

## Preface

This report is the unclassified version of a classified document delivered to Congress at the end of August 1987. In attempting to reach agreement with the Department of Defense on what information could be included in an unclassified report, OTA found the wheels of bureaucracy to turn very slowly—when they turned at all. Only through the active intervention of the Strategic Defense Initiative Organization, beginning in late in November 1987, and extending to the end of March, 1988, was a partial resolution of the problem achieved.

OTA, with assistance from SDIO staff, revised the entire report to produce a complete version that both agreed should not be considered classified. The Department of Defense concurred on all but the final three chapters. These latter chapters deal in a general way and without the kind of specific detail that might be useful to an adversary with a variety of potential countermeasures to BMD systems. In particular, chapters 11 and 12 deal with defining and countering threats to the survivability of space-based BMD systems.

Chapter 1 offers a brief review of the “bottom lines” of chapters 10 through 12. But apparently some in the Defense Department wish to assert that it is *impossible* to present an unclassified analytical discussion that would enable the reader to understand the issues and form his own judgments. In OTA’s judgment, this position does not deprive potential adversaries of any information they do not already have: rather, it stifles rational public debate in the United States over the pros and cons of proceeding with ballistic missile defense. To give the reader at least some appreciation of the scope of the deleted material, the tables of contents of chapters 10 through 12 appear at the end of this volume. In addition, the major conclusions of these chapters (without, of course, the supporting analysis) are summarized in chapter 1.

OTA thanks the SDIO for the additional substantive comments and information it provided on the final drafts of the report. Thus, despite the many months of delay since original completion of the report, this unclassified version is reasonably up to date. OTA, not SD IO, is responsible for the contents and conclusions of the report.

A further note on the subject of classified information is in order. Any report which attempts to analyze the feasibility and survivability of prospective ballistic missile defense systems must refer to possible measures an adversary could take to counter the system. OTA sought the views of a variety of experts on Soviet military research, development, and deployment about potential responses to the SDI. It also sought to understand the technical feasibility of various countermeasures. It did not seek out or report on the official judgments of the U.S. intelligence community on what countermeasures the Soviet Union would or could take against SDI-derived systems. *Therefore, nothing said in this report should be construed as an “intelligence” judgment of Soviet intentions or capabilities.*