9.0 CONCLUSION (Continued)

concluded that the greatest threat for a spacebased weapon system is to be directed against space assets in an antisatellite role. Questions of versatility and cost effectiveness of other basing schemes relegated spacebased weapons directed towards terrestial targets a lower threat rating. Ballistic missile defense systems were judged to be at a slightly lower threat rating than antisatellite systems on the basis of technological maturity. It being possible that a BMD system would be implemented as a followon to the first generation of a spacebased ASAT weapon. The technological kinship between BMD and ASAT weapon systems however, makes such assessments difficult. The fourth weapon system directed against space weapons themselves would only surface after the initial deployment of a spacebased weapons system.

Of the weapons systems examined, each represents somewhat different levels of technological sophistication, not only in terms of the weapon capabilities but also in the ways in which they are deployed. The destructive mechanisms which may be employed very from simple chemical explosives through nuclear bombs, to exotic laser and particle beam weapon technology. Each technological means has a characteristic merit of effectiveness and is at a different state of technological maturity, thereby implying a cost effectiveness measure. It was thereby concluded that spaceborne weapon systems would require high levels of optimization, and would be focussed on targets which are of such a nature as to justify the complexity and cost of the weapon systems envisaged.

These considerations suggested that the verification of space for the presence of weapons should be oriented towards particular spacecraft configurations and specific orbits. Not all of the spacecraft presently deployed were found to constitute logical and rewarding military strategic or tactical targets for space-to-