

JUNE 12, 2001

**SCHAKOWSKY TO PRESIDENT BUSH DURING ANTI NATIONAL MISSILE DEFENSE RALLY:  
*STAR WARS IS BETTER LEFT TO THE EXPERTS IN HOLLYWOOD***

WASHINGTON, D.C. - U.S. Representative Jan Schakowsky (D-IL) today called on President Bush to accept scientific data and heed the call of our NATO and European allies and drop plans to deploy a National Missile Defense System (NMD). Schakowsky, speaking at a Capitol Hill rally organized by Peace Action, Physicians for Social Responsibility, and Women's Action for New Direction, urged President Bush to leave star wars to the experts in Hollywood.□□

"NMD is a program that is destined for failure on so many levels and I stand here today with all of you in strong opposition to its deployment.□ It is important that we all continue our work to help others understand that this plan is opposed by our allies and nations across the globe.□ NMD could very well lead to a new arms race, making the U.S. a clear target for nations building up their offensive arsenals in response to a renewed perception of threat presented by the U.S.," Schakowsky said.

Schakowsky pointed to experts who have expressed concerns about NMD's unproven technology, including Philip Coyle, who served as the Director of Operational Test and Evaluation for NMD.□ He said, "*Deployment means the fielding of an operational system with some military utility which is effective under realistic combat conditions, against realistic threats and countermeasures when operated by military personnel at all times of day or night and in all weather.□ Such a capability is yet to be shown practicable for NMD.*"

"Since the Reagan Administration, we have been urged by right wing wishful thinkers to deploy a system for which workable technology does not exist.□ Now many years, and many billions of dollars later, the Bush Administration is still pursuing this irresponsible, unnecessary, and unrealistic policy," Schakowsky said.□□

"I fear that moving forward with NMD will reverse the diplomatic progress made over the last decade and deployment will actually undermine our security by igniting Cold War II," she added.□□

At the event, a petition signed by more than 50,000 concerned citizens and a letter signed by 600 non-governmental organizations from around the world opposing NMD were delivered to members of Congress.□ The petition reads in part, "*The National Missile Defense System is a prescription for disaster.□ It is costly, technologically unproven and would violate the Anti-Ballistic Missile Treaty.□ Rather than addressing an existing threat, it will increase tensions with other nuclear powers.*"

**She concluded, "I think we all need to urge President Bush to spend a little less time watching Star Wars in the White House movie theater and a little more time studying the scientific facts and political realities involved with moving forward on NMD. As the President embarks on a whirlwind tour to convince our neighbors of the wisdom behind Star Wars, we all need to renew our efforts to deploy the truth."**