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Nuclear Disarmament -- The Necessary Components

Introduction

An accidental nuclear holocaust is as prevalent today as it was many decades ago. While we are lucky we haven't blown ourselves up yet, the statistics applicable for such a catastrophe haven't changed. The movie "Crimson Tide" is an excellent example depicting a realistic accident scenario.

The component parts of a nuclear disarmament agreement are several but the U.S. has been the major culprit preventing such an agreement. This article is not to condemn the U.S. but to spell out the agreement components necessary. Each part is worthy of an extensive treatment, so what follows is simply an overall view of what we have to do.

Deterent Myth

The argument given for maintenance of a nuclear bomb stockpile is deterrence, i.e., the assumption that no country will attack another that has nuclear bombs. While it has been contended that the U.S. was deterred from bombing North Korea and Vietnam at one time because of a Soviet threat to unleash submarine launched ballistic missiles if we did, this may be true. Today, however, the radioactivity coming back on the world and/or the contemplation of vehement worldwide response seems to have done the trick. We note that both India and Pakistan have nuclear bombs and neither side has tried to use them -- yet. Also we might note that countries or groups resorting to suicide bombing would probably not be deterred to use nuclear bombs if they had access to such weapons. It is also noted that while missiles are probably the best bomb delivery mechanism, long distance aircraft were relied upon at one time.

Maintenance of a nuclear bomb stockpile is not a very reliable technique for deterring irrational leaders. This is certainly true when comparing and evaluating worldwide public safety in a nuclear free world.

Worldwide Disarmament Agreement

It goes without saying that nuclear disarmament has to include all countries. Any one country having nuclear bombs when all others have none is not an acceptable situation. Therefore, an agreement including every country in the world capable of producing nuclear weapons must be in force before the staged dismantlement can begin.

Past experience indicates that U.S. failure to embrace any total dismantlement agreement will be a major problem. The Nuclear Proliferation Treaty (NPT) has been violated from the outset, even though the U.S. signed it. The section violated is that specifying old nuclear stockpiles be dismantled simultaneously with non-proliferation of new stockpiles.

While negotiations between the U.S. and Russia are considering reducing their stockpiles to 1500 weapons, that large a number is still unacceptable because the possibility of an accidental nuclear war would be little effected by the reduction. Only complete dismantling of all weapons will ever be acceptable, the problem then shifting to countries possessing nuclear power plants. It is noted that any country possessing a nuclear power reactor has the capability of processing the waste to extract plutonium for bombs. In other words, much more is required by way of agreements and the establishing of new international agencies than simply the dismantlement of present stockpiles.

A listing of the component parts or steps required is as follows:

- 1). The U.S. and Russia must agree to dismantle their entire nuclear stockpiles.
- 2). All other nations with smaller stockpiles must agree to dismantle their stockpiles as well.
- 3). The U.N. must establish a monitoring system acceptable to all nations to detect any attempts by a rogue nation to acquire nuclear weapons.
- 4). The U.N. also needs to establish a nuclear repository for worldwide control of fissile material.
- 5). All organizations sharing the above rationale must join forces in order to achieve a world that is free of nuclear bombs.