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by PHYLLIS SCHLAFLY

Box 618, Alton, 111inois 62002
Phone: **618-462-5415**

ABM CLOSING

The anti-defense lobby in Congress has just pushed through passage of the Kennedy Amendment to force the closing of our only anti-ballistic missile site, at Grand Forks, North Dakota. This is the wrong move at the wrong time at the wrong place.

The anti-ballistic missile system, or ABM as it ie called, is one of the greatest achievements of American technology. It is a device for shooting down enemy missiles when they are coming at us at speeds up to 18,000 miles per hour. The technical feat involved is as difficult as hitting a bullet with a bullet -- and this fan tastically difficult intercept was developed and perfected by Ameri can scientists.

The ABM is not a weapon of war but the key to peace. It is no good at all for killing people. Its sole purpose is to defend American lives and property against enemy attack. It is the only means we have to protect ourselves against the possibility that some Dr. Strangelove in the Kremlin might push the button to launch the 1,618 Soviet in tercontinental' ballistic missiles at the United States.

The anti-defense lobby argues that the ABM is "provocative." This is like saying that it is provocative of a jewelry store to in stall a burglar alarm system. A burglar alarm is totally benign toward everyone in the world except the burglar; it doesn't even harm him, but serves only to hamper his illegal work. The ABM cannot kill a single Russian or Red Chinese. It doesn't interfere with anything

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except missiles that have already been launched to kill millions of Americans.

The anti-defense lobby argues that the ABM is "destabilizing to the nuclear balance."· Over the last seven years, the Soviets have built a thousand intercontinental ballistic missiles capable of carrying fire and death to millions of Americans. During the same period of time, the United States built no additional offensive missiles, and only that one ABM in North Dakota, with which we can shoot down a handful of incoming Soviet missiles. The record speaks out loud and clear as to which side is destabilizing.

The anti-defense clique argues that we have never used the ABM so, therefore, the money we spend on it is wasted. That is about like saying that your fire insurance premiums on your house are wasted if your house never burns down and you never collect. I will not feel cheated if I pay fire insurance premiums all my life and never collect. Military weapons, and especially the ABM, are our insurance of peace. The most successful weapons of all are the ones we never have to use because we convince the enemy in advance that we have more than enough means to come out on top of any fight he starts.

The anti-defense lobby argues that the Soviets now have so many MIRVs that they can overwhelm our ABM and still hit U.S. targets. The answer to this is not to give up and let the Soviets destroy us more easily, but to revive the great American "can-do" attitude. If the Soviets have enough missiles to overwhelm one ABM, then we should build the twenty ABM sites ordered by President Lyndon Johnson before his wise plan was killed by Secretary of Defense Robert McNamara. The lives we save may be our own.

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