

C121.1(A68)

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Proposal Abstract C121.1(A68)

1. **Arms Control Problem:**  
Conventional weapons - ground forces  
- ships
2. **Verification Type:**
  - (a) On-site inspection - selective
  - (b) Remote sensors - aerial
3. **Source:**  
Burns, Richard Dean. "Inspection of the Mandates, 1919-1941".  
Pacific Historical Review 37 (November 1968): 445-462.
4. **Summary:\***

Verifying compliance with Japan's non-fortification pledges regarding its Pacific mandated islands was a serious problem to US officials during the interwar years. Five questions are posed by these events:

  - (1) What authority did the United States or the League of Nations' Mandates Commission possess to verify these pledges?
  - (2) How did the US react to the need for the development of a verification system during the interwar years?
  - (3) What was the Mandates Commission's response to the rumours concerning Japanese remilitarization?
  - (4) Did the Japanese actually violate their pledges? and
  - (5) Would an international inspection system employing on-site inspections have successfully resolved Western apprehensions about Japanese pre-1939 activities?

It is pointed out that League's supervision of the mandated territories did not include the right of on-site inspection. Few inspection rights were granted in agreements governing the Pacific islands.

Prior to the 1930s the US attitude was that no formal provision for verification was necessary; fulfillment of obligations rested on each signatory's national honour and good faith. "Not until 1932 and 1933 did American policy shift to an emphatic and total endorsement of

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\* Editor's note: There is an extensive literature on the subjects of verification and compliance during the period between the World Wars. Because of time limitations only a few such articles have been included in this Compendium. While verification technology has advanced since that era, some of the historical insights relating to these issues continue to have relevance today.