

Winnipeg, August 2, 1985

The Canadian Bar Association (David Matas) stated that Canada and the United States would escalate the arms race and violate too many important international treaties if they went ahead with plans for the Strategic Defense Initiative.

Mr. Matas pointed out that as a unilateral initiative of the U.S., SDI goes against the interests of NATO, NORAD and the Anti-Ballistic Missile Treaty. The violation of the ABM Treaty would move research work towards actual field testing, "an illegality that should not exist."

Canada's involvement in SDI would conflict with an American treaty promise not to provide technical descriptions worked out for the construction of ABM systems. Canada would also violate its commitment to the Outer Space Treaty which commits nations to the use of space for peaceful purposes.

Canada and the U.S. would also violate the Partial Test Ban Treaty and the Non-Proliferation of Nuclear Weapons Treaty and escalate the arms race in the process. Canada would also violate international law by helping the U.S. to violate other U.S. treaties.

The Winnipeg Coordinating Committee for Disarmament said SDI is full of myths and would have a negative impact on Canadian society and international affairs. The group attacked several aspects of the plan and said it was creating "false hopes" among Canadians about job creation. Canada would still lag behind in technology at the end of such a project. The program offered nothing towards world peace, it could be used as an offensive measure instead of defensive, and it would escalate the arms race.