

Private sector should be barred

Alberta Federation of Labour (President Dave Werlin and Secretary-Treasurer Don Aitken) strongly opposed involvement in SDI and recommended no public money be spent. Nor should private companies be allowed to participate.

SDI -- "even in its initial research phase" -- would undermine strategic deterrence or mutually assured destruction, as well as breach signed treaties, in particular, SALT I.

A further reason for opposition was that defence research creates fewer jobs in terms of dollars spent than most other uses of public funds. Because military technology changed so rapidly, "military production is an absurd waste of both non-renewable resources and labour."

Exploration of weaponry

Project Ploughshares (Saskatoon Chapter - Co-ordinator Ellen Gould and member Murray Dobin) said that since SDI is not an impermeable shield, "the program merely becomes another exploration of new forms of weaponry." It would undermine deterrence by encouraging a first strike. And it would violate provisions of the ABM Treaty.

Project Ploughshares concluded that Canada should not be involved, publicly or privately. Nor is Canada obligated to participate as a member of NATO. As Lord Carrington recently said, money spent on SDI would not be available for conventional defence.