

Verification problems a concern

Calgary Disarmament Coalition said Canada should be opposed -- regardless of whether SDI would actually work -- and work toward demilitarization of outer space. SDI would spur the arms race as the Soviets would not accept nuclear superiority in offensive or defensive weapons.

The only way SDI could be considered a tool of peace, said the Coalition, would be if the technology was shared, and mutual ABM systems erected simultaneously. But this co-operation is unlikely, and there is little evidence to suggest the USSR is ahead in space-based military technology.

SDI would create problems in verification in addition to precariously endangering space. Canada should not participate and instead should strongly reaffirm the ABM Treaty.

Military escalation seen

Edmonton Peace Council (prepared by B.G. Gislason) said the only defence against modern-day weapons, especially nuclear weapons, is their abolition. Canada should work towards reducing nuclear weaponry by supporting existing treaties and encouraging further arms negotiations and stronger treaties.

SDI is military escalation, and rather than diminishing the threat of nuclear war, it would destabilize international relationships. A first-strike capacity appears to be the aim of the system, said the Council.

In addition to being ineffective against such weaponry as cruise missiles, the existence of numerous ICBM decoys and computer malfunction could render the system ineffective.