

C119(A82)

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Proposal Abstract C119(A82)

1. Arms Control Problem:

Other weapons of mass destruction - radiological weapons

2. Verification Type:

- (a) On-site Inspection - selective
- (b) Complaints procedure - consultative commission
- referral to General Assembly

3. Source:

Issraelyan, Victor L. and Charles C. Flowerree. Radiological Weapons Control: A Soviet and US Perspective. Occasional Paper #29. Iowa: The Stanley Foundation, February 1982.

4. Summary:

Two papers are included in this report on radiological weapons control. The first, by Flowerree, provides a general explanation of the problem. Radiological weapons use radioactive materials to cause "destruction, damage or injury on a massive scale" (p.7), and are classified as weapons of mass destruction by the United Nations. Basically, the destructive capacity of these weapons is produced through the decay of radioactive substances. Their lethality has been acknowledged in the post-war period, but they have only inspired "brief flickers of interest" as strategic nuclear weapons were deemed to be the central cause for concern.

The second paper by Issraelyan discusses some specific proposals and verification issues. Some means of verification ought to accompany a treaty restricting radiological weapons in order to guarantee its credibility and provide assurance that nations comply with its provisions. The Soviet-US draft treaty on radiological weapons is reviewed with respect to its provisions for verification of compliance. First, Issraelyan points out that there is provision for withdrawal from the treaty when a violation occurs - this will protect nations' security interests and may also deter potential violations. A consultative committee of experts is authorized to investigate and pass judgment on suspected violations, and complaints may then be addressed to the United Nations General Assembly as a last resort. "Such a complaint should include all relevant information pertaining to the case in question as well as all possible evidence supporting its validity. Furthermore, in order to ensure an effective system of verifying compliance with the treaty, each party undertakes to cooperate in carrying out any investigations which the Security Council may initiate on the basis of the complaint received" (p. 26).