

ICBM sites, rather than cities.

Meanwhile, the USSR had finally announced its willingness to negotiate strategic arms limitations in May 1968. Delayed by the invasion of Czechoslovakia and the advent of a new American Administration, however, the talks — soon known as 'SALT' — did not begin until November 1969.

### PROVISIONS OF THE TREATY

The Treaty which resulted, signed in Moscow on 26 May 1972 and entered into force on 3 October 1972, forbids each side from deploying a country-wide ABM system. Permitted sites were limited to one around the national capital ('National Command Authority' or NCA) and one around an ICBM field. This allowed the US to complete the one Safeguard complex it had almost finished, at Grand Forks, North Dakota, with an option to build a second ABM site under construction, at Malmstrom Air Force Base in Montana, and to forego the two additional sites that had already been authorized. The USSR could retain its Galosh system around Moscow and build a new one at an ICBM site at least 1,300 kilometres away. The distance was specified in order to prevent the creation of an effective regional defence zone. Each site was limited to no more than 100 ABM launchers and interceptor missiles. Among the ancillary restrictions were limits on the number, location and capabilities of radars, to preclude establishment of a base for nationwide defence; a prohibition on the transfer to other countries of ABM systems or their components; and a ban on their deployment outside of each party's own national territory.

Other important provisions of the Treaty, setting useful precedents for future strategic arms agreements, were related to verification and compliance. Thus, each side was specifically prohibited from interfering with the other's 'national technical means of verification,' such as reconnaissance satellites. And a US-USSR Standing Consultative Commission (SCC) was created, intended to meet at least twice a year to consider implementation and compliance questions, as well as further limitation measures. While of unlimited duration, the Treaty is subject to review every five years. As is customary with arms control agreements, each party has the right to withdraw, after giving appropriate notice — in this case, six months — if it decides that "extraordinary events related to the subject matter of this Treaty have jeopardized its supreme interests."

At a summit conference in Moscow in June 1974, the two sides signed a Protocol to the ABM Treaty further limiting deployments to just one site each. Each side would be permitted to shift once between an NCA defence and an ICBM site defence. In other words, the USSR could choose to dismantle its Galosh system and

build an ICBM site defence instead; while the US could give up its Grand Forks site in favour of a defence of Washington, D.C. As it turned out, the Americans chose to deactivate their ICBM site defence in 1976, soon after it became operational, on the grounds that it was cost-ineffective in protecting only a small fraction of US nuclear forces. They never took up the option of building a Washington site. Since that time the only operational ABM system has been the one around Moscow, which has been modernized and upgraded to the technological sophistication of the earlier US system.

### EVALUATION OF THE TREATY

The ABM Treaty was criticized by some disarmament advocates as 'arms control upward,' for allowing each side to build a site additional to the one it already possessed. As we have seen, neither side took advantage of this option and indeed the parties jointly foreclosed it by means of the Protocol two years later. On the contrary, the Treaty did embody some degree of actual 'disarmament'; and not merely of obsolescent systems, insofar as the second Safeguard site was dismantled. It also brought about a definite reduction from the number of systems planned, including those already authorized, in the United States; in the Soviet case, we can only guess.

Other critics have contended that, in light of the strong Congressional opposition to proceeding with the programme, the US would not have built a large-scale BMD in any event. Of course, it is difficult to know what might or might not have occurred in the absence of the ABM Treaty. Certainly, offensive nuclear force-levels on both sides continued to expand, though by means of installing multiple warheads on missiles rather than the proliferation of launchers. How much more they would have grown in the face of on-going ABM programmes is open to question. However, it is likely that, in the face of Moscow's continued improvement of the Galosh system and widespread fears about the upgrading of Soviet air defences to give them a BMD capability — prohibited by Article VI of the Treaty — pressure within the US to build a large-scale ABM system of its own would fairly soon have become irresistible.

It has been estimated that it would have cost the US over \$10 billion in 1972 dollars to complete and operate the four-site ABM system that had already been approved. And pressures to expand the system to include other ICBM sites, as well as at least a limited population defence, would likely have followed. Any American programme on such a scale could be expected to be matched eventually by a Soviet counterpart, which would have necessitated acceleration of US offensive programmes and so on . . . It is difficult to quarrel with the conclusion of the Stanford