats, not vis-à-vis Congress). In terms of bureaucratic motive, high-ranking bureaucrats tended to represent their political ideologies as well as their organizational interests. Overall, the examination of the five cases demonstrated that bureaucrats ultimately gave in to the president they were serving. In this regard, the president was the key player within the executive branch in the missile defense decision making process. However, the president often chose an option other than his favorite one in order to mitigate the political pressure from Congress. Therefore, the conventional understanding that public policy, foreign policy in particular, is a product of the executive power proved to be seriously challenged.

5.3 GROWING POWER OF CONGRESS

The last perspective this study tested was the role of the legislative branch in determining missile defense policy. The analysis of the five cases revealed an intriguing finding. Landmark policy decisions are frequently identified with the presidency. Johnson is equated with the Vietnam War, Nixon with détente or withdrawal of US troops from Indochina, Reagan with SDI, Bush with the first Gulf War, and Clinton with Somalia and Kosovo. This common practice assumes that the executive branch is in control of policy making, and that it is a reasonable

assumption considering the executive body's responsibility to formulate and implement policy. Nonetheless, preliminary research hinted that Congress was deeply involved in US missile defense policy decisions, and it was essential to examine the role of Congress in order to accurately understand the decision making process for missile defense.

This study found that Congress played an effective role in changing the direction of US missile defense policies. The first two cases, Sentinel deployment and the ABM Treaty demonstrated the tug of war between the two branches of the US government. Congress constantly pressured the Johnson administration for deployment and the Nixon administration for an arms treaty. Both presidents understood the political dynamics and eventually determined that they had to change their policy course. President Johnson and his defense secretary resisted the call by members of Congress for deployment, but other options, such as arms negotiations with the Soviets, had been exhausted, and the administration had less and less to leverage against the congressional demands. The Nixon administration's Safeguard proposal relied on fragile support from Congress, which valued the program largely as a bargaining chip for arms talks. President Nixon and Henry Kissinger realized that Congress could pull the plug on the Safeguard program and cut off funding at any time. The first two cases showed the subtle political games in which the executive branch and Congress engaged, whereas the two major pieces of missile defense legislation enacted under Presidents Bush and Clinton demonstrated the more lopsided influence of Congress. The 1999 National Missile Defense Act marked the zenith of legislative power, leaving the president little room to maneuver.

Reagan's SDI was the weakest case for the congressional perspective since it was led by President Reagan. Congress was helpful in sustaining the costly SDI program only after President Reagan had launched it. Nonetheless, all of the other four cases were strong in supporting the central argument of the congressional perspective: that the legislative body was influential in generating the policy turns.

5.3.1 Basis of Congressional preferences

On what grounds, then, did Congress make missile defense policy decisions? Their decisions were responses to external events, and strategic calculations were important to members of

Congress. The tipping point for adopting a stronger missile defense policy often followed the development of new security threats, such as China's acquisition of nuclear capabilities in the 1960s, Saddam Hussein's invasion of Kuwait in 1990, and so-called rogue states' nuclear or ballistic missile tests in the 1990s.

In dealing with new developments, members of Congress displayed a greater level of flexibility—almost to the extent that they were precarious—than the administration in changing their positions. When Johnson was the president, Congress was at first comfortable with the MAD doctrine that the administration espoused, and the lawmakers were not troubled by the absence of a plan to deploy an ABM system. As the Soviet Union was building up its military power on the strategic front, and as China emerged as a newcomer to the nuclear club, congressional members demanded deployment of an ABM system, forcing President Johnson to take a new position on ABM. However, by the time Nixon became president, Congress had changed their stance again and began to withdraw their support for the new administration's Safeguard system. This move strongly signaled to the Nixon administration that Congress might not fund the Safeguard network.

When President Reagan introduced his grand plan to resume a missile defense program, congressional members first responded with skepticism but then largely supported the ambitious program later on. The 1991 Missile Defense Act was another strong example consistent with this observation. Congress cut SDI funding to below \$3 billion for FY 1991 as the members were highly skeptical of the strategic need and technological feasibility of deployment. However, the next year, Congress came around, especially the House, to mandate a deployment plan and authorize over \$4 billion for a limited-scale missile defense system. The 1999 National Missile Defense Act further confirmed this pattern when the controversial measure was passed by 97–3 in the Senate, despite the fact that almost identical bills had failed to muster a sixty vote for cloture only months before.

As to why Congress is more prone to changing its positions, there are a couple of reasons. First, politically, members of Congress are influenced by the political climate and constituents' demands as they are subject to reelection. Second, congressional members act collectively and lawmakers can share the blame for shifting their stances. In contrast, administration officials are typically under more persistent and rigorous inquiries to justify their policy changes.

5.3.2 Congress and missile defense

While examining the power of Congress in the missile defense decision making process, this study made other interesting observations. Members of Congress increasingly ossified their positions in a partisan way. The party demarcation had been always present in the missile defense discourse, but unity along the party line increased over time, with Democrats opposing and Republicans supporting the deployment of an ABM system. During the Johnson administration, the Democrat-controlled Congress challenged the Democratic president for deployment. Fast-forward four decades to the 1990s, when the partisan battle between the Republican-dominated Congress and the Democratic administration reached an apex. The Republicans' lawsuit against the Clinton administration over its refusal to obligate funds appropriated to THAAD and NTW was the prime example demonstrating this bitter partisanship.

Another important finding was that Congress became increasingly involved in the details of missile defense policy. In the late 1960s, congressional participation was largely limited to the power of the purse along with occasional statements criticizing the administration's inaction with respect to the deployment question. By 1970, due to congressional objection, the Nixon administration had to revise its second phase of the Safeguard program by proposing only one additional site for deployment at Whiteman Air Force Base in Missouri instead of two (the other deployment site was slated for Upper Washington State). By the time President Bush (Sr.) came to office, Congress was comfortable and assertive enough to discern specific elements of SDI, approving a land-based system but showing little support for the space-based portion of the SDI program. This pattern repeated in the 1990s during the Clinton administration. Republican lawmakers squarely defied the Clinton administration's definition of theater missile defense in terms of velocity and flight range. This confrontation provided a clue as to how intensely and confidently Congress had begun to engage in specific technical details of the missile defense discussion. The most important finding, however, was that Congress was influential in four of the five cases and its role steadily increased over the span of time examined by this study.

5.4 COMPARISON OF THE THREE PERSPECTIVES

This conclusion chapter is intended not only to summarize whether each of these perspectives could explain the five policy turns and validate the perspectives' central arguments, but also to determine which one of the three perspectives performed best. The analysis of the five cases showed that the threat variable of the security perspective seemed to be an important cause of policy changes. This conclusion was stronger when the link between external developments and policy changes was analyzed than when the administrations' explanations for the changes were examined, due to inconsistencies and contradictions found in the administrations' justifications. Policy changes were all preceded by significant security developments, and decision makers reacted to those episodes. However, the administration, responsible for deciding the policy option at the time of the events often failed to convincingly elaborate their policy shifts with a sound strategic reason that would not undercut the rationale for their original stances.

Although this study ruled that none of the three perspectives proved to be the "right" or "perfect" approach in explaining the five cases, it was clear that the bureaucratic politics perspective did not provide much utility. The bureaucratic politics perspective's main argument that the five decisions were the outcomes of the bureaucracies' sway was tenuous. The influence and participation of the major bureaucracies in the decision making process were uneven. The Department of State and the Arms Control and Disarmament Agency, the two supposedly most important bureaucracies for arms negotiations and treaty making, were completely sidestepped by President Nixon and his national security adviser, Henry Kissinger. In the case of SDI, President Reagan sought almost no advice from the two most pertinent cabinet members, secretary of defense and secretary of state, before he announced the major policy plan.

It was observed that the security perspective and the congressional perspective were stronger than the bureaucratic politics perspective, and the security perspective and the congressional perspective complemented each other quite nicely. Strategic developments were an essential but insufficient variable for causing policy change. All five missile defense policy turns occurred after significant strategic events took place or when the United States faced strategically disadvantageous trends. China's acquisition of nuclear capability during the Johnson administration, the first Iraq War under the Bush administration, and unsettling developments in North Korea, Iran, India, and Pakistan during the Clinton presidency prompted

the policy moves. Presidents Nixon and Reagan also noticed the increase of the Soviet Union's strategic capabilities. While the heightened level of threat contributed to the policy shifts, the new developments were initially unsatisfactory in convincing the administration in charge at the time, with the exception of President Reagan's case. In four of the five cases, it took prodding by Congress and the presidents' realization of the political climate for the administration to change its course on missile defense. The executive budged because the congressional pressure was mounting and the president recognized that the status quo would incur political damage to his political party, especially close to the presidential election cycle. Taken together, there was a pattern in four of the five cases that the security element triggered a congressional response and that, in turn, brought about the administration's policy changes. It is interesting to note that Reagan's SDI was a weak case for all three perspectives. It was, in essence, a case that demonstrated how President Reagan's idiosyncrasies trumped all other players in domestic politics, including bureaucrats and Congress.

Table 11. The Performance of The Three Perspectives In Explaining the Five Cases

	Security Perspective	Bureaucratic Politics Perspective	Congressional Perspective
Johnson: Sentinel	Strong	Weak	Strong
Nixon: ABM Treaty	Strong	Mixed (strong president, weak bureaucracy)	Strong
Reagan: SDI	Weak	Mixed (strong president, weak bureaucracy)	Weak
Bush: Missile Defense Act of 1991	Strong	Weak	Strong
Clinton: National Missile Defense Act of 1999	Strong	Weak	Strong

In answering the most fundamental question of this study—why US missile defense policy has sustained for over half a century despite changes in the security environment—this study offers the following reasons. First, strategic assessment, as rational as it sounds, is built on a set of assumptions such as the rationality or irrationality of the adversary that hinges on the decision maker's view. This quality in strategic assessment, coupled with often incomplete information on the adversary's capability and intent, was the fundamental cause for disagreement in evaluating the strategic merits of missile defense. The subjectivity and uncertainty involved in strategic calculation perpetuated debates over missile defense and also made it hard for decision

makers to bluntly reject the program. When defense policy is at issue, decision makers err on the side of caution and tend to support research and development. This tendency helped the survival of missile defense even during the time when MAD was accepted as the bedrock of US strategy and after the Soviet Union dissolved, leaving the United States the most powerful player on the world scene.

Second, the continuation of missile defense owes to political visibility. The Republican Party has identified missile defense as one of its key platforms, especially since President Reagan revived a large-scale missile defense program in 1983. Many Republicans were already inclined to believe that missile defense was essential. Over time, as the issue became a political litmus test, it became both a strategic and a political necessity for the Republicans to endorse it. The long existence of the missile defense program took on a life of its own in the political establishment. It has also become a politically risky move even for the Democrats to eliminate research and development efforts that have been supported for so long.

Third, the United States' superpower status affords policy makers the latitude to pursue the maximization of security interests. (Maximization in this instance means that the United States should do whatever it takes to reduce its vulnerability against a high risk such as nuclear attack. It does not mean that erecting missile defense is necessarily a way to improve US security since believers in deterrence have a different view). Policy makers do not want to completely halt efforts to build a missile defense system that might be effective some day in the future. The extraordinary resources, technology, and confidence of the United States contributed to the longevity of the missile defense program. In sum, US missile defense has survived for so long because it embodies complicated and diverse views on nuclear strategy, the political and institutional capital, and the unique standing of the US in world politics.

One last point this study would like to make is the comparison of the explanatory power of the three perspectives. This study found that the security perspective was the strongest both in justifying the survival of missile defense despite its controversies and in explaining the five case studies. The nature of the threat has changed from massive nuclear threats from the Soviet Union to smaller-scale threats from the Third World or terrorist groups. Small or large, the persistent presence of a threat, and the anticipation that there would emerge a new threat if none were prominently perceived, motivated the United States to continue to pursue missile defense. The security perspective was also able to explain the five case studies with the help of the

congressional perspective. Congress was reactive to external developments and instrumental in fostering the five policy turns. The bureaucratic politics perspective was the weakest perspective in explaining the cases examined in this study.

5.5 FINDINGS

The examination of the five missile defense cases revealed a number of interesting strategic and political implications. The following section summarizes these findings.

5.5.1 Security Factor Essential But Not Sufficient in Leading to a Policy Change

The external security environment or developments led to a policy change in some cases as evidenced by the Nixon administration's ABM Treaty, and the passage of the Missile Defense Act in 1991. President Nixon and his national security adviser, Henry Kissinger, were eager to secure an arms agreement in reaction to the strategic conditions that they perceived to be tipping in the Soviets' favor. The Missile Defense Act of 1991 was adopted by Congress (at the collective level) and gladly endorsed by the executive branch following the first Persian Gulf War.

Two other cases, however, showed that despite alarming new security developments, the executive branch tried to maintain the status quo in their missile defense policy. President Johnson's decision to deploy the Sentinel ABM system in 1967 and the 1999 National Missile Defense Act under President Clinton were cases in which the two administrations were reluctant to reverse their original policy positions even in light of external security factors, respectively, China's nuclear test and the worsening nuclear and missile proliferation in the Middle East and Asia.

5.5.2 Technology and costs: Glass half-full or half-empty

In addition to the threat, technological feasibility and cost are two other criteria that are often considered in making logical decisions on missile defense. Although these two factors were important and proved to be relevant in the missile defense debate, they were easily overpowered by political will. Technology is questionable as a determining factor because its feasibility is a function of future prospects. A test failure could be deemed as proof of the impracticality of a missile defense system to opponents, but proponents might interpret it as proof of the need for stronger support. With respect to cost, intangibles such as security could not be priced, and the worth of a program was often seen through the political lens. Given the importance of the individual's own view in interpreting and evaluating the technological achievability and worth of missile defense, these two criteria should not be considered decisive factors in predicting future decisions.

5.5.3 Missile defense: Enhancing or degrading deterrence?

The strategic value of missile defense cannot be adequately understood without considering the overall nuclear strategy. During the Cold War, one of the strongest arguments against missile defense was that having missile defense capability would ruin the delicate balance required by the MAD doctrine by affording the side with a missile defense system the perception of greater survivability, thus increasing the likelihood of launching a first strike against the side without missile defense capability. This would lead to a nuclear exchange that would eventually bring down both sides.

In the 1960s and 1970s, missile defense policy had to overcome these questions raised by supporters of the MAD doctrine. The ABM Treaty was largely recognized as the United States' acceptance of the MAD doctrine, and deterrence was used synonymously with MAD. Opponents of missile defense often do not distinguish between deterrence and MAD, and continue to make their case against missile defense citing the success of deterrence strategy during the Cold War. However, this approach ignores the important difference between MAD and deterrence. Missile defense capability destabilizes the MAD doctrine in a nuclear bipolar

system. In a unipolar system, missile defense only increases a country's ability to discourage the adversary from launching an attack because it decreases the chances of success for that attack.

In the post-Cold War era, the MAD doctrine became immaterial because the balance of nuclear power required by the MAD doctrine ceased to exist. This was not a consequence of a deliberate policy of the United States but rather the outcome of the Soviet Union's dissolution. The breakup of the Soviet Union caused the United States to become the dominant power by default, and this power distribution broke the equilibrium necessary for the MAD doctrine. Therefore, the MAD doctrine cannot be applied to the post-Cold War system. One point for the opponents of missile defense is that the US strategic offensive capability is already so dominant that it can achieve deterrence even without a defensive mechanism.

5.5.4 Third World Threat: A useful justification for missile defense

The Johnson administration's decision to deploy the Sentinel system in 1967 was constructed on the risks posed by China's nuclear development. Since then, there has been little discussion on the strategic risks from China when discussing missile defense. Why was that the case? China had not rolled back its nuclear capability like South Africa. Although it gradually infused capitalism into its economic system, and the relationship between the United States and China was restored after Nixon's surprise visit to China in 1972, China had not been considered an ally. On the one hand, China's nuclear development certainly increased the level of nuclear threat to the United States. On the other hand, however, as was discussed in the Johnson administration case study, it would have been suicidal for China to attack the United States, which possessed a devastating second strike capability. Thus, from this point of view, China was never a serious threat to the United States.

In terms of individual cases, the Nixon administration cleverly exploited the deteriorating relationship between the Soviet Union and China and adopted a strategy of rapprochement with China. There was no reason to stoke the China rhetoric, especially when the Nixon administration's Safeguard system was built on the counterforce protection against a possible Soviet attack. The Reagan administration was preoccupied by its competition with the Soviet Union. President Reagan's emphasis on building a strong missile defense system against what he called the evil empire overshadowed the perceived China threat. For realists who believe that

China's capability is sufficient to be a source of concern, China deserves more attention than what has been paid to it after the Johnson administration. The Bush administration and the Clinton administration alike were concerned with smaller-scale threats not from China but from "rogue states" such as Iran, Iraq, and North Korea and terrorist organizations. It is interesting to observe that while the identified sources of threat were different from that cited by the Johnson administration, the central argument was the same and could be generalized. Both the China threat and threats from rogue states or other rogue entities highlighted the irrationality of the potential attackers. The emphasis on irrationality of adversaries is quite helpful in justifying the deployment of a missile defense system to opponents of deterrence, who argue that countries with smaller-scale nuclear capability would be deterred without missile defense since the United States' nuclear capability is overwhelmingly superior. In addition, the desire to be free from nuclear blackmail, whether the threat was serious or for a bargaining purpose, from smaller nuclear powers such as North Korea was added to the reasons for erecting a missile defense system in the post-Cold War era.

It is also an interesting observation that in the late 1990s, when Clinton administration officials voiced their concerns over Iran, Iraq, and North Korea and ultimately the North Korea missile tests in 1998 that contributed to the passage of the 1999 National Missile Defense Act, much of the whispering in the background among strategists was that the missile defense capability against North Korea was fungible for protection against China as well. There was no need to play up this feature, especially when there was a growing economic interdependence between the United States and China, but it was certainly in some strategists' minds.

5.5.5 Missile defense as president's political agenda

This study argued that the president played the central role in the missile defense decision making process within the executive branch, and that cabinet departmental heads largely submitted to the political desire of the president. It bears repeating that the president was a key player because by the time the five presidents this study examined made their decisions on missile defense, it had become a politically significant enough issue to attract the president's attention. The political profile of missile defense steadily rose, especially since the 1980s largely

thanks to President Reagan who transformed an otherwise extremely technical subject into a passionate political issue. The political visibility hampered the bureaucrats' leeway to maneuver the policy discourse. This point cautions that the role of bureaucracy might prove to be more significant for other decisions.

5.5.6 Congressional Influence on the Rise

Congress competes with the executive branch in decision making. It has always played a significant role in administration policy as appropriators. However, there is an argument that when it comes to strategic questions, Congress relegates its power to the president. This study found that lawmakers were active participants in missile defense decision making and their influence grew significantly over time. Their role moved from approving or disapproving the administration's missile defense policy to more proactively formulating one. This rise in influence and participation occurred thanks to professional support staff, missile defense advocates and opponents among defense intellectuals, and growing support by the public (although there is serious public misunderstanding on the subject).

Congress's motivations for this interest and willingness to engage in missile defense policy decision making were political and strategic. The turning point was, again, during the Reagan presidency. With the political impetus gained by President Reagan's SDI, congressional Democrats and Republicans both tried to use missile defense to their advantage as one of the defining issues for their party.

5.5.7 Public Opinion: Political capital for missile defense

Supporting missile defense is appealing to the public. A missile defense system is designed to protect American lives, and in that spirit it is much easier to mobilize the public to support than to oppose missile defense. Opponents' arguments are largely built on MAD, the uncertainties of technology, and cost-effectiveness. It is not easy for the general public to grasp the complicated assumptions and the validity of the MAD doctrine, nor to think that the required missile defense technology cannot be achieved at some point in the future, or that defending America can be too expensive. Surveys showed that a majority of Americans supported developing or deploying a

missile defense system in the mid-1980s, and the percentage grew in the 1990s. Surveys also revealed that many respondents did not understand missile defense well. A majority of Americans believed that the United States already had the capacity in the 1990s, and did not follow the issue closely. Only if they were pressed to make a choice between missile defense and other programs, did Americans seem to waver in their support for missile defense, especially during economic downturns. However, the American public's lack of understanding on missile defense did not matter much from the supporters' perspective. What mattered was that public support has become political stock for the proponents of missile defense.

5.6 THE GEORGE W. BUSH ADMINISTRATION AND THE FUTURE OF MISSILE DEFENSE

President George W. Bush succeeded Bill Clinton in January 2001. The Republican administration was abundantly skeptical of the balance of terror. Based on the belief that a new approach should be adopted in the post-Cold War strategic environment, the Bush administration was committed to building an operational missile defense system and made a formal decision to begin the deployment effort in Fort Greeley, Alaska, in August 2001.¹

After the terrorist attacks on the World Trade Center and Pentagon on September 11, 2001, decision makers' attention was riveted on the war on terror. As defeating terrorism became the highest priority for US leaders and policy makers, many speculated that the missile defense program would be put on the back burner. However, contrary to the prevalent expectation that decision makers' focus on terrorism would chip away support for missile defense, the United States took swift action to expand the missile defense program. One of the most extraordinary actions was the Bush administration's announcement in December 2001 that the United States would withdraw from the ABM Treaty, which had been regarded by many as a cornerstone of arms control.

The Bush administration carried out its resolve for the deployment of a missile defense system against small-scale threats. Annually the United States spent over \$8 billion on average

¹ Missile Defense Agency, MDA History, <http://www.mda.mil/mdalink/html/milestone.html>.

between 2001 and 2008, about twice as much as during the previous eight years under President Clinton.² The constrained budgetary situation due to the two wars the United States is engaged in Afghanistan and Iraq, and the exponentially growing federal deficit, have done little to discourage decision makers.

Missile defense policy under the Bush administration has confirmed the major findings of this study: high cost can be easily overcome by political will, and anxiety over a security threat encourages policy makers to back any potential program that might alleviate the possible threat. The objective of the missile defense system under the Bush administration was to protect the United States from threats originating from rogue states such as North Korea and Iran or terror organizations. The familiar debates continued as to whether smaller countries would dare to attack the United States knowing that it would invite a US retaliation that would certainly destroy the aggressor, and whether terrorists would launch a missile attack or would prefer sneaking dirty bombs into US cities and ports. These arguments were already heard in the 1960s, when the Johnson administration proposed the Sentinel deployment against a Chinese threat, and again following the outbreak of the first Gulf War in 1991.

If past behavior is any indication of future action, a security crisis or the perception of a heightened security threat against the United States is likely to sway decision makers to increase their support for missile defense. The United States elected a Democratic president in November 2008. The new Barack Obama administration thus far has shown a more restrained position on the deployment of missile defense systems in the Czech Republic and Poland. However, the Obama administration seems to be continuing the deployment plan in Alaska. Democrats are likely to continue to support research and development efforts and TMD programs, and will show limited support for NMD if only to hedge their bets and to keep the production line open for deployment in case of crisis.

² Missile Defense Agency, MDA Historical Funding for MDA FY85-09, <http://www.mda.mil/mdalink/pdf/histfunds.pdf>.

6.0 LIMITATIONS AND FURTHER RESEARCH AREA

Analysis of missile defense has attracted attention from a diverse group of scholars in decision making and international security, policy makers, arms controllers, and opinion leaders. Missile defense is an issue related to nuclear strategy, a major program for defense contractors, and a thorny issue for arms controllers. Many offered their insights on this topic, and one of the most frequent suggestions for explaining the longevity of the missile defense program in the United States was the influence of the defense industry on congressional members. It is an interesting and important question, but this study did not discuss the military–industrial complex extensively for three reasons.

The first reason that this dissertation did not include the missile defense industry’s influence on congressional decisions was to preserve the focus of this study. One of the main answers this study sought was which of the three factors in missile defense policy—external security events, the executive branch, or the legislative body—was supreme in molding missile defense policy. What motivated the executive or the legislative body was a secondary interest of this study.

Second, there were practical challenges in examining the military-industrial complex. Analysis of the relationship between defense contracting and congressional members’ behavior requires a systemic data set for decades, and an exhaustive analysis of congressional voting records for a large number of members. Obtaining a consistent data set posed a problem since missile defense programs were largely part of the Army program in the 1960s and 1970s, but later SDIO and BMDO had their own records. Also problematic was the availability of the data. For example, Defense Technical Information Center (DTIC) had limited public access. It is my belief that the argument that the military-industrial complex was present in missile defense policy deserves a bigger purview of study than as a subset of this analysis.

Third, preliminary research revealed that evidence of the missile defense program contractors' pressure on congressional members was at best mixed. Missile defense debates in the late 1960s and 1970s regarding a possible deployment decision were deemed largely separated by party lines or political needs of the moment. Prominent Democrats who supported missile defense efforts included Senators Richard Russell of Georgia, Henry Jackson of Washington, Strom Thurmond of South Carolina (before he changed his party affiliation), and John Pastore of Rhode Island. What was common among these Democratic senators who pressured President Johnson to deploy a missile defense system and supported President Nixon's plan to deploy Safeguard were their conservative predilections in defense and security matters, rather than the prospect of defense contracts or demands from constituents in their states. Ironically, the Sentinel deployment plan would have benefited Senator Jackson's home state of Washington for construction work since the Seattle area was one of the sites for Sentinel deployment, and one could argue that that might have persuaded Senator Jackson. However, citizen groups in Boston, Seattle, and Chicago protested against ABM deployment in the vicinity for fear of accidental explosions.

After President Reagan launched SDI, missile defense earned nicknames such as "pie in the sky," referring to the huge budget amount allocated for the new program. It sparked interest in the military-industrial complex among scholars, and rightly so considering the magnitude of the program. It is a reasonable proposition that the missile defense program with billions of dollars in funding motivated the defense industry's lobbying effort on congressional members. However, members' support continued to seem more linked to their ideology and party affiliation than bringing "bacon" to their district. Republicans and hawkish Democrats tended to support rigorous and aggressive efforts for missile defense. Systematic studies have been conducted applying the military-industrial complex theory to missile defense after the launch of SDI in 1983. Eric K. Pratt examined this case in his, *Selling Strategic Defense* and found that "the military-industrial complex is not a rogue elephant," because missile defense contractors had to compete with the institutionalized interest groups who had been already invested (not only monetarily but also organizationally and dogmatically) in offensive deterrence.³ Another interesting study was conducted by Edward Reiss. He analyzed the top states that earned SDIO

³ Erik K Pratt, *Selling Strategic Defense: Interests, Ideologies, and the Arms Race* (Boulder, CO: L. Rienner, 1990).

contracts and they included California, Massachusetts, Alabama, Washington, New Mexico, Maryland, New York, Virginia, Texas, and Colorado. Senators and representatives from traditionally Democratic states such as California, Massachusetts, Washington, Maryland, and New York were not prominent supporters of missile defense—partly because the defense industry is not the only interest group in these states. Maintaining their liberal policy view on defense serves other liberal interest groups and constituents. The members of Congress had to weigh these competing groups' demands. If any, as James Lindsay's study concluded, members' ideology and party affiliations seem more promising determinants than the constituency service factor.

Nonetheless, it is logical to posit that lobbying efforts for missile defense contributed to the longevity of the missile defense program since, as Reiss analyzed in the same book, major defense contractors often were part of the revolving door, moving between the defense industry and taking advisory roles or even rejoining the Defense Department. Therefore, the effect of the defense industry on missile defense is a potential research area for the future.

APPENDIX A

ABM TREATY, 1972

KEY PROVISIONS OF THE TREATY BETWEEN THE UNITED STATES OF AMERICA AND THE UNION OF SOVIET SOCIALIST REPUBLICS ON THE LIMITATION OF ANTI-BALLISTIC MISSILE SYSTEMS

Article I

1. Each Party undertakes to limit anti-ballistic missile (ABM) systems and to adopt other measures in accordance with the provisions of this Treaty.
2. Each Party undertakes not to deploy ABM systems for a defense of the territory of its country and not to provide a base for such a defense, and not to deploy ABM systems for defense of an individual region except as provided for in Article III of this Treaty.

Article II

1. For the purpose of this Treaty an ABM system is a system to counter strategic ballistic missiles or their elements in flight trajectory, currently consisting of:
 - (a) ABM interceptor missiles, which are interceptor missiles constructed and deployed for an ABM role, or of a type tested in an ABM mode;
 - (b) ABM launchers, which are launchers constructed and deployed for launching ABM interceptor missiles; and
 - (c) ABM radars, which are radars constructed and deployed for an ABM role, or of a type tested in an ABM mode.

2. The ABM system components listed in paragraph 1 of this Article include those which are:
 - (a) operational;
 - (b) under construction;
 - (c) under testing;
 - (d) undergoing overhaul, repair or conversion; or
 - (e) mothballed.
 - (f)

Article III

Each Party undertakes not to deploy ABM systems or their components except that:

(a) within one ABM system deployment area having a radius of one hundred and fifty kilometers and centered on the Party's national capital, a Party may deploy: (1) no more than one hundred ABM launchers and no more than one hundred ABM interceptor missiles at launch sites, and (2) ABM radars within no more than six ABM radar complexes, the area of each complex being circular and having a diameter of no more than three kilometers; and

(b) within one ABM system deployment area having a radius of one hundred and fifty kilometers and containing ICBM silo launchers, a Party may deploy: (1) no more than one hundred ABM launchers and no more than one hundred ABM interceptor missiles at launch sites, (2) two large phased-array ABM radars comparable in potential to corresponding ABM radars operational or under construction on the date of signature of the Treaty in an ABM system deployment area containing ICBM silo launchers, and (3) no more than eighteen ABM radars each having a potential less than the potential of the smaller of the above-mentioned two large phased-array ABM radars.

Article V

1. Each Party undertakes not to develop, test, or deploy ABM systems or components which are sea-based, air-based, space-based, or mobile land-based.
2. Each Party undertakes not to develop, test or deploy ABM launchers for launching more than one ABM interceptor missile at a time from each launcher, not to modify deployed launchers to provide them with such a capacity, not to develop, test or deploy automatic or semi-automatic or other similar systems for rapid reload of ABM launchers.

Article XIII

1. To promote the objectives and implementation of the provisions of this Treaty, the Parties shall establish promptly a Standing Consultative Commission, within the framework of which they will:

- a) consider questions concerning compliance with the obligations assumed and related situations which may be considered ambiguous;
 - b) provide on a voluntary basis such information as either Party considers necessary to assure confidence in compliance with the obligations assumed;
 - c) consider questions involving unintended interference with national technical means of verification.
 - d) consider possible changes in the strategic situation which have a bearing on the provisions of this Treaty.
 - e) agree upon procedures and dates for destruction or dismantling of ABM systems or their components in cases provided for by the provisions of this Treaty;
 - f) consider, as appropriate, possible proposals for further increasing the viability of this Treaty; including proposals for amendments in accordance with the provisions of this Treaty;
 - g) consider, as appropriate, proposals for further measures aimed at limiting strategic arms.
2. The through consultation shall establish, and may amend as appropriate, Regulations for the Standing Consultative Commission governing procedures, composition and other relevant matters.

Article XIII

1. This Treaty shall be of unlimited duration.
2. Each Party shall, in exercising its national sovereignty, have the right to withdraw from this Treaty if it decides that extraordinary events related to the subject matter of this Treaty have jeopardized its supreme interests. It shall give notice of its decision to the other Party six months prior to withdrawal from the Treaty. Such notice shall include a statement of the extraordinary events the notifying Party regards as having jeopardized as supreme interests.

Source: Department of State, Archive Site for State Department information prior to January 20, 2001.
<http://state.gov/www/global/arms/treaties/abm/abms.html>.

APPENDIX B

SALT I: INTERIM AGREEMENT ON THE LIMITATION OF STRATEGIC OFFENSIVE ARMS, 1972

KEY PROVISIONS OF THE INTERIM AGREEMENT BETWEEN THE UNITED STATES OF AMERICA AND THE UNION OF SOVIET SOCIALIST REPUBLICS ON CERTAIN MEASURES WITH RESPECT TO THE LIMITATION OF STRATEGIC OFFENSIVE ARMS

Article II

The Parties undertake not to convert land-based launchers for light ICBMs, or for ICBMs of older types deployed prior to 1964, into land-based launchers for heavy ICBMs of types deployed after that time.

Article III

The Parties undertake to limit submarine-launched ballistic missile (SLBM) launchers and modern ballistic missile submarines to the numbers operational and under construction on the date of signature of this Interim Agreement, and in addition to launchers and submarines constructed under procedures established by the Parties as replacements for an equal number of ICBM launchers of older types deployed prior to 1964 or for launchers on older submarines.

Article IV

Subject to the provisions of this Interim Agreement, modernization and replacement of strategic offensive ballistic missiles and launchers covered by this Interim Agreement may be undertaken.

Article V

1. For the purpose of providing assurance of compliance with the provisions of this Interim Agreement, each Party shall use national technical means of verification at its disposal in a manner consistent with generally recognized principles of international law.
2. Each Party undertakes not to interfere with the national technical means of verification of the other Party operating in accordance with paragraph 1 of this Article.
3. Each Party undertakes not to use deliberate concealment measures which impede verification by national technical means of compliance with the provisions of this Interim Agreement. This obligation shall not require changes in current construction, assembly, conversion, or overhaul practices.

Source: Federation of American Scientists, <http://www.fas.org/nuke/control/salt1/text/salt1.htm>.

APPENDIX C

KEY PROVISIONS OF THE MISSILE DEFENSE ACT OF 1991

SEC. 211. MISSILE DEFENSE ACT OF 1991

(a) GOAL – It is a goal of the United States to –

- (1) deploy an anti-ballistic missile system, including one or an adequate additional number of anti-ballistic missile sites and space-based sensors, capable of providing a highly effective defense of the United States against limited attacks of ballistic missile;
- (2) maintain strategic stability; and
- (3) provide highly effective theater missile defenses (TMD) to United States forward-deployed and expeditionary armed forces and to our friends and allies.

(b) IMPLEMENTATION-

- (1) IN GENERAL – To implement this goal, Congress directs the Secretary of Defense to take the actions described in paragraph
- (2) and urges the President to take the actions described in paragraph (3).
- (3) ACTIONS OF THE SECRETARY OF DEFENSE –

(A) TMD OPTIONS – The Congress directs the Secretary of Defense to aggressively pursue the development of a range of advanced TMD options, with the objective of downselecting and deploying such systems by the mid-1990s.

(B) Initial Deployment – The Congress further directs the Secretary to develop for deployment by fiscal year 1996 a cost-effective and operationally-effective and ABM Treaty compliant anti-ballistic missile defense system at a single site as the initial step toward deployment of the anti-ballistic missile system described in subsection (a) designed to protect the United States against limited ballistic missile threats, including accidental or unauthorized launches or Third World attacks.

Source: *National Defense Authorization Act for Fiscal Years 1992 and 1993*. H.R. 2100. 102nd Cong., 1st sess., <http://thomas.loc.gov>.

APPENDIX D

NATIONAL MISSILE DEFENSE ACT OF 1999

An Act

To declare it to be the policy of the United States to deploy a national defense

Be it enacted by the Senate and House of Representatives of the United States of America in Congress assembled,

SECTION 1. SHORT TITLE.

This Act may be cited as the “National Missile Defense Act of 1999”.

SEC. 2. NATIONAL MISSILE DEFENSE POLICY.

It is the policy of the United States to deploy as soon as is technologically possible an effective National Missile Defense system capable of defending the territory of the United States against limited ballistic missile attack (whether accidental, unauthorized, or deliberate) with funding subject to the annual authorization of appropriations and the annual appropriation of funds for National Missile Defense.

SEC. 3. POLICY ON REDUCTION OF RUSSIAN NUCLEAR FORCES.

It is the policy of the United States to seek continued negotiated reductions in Russian nuclear forces.

Approved July 22, 1999.

Source: Public Law 106–38, 106th Congress, 113 STAT. 205.

APPENDIX E

Table 12. Number of US Strategic Launchers, Bombers, and Nuclear Warheads (1945-2000)

Year	Launchers		Primary Authorized Aircraft	Warheads	
	ICBM	SLBM	Bomber	(Strategic: ICBM, SLBM, Bomber)	(Stockpiled)
1945			1	6	6
1946			125	11	11
1947			270	32	32
1948			473	110	110
1949			447	235	235
1950			462	369	369
1951			569	549	640
1952			660	800	1,005
1953			720	1,000	1,436
1954			1,035	1,500	2,063
1955			1,260	2,200	3,057
1956			1,470	3,000	4,618
1957			1,605	4,200	6,444
1958			1,620	5,700	9,822
1959	6		1,545	7,006	15,468
1960	12	32	1,515	7,000	20,434
1961	57	80	1,395	6,874	24,111
1962	203	144	1,306	7,211	27,297
1963	597	160	1,055	7,098	29,249
1964	907	320	785	8,028	30,751
1965	854	384	650	9,345	31,642
1966	1,004	560	575	11,232	31,700
1967	1,054	656	558	12,409	30,893
1968	1,054	656	481	12,238	28,884
1969	1,054	656	399	11,969	26,910

Table 12 (*continued*)

Year	Primary Authorized				
	Launchers	Launchers	Aircraft	Warheads	Warheads
	ICBM	SLBM	Bomber	(Strategic: ICBM, SLBM, Bomber)	(Stockpiled)
1970	1,054	656	390	12,223	26,119
1971	1,054	656	377	12,875	26,365
1972	1,054	656	457	12,363	27,296
1973	1,054	656	423	15,059	28,335
1974	1,054	656	396	15,398	28,170
1975	1,054	656	396	15,748	27,,052
1976	1,054	656	382	15,568	25,956
1977	1,054	656	382	15,530	25,099
1978	1,054	656	376	15,235	24,243
1979	1,054	656	376	15,156	24,107
1980	1,054	592	376	14,404	23,764
1981	1,054	512	376	13,586	23,031
1982	1,049	520	328	13,072	22,937
1983	1,040	544	297	13,113	23,154
1984	1,030	592	297	13,960	23,228
1985	1,020	600	297	14,044	23,135
1986	1,005	616	312	14,481	23,254
1987	1,000	640	361	14,955	23,490
1988	1,000	608	318	14,795	23,077
1989	1,000	592	311	13,967	22,174
1990	1,000	608	267	13,395	21,211
1991	550	480	209	9,154	18,306
1992	550	488	158	9,444	13,731
1993	550	336	159	8,512	11,536
1994	580	360	157	8,801	11,012
1995	575	384	122	8,959	10,953
1996	575	408	113	8,648	10,886
1997	550	432	65	8,755	10,829
1998	550	432	65	8,744	10,763
1999	550	432	72	8,681	10,698
2000	550	432	72	8,679	10,615

Sources: Natural Resources Defense Council, "Table of US Strategic Offensive Force Loadings," <http://www.nrdc.org/nuclear/nudb/datab1.asp> and "Table of US Nuclear Warheads," <http://www.nrdc.org/nuclear/nudb/datab9.asp>.

APPENDIX F

Table 13. Number of USSR/Russian Strategic Launchers, Bombers, and Nuclear Warheads (1949-2000)

Year	Primary Authorized Launchers		Aircraft	Warheads	
	ICBM	SLBM		(Strategic: ICBM, SLBM, Bomber)	(Stockpiled)
1949					1
1950					5
1951					25
1952					50
1953					120
1954					150
1955					200
1956			40	126	426
1957			53	160	660
1958		6	85	269	869
1959		33	105	360	1,060
1960	2	30	121	405	1,605
1961	10	57	133	471	2,471
1962	36	72	138	522	3,322
1963	99	72	150	638	4,238
1964	191	72	173	821	5,221
1965	281	75	163	929	6,129
1966	416	78	159	1,089	7,089
1967	818	87	159	1,539	8,339
1968	1,017	138	159	1,799	9,399
1969	1,274	221	157	2,138	10,538
1970	1,472	317	157	2,443	11,643
1971	1,519	407	157	2,592	13,092
.....					

Table 13 (continued)

Year	Launchers	Launchers	Primary Authorized Aircraft	Warheads	warheads
	ICBM	SLBM	Bombers	(Strategic: ICBM, SLBM, Bomber)	(Stockpiled)
1972	1,504	503	157	2,678	14,478
1973	1,462	595	157	2,815	15,915
1974	1,367	679	157	2,985	17,385
1975	1,469	771	157	3,743	19,443
1976	1,483	849	157	4,205	21,205
1977	1,333	972	157	4,744	23,044
1978	1,251	1,002	157	5,793	25,393
1979	1,395	993	157	7,035	27,935
1980	1,338	990	157	7,862	30,062
1981	1,368	1,038	157	8,549	32,049
1982	1,398	990	157	9,152	33,952
1983	1,368	978	167	9,704	35,804
1984	1,353	982	160	10,031	37,431
1985	1,371	980	160	10,497	39,197
1986	1,370	948	160	10,723	40,723
1987	1,418	962	155	11,159	38,859
1988	1,393	963	170	11,630	37,330
1989	1,379	949	160	12,117	35,817
1990	1,297	908	127	11,815	33,515
1991	934	832	102	10,672	29,606
1992	905	628	104	10,089	26,256
1993	859	520	107	9,385	22,785
1994	782	456	110	8,434	19,067
1995	753	440	113	7,748	15,615
1996	746	440	113	7,622	12,722
1997	746	384	113	6,514	11,264
1998	756	348	113	6,264	10,764
1999	756	348	112	6,201	10,451
2000	756	348	112	6,201	10,201

Sources: Natural Resources Defense Council, "Table of USSR/Russian Strategic Offensive Loadings," <http://www.nrdc.org/nuclear/nudb/datab2.asp> and "Table of USSR/Russian Nuclear Warheads," <http://www.nrdc.org/nuclear/nudb/datab10.asp>.

APPENDIX G

Table 14. Missile Defense Funding Level

	In current dollars (billions)			In 2000 constant dollar (billions)		
	President's Request	Appropriations Passed	Expenditures	President's Request	Appropriations Passed	Expenditures
FY85	1.8	1.4	1.4	2.88	2.24	2.24
FY86	3.7	2.8	2.7	5.81	4.4	4.24
FY87	4.8	3.2	3.3	7.28	4.85	5.0
FY88	5.2	3.6	3.6	7.57	5.24	5.24
FY89	4.5	3.7	3.6	6.25	5.14	5.0
FY90	4.6	4.0	3.6	6.06	5.27	4.74
FY91	4.5	2.9	3.1	5.69	3.67	3.92
FY92	5.2	4.1	3.9	6.38	5.03	4.79
FY93	5.4	3.8	3.7	6.44	4.53	4.41
FY94	3.8	2.8	2.7	4.42	3.25	3.14
FY95	3.2	2.8	2.7	3.62	3.16	3.05
FY96	2.9	3.4	3.3	3.18	3.73	3.62
FY97	2.8	3.7	3.6	3.0	3.97	3.86
FY98	2.6	3.8	3.6	2.75	4.01	3.80
FY99	3.6	3.5	3.5	3.72	3.62	3.62
FY00	3.3	3.6	4.8	3.3	3.6	4.8

Note: Missile defense budgets prior to the establishment of SDIO (later BMDO and MDA) were spread across different military services, the Army, the Navy, the Air Force, and the Defense Advanced Research Project Agency. The data for the president's request and appropriations passed in this table are taken from the MDA website, historical funding for BMD FY85-FY09, Missile Defense Agency, <http://www.mda.mil/mdalink/pdf/histfunds.pdf>. The unpublished source of the expenditure amounts cited here is Mr. Stephen Daggett, Congressional Research Services specialist in the National Defense, Foreign Affairs, and Trade division.

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