

Directed Energy Missile Defense in Space

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**Directed Energy
Missile Defense in Space**

Background Paper

April 1984

Prepared under contract for the
Office of Technology Assessment

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Preface

This background paper was prepared by Dr. Ashton B. Carter under a contract with the Office of Technology Assessment. OTA commissions and publishes such background papers from time to time in order to bring OTA up to date on technologies that are the subject of frequent congressional inquiry. After Dr. Carter's work was under way, Senators Larry Pressler and Paul Tsongas of the Senate Foreign Relations Committee requested that the resulting paper be made available to that Committee as soon as possible. OTA is issuing the paper in the belief that others in Congress and members of the public will find it of interest and importance.

An OTA background paper differs from a full-fledged technology assessment. Background papers generally support an ongoing assessment of broader scope or explore emerging technological issues to determine if they merit a fuller, more detailed assessment. On March 22, 1984, the Technology Assessment Board directed OTA to carry out a full-fledged assessment of "New Ballistic Missile Defense Technologies," for which this background paper will serve as one point of departure.

This paper was prepared for OTA's International Security and Commerce Program, under the direction of Lionel S. Johns (Assistant Director, Energy, Materials, and international Security Division) and Peter Sharfman (Program Manager).