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Multilateral Verification and Arms Control Agreement
(Continued)

states to particular arms control agreements. For example, this could involve the policing of the ABM Treaty by a group of states who are not parties to that agreement. The rationale for such a scenario would presumably be based on a desire to ensure that the parties are adhering to the agreement, on the assumption either that existing verification assets are inadequate, or that there might occur some sort of collusive violation of the agreement by the signatories.

However, problems abound with this scenario.

- (a) Since by definition neither Paxsat nor the states involved in its operation would be legally linked to the treaty or treaties to be verified, there would be no legally established means for discussing compliance issues arising from the operation of Paxsat. Although Paxsat itself and its associated administrative structure might have international legal standing by virtue of agreements signed between the participating states, there would be no legal linkage between this structure on one hand and the agreements to be verified on the other.
- (b) It is generally accepted that verification and compliance processes are conditioned by the political context in which they operate. What in one political context might be construed as a violation of an agreement might be seen in another as an activity which is either allowed by the agreement or a violation insufficiently serious to warrant a major political conflict.

A stand-alone verification capability operating outside the context of the political relations between the treaty parties would interfere with this relationship between verification and politics, and might well create unnecessary political problems between the parties. In addition, since compliance issues arising between the parties are subject to private consultations, through such mechanisms as the Standing Consultative Commission created by SALT I, independent 'findings' could well interfere with this process, generating more problems than they would solve.