

questions. Still, in the context of our discussions here, in which ideas have been freely and personally exchanged among friends, I might venture some conditional answers to such questions. You will understand, I am sure, that my views are indicative only and certainly do not represent a final and firm official Canadian position.

There are two sides to the problem. The first can be considered primarily an American issue, with indirect implications for other countries. The second aspect concerns Canada and other countries more directly.

Taking the specifically U.S. aspects first, I should offer the following observations:

First, despite the undoubted technical improvements in ABMs in the recent past, the U.S. Administration has suggested quite convincingly that the so-called "cost-exchange ratio" between offensive and defensive weapons is unlikely to favour the defence, so that a considerably smaller amount of money spent on offensive weapons would offset any protection the U.S.S.R. might be thought to gain through deployment of a BMD system. Expressed in terms of anticipated casualties, a smaller expenditure on offensive weapons would return the level of casualties in a nuclear exchange to the figure expected before the defensive expenditure made by one side (the U.S.S.R.).

A second point concerns the extent of deployment. In this connection, we have heard a good deal about light and heavy defences, about postures A for 25 and B for 50 cities, about point-versus-area defences, and about defences against attacks from the U.S.S.R. or from China. While I agree that there are valid choices to be made between the various alternatives, I sometimes have the impression that the "light" posture for defence against China represents a compromise between no ABMs and a very costly "heavy" system. It is to be hoped that ABM deployment -- if there were to be one -- would be undertaken solely on the military and technical merits of the system, taking due account of the implication for other countries and for the international community as a whole, and would not be decided solely on the basis of some compromise between competing pressures within the United States.

Again, most supporters of ABMs seem to have conceded that deployment would not be effective in the sense of offering complete protection against the U.S.S.R. They believe, however, that the threat from Communist China could and should be countered. In answer to this assertion, I should argue that the Chinese missile threat is neither immediate nor assured. More important, however, lead times for deployment of ABMs are shorter than they would be for Chinese missile systems, so that a "wait-and-see" approach would scarcely endanger Western security.

Finally, even if the heaviest ABM system were deployed, assuming that the U.S.S.R. reacts, it appears doubtful that United States security would be greatly enhanced. This is a point which has been repeatedly made by President Johnson and Secretary McNamara, and I have heard little convincing argument to the contrary.