

would attack this massive complex of problems if you could start *tabula rasa*. Let's say, for instance - some people have argued this - that it would have been far more sensible to start with negotiations covering battlefield weapons. Anyway, one way or another, we are where we are. We start from where we start. Alright, the INF thing may on one logic be an odd place to attack the problem. Nonetheless, history has brought us there, and if we can register success with that particular category of weapons, that success itself I think is far more important than the fact that by some arguments the two sides really ought to be talking about something else first.

[HILL] It's an interesting point. It brings us around also to another point. One of the things which arose while you were at NATO was the question of the Strategic Defense Initiative. I think this was announced by President Reagan while you were at NATO. My impression was that most people could not quite figure out at first what this was all about, but then when it dawned on people what it was about, then they began to worry about it. That is what happened in Canada, I think. And I have a feeling that it was not dissimilar in Europe. And when they started to worry about it, the Europeans began to wonder where would they stand in relation to the American defensive shield that was going up. Could you tell us something about the discussions that took place on this issue? Was there much discussion?

[TAYLOR] There was no conclusive discussion at all while I was there, and I do not think that there was anything that you could call more than the beginnings of a process of consultation about SDI and its implications. The President's announcement came really as quite a surprise to everybody. It surprised a lot of people in the United States. Unlike INF and the two track decision and all the rest of it, it was not something that people had had a long time to work up to. On the contrary, it was more or less dropped on the Alliance, and people had to start from there.

Well, the United States sent a number of extremely expert military and civilian defence advisers to Brussels, and there were frequent briefings about what was involved in the programme. General Abrahamson came several times for instance, and there were other senior officials from the Defense Department; and of course the Secretary of Defense himself appeared regularly in NATO meetings, and would speak to the progress of the programme.

One of the great difficulties, at least so long as I was there - and I take it this is still a difficulty - is that it all depends on what SDI you are talking about. If the most ambitious form of strategic defence could be realized, the kind that the President appeared to be talking about and appeared to believe in - he seemed to believe in the most ambitious form - that is something that would be a kind of double dome. That is, it would protect the United States, but it would also protect the territory of the Allies. That was part of the answer to European worries about is SDI just Fortress America?

In principle, the President appeared to be saying that the protective umbrella would cover all the Allies. But then there was also, you will remember, the offer to share the technology with the Soviet Union. So, the Soviet Union would be protected by another dome or umbrella as well. Well, the implications of that are breathtakingly vast; they would obviously be in a class by themselves. Now between that extreme vision of what might be possible, and whatever the United States may eventually come to as a result of the research that is going on now, there is a whole range of possibilities. Just in the last few months, of course, Secretary Weinberger has talked again about the possibilities of an early deployment of something much less ambitious. Your judgement about whether these things are possible or impossible, wise or unwise, destabilizing or not, depends in the end on what SDI is. While people use SDI as one of these very convenient labels, in fact, you know, SDI is a label like "middle class": it means all sorts of things - so far as I can see,