

MISSILE DEFENSE

Mr. SESSIONS. Madam President, it is easy for us to fall into the trap and the habit of believing the United States and our friends around the world are immune from the aggressive actions of hostile nations. Since the Cold War has ended, I think we have come to think that conflicts between industrialized nations are an historic relic. I believe one writer who has since admitted he was in error wrote a book called "The End of History." But we are not beyond history. We are not immune from the threats that have apparently always been out there in the world. And I wish it were not so, but I am afraid it is. I believe the world clearly remains a dangerous and unpredictable place. Significant and serious threats exist. North Korea and Iran, for example, seek nuclear capabilities despite all kinds of efforts by the rest of the world to convince them to the contrary. They continue to invest heavily in the development of long-range missiles that could cause us great harm. Russia's recent actions in Georgia remind us that country, which we once hoped was on a path to greater integration into the global world community, might again be seeking to restore old Soviet ideas of dominance throughout their neighbors and in Eastern Europe, all of which should serve as a motivation to move ahead with the necessary capabilities to defend ourselves and our allies from missile attack, in particular. If a government, by way of the skills, knowledge, and technical achievements of its citizens, has the ability to protect itself from a known threat, does it not have a moral obligation to do so?

I remember once former Secretary of State Henry Kissinger saying:

I never heard of a nation whose policy it is to keep itself vulnerable to attack.

Why would we want to allow ourselves to remain vulnerable to a potential missile attack from North Korea or Iran? Well, we do not. We have been working for some time now to develop a defense system to block any such missile attack. Although it is highly technical and complex, we have made tremendous progress, and we now know we have a system that fundamentally works and we are continuing to advance it every year.

We cannot do this alone, however. We have our friends in Europe. We asked them for assistance in developing a third site there. In fact, perhaps one of the threats we face would be from a missile launch from Iran. The Iranians are continually working on advanced missiles. I believe they are also openly moving forward to develop nuclear capabilities. If they were to launch such an attack against the United States, it would pass over Europe. So Europe would be an important site for us in protecting the United States.

Indeed, the importance of recent decisions, therefore, taken by the Governments of Poland and the Czech Republic to base missile defense assets on their territory to protect our NATO allies and the United States against long-range ballistic missile threats is very important. The United

States has been negotiating with the Czech Republic and Poland since early 2007 to base a missile-tracking radar and 10 long-range interceptors—just 10, but importantly 10—in those countries. I am pleased to note that those agreements were signed between the United States and the Government of the Czech Republic on July 8 of this year and with the Government of Poland on August 20 of this year. Ratification of these agreements by the allied parliaments in those countries is expected this fall. These deployments are intended to provide protection for the United States and most of Europe against long-range ballistic missiles such as those that might be launched by Iran.

The strategic objective of extending missile defense protection to our allies is to enhance the ability of the alliance to more effectively deter aggression and counter the growing threat posed by Iran. These deployments would send a strong message to our allies and adversaries alike that the NATO alliance will not be intimidated or blackmailed by any missile threat.

You have leaders of Europe, NATO, and the United States, and if some country threatens that they will launch a missile, and we have only 1 or 2—OK, maybe 10—but if we have the ability to knock those down, that alters the strategic threat capability significantly and allows the President of the United States or any European nation to say: We are prepared to defeat your missile attack. We will not be blackmailed. We will not alter our policies that we believe are in our national interests as a result of such threats.

So the planned deployments in Poland and the Czech Republic are supported by the NATO alliance. Some of our Members have wanted that. They have said that they would feel better about going forward if the alliance itself spoke on this, and so we have obtained that now. The system to be deployed will be fully integrated into NATO's ongoing plans to provide defense against shorter range ballistic missile threats.

The April 3, 2008, NATO Bucharest Summit Declaration notes:

Ballistic missile proliferation poses an increasing threat to allies' forces, territories and populations.

They went on to say:

We therefore recognize the substantial contribution to the protection of allies from long-range ballistic missile to be provided by the planned deployment of European-based U.S. missile defense assets.

In May, the Senate Armed Services Committee, of which I am a member and its bill is on the floor today, reported out of the committee, I am proud to say, a bill which authorizes fully the administration's \$712 million request for the Polish and Czech missile defense sites. I am proud that our committee did that. It was the right thing. It is important now that the appropriators recognize the critical importance of following through with adequate funding for these sites. Events of the past month reinforce the decision by the Armed Services Committee to recommend full funding. Not only does Iran persist in defying international calls to end its nuclear program, Iran continues to test space launch vehicles and ballistic missiles of increasing range, while also conducting military exercises in the gulf with operational ballistic missiles.

We should not take lightly the courageous action taken by the Governments of the Czech Republic and Poland to agree to establish a missile defense site on their territory, for by supporting the defense of NATO in this manner, and the defense of the United States, these countries have earned the ire of their big neighbor on the east, Russia.

In an effort to exert pressure on our allies to not do this, in February of 2008 Prime Minister Putin of Russia stated that:

If it is deployed, we will have to react appropriately. In that case, we will probably be forced to target some of our missiles at the objects threatening us.

Let's take a moment to analyze that language. What threat is it to Russia, let me ask, that an independent, sovereign nation would agree to have a defensive missile system deployed on their territory—not a hostile missile system, not a nuclear weapon missile system, a missile system designed to protect their own country and other countries from a potential threat? What possible threat is that to Russia? Zero. Of course, we know Russia has hundreds and hundreds of nuclear-armed missiles. The 10 silos and missiles we would propose to place in Poland would have no ability whatsoever to resist a massive Russian attack, God forbid they would ever launch.

So I would suggest something more is at stake here, and I think it is something that the Poles and the Czechs and the Georgians and the Ukrainians and the Estonians and the Latvians and the Lithuanians understand full well, and that is that Putin desires to reestablish hegemony over the former Soviet satellites. They think they have a right to tell Poland whether to undertake a military partnership with the United States. They have no right whatsoever to do so. Poland is glad to be rid of them. They are glad to be out from under the Soviet boot. They have no intention whatsoever of allowing themselves to fall back under their dominance. They have values that are close to our values. They want to be part of our heritage and the Western heritage.

Just days after the Czech Republic signed the radar basing agreement with the United States, Russia reduced its oil shipments to the Czech Republic without providing any explanation. Boom. The oil shipments have since been restored, but threats continue.

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Despite increasingly bellicose threats by Russia to cut off energy supplies and to target Poland and the Czech Republic with military means, these allied Governments have maintained their freedom, their independence, their sovereignty, and their courage, and have stood fast with the United States and NATO. So the very least this Senate could do would be to recognize the importance of these decisions, to express our full and strong support for what these nations have done on behalf of themselves and the Atlantic alliance and affirm that with the support of legislation that would move forward with the third site.

In closing, I would share with my colleagues the words of Mirek Topolánek, the Czech Prime Minister. The Czech Republic and Poland are such wonderful countries. They are so proud to be free and independent. They are some of our best allies in the world.

The Prime Minister placed this issue in the proper context, when he stated:

The moral challenge is clear and simple. If we are not willing to accept, in the interest of the defense of the Euro-Atlantic area, such a trifle as the elements of a missile defense system, then how shall we be able to face more difficult challenges that may come?

Isn't that a great statement? That is the right context.

I hope this part of the bill will remain intact. I am confident it will. I hope our appropriators will find the money necessary to move forward rapidly to complete the development of these systems. Indeed, our NATO allies and the United States are certain to face more difficult challenges in the days ahead, as Iran and other nations continue to develop weapons of mass destruction and the ballistic missile capability to deliver them. As the crisis in the Caucasus suggests, there may be even greater challenges ahead. By supporting the European missile defense initiative, we extend missile defense capabilities to our allies while bolstering the defense of the United States homeland. In so doing, we strengthen our partnership and our collective security. We send a strong message to potential adversaries that this alliance will take such actions as necessary to ensure its security against threats that may occur.

I yield the floor.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The Senator from Oklahoma.

Mr. INHOFE. Madam President, I ask unanimous consent to speak in morning business for whatever time I may consume.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. Without objection, it is so ordered.

Mr. INHOFE. Madam President, allow me to echo strong agreement with my colleague from Alabama. We both serve on the Armed Services Committee. It is our hope and belief that we will be able to get a bill tonight. There are a lot of amendments that we would have liked to have had time to add. Senator Sessions talked about the successes we have had in the Czech Republic and in Poland. It is absolutely necessary. This is a life-threatening situation. I believe we are in pretty good shape there. I had several programs that are going to be included in this bill expanding the training and equipment. Sections 1206, 1207, and 1208 are significant. Those are things we can do in the field in these countries where we are in a position to train and equip these people, which is certainly to our advantage. Expanding what used to be called the CERP, the Commanders Emergency Response Program—they changed the name. I can never keep up with these things. But instead of having it only apply to Iraq and Afghanistan, it now applies to other areas also. It gives the commanders in the field a chance to respond immediately rather than go through all the bureaucratic redtape of correcting problems back in Washington.

With the IMET program, which is a program whereby we bring in officers and train them in our facilities in the United States, it used to be that until they signed an article, we would not allow them to be trained in the United States. The assumption was that somehow we were doing them a favor by training them. The reverse is true. They want to come to the United States to train because they know we have the best training. If we refuse to do it, countries such as China will welcome them with open arms. One of the interesting things is, once officers are trained in this country, they develop an allegiance that stays.

A lot of these things are in the bill that are good. I am delighted, because I understand we will be voting on it very soon.