

Vancouver, July 30 and 31, 1985

Catalyst for arms control

Federation of Military and United Services Institutes of Canada (Lt.-Gen. R.J. Lane, national chairman) argued that the research program would not stimulate the arms race; the arms race was already on and would continue until there was a political settlement or a new strategy was found.

In fact, Lt.-Gen. Lane suggested SDI could be a vital catalyst for arms control, even during any transition years, until both opponents had an effective system. In addition, the program would provide a hedge against Soviet technological breakthroughs or defence developments.

Canada should accept the principle that defence against a ballistic missile attack was no different from defence against a bomber/cruise missile attack. Canada should participate actively in SDI.

The advantages outweighed the disadvantages, the Federation asserted. The scientific community would benefit from research. Information about research and development findings would be forthcoming in any real sense only when Canada was a full partner in the program.

The Federation, in summation, urged Canada to accept the U.S. invitation to gain the knowledge necessary for informed decisions; to reiterate the principle of joint aerospace defence; to ensure that the USSR did not spring a technological surprise; and to seek a new approach to move nuclear disarmament discussions off dead centre and so take the first step in reducing existing nuclear stockpiles while ensuring the security of West and East.