

infringement of the ABM Treaty closely and clearly expressing our concerns in cooperation with European allies. The Centre recommended against formal participation and against any government support for private sector involvement while not preventing Canadian firms from bidding on SDI-related contracts. Formal endorsement or material support "could give the government a stake in SDI which would make open criticism of, or even disassociation from, SDI much more politically costly, were such action necessitated by later events."

4) *Canadian Reputation and Sovereignty*

Several witnesses raised concerns about the effect the decision would have on Canada's international reputation and on the exercise of Canadian sovereignty. Political scientist Adam Bromke of McMaster University testified that proceeding with SDI research would be contrary to the fundamentals of postwar Canadian foreign policy—of maintaining support for the western alliance while simultaneously striving to reduce East-West tensions and promoting arms control.²⁰ His concern was echoed by the World Federalists of Canada which feared that Canadian involvement would undermine our reputation as a nation committed to the "peaceful settlement of international disputes, U.N. peace-keeping and the negotiation of many arms control agreements."²¹

The Council of Canadians suggested that SDI would almost certainly require deployment of BMD sensors and interceptors on Canadian territory. Direct Canadian participation could also entail additional encroachments on Canada's territorial sovereignty.²² The Canadian Council of Churches made the same point; to participate in the research phase, they contended, would make it difficult for Canada to say "no" to deployment in Canada's north.²³ The Church Council endorsed the Ottawa presentation of Project Ploughshares who insisted that SDI would increase pressures to establish comprehensive air defence systems in the north. Ploughshares also reiterated that SDI participation was "out of sync with what we have traditionally stood for in Canada. We have always argued for finding political means rather than military or technological means."²⁴

Other Responses

While the Joint Committee provided a focus for discussion about SDI, other voices continued to be heard outside the hearing rooms. The government reported receiving an unusually large amount of mail on the subject—the bulk of it opposed—partly in response to a campaign initiated in February by

Mayor Marion Dewar of Ottawa and Joanna Miller of Saskatoon. On the other hand, a Gallup poll early in July reported that 53% of the public supported participation while 65% approved *if it meant more jobs for Canadians* (based on a survey conducted between June 10 and 30).

THE COMMITTEE DECIDES

The first news of the Joint Committee's deliberations came in the form of a leak. Early press reports on August 21 indicated that a flat rejection of participation had been defeated by a single vote. Nine Conservatives defeated the motion which had the support of all seven opposition members plus a lone Conservative.

The report itself listed four options for the government: unqualified acceptance of the U.S. invitation, qualified acceptance, qualified rejection and unqualified rejection. The committee said that it was unable to arrive at a majority recommendation because it lacked access to classified technical information, though opposition members insisted that they had heard enough to reject the invitation and, consequently, appended strong statements of dissent to the report. It was clear, however, that the committee majority favoured a middle course which meant a qualified decision, with some preference shown in the report's wording for a qualified rejection. Tom Hockin, one of the committee's chairmen, confirmed this when he told the press that, in effect, the committee had given an "interim no" to Washington.

The committee's preference was implicit in its description of the four options open to the government.²⁵ Among the concerns raised in the report were the following:

Unqualified Acceptance

- By opting for full participation, Canada risked *de facto* involvement in later phases as well because the barrier between research and development was unclear.
- Full participation was unlikely to result in major contracts for Canadian organizations. The drain of scientific expertise to the U.S. would probably go on just as rapidly even if the government decided to participate and Canada were then barred from the core areas of research. Moreover, if Canadian experts were deeply involved in SDI, this would divert scarce financial and manpower resources from other high technology programs.
- Later withdrawal might be "exceedingly awkward".