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Alaska's Promise for the Nation

Sarah Palin

Governor of Alaska



SARAH PALIN took office as the eleventh governor of Alaska on December 4, 2006. Prior to her election as governor, she served two terms on the Wasilla City

Council and two terms as mayor of Wasilla, during which she was elected as president of the Alaska Conference of Mayors. A former chair of the Alaska Oil and Gas Conservation Commission, Governor Palin is currently chair of the Interstate Oil and Gas Compact Commission and vice chair of the National Governors Association Natural Resources Committee. A resident of Alaska since 1964, she and her husband Todd have five children.

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“BALLISTIC MISSILE
DEFENSE IS NOT
YET REALITY”

BRIAN T. KENNEDY

The following is adapted from a speech delivered on August 2, 2008, aboard the Regent Seven Seas Mariner in Juneau, Alaska, to Hillsdale College friends and supporters during the College's "North to Alaska" cruise from Seward to Vancouver.

Next year in Alaska we are celebrating 50 years of statehood. We are still a very young state, and we're still experiencing some growing pains, perhaps, as we seek opportunities for Alaska to become more self-sufficient and less dependent on the federal government. And the key to our becoming self-sufficient—and doing our part for our fellow Americans—is to develop further our state's vast natural resource wealth.

Fifty years ago, this was our deal with the federal government—that we pull our own weight. And we've already come a long way from being known as “Seward's Folly,” back when Alaska was purchased from the Russians for two cents an acre. We're earning our keep, largely by tapping our energy resources such as crude oil and liquefied natural gas. In fact, Alaska has our nation's only liquefied natural gas export facility, located in the south-central Alaska town of Nikiski. But Alaska could and should be doing much more.

Being an Alaskan today is especially exciting and historic, as the energy and fuel crisis in our nation spawns creativity and makes us reevaluate what is important and necessary. As we consider where our energy will come from in the future, Alaska can and must be a big part of the answer. In fact, Alaska has already begun to take the lead on a sorely needed national energy policy. Groundbreaking history was made just up the hill at the

capitol building yesterday, as Alaska’s lawmakers voted to award TransCanada Alaska a license to proceed with fieldwork, permitting, and development of the biggest construction project in the history of North America—the building of a natural gas pipeline, a project we have been fighting to begin for three decades. Once constructed, this pipeline will supply four to four-and-one-half billion cubic feet of natural gas per day—roughly six percent of America’s demand—to our fellow countrymen in what we call “the lower 48.”

Just to provide some perspective, Alaska has tens of trillions of cubic feet of natural gas under the surface, especially on the North Slope. Alaskans have longed for the right to access our gas and more of our oil to assist in supplying the U.S. market, and now we are finally on the road to doing so. This \$30-40 billion infrastructure project—which will be built by the private sector—is one of the most exciting and progressive events in Alaska’s history.

This is a good start, to be sure. But Alaska has much more to offer in the way of resources. And let me tell you clearly that we can do so in a way consistent with good environmental stewardship. Each and every Alaskan recognizes that our most precious resource is the pristine environment in which we are privileged to live and where our “First People” still subsist to this day. No one can love or care for Alaska more than Alaskans. And we who live here recognize that sound science and constantly improving technology make it possible to extract oil and gas

safely and responsibly. Furthermore, with gas and fuel prices reaching record highs, oil and gas *must* be extracted—even as we move in the direction of renewable and alternative sources of energy.

Because of the lagging economy, Americans do not have time for “all talk and no action.” Here at home, Alaskans struggle with the highest gas prices in the nation—the cost of gas in parts of Alaska is four to five dollars more per gallon than gas in the lower 48—and many face the choice between heating their homes and putting food on the table. Now other Americans are experiencing the same challenges. And we are in this position only because Alaska’s vast resources are being warehoused underground by Congress—placing us in a ridiculous and difficult position.

The price of oil, and now gasoline, has always been sensitive and subject to events occurring outside the U.S. We have placed ourselves in the position of having

to plead with Middle Eastern suppliers to increase production, when instead we could lift the development bans that are keeping us from our own resource independence—namely, the bans relating to the Arctic National Wildlife Refuge (ANWR) and offshore drilling.

Alaskans find it incredibly frustrating that others—many of whom have never even set foot in our state, much less lived here—dictate how and when we can best use our own resources. Whether over the barren tundra or in our majestic mountains, we have a strong history of responsible development. To date, Alaska has sent more than 15 billion barrels of oil, safely and efficiently, to the lower 48. One look

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[Latin]: in the first place

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at the Trans-Alaska Pipeline System illustrates that development and wildlife can and do coexist.

I've heard it said by some politicians that Alaska doesn't have enough oil to make a difference. I can tell you honestly that we *do* have enough. And while consultants and experts debate the current energy crisis, Alaska is already preparing for its next role—providing American consumers with a safe and secure domestic source of crude oil and natural gas. In fact, if energy imports were curtailed completely, Alaska could provide our nation with seven years of crude oil independence and an eight-year supply of natural gas. These are numbers that reflect known and recoverable oil and gas deposits.

To repeat, Prudhoe Bay has produced 15 billion barrels of crude oil, and there's more where that came from in ANWR, which is home to more than ten billion barrels of oil and nine trillion cubic feet of natural gas. I know this is a controversial issue. But most Americans do not realize that of the 20 million acres that make up ANWR, we are asking for the right to access just 2,000 of them—a mere 1/10,000th of the total area. Opening up just that sliver of ANWR—which would create a footprint smaller than the total area of Los Angeles International Airport—could produce enough oil (an estimated one million barrels per day) to ease America's fuel crisis and greatly reduce our dependence on foreign oil.

It is also estimated that there are 24 billion barrels of recoverable oil and another 104 trillion cubic feet of natural gas offshore. In other words, offshore areas that are geologically promising, such as the Chukchi and Beaufort Seas, hold roughly three-and-one-half years of U.S. oil consumption and four-and-one-half years of natural gas.

Congress can make it possible to take advantage of these resources right now, by streamlining access to offshore areas. As usual, outside interests are throwing up roadblocks and manipulating the legal system to achieve their agenda. But we need to bring some sanity back to the legal and permitting processes in the area

of energy production.

In calling for bans to be lifted in order to get our nation out of the chokehold of high oil prices and dependence on the Middle East, I am certainly not rejecting the idea of alternative and renewable resources. I believe that we need to move in that direction, ultimately weaning ourselves off of fossil fuels. But we can't do it overnight—or even over a decade. In Alaska, we have almost limitless opportunities for thermal, wind, solar, and hydroelectric energy. In fact, our capital city of Juneau receives 80 percent of its electricity from hydroelectric energy. Recently we have created a renewable/alternative energy fund with an initial \$50 million that will build to \$250 million over a five-year period. Yet until the science is fully developed, until all our vehicles are green, we must wisely and responsibly utilize known and given oil and natural gas resources so that we can provide for ourselves.

Alaskans are a very unique kind of people. We hear this on a regular basis from our visitors from the lower 48. One thing that makes us so unique is that we are at once fiercely independent and incredibly community-minded. It may seem as though these two qualities would be in conflict, but I believe they are the complementary qualities which, in tandem, drove the American Revolution. Our forefathers fought and died for liberty and independence, but they did so together. Today, as we seek freedom from dependence on foreign oil—and freedom from having to send our presidents to plead with the Saudis for more oil production—we must join together again, in the spirit of freedom and independence, to gain access to our own energy resources.

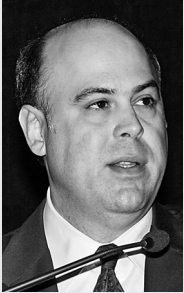
I say this to you not just as Alaska's governor, but as the mother of a soldier—my son, Track, will soon be deploying overseas in service to his country and to a war that is certainly complicated by our dependence on foreign resources.

We must open ANWR and lift the ban on offshore drilling. The science and technology to harvest our resources responsibly and safely are in hand. The time for congressional action and leadership is now. ■

Ballistic Missile Defense is Not Yet Reality

Brian T. Kennedy

President, The Claremont Institute



BRIAN T. KENNEDY is president of the Claremont Institute, publisher of the *Claremont Review of Books*, and director of the Institute's Ballistic Missile Defense Project. He has written on national security affairs and California public policy issues in *National Review* and *Investor's Business Daily*. He also sits on the Independent Working Group on Missile Defense, whose most recent report can be found at www.missilethreat.com.

The following is adapted from a speech delivered on May 20, 2008, at a Hillsdale College National Leadership Seminar in New York City.

In the course of fighting a global war against Islamic terrorism, a gross strategic failure has occurred: The United States has not fully prepared itself against a ballistic missile attack. To be sure, the U.S. today possesses—after seven-and-one-half years of the Bush administration—a very limited missile defense system consisting of a small number of ground-based interceptors; and soon it will have more capability, when a limited sea-based system comes online. But President Bush will leave office in January with the nation still essentially undefended against Russian, Chinese, or ship-launched terrorist missile attacks. Although Mr. Bush has accomplished more in this area than his predecessors, including Ronald Reagan, this failure is unacceptable.

Nowhere is it written that America is invincible. Yet the threat of nuclear attack has somehow seeped out of our consciousness. Because it didn't happen during the Cold War, perhaps we presume it never will. But Islamic terrorists did fly planes into our buildings, and if they obtain nuclear weapons, they will not shrink from using them on us. Nor do they pose the only threat to America

of nuclear attack or nuclear blackmail.

Let us examine the three countries that present the greatest challenge to U.S. interests and security.

Russia, China, and Iran

Although we very much want Russia to become a peaceful member of the community of nations, recent events in Georgia suggest that this is unlikely anytime soon. Mr. Putin and Mr. Bush may seem to enjoy a warm relationship, but Russia will continue to seek what its rulers believe is in its interest. Sometimes this will coincide with the interests of the West, but sometimes it will not. In either case, we should make no mistake: Russia is proceeding to modernize its military and its ability to influence world events.

In 2005, President Putin announced that Russia was developing a new ballistic missile. The prototype of a new hypersonic vehicle, he said, had proved its ability to maneuver while in orbit, thereby enabling it to dodge an enemy's missile shield. Russia clearly believed that the U.S. would build missile defense systems, and has

taken steps to build weapons to negate them. With thousands of nuclear warheads and ballistic missiles, Russia remains a most serious threat to U.S. security.

Nor did our victory in the Cold War entail the disarming or reorganization of communist China—which, in fact, has over two million men under arms. And although China’s navy and air force are not as sophisticated as Russia’s, they still possess a minimum of 30 intercontinental ballistic missiles—most of them aimed at the U.S.—and hundreds of short and medium range nuclear missiles for use in an Asian theater of combat. Today, in an unprecedented build-up that has even liberal policy analysts concerned, the Chinese are building and testing more than one ballistic missile per week.

Furthermore, China’s military thinking is openly anti-American. Its military journals write candidly about unrestricted warfare using a combination of traditional military power, cyber warfare, economic warfare, nuclear warfare, and terrorism. China is also working to develop a space-based military capability and is investing in launch vehicles that include manned spaceflight, a space station, and extensive anti-satellite weaponry meant to negate U.S. global satellite coverage (the latter was successfully tested last year).

Both the Russians and the Chinese know that the only nation that can limit their influence is the U.S. Thus they seek to limit our influence on the world stage, and will undertake whatever policies serve that end.

Meanwhile, the goal of radical Islam is the conversion, subjugation, or destruction of the infidel peoples—first and foremost the citizens of the U.S., Western Europe, and Israel. Even after 9/11, we appear not to take that threat seriously. But Islam is not fragile. It has survived for over a thousand years, and has controlled at various times much of what we know as the civilized world. Even more worrisome, today its determination is matched with modern weaponry and it enjoys alliances with powerful non-Islamic powers.

Consider Iran. President Ahmadine-

jad and his Iranian Revolutionary Guard Corps (IRGC) have control of key strategic parts of the Iranian government, and the IRGC is capable of operating as a terrorist training unit both inside and outside of Iran (witness Iran’s support of Hezbollah in Lebanon and its backing of lethal attacks on Americans in Iraq). For the past decade, Iran—with the assistance of Russia, China, and North Korea—has been developing missile technology. It is believed that the Iranians have produced hundreds of Shahab-3 missiles. This is not the most sophisticated missile in the world, but it is capable of carrying a payload to Israel or—if launched from a ship—to an American city.

The current controversy over Iran’s nuclear production is really about whether it can produce an industrial infrastructure that would be capable of producing nuclear warheads. It has sought nuclear capability since the time of the Shah, as most nations do, since nuclear weapons bestow on a country great military and political power. Even a fully democratic and pro-western Iran would want such weapons.

Mr. Ahmadinejad said in 2005: “Is it possible for us to witness a world without America and Zionism? But you had best know that this slogan and this goal are attainable, and surely can be achieved.” What about this do we not get?

Consider this scenario: An ordinary-looking freighter ship heading toward New York City or Los Angeles launches a missile from its hull or from a canister lowered into the sea. The missile hits a densely populated area and a million people are incinerated. The ship is sunk and no one claims responsibility. There is no firm evidence as to who sponsored the attack, and thus no one against whom to launch a counterstrike.

But as terrible as that scenario sounds, consider a second one: Let us say the freighter ship launches a nuclear-armed Shahab-3 missile off the coast of the U.S. and it explodes 300 miles over Chicago, creating an electromagnetic pulse. Gamma rays scatter in what is called the Compton effect, and three sep-

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arate pulses disable consumer electronics, some automobiles, and, most importantly, the hundreds of large transformers that distribute power throughout the U.S. All of our lights, refrigerators, TVs and radios stop running. We have no communication. This is what is referred to as an EMP attack, and such an attack would effectively throw America back into the early nineteenth century. Perhaps hundreds of millions of us will die from lack of food and water and as a result of social breakdown.

Opponents of missile defense call such scenarios far fetched, on the basis that the U.S. would launch a nuclear attack against whatever nation attacks us. That is, they continue to rely on the doctrine of mutually-assured destruction that our leaders prior to Reagan relied on during the Cold War. But in my scenarios, we would not know who attacked us, so that doctrine is no help. And in any case, even if Iran could be identified as the attacker, who is to say that it wouldn't gladly sacrifice itself to destroy the Great Satan? As the Ayatollah Khomeini said in 1979, during the American hostage crisis: "I say let [Iran] go up in smoke, provided Islam emerges triumphant in the world."

I do not use the word "destroy" lightly: An EMP attack on the U.S. would mean the end of American civilization, and dropping nuclear weapons on or retaliating against whoever caused the attack will not bring our civilization back. Nor is this science fiction. Twice, in the Caspian Sea, the Iranians have tested their ability to launch ballistic missiles in a way to set off an EMP. And the congressionally-mandated EMP Commission, including some of America's finest scientists, has released its findings and issued two separate reports, the most recent in July, describing the effects of such an attack on the U.S.

What to Do

The only solution to this problem is the building of a robust, multi-layered missile defense system. Our land-based system in Alaska and California will go far toward stopping a North Korean missile launched at the U.S. But it has very limited capabilities. It will not defend us against an EMP attack of the kind I have described.

The most effective form of missile defense is from space, using space-based interceptors that destroy an enemy warhead in its ascent phase when it is easily identifiable, slower, and has not yet deployed decoys. We know this can work from tests conducted in the early 1990s. We have the technology. What we lack is the political will to make it a reality.

Despite the growing Iranian, Chinese, and Russian arsenals, it is said we are postponing serious missile defense because we must win the war on terror first, as if we cannot do both simultaneously. It is also said that we need the help of Russia and China in the war on terrorism, and that such help will not be forthcoming if we build a missile defense. But the Iranian threat makes such concerns meaningless, and it should be our national policy to defend ourselves from the Russian and Chinese arsenals in any event. In the nuclear age, one does not have the luxury—if one could call it that—of a Pearl Harbor, after which we were able to regroup and rebuild and fight on to victory.

In the face of the threat of an EMP attack, the time for missile defense is

now. Our enemies should understand that we will defend our freedom at any cost. In the words of Ronald Reagan, who put America on the road to missile defense: "If we lose freedom here, there is no place to escape to. This is the last stand on Earth." ■



DID YOU KNOW?

Hillsdale College's Center for Constructive Alternatives (CCA) sponsors one of the largest college lecture series in America. CCA conferences are held on the Hillsdale campus four times a year on wide-ranging topics. This year's topics are "The Cold War: History and Controversies," "The Art of Biography," "Cars and Trucks, Markets and Governments," and "Early TV Westerns." Lectures are open to the public and out-of-town guests are welcome. For more information regarding the CCA lecture series, go to hillsdale.edu and click on "Seminars and Programs."