

Washington experts differ on usefulness of missile defense

WASHINGTON (AP)—How's this for a scary scenario: Iran takes some missiles supplied by North Korea and places them, along with a mobile launcher, aboard an ordinary merchant ship. The ship sails to within 100 miles of the U.S. coast.

The crew, made up of militants from the Iranian-backed Hezbollah group, fires away, bringing "a large section of the U.S. population under attack with zero warning, and not much opportunity to be detected."

Could this actually happen? William Schneider, a former top State Department official, outlined that scenario a while back in making the case for the

establishment of a national missile defense.

The concept is supported by President-elect George W. Bush and a large segment of the security establishment, but faces an impressive array of critics who believe there are better ways of neutralizing the missile threat.

That threat was spelled out in a July 1998 report prepared by a congressionally mandated commission headed by Donald Rumsfeld, Bush's choice to be secretary of defense.

The nine commissioners unanimously concluded that "concerted efforts by a number of overtly or potentially hostile nations to acquire ballis-

tic missiles with biological or nuclear payloads pose a growing threat to the United States, its deployed forces and its friends and allies.

"These newer, developing threats in North Korea, Iran and Iraq are in addition to those posed by the existing ballistic missile arsenals of Russia and China, nations with which we are not now in conflict but which remain in uncertain transitions."

Like Schneider, the commission suggests Iran is a country of particular concern.

The report said that at some point, Iran could develop the capability for a missile in the 10,000-kilometer range,

and hold the U.S. at risk in an arc extending northeast of a line from Philadelphia to St. Paul, MN.

President Clinton last summer deferred a decision on deployment to his successor after toying with the idea of a limited missile defense by deploying missile-tracking radar in Alaska.

Bush said last week in announcing his appointment of Rumsfeld that "to defend our forces and allies and our own country from the threat of missile attack or accidental launch, we must develop a missile defense system."

As the debate on a missile defense approaches, many opponents will take their cues from Democratic Sen. Jo-

seph Biden of Delaware, a leading expert on the issue.

"Is there a future for national missile defense?" he asks. "I remain a skeptic but I would not reject the idea for all time."

Opposition to a national missile defense, or NMD, is strong—and it's not just the \$60 billion estimated price tag that frightens critics.

Among the opponents are the Union of Concerned Scientists and the Massachusetts Institute of Technology, which said in a joint study last April that there are numerous ways an attacking nation or group could circumvent a missile defense.

The report found that attackers using nuclear weapons could defeat a missile defense system by deploying their warheads inside special balloons and releasing many empty balloons along with them, presenting the defense with an unwinnable shell-game.

Or, the study said, a nuclear warhead could be covered by a shroud cooled to very low temperatures, preventing the heat-seeking interceptor from detecting and homing on the target.

There are other drawbacks that critics point to.

Many experts believe China and Russia would seek ways to overwhelm a U.S. NMD by upgrading their arsenals, lest they become irrelevant.

NMD deployment could cause strains in the Atlantic Alliance. Camille Grand, of the Institut d'Etudes Politiques in Paris, writes that there is genuine concern in Europe that "the country that invented arms control and non-proliferation is showing a mounting distrust, if not outright contempt, for bilateral and multilateral regimes and treaties. ... The determined pursuit of NMD is another signal of growing U.S. preference for unilateral responses to global issues."

Dilated eye exams can detect glaucoma

TOPEKA—Optometrists in the Kansas Optometric Association are encouraging those at risk for glaucoma to schedule regular dilated eye examinations to help detect this blinding eye disease.

"One of the challenges we face with glaucoma is that people are not aware that the disease is slowly stealing their vision," said Dr. Gary Beaver, an Independence, optometrist who is president of the KOA. "By the time they realize that they are losing their vision, it is too late to restore the vision they have already lost. However, with treatment, glaucoma usually can be controlled and remaining vision can be protected."

January is Glaucoma Awareness Month, and optometrists in the KOA, along with the National Eye Institute

and 31 other organizations, are highlighting the importance of regular eye care.

Glaucoma is the leading cause of irreversible vision loss in the United States and affects about three million Americans. It is estimated that up to one-half of this number may be unaware they have the disease. According to Dr. Beaver, individuals who are at a higher risk for the condition include: Everyone over age 60, African-Americans over age 40, and people who have a family history of glaucoma. He suggests that individuals in these groups receive a dilated eye exam at least every two years.

Glaucoma occurs when the normal fluid pressure inside the eye progressively increases, leading to optic nerve damage and reduced peripheral (side)

vision. As the disease worsens, the field of vision gradually narrows and blindness may result. However, it is important to note that elevated fluid pressure inside the eye may put people at risk for glaucoma, but it does not necessarily mean they have the disease. Whether or not a person develops glaucoma depends on the level of pressure the optic nerve can tolerate without being damaged. The level of pressure is different for each person.

Dr. Beaver said that while glaucoma screening techniques have improved and can play a vital role in educating people about the risks of glaucoma, dilated eye exams are the most reliable method of detecting the disease. This allows the eye care professional to obtain a better view of the eye's optic nerve to look for early signs of glaucoma.

Jack McLaughlin, Ph.D., acting director of the NEI, said that people at risk for glaucoma often believe that if their vision is fine, there is no need to be concerned. It is only when they notice vision loss that they take action.

"With no obvious problems associ-

ated in glaucoma's early stages, people believe their quality of life is not affected," said Dr. McLaughlin. "But it is important that people understand that when vision is lost from glaucoma, it is lost forever. However, if glaucoma is detected and treated early in its progression, it can usually be controlled before vision loss occurs."

According to Dr. McLaughlin, "Many new medications, including eye drops, have become available in the past two years to help treat glaucoma. These new eye drops have fewer side effects that could reduce patients' quality of life. Other treatments for glaucoma may include laser surgery or conventional surgery."

The Kansas Optometric Association is participating in the National Eye Health Education Program, a nationwide effort coordinated by the National Eye Institute to educate the public about the importance of preventive eye care.

News of Record

- Marriages**
 Michael Henry Ostmeyer, Oakley, and Charlene Marie (Hoy) Schemio, Norton, Dec. 2, 2000
 Terry Lynn Overton, and Sherri Leann Weaver, both Colby, Nov. 21, 2000.
- Real Estate**
 Don F. Ostmeyer and Patsy L. to Eugene Schwarz and Linda M.: all 25-9-31
 Sheila J. (Evan) Orange and Richard Orange to John W. Barton and Karen A.: All undivided interest in NE 1/4-11-6-31 and NW 1/4-2-6-31
 Bernadene Sewell and Donald J. to John W. Barton and Karen A.: All undivided interest in NE 1/4-11-6-31 and NW 1/4-2-6-31
 Wayne Marshall and Linda A. to John W. Barton and Karen A.: All undivided interest in NE 1/4-11-6-31 and NW 1/4-2-6-31
 Bernitta Ward to John W. Barton and Karen A.: All undivided interest in NE


- 1/4-11-6-31 and NW 1/4-2-6-31
 Floyd Eugene Marshall and Glenda J. to John W. Barton and Karen A.: All undivided interest in NE 1/4-11-6-31 and NW 1/4-2-6-31

Colby Wesleyan Church
 invites you to honor
DON & JAN FAIDLEY
January 7, 2001 • 10:40 a.m.

A covered dish dinner will follow at United Methodist Church at 12:30 p.m. Mark and Sandy Mueller, missionaries to Australia will be presenting the worship service.

The Faidleys will be moving to Kansas City soon and in honor of their service to our church and our community, we will present them with a scrapbook of memories. If you would like to contribute, you may design an 8 1/2" x 11 1/2" sheet and mail it to 320 W. Pine in Colby.

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Jan. 14: 2:00-5:00 p.m.
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