

(Mr. Lowitz, United States)

seek them independent of whether effective defences prove feasible or not. If the United States sought defensive systems to "supplement" an offensive strategy, it would not make sense for us to seek the reduction of strategic offensive nuclear forces. Nor would the United States seek a jointly managed transition with the Soviet Union to a strategic régime where the security of both sides, indeed the whole world, would be underwritten by those defences which could frustrate the offensive designs of any aggressor.

Finally, Mr. Kornienki alluded to allegations that the strategic defence initiative is inconsistent with the ABM Treaty. There is no basis to these allegations. Let me discuss them briefly.

First, it was alleged by the Soviet Union that the United States proposed only a scientific research programme, but that this was disproved by United States Department of Defence documents indicating that certain "advanced development" efforts will be conducted. There is no contradiction here; the programme will include a variety of activities allowed by the ABM Treaty -- and that Treaty allows not only research, but also development, testing and even deployment, subject to limitations.

Second, it was alleged that the objective of the strategic defence initiative was to deploy a space-based ABM system, and that this objective was inconsistent with the ABM Treaty. That, too, is an incorrect statement. The objective of the strategic defence initiative includes determining whether effective defences are feasible in a number of basing modes, and whether they will meet a variety of stringent criteria. Such an exploration is legal under the ABM Treaty; as I have already noted the Soviet Union is pursuing the same kind of research in this area.

The legitimacy of such research was, in fact, emphasized by the Soviet Union soon after the Treaty was signed, when the Soviet Defence Minister informed the Supreme Soviet that "research and experimental work aimed at resolving the problem of defending the country against nuclear missile attack" was not limited by the ABM Treaty.

Indeed, any assertion that the strategic defence initiative programme is inconsistent with the ABM Treaty is unfounded; as President Reagan has directed, the programme is being conducted well within the Treaty's bounds. All activities are continuously and scrupulously reviewed to ensure their legality under the Treaty.

A third allegation we have heard concerning the legality of SDI under the ABM Treaty is that the United States has attempted "to create confusion" by making false reference to an agreed statement to the Treaty which deals with ABM systems "based on other physical principles" than those systems limited by the Treaty.

In the United States view, its interpretation of the Treaty -- that the parties did not agree to ban the development and testing of systems based on other physical principles -- is fully justified. Nevertheless, as President Reagan has directed, the United States is following an even more restrictive course than required by the Treaty.

From the facts that I have outlined, we can only conclude that the statements by the Soviet Union were designed to pressure the United States to adopt unilateral restraints on its strategic defence programmes. This would