

cause of this commitment that Prime Minister Brian Mulroney had declined the invitation to take part, officially, in strategic defence research. The Prime Minister should be congratulated, said Polanyi, for responding to Canadians' fear that SDI would "blow the 1972 ABM Treaty sky-high."

How would Canadians regard Canada's continued involvement in NORAD which, with the advent of SDI, now straddled both aerospace and outer space, both passive sensing and active interdiction? If SDI proceeded, the United States would press for Canada's active participation in ballistic missile defence, bomber defence and cruise missile defence. It was important, said Polanyi, that Canada made its views known, politely but firmly, at this early stage.

In closing, Professor Polanyi used an analogy from the laboratory. Sometimes, he said, when you have a recalcitrant piece of delicate scientific equipment, you can save the day by giving it a bash. On 23 March 1983, that was what President Reagan had done to the delicate world of international relations. He frightened both the Soviet Union and the allies of the United States; he set in motion a process of soul-searching unparalleled since the Cuban Missile Crisis. The question now was whether this was a stroke of genius or simply vandalism.

### **Discussion and Questions from the Floor**

William Epstein suggested that Mr. Hagen's comment, that there was little Canada could do to influence US policy, was too pessimistic. He pointed out that both Denis Healey and Abram Chayes had said that Canada could, and should, play a more active role in both NORAD and NATO.

Paul McCrae asked whether Canadians should be concerned that Soviet missiles and warheads might be "salvage-fused", that is, that the nuclear warheads would be rigged to explode if intercepted, in which case they would explode over Canadian territory. Professor Legault responded that it would be in Canada's interest to participate in missile defence to ensure that interception takes place as far north as possible. Professor Polanyi disagreed. He quoted former Prime Minister Trudeau, who had responded to the question of missiles falling on Canada with: "Who cares? What matters is whether there is a global conflagration." Professor Polanyi emphasized that Canada should oppose SDI because it increased the risk of nuclear war and diminished the security of the planet.