leading to decisions to pursue less ambitious BMD programmes such as limited defences of ICBM silos and other military assets.

(iii) ***Alliance Reactions:*** a decision to accelerate or postpone an SDI deployment decision will be affected by allied policies and reactions, including their interest in a defence against tactical ballistic missiles.

(iv) ***The Next US Administration:*** on the assumption that a decision will not be taken before 1989, the future of SDI will be dependent on the strategic and arms control policies of the next US Administration, or even the one after that.

(v) ***Arms Control:*** the success or failure of the ongoing Geneva Negotiations may yet have a major impact on the future of SDI, leading either to its *de facto* demise or acceleration. So too will the fate of the Anti-Ballistic Missile (ABM) Treaty.

In sum, technological uncertainty makes it difficult to speculate about the long-term prospects, while political factors cloud the near term. It is nevertheless possible to identify certain plausible developments in the near or middle term which could have a significant impact on the bilateral defence relationship.

First, within the terms of the ABM Treaty, the United States might choose to exercise its option to deploy an ABM system at one location. The purpose of this would be the defence of one American missile field. The difficulty may be that the presently designated location (Grand Forks) might not extend defensive coverage to the present basing mode of the MX missiles, (Wyoming), but an agreement to relocate the American site could hardly be considered an erosion of the Treaty.

Such a point defence could be deployed within the next few years using existing technologies. For example, both exo-atmospheric (HEDI) and endo-atmospheric (ERIS) interceptors are being tested within the terms of the ABM Treaty. Both are single-warhead interceptors without the capacity for rapid reload, meaning that both could be deployed within the terms of Article V of the ABM Treaty.[18] Although it may be farfetched,

[18] See *Report to the Congress on the Strategic Defense Initiative*, June 1986, pp. C-14, C-15: "The High Endoatmospheric Defense Interceptor (HEDI) project is to demonstrate the capability to intercept and negate strategic ballistic missile warheads within the atmosphere using a non-nuclear interceptor missile. Flight tests will be performed at White Sands Missile Range (WSMR) and Kwajalein Missile Range (KMR). All flight tests will be from fixed ground-based launchers without the capability of being rapidly reloaded or launching more than one interceptor missile. The interceptor missiles will not be capable of delivering more than one independently-guided warhead. All activity will be conducted in a manner permitted by the ABM Treaty. The Exoatmospheric Reentry-Vehicle (RV) Interceptor Subsystem (ERIS) is intended to engage incoming RVs prior to entry into the atmosphere. This is an allowed test of a non-nuclear interceptor missile. All interceptor missile flight tests are to be conducted from fixed ground-based launchers at KMR. The planned flight tests include launch of the first stage, launch of all stages without homing, homing against a point in space, and hit-to-kill against targets. Fixed ground-based