

There is evidence that Soviet treaty compliance has been less than perfect. While the Soviet Union has not abrogated any legally binding arms control treaty, "they have tried to exploit ambiguities and have disregarded US views on the spirit of the accords" (p. 262). Such practices do not pose a serious threat however, and more substantial treaty violations would pose great risks of detection while providing only marginal gains. In order to conceal a new weapon, the Soviet Union would have to disguise all five stages of development; it is highly unlikely that the research, development, testing, production and deployment of a weapon could be concealed, and to attempt to do so would be very costly.

One potential obstacle to the verification of a nuclear freeze is perceived in the traditional Soviet rejection of on-site inspection. Most aspects of a nuclear freeze could be verified using other verification measures, but some parts of a freeze would 'clearly benefit' from on-site inspection. Despite the possible benefits, however, the acceptance of a nuclear freeze should not be predicated on the acceptance of on-site inspection; "it is important to ensure that the independently verifiable parts of the freeze should not be held hostage to those which are more difficult to verify without on-site inspection" (p. 263). Prospects for on-site inspection are improving however, with a 'softening' of the Soviet position, and the USSR has recently agreed to permit ten seismic stations on Russian soil. Finally, this willingness may be enhanced by the nature of the freeze proposal, as the Soviet Union has indicated that they would prefer a more comprehensive proposal.

The freeze proposal itself is quite extensive, and would affect the testing, production and deployment of nuclear warheads, weapon-grade material and nuclear delivery systems. Previous attempts to reach a comprehensive test ban agreement have been frustrated by the United States' insistence that Soviet concessions on seismic sensors and on-site inspection are not sufficient to allow adequate verification. "Yet the failure to conclude a Comprehensive Test Ban Treaty has little to do with verification and a great deal to do with the political power of the military in the US" (p. 263). National technical means of verification would suffice to monitor missile tests, with the possible exception of cruise missiles for which "independent verification of non-testing would be more difficult and less reliable, though still possible. This area needs further investigation to determine the adequacy of national technical means of verification" (p. 264).

The verifiability of a ban on production is one of the great contentious issues in negotiations for a nuclear freeze. Despite such controversy, production should not be excluded from a freeze, since a literal interpretation of such a treaty would permit continued production even where testing is banned. The task of verification is also made easier by a total ban on testing and production; "the comprehensiveness of the freeze proposal means that verification of the whole package would be significantly easier than verification of the separate parts. High-confidence verification of one link of the production chain could compensate for weaknesses in other links" (p. 264).