



University of California
Institute on Global Conflict
and Cooperation

**HISTORICAL
PERSPECTIVES
ON
GLOBAL CONFLICT
AND COOPERATION**

Edited by
Gregg Herken

Report of a Conference Held
at La Jolla, California

February 5-7, 1987

A Report on the Conference
"Historical Perspectives on Global Conflict and Cooperation"

held at The SeaLodge

La Jolla, California

February 5-7, 1987

sponsored by the University of California's
Institute on Global Conflict and Cooperation

edited by

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Background on the Conference

On February 5-7, 1987, the University of California's Institute on Global Conflict and Cooperation sponsored a conference at the La Jolla Sealodge on the topic, "Historical Perspectives on Global Conflict and Cooperation." This was the third such conference the IGCC has sponsored in recent years, and the first for historians. Attending were seventeen members of the history faculty and staff from seven campuses of the University of California, eight workshop leaders from other institutions, representatives from the Alfred Sloan Foundation and the MacArthur Foundation, as well as six other university-affiliated observers.

The aim of the conference was two-fold: to identify promising new areas for historical scholarship in the field of global conflict and cooperation, and to generate new ideas for specific research proposals that University of California historians might later present to the IGCC for funding.

Following a brief plenary session on Friday morning, February 6, the conference divided into the following four workshop-sized groups, to which topics had been assigned in advance:

- Workshop 1 "New Resources" (Leaders: Armstrong and Henson)
- 2 "Nuclear History" (Sherwin, Haslam)
- 3 "Science, Technology, and Conflict" (Elliott, Bernstein)
- 4 "Non-Traditional Approaches" (Strozier, Lanouette)

Both the composition and the topics of the workshops on Friday afternoon and Saturday morning were left to the participants and the individual workshop leaders to decide. A final plenary session was

held on Saturday afternoon, during which the workshop leaders and participants reported on what was discussed in the workshops.

The Workshops

This summary account is adapted from the notes taken by the workshop rapporteurs. The original titles of the workshops have been maintained, although both their membership and their focus changed over the course of the conference. At the end of this report is a list of those who attended the conference and their affiliation, along with information concerning the IGCC.

Workshop One: "New Resources" (rapporteur: Lawrence Badash)

The workshop began with a discussion by Scott Armstrong, director of the recently-established National Security Archive in Washington, D.C., of the Archive as a new resource for scholars of recent American foreign policy, and its current plan to offer country- and issue-related "document sets" for sale to universities and colleges around the country. Armstrong made the point that the Archive was both a more comprehensive and a cheaper alternative to the incomplete and unindexed document collections currently available from University Microfilm, or previously available from the now-defunct Declassified Documents Reference Service.

As an example of how the Archive is providing a service heretofore lacking to scholars, Armstrong mentioned that his researchers are combing the presidential libraries scattered throughout the country in an effort to target national security documents for mandatory declassification review under the Freedom of Information Act--a task

beyond the resources of individual historians or even colleges.

Armstrong also noted that the National Security Archive has been asked to provide supporting documentation for the multi-national "Nuclear History" project currently being undertaken at Harvard and MIT. Armstrong expressed the hope that the National Security Archive and historians would eventually share a symbiotic relationship, with the Archive spearheading efforts to get classified documents released, while scholars will take the lead in identifying the most important documents, or those that should be declassified first.

Pamela Hensen of the Smithsonian Institution noted that the Institution's "video-history" project, recently underwritten by the Sloan Foundation, plans to add to the videotaped interviews already done by Sloan on "Project Charles," the air-defense study at MIT in the 1950s, the H-bomb decision, the Cuban missile crisis, physicist Isidor Rabi, former American ambassadors to Russia, and presidential science advisers. The Smithsonian project presently has a series of interviews underway or planned--dealing, for example, with pioneers in the biological sciences, veterans of the Manhattan Project, and the origins of the Rand Corporation. Hensen remarked that, unlike the earlier Sloan series, the Smithsonian interviews will experiment with a variety of different interview approaches--including one-on-one as well as group interviews, and interviews conducted at the actual site of a scientific discovery, such as the Los Alamos laboratory in the case of the Manhattan Project. Hensen made the point that returning to such sites not only increased the drama of the interview, but often helped stimulate the memory of those individuals who are its subject.

Arthur Singer, vice-president of the Sloan Foundation, described the Foundation's current "scientific biography" projects. The earliest and

perhaps best known of these is the memoirs of physicist Freeman Dyson, Disturbing the Universe. The Foundation has also either published or now has under contract books by Luis Alvarez, Herbert York, Jerrod Zacharias, Emilio Segré, Simon Ramo, McGeorge Bundy, and others. In some cases--including that of a forthcoming book on Isidor Rabi by John Rigdon--Sloan has sponsored biographies rather than autobiographies. The Making of the Atomic Bomb by Richard Rhodes, which has just been released to very favorable reviews, is another example of the Foundation's efforts to educate the public about the historical origins of the nuclear arms race.

Visiting Professor He Di of the Institute of American Studies, Beijing, remarked upon the difficulty that Chinese historians have in gaining access to documents, noting that his colleagues in the west may not suffer from the same problem, or at least to the same degree. He cited the recently-released official history of the Chinese nuclear weapons project as an example, pointing out that it was based--as is his own research on the Taiwan Straits incidents of the 1950s--almost exclusively upon interviews with participants. As in the west, both the memory and the forthrightness of such interviews vary greatly according to the individual and his/her status in the government, he noted.

Among comments made by the other participants in the workshop, Allen Greb, an assistant director of the IGCC, argued that past approaches to the study of arms control have been too mechanistic, generally focussing upon the language of treaties and the process of how nations negotiate, with insufficient attention being paid to the actual people involved.

Gregg Herken, senior research associate at the IGCC, remarked that in researching his current book on the president's science advisers he had discovered that the "paper trail" on the life of physicist Edward Teller was seemingly obliterated, either by accident or design. Thus, Herken has been told that Teller's personal papers and correspondence prior to the establishment of the Livermore lab in 1952 were misplaced, whereas Teller's papers after 1952 and up to 1960 were destroyed, in what was described by one official at the lab as routine "house-cleaning."

Armstrong remarked that the disappearance of documents, as in Teller's case, was not unusual in his experience. Such occurrences made document depositories like the National Security Archive all the more valuable. Armstrong further suggested that historians, in addition to identifying the most "urgent" documents for declassification review, also identify those likely to be the most vulnerable--such as documents at the National Laboratories at Los Alamos and Livermore. The fact that both labs are administered by the University of California means that UC historians would be perhaps best suited to that task.

The workshop on Friday afternoon focussed primarily upon interviewing techniques. Hensen noted the vital importance of thorough preparation--which included providing the subject with documents showing his/her role in historical events as a way of refreshing their memory. Armstrong made the argument that not only documentation, but persistence--and endurance--were the key to a successful interview. He pointed out that he almost never interviewed a subject in his/her office, but insisted upon talking to them at their home, whenever possible. Armstrong also argued that the longer the interview, the

better--noting that on one occasion an interview he conducted lasted sixteen hours. Armstrong said he made a point whenever possible of interviewing not only the major figures in his research, but their secretaries and aides as well.

Hensen noted that the expense of producing a video-history put it beyond the range not only of individuals, but even of many colleges. She cited published estimates (appearing in Cullom Davis, Oral History: From Tape to Type) claiming that forty hours of preparation were necessary for a one-hour, tape-recorded interview, and noted her own estimate that more than sixty hours of preparation were needed to produce one hour of video-history.

There was general agreement on the difficulty and peculiar pitfalls associated with oral and video-history--perhaps the most obvious being the often self-serving and selective memory of interview subjects. But the participants also acknowledged that the same drawbacks exist with published memoirs, and that living historical figures should be treated as a "perishable" and even "endangered" resource. Pointing to current efforts by the Department of Energy and the Reagan administration to reclassify previously-declassified documents on national security, the point was made that, contrary to the previous assumption of scholars, it may be easier to find out the "historical truth" about an event sooner than later--while the principals are still alive and their memories are still intact.

More than one participant in the workshop mentioned the vital importance of identifying certain areas and individuals now as subjects for subsequent oral or video-history interviews, and conducting such interviews as soon as possible. Singer mentioned as an example of a

priceless missed opportunity, in this regard, the oral and video-history of the life of Robert Oppenheimer which he proposed in the mid-1960s. Oppenheimer's death in 1967 ended the project before funding for it could be obtained, Singer noted.

One suggestion for getting around the reluctance of some interview subjects to speak about still-living contemporaries was that of "sealing" the interview until the death of one or both individuals. Since few interview subjects were likely to trust a researcher to keep the interview secret, some institutional mechanism--such as having the interview conducted by representatives of the Smithsonian or of a presidential library--would have to be worked out to assure confidentiality.

In conclusion, Armstrong and Hensen expanded upon this theme of the current and future responsibilities of historians and archives to include the following:

1. Encourage institutions to know what is historically important and what is not; what they should preserve and what they can discard. Ideally, governments and other institutions--including national laboratories, major corporations, etc.--should have a historian or an employee trained in historical research able to carry out this task.

2. Establish criteria for retention of documents by such institutions.

3. Compile a master list not only of historical figures but of key aides and secretaries still living for each presidential administration, showing the contacts between individuals.

4. Compile a single, computerized list of collections which would be instantly updated, unlike the present National Union Catalog, and sold or otherwise provided to libraries.

5. Create detailed chronologies of particularly important historical events, such as the Cuban missile crisis, which scholars might employ as a "template" to begin their research, and archivists could use to identify and obtain important documents.

6. Collect and assemble relevant foreign documents pertaining to such events--in the case of the missile crisis, for example, Air Force and CIA translations of Soviet documents and intercepts of communications.

7. Identify and disseminate a list of other individuals engaged in working on particular areas.

At the end of the workshop, Singer made the observation that, in the past, the relationship between public figures and historians has generally been one-sided, with historians intent upon learning what the public figures have done. An area that is still relatively unexplored, Singer argued, is what public figures might learn from historians--or, specifically, from the lessons of history.

Workshop Two: "Nuclear History" (rapporteurs: Michael Smith; Don Elder)

Martin Sherwin, director of the Nuclear Age History and Humanities Center at Tufts University, began with the observation that the study of the "nuclear question" has long been too much focussed on the United States, with too little attention being paid to the other side of the equation--the Russians--as well as to other countries vitally affected by the Cold War. Jonathan Haslam, a British scholar of the Soviet Union visiting Stanford, agreed that the present emphasis was not only too concentrated on the west, but also too "U.S.-centric."

Both Sherwin and Haslam argued that one of the greatest needs was to understand more about the Soviets' process of decision-making in foreign policy and the nuclear area. Yet, in contrast to the current analysis of decision-making in the United States by political scientists, this process cannot be usefully separated from an examination of the cultural and social context in which decisions are made. This is true in both the American and the Soviet example. Thus, as Haslam pointed out, the nuclear arms competition between the U.S. and the U.S.S.R. is also a symptom of a deeper antagonism. Traditionally, American scholars looked at the arms race as a self-contained dynamic and ignored its ideological underpinnings.

Sherwin took issue with the thesis put forward by some scholars that the real problem is the Cold War, noting that nuclear weapons do present a particular and even unique problem in international relations.

Among the comments by participants in the workshop, Barbara Epstein of the History of Consciousness program at UC Santa Cruz raised the point that historians have typically chronicled the course of Soviet-American conflict without examining what stimulates this antagonism, what its roots are, and how deep in society they go. Daniel Brower, a Soviet specialist from UC Davis, argued that both the U.S. and Russia were operating from paradigms they inherited from the past that might not fit the present situation. As an example, Brower cited the fact that Stalin inherited the "balance of power" paradigm, which nuclear weapons have largely rendered obsolete. The current paradigm in the west--the belief that the existence of nuclear weapons will force us to live in peace--is also subject to question, participants noted.

Sherwin remarked that even the present concept of "peace" is

misleading, since the number of war-related deaths worldwide in "peacetime" after 1945 is higher than many previous periods of "wartime."

John Heilbron, historian of science at UC Berkeley, interjected the reminder to the group that their ideas on peace and war were to be adapted to specific proposals to be made to the IGCC.

In response, Haslam suggested as one possible topic a study of Soviet and American interaction during the 1962 Cuban missile crisis. Haslam noted that although there is an entire library of books on that subject in the U.S., very little has been done by western scholars on Soviet motivations and actions during the crisis since Herbert Dinerstein's book of many years ago. When western scholars speak of "nuclear history," Haslam pointed out, they usually mean American nuclear history.

Sherwin mentioned, in this regard, the possibility of a joint seminar or conference of Soviet and American scholars of the Cold War, perhaps built around a subject of mutual interest, such as the missile crisis. Another possible topic would be the impact of the Second World War upon postwar Soviet and American thinking and culture. Is there a possibility, for example, that Richard Pipes is right--and that the Russians fear a nuclear conflict less than the U.S. because they survived horrific losses in the last war?

Michael Smith of UC Davis noted that the history of the development of civilian nuclear power in both countries might be another such focus for a comparative study--by comparing the mishaps at Chernobyl and Three-Mile-Island, for example.

Donna Gregory, an observer from UCLA, noted that scholars in other

fields--including her own, literature--had to rely upon the research done by historians when it came to the nuclear "predicament." Her own recent interest, for example, concerned the earliest thinking on nuclear weapons and how it had been used in the service of foreign policy. She cited as an example the case of the Baruch plan for the international control of atomic energy, which the U.S. submitted to the UN in 1946.

Regarding the Baruch plan, Heilbron noted his interest in a proposal that would examine the role of the expert in the nuclear debate. Picking up on the need for joint studies raised by Sherwin and Haslam, he suggested a comparative study of how experts gave advice, and how that advice was heard in the Soviet Union and America. He noted, therefore, that historians often looked only at the end result of the advisory process--the actual decision--while ignoring how that advice got to the top, or the reasons why it was accepted. His hunch, Heilbron said, was that cultural preconceptions played an important part in determining what experts were consulted and whose advice was listened to in Russia, as in the U.S.

Brower raised the further point that the term "expert" meant different things in Russia and the U.S. It was important to know, therefore, not only who the experts were, but why and under what circumstances their opinions were solicited and heard, since expertise existed in a different social context in the two countries.

On the theme of the social context of the nuclear debate, Sherwin raised the question of the role of women in the field of nuclear history. Ruth Rosen, who teaches a "nuclear age" course at UC Davis, and Barbara Epstein commented on the irony that women have historically played a major role in peace activism and in the effort to ban nuclear

testing--yet there are few recognized women "experts" in this field. (In a subsequent plenary session, Epstein made the point that there were many important questions that routinely fell outside the "framework" of the current nuclear debate--including, what conditions give rise to peace movements, and what conditions disrupt them.) Sherwin added that another understudied subject in this regard is the comparative history of peace movements in the United States and the Soviet Union.

Rosen proposed a joint Soviet-American study of the comparative education--or indoctrination--of children in both countries during the 1950s regarding the realities of the Cold War. During discussion, the question was raised whether there existed any Soviet equivalent to the Disney film and book "Our Friend the Atom," or to the Weekly Reader's portrayal of the Russians and the bomb. Haslam noted that there are conflicting notions of "militarism" in Soviet and western society. In Russia, for example, children are encouraged to play with plastic rifles at an early age--while many Russians are surprised by criticism from westerners that such behavior is "militaristic."

Among the questions that the group suggested as the focus for a comparative inquiry into Soviet and American education were: What are children taught about nuclear weapons? How is it possible for adults to reconstruct what they thought as children? What were our first political memories? How is nuclear power a source of images in popular culture? How is education different from indoctrination, or wartime propaganda?

Heilbron suggested that the proposed study be broadened to include the effect of such indoctrination upon subsequent generations, which

are now coming to power in both countries. Rosen and Epstein noted that another untouched field in this regard was the impact of the Soviet-American arms race upon the Third World--including the competition in weapons sales to developing countries. Epstein said that there seemed to be few or no studies on cross-cultural reactions to the arms race. Sherwin mentioned that the Third World was actually affected by the nuclear arms race in two ways--nuclear power and nuclear weapons. Whereas the main concern of the superpowers was with preventing nuclear proliferation, the steps they took to stop the spread of nuclear weapons meant that Third World nations were cut off from a potential source of energy for development. Rosen raised the broader problem that the strategy of deterrence adopted by the superpowers had the effect of encouraging proxy wars, where Third World nations become the battlefield.

At the end of the first workshop, a general consensus emerged that the IGCC should broaden its focus beyond purely nuclear questions concerning Russia and the U.S. to include, (1) lower-intensity conflict between those two countries, and (2) the Third World. There was also agreement that in the scholarship on the nuclear question per se, comparative studies had been neglected due to the emphasis upon the west, and specifically the U.S.

Among areas identified for future study, and as possible beginnings for IGCC-sponsored proposals were the following:

1. Nuclear power in the U.S. and U.S.S.R.: Chernobyl and TMI.
2. How experts and their advice are heard.
3. "Nuclear language" and social control.
4. The impact of the Second World War upon the current arms race.
5. A comparative study of literature on the nuclear threat.

6. A comparative study of 1950's education.
7. A comparative study of peace movements.
8. The impact of the nuclear arms race upon the Third World.

The workshop on Friday afternoon began, at the request of the participants, with a discussion by Sherwin and Barton Bernstein of their respective courses on nuclear history at Tufts and Stanford.

Sherwin noted that the emphasis in his course, "America in the Nuclear Age," was upon not just what happened, but why--the cultural roots of the Cold War, for example. For this he found team teaching, with faculty members from other departments, particularly valuable. Sherwin said he also tried to avoid giving a "party line" in the course--offering, instead, four rival theories of what drives the arms race. One of the most valuable approaches to teaching the subject has been the use of literature on the nuclear age. For students to understand the effects of strategic bombing--and the fact that "city-busting" was the aim of strategists even before the atomic bomb--he has assigned Kurt Vonnegut's Slaughterhouse Five as well as John Hersey's Hiroshima.

Bernstein made the point that many of his own students now looked upon the dropping of the atomic bomb as "lamentable but necessary"--and likewise ignored the fact that Hiroshima was only one of many instances of mass killing in the war. Ironically, one effect of focussing so much attention upon the atomic bombings had been to persuade U.S. students that this was a case of rare "exceptionalism" in America's wartime behavior, when in fact mass killing was always the aim, as the history of conventional strategic bombing and consideration by the U.S. of using biological warfare showed. The difficulty that

Americans had in facing the moral and historical facts of the war even some forty years later was illustrated by criticism of Bernstein's recent article exposing the "myth of a million lives saved" by the atomic bombing, Sherwin noted.

Sherwin and Bernstein then engaged in a brief debate over the interpretation of why the United States dropped atomic bombs on Japan-- Bernstein noting his own view was that the use of the bomb was inevitable even before the question of the U.S. putting leverage on the Soviets became an issue. In Bernstein's view, this latter concern "overdetermined" the decision to drop the bomb.

Sherwin explained that after reviewing the atomic-bomb decision for his students, he found it useful to raise the moral dilemma that scientists once again had to face over the question of whether to proceed with the hydrogen bomb. His lecture on Robert Oppenheimer, for example, is titled "Do Scientists Have Blood on Their Hands?" In addition to the Oppenheimer case, Sherwin's class looks at the Rosenberg trial, using the novel The Book of Daniel as a text. Films-- such as "The Day after Trinity" and "Atomic Cafe"--and audio tapes, including the recordings of the Ex Comm meetings during the Cuban missile crisis, add a sense of drama and "immediacy" to the topic.

Daniel Kevles, an observer from Cal Tech, noted that most courses on nuclear history tended to emphasis the cultural substrata of the arms race, and to pay less attention to what actually drives that race. In response, Sherwin mentioned his four rival theories, and theorists, of the arms race:

1. Solly Zuckerman--technological imperative
2. Walt Rostow--Soviet expansionism
3. McGeorge Bundy--prisoners of the rhetoric of strategists

4. Robert McNamara--action-reaction phenomenon

Discussion then turned to the question of how it was possible to "periodize" the arms race. Kevles argued that, historically, the focus of scholars looking at the arms race has been upon the growth or reduction in the number of warheads, when in fact the development of new delivery systems--the supersonic bomber, the ICBM, MIRV, etc.--has had a more profound effect upon both the economies and the armed services of the United States and Russia. Kevles made the point that the Soviet-American arms race has actually been two different contests at various times: an arms race of kind, where both sides tried to "end-run" the other by developing a new and potentially decisive weapon; and an arms race of quality, where each endeavored to have more or better weapons in the same category. As examples of an arms race in kind, Kevles cited the development of the ICBM by the Russians and the submarine-launched ballistic missile by the U.S. Throughout most of the 1960s, he claimed, the contest was essentially an arms race in quality, with both sides competing to build better ICBMs, SLBMs, MIRVs, etc. The significant thing about the Reagan administration's Strategic Defense Initiative, Kevles argued, is that it marks an attempt to return to an arms race in kind.

Kevles also noted that historians generally have paid too little attention to complexities within the nuclear arms race--such as the effect that interservice rivalry, for example, has had upon the development of new weapons. One reason for the development of MIRV, he suggested, was as a solution to the competing claims of the services for more weapons; hence, MIRV gave everybody more warheads, even if the number of missiles stayed the same.

The workshop on Saturday morning began with a discussion of the scope and focus of previous IGCC grants in the area of "nuclear history." Jim Skelly, an assistant director of the IGCC, noted that, in the past, nuclear issues have taken precedence--but that the Institute was certainly willing to consider a wider range of related issues.

Jonathan Haslam then turned the discussion to a consideration of Soviet sources in English. Haslam noted that he was use to hearing two complaints from scholars of American foreign policy about the availability of comparable sources on Soviet diplomacy--namely, that most of the sources are in Russian and hence inaccessible; and that most of the information is inaccurate, or outright propaganda. He maintained that there are nonetheless ways of gaining insights into what really goes on in Soviet foreign policy, primarily through translations of Soviet radio and television broadcasts regarding international policy prepared by the U.S. government's Foreign Broadcast Information Service, and available at most major university libraries.

Haslam noted that the FBIS also did translations of Soviet Military Thought, a Russian journal on military strategy and nuclear topic. Issues of the journal are available from 1965 to 1972, and more recent issues are due to be released soon. He discounted the reliability of Pravda as a source of information on what is going on inside Russia, but noted that another publication, New Times, is often surprisingly useful--since it is an organ of the official press published by the trade unions but written primarily by agents of the KGB, and as such gives an insight into topical issues within the USSR. Haslam confirmed that issues which suddenly appear in Soviet broadcasts or are

interjected in an unusual manner into the news can shed unexpected light on official Soviet views of certain policy questions.

Bernstein agreed with Haslam's point that Soviet behavior might not be as difficult to explain as some western observers maintain. He argued, therefore, that Soviet actions leading to the Cuban missile crisis could be seen as a rational response to the deployment of U.S. missiles in Greece and Turkey. Haslam interrupted to note that Bernstein's observation illustrated his point about Soviet sources, since a Russian editorial in early 1962 had questioned why the United States should be the only nation to have forward-based missiles on foreign soil. Haslam added that information released by communist parties in other countries--particularly Italy and Yugoslavia--provided another avenue for examining the way that policy is formulated in the Soviet Union.

Scott Armstrong observed that foreign policy scholars often ignored sources on the Soviet Union that were readily available, in English, in this country. Yet such sources could be utilized to gain insights into Russian behavior, particularly in the area of foreign policy. As examples, he cited, 1) official U.S. military unit histories, published by the individual services, which give, for example, the yearly estimates of the strength of Warsaw Pact forces; 2) Department of Defense publications on doctrinal issues within the Russian military; 3) CIA publications on verification issues in arms control; and 4) CIA publications and analysis of Soviet economic forces involved in the arms race.

At the end of the workshop, Haslam and Sherwin proposed, as a possible IGCC project, that those faculty members who teach or would

like to teach a course on nuclear history attend a one- or two-week conference, the purpose of which would be to instruct them on the availability of English-language sources on Soviet foreign policy and how to use them.

Workshop Three: "Science, Technology, and Conflict"

(rappporteur: Barton Bernstein)

Bernstein began the workshop by noting that, despite the manifest interest and concern with the nuclear peril, virtually no study had yet been done of the "political economy" of the arms race: what drove the race, who benefited, and what forces or interests in society sustained it. Ironically, he noted, there was a fair amount written on the political economy of postwar scientific research in America and on the sources of science policy, but very little such treatment for nuclear policy. What Bernstein had in mind, he said, was the equivalent of Mills' analysis of the power elite, but applied to the "nuclear" elite: those who built the weapons and theorized about their use.

Such a study might begin, it was suggested, with an inquiry into where trained PhD.'s in the sciences went after they left the university. Current statistics indicated that some 70% of physicists wind up working for some part of the military-industrial-complex. This was a marked change, Bernstein argued, from the practice as late as the end of the Second World War, when the majority of scientists still went into teaching and non-defense-related research.

Bernstein and Kevles agreed that the dramatic watershed was not the atomic bomb and Hiroshima, but the war in Korea--which provided the impetus for the American government to deliberately mobilize science to serve the war effort, a trend that continues to the present day. So

successful and pervasive has that mobilization become that we have ceased to be aware of or to question it.

Discussion in the workshop then centered upon how it might be possible for scholars to study the political economy of the arms race. One question raised was how the institution in America that has had the responsibility for and custody of nuclear weapons has changed over time. Specifically, how different from the Atomic Energy Commission was the Energy Resources and Development Agency, and how different from ERDA is the current Department of Energy?

It was agreed that another institution that has received little scholarly attention thus far is that of the national laboratories--specifically, the weapons labs at Los Alamos and Livermore. Hence, the assumption has always been that these labs are merely the recipients of policy--in that they receive the orders to build the bombs--when in fact there have been several occasions when they may have been the instigators of policy. The debate in the Carter administration over the feasibility of a comprehensive nuclear test-ban was mentioned as a case in point. Yet no historical study of Los Alamos or Livermore as to their effect upon national policy has yet been done. The difficulty of gaining access to classified documents--as well as the recent "disappearance" of Edward Teller's personal papers, noted in another workshop--meant that such a study, while difficult to undertake, was perhaps all the more needed.

It was argued that still another category left unstudied is that of the personnel behind the arms race. Thus, while much attention has been paid to the "grand strategists" of nuclear war, what about the impact of the "middle-level" theorists of the arms race? Apropos of

this observation, it was suggested that biography might be one way of getting to the central question of the political economy of the arms race.

A final issue, introduced by Bernstein, concerned the unexamined assumption that morality has historically been a constraint upon warfare, at least in the west. Bernstein thus raised the question why it was that certain weapons--notably gas and biological agents--were not used in the Second World War, while a supposedly "absolute weapon," the atomic bomb, was.

Workshop Four: "Non-Traditional Approaches"

(rapporteurs: William Lanouette; Helen Hawkins; Pamela Henson)

William Lanouette, author of a forthcoming biography of physicist Leo Szilard, described the challenges of doing biography and sought advice from the specialists in psychohistory as to how to address the psychology of Szilard. Judith Hughes of UC San Diego suggested that collaborating with a psychologist may not be enough, and recounted how she had studied psychiatry and psychoanalysis when preparing studies of 19th-century European elites (Germany and England), leading to work on her next book about psychiatry itself.

Discussion followed on how psychohistorians pursue their craft, including a focus on the importance of apparently slight bits of evidence that can be analyzed to reveal general conclusions about a person. Charles Strozier, director of the Center on Violence and Human Survival at John Jay College in New York, offered examples from his work on Abraham Lincoln.

Discussion expanded to include possible areas of study for historians concerned with conflict resolution. One possibility is the

Soviet-American "signalling" that occurs in conjunction with routine diplomatic contacts. This is perhaps best studied on the regional level, where several countries and their diplomats/officials might be observed, such in the NATO and Warsaw Pact confrontation. Lanouette cited the Foreign Broadcast Information Service as a possible source of information about informal signals (perhaps unconscious) that governments give to one another.

Research for historians, it was generally agreed, cannot be limited to "presentist" studies that are expected to reveal patterns or truths useful today. Strozier pointed out that drawing currently useful patterns/lessons from history is more the work of "serious journalism," not "serious history."

Strozier expressed concern at the emphasis on post-World War II studies, noting that history as a discipline contributes much more by providing truly long-term perspectives. He described his own work on the doctrine of unconditional surrender, its relationship to the concept of total war, and the ties between the rhetoric and the realities of the American Civil War.

Strozier described a study by the Center on Violence and Human Survival in which images of the nuclear-weapons threat are studied among four sets of Americans: racial minorities, "end-of-time" religionists, anti-nuclear activists, and white upper-class civic leaders. For each set, small-group interactions are being used to elicit understanding of individual (and common) fears and motivations.

Strozier stated the need for biographies of ordinary people as well as outstanding individuals, giving as an example the comparison of a 19th-century abolitionist and a 20th-century anti-nuclear activist. In

this way contemporary movements can be rooted in the context that helps create them.

Strozier raised the question of "feminist theory" in history, giving the example of a forthcoming article in the Bulletin of the Atomic Scientists by a woman who participated in a Harvard summer seminar and felt pressured to conform to the male culture of the meeting. Helen Hawkins, publications director of the IGCC, noted that historians and other scholars, for whatever reason, ignore or downgrade the role of women in affecting policy on nuclear issues.

Peter Loewenberg of UCLA expressed concern at the restrictions in the Request for Proposal guidelines at the IGCC, which appear to rule out studies at the interpersonal level. He sees structural similarities and common principles among all levels of participation--from personal to national--which can help to explain historic events. He also warned that we must transcend the rhetoric of terms such as "total war" or statements such as "we won't negotiate with terrorists," to contrast the actuality of a situation to the words, and he recommended a study of the codes of communication between the Soviet Union and the United States, apropos of the earlier discussion of "signalling."

George Hogenson of the MacArthur Foundation regarded psychoanalytical approaches as useful, but warned that they might lead small-group theorists to ignore the findings of large-group theorists, such as those working in sociology and systems analysis. Synthesis is needed to break down barriers between small- and large-group practitioners--barriers erected and maintained in part through personal intellectual investment. He also expressed dismay at seeing the starting date for nuclear history studies set at 1945, but saw one area

where this is appropriate: the study of ways the United States and the Soviet Union have cooperated since then to avoid general war starting from the actions of other nations. He also mentioned the negative effect of economists' thinking modes as they are applied to the research and writing of history.

Hughes suggested the use of a concentric-circles approach to writing non-traditional history, especially when narrative proves ineffective for the material. Hogenson added that another solution to the limitations of narrative is to juxtapose misunderstood actions or other material that defies chronological accounts.

Hogenson summarized this opening session as leading to two different kinds of historical studies: 1) of top leaders of the United States and U.S.S.R. and their modes of communication and interaction--with the hope of encouraging their cooperation to negotiate more effectively (especially in "case-situated" examples of U.S.-Soviet cooperation); and, 2) of how people do live with the bomb, this to demonstrate that they need not endure such peril if they choose not to. He also noted the importance of understanding how and why leaders rise to the top of their country's power structures--what characteristics they have, in contrast to the (perhaps nicer) folks who do not rise to the top. This point reenforced the importance of biography in historical studies.

In summary, it was noted that the general themes which wove through the first session included the following: 1) the difficulties of cross-disciplinary work, which is a real barrier to being non-traditional; 2) the need to better understand the fears of nuclear annihilation, and whether this fear is significantly different from fear of personal death or fear of humanity's demise.

The Friday afternoon meeting focussed on the opportunities for non-traditional approaches to history afforded by the work of Lanouette, who again used the specific example of Leo Szilard. Szilard, he noted, poses important historical and political challenges to an understanding of the nuclear arms race and its control because he lived both sides of that race: first, from 1933 to 1939, trying to prevent Germany from discovering what he had realized, which was the nuclear chain reaction as a mechanism for atomic weapons; second, from 1939 to 1944, trying to promote U.S. development of atomic weapons, in a perceived arms race with Germany; and third, from 1944 until his death in 1964, trying to promote U.S.-Soviet understanding as a way to prevent the spread of nuclear weapons.

Lanouette described in detail Szilard's childhood; his social and economic environment in turn-of-the-century Budapest, his relationships with his parents and siblings, his emotional development, and his early scientific and political ideas. From this Strozier and Kees Bolle of UCLA suggested themes, and inquired if these themes persisted in Szilard's later life. General discussion followed, based upon the account of Szilard's early years, as to how much could be suggested and how much confirmed about the roots of his later behavior as a policy-maker and arms-control activist. Szilard's personal style was also considered in light of his scientific work, and as a way historians of science might apply known information about a person to his later professional achievements.

Strozier described his work with the political decisions of Abraham Lincoln, explaining the kinds of themes that can--and cannot--be inferred from fragments of personal information. Arthur Singer noted that it is important to weigh an historical figure's own recollections

with those of his contemporaries and with available documents. At issue was the question of how Szilard and Enrico Fermi differed on the importance of pursuing large-scale nuclear research. Lanouette noted that Szilard's recollections that he had to push Fermi were documented in letters the two scientists exchanged. This discussion provided a useful example of the interplay between history and biography. A further discussion followed in which the personal styles of Szilard and Fermi were contrasted.

The session concluded with the affirmation that biographical detail, if carefully collected and analyzed, can help to illuminate political and diplomatic history, as well as the history of science.

Discussion on Saturday morning focussed on new non-traditional ways of better understanding historical phenomena such as the rise of the military-industrial complex. Kevles noted that accounts of laboratory directors (e.g., E. O. Lawrence) and their careers failed to explain the economic and political forces behind nuclear arms development. Moreover, the power to influence policy grew in an era when the personalities of the national labs' leaders became less important. In short, the group wondered, what is the collection of forces that has nurtured and maintained the research and development component of the nuclear arms race?

Heilbron explained that records are now available to study the "faceless" bureaucrats, those researchers in the ranks of scientific manpower who rise to positions of influence within the research community. It should be possible, he said, to document and analyze the flow of talent into and through the military-industrial complex, in the process learning how and why certain attitudes about weapons

development became national policy.

By and large, the group concluded, such a study of the history of the military-industrial complex would not yield many dramatic case studies, but that in itself is worth noting. One exception might be the controversy over selection of candidates for Atomic Energy Commission Fellowships in the late 1940s and early 1950s.

Kevles and Heilbron also raised questions about how events in the 1945 to 1965 period might be researched by historians. One question to be studied, the group agreed, is whether basic, direct, or applied research contributed most to the continuation of the nuclear arms race during this period.

Concluding Observations and Postscript

At the plenary session on Saturday morning, the representatives from the Sloan Foundation and the MacArthur Foundation were invited to describe the existing programs and future plans their organizations had for support of historical scholarship in the area of global peace and security studies. Arthur Singer showed selections from Sloan video-histories on the H-bomb decision and the Cuban missile crisis and spoke of the foundation's current "Nuclear Education Program," including its partial underwriting of a 13-hour television series, entitled "The Nuclear Age," being produced by WGBH in Boston for broadcast in 1988. George Hogenson remarked that the MacArthur Foundation recently decided to focus its response to concern with the nuclear peril upon greater support for educational efforts underway at colleges and universities around the country.

In the course of the plenary session, copies were distributed of a proposal calling for creation of an academic program on the history of

peace, the idea of emeritus University of Colorado economics professor Kenneth Boulding, who urged all historians interested in the project to contact him at the Institute of Behavioral Science, University of Colorado, Boulder, 80309.

From the presentation of reports by the rapporteurs at the workshops, summarized above, the following broad themes may be said to have emerged:

There was seemingly unanimous agreement at the conference that scholarship on the subject of global peace and security had too long been dominated by political scientists and international-relations theorists, to the neglect of the historical dimensions of the problem. The result has been to treat such issues as the nuclear arms race and the superpower Cold War as overly mechanistic and abstract, in the process ignoring or slighting the very important role that culture, society, and personality have always played in the working out of events.

Moreover, within the historical profession itself, there has long been in this area a trend toward what one participant termed the "Casablanca syndrome"--a tendency to call upon the "usual suspects," or the established voices, for wisdom to the exclusion of a fresh approach.

Such an approach, the workshops suggest, would look not only at the origins of the nuclear arms race and superpower rivalry, but at the political economy that sustains them; would be comparative rather than "U.S.-centric"; and would aim at encompassing several hitherto neglected or forgotten areas of inquiry--among them, the role of women in peace movements, the effect upon society of "nuclear age" education

and literature, the impact of the Cold War for the Third World, and the historical role of personality upon the arms race.

Among the concrete proposals which seek to embody this approach and which have been suggested to the IGCC since the conference at the SeaLodge adjourned are:

1. A week-long conference entitled "Understanding the Soviet Union," to be jointly sponsored by the IGCC and Tufts University, where those scholars teaching courses in "nuclear age" history would learn about the availability of English-language sources for research into the Soviet Union.
2. A meeting of Asian and western scholars, to be held first in Washington, D.C., and then in Hiroshima during August 1990, on the forty-fifth anniversary of the atomic bombing of Japan, to discuss historical interpretations of the atomic-bomb decision and its role in the Japanese surrender.
3. An "International Security Research Center," to be established at a University of California campus and eventually linked systemwide by UNIX and MELVYL, to serve faculty, graduate students, and undergraduate researchers as a repository for recently-declassified documents on national security from federal agencies and the laboratories administered by the University of California. The Center's archive would also contain video- and oral-histories pertaining to the nuclear age.
4. A research seminar on "Sino-American crisis management," based upon historical case studies such as the Taiwan Straits crises and the

Korean war. The purpose of this seminar would be to improve understanding of how the American and Chinese governments respectively have reacted to incidents of crisis in their relations since 1949.

For further information about proposals submitted to the IGCC, or for additional copies of this report, please contact:

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Description of the IGCC

The Institute on Global Conflict and Cooperation is an interdisciplinary Multicampus Research Unit of the University of California. The Regents of the University formally established the Institute in June of 1983.

The focus of the Institute's program is two-fold. It is concerned with conflict situations which are sufficiently severe so as to threaten escalation into a large-scale war, and with various forms of international cooperation to meet problems which threaten world peace. The main, but not exclusive, emphasis will be on threats and avoidance of nuclear war. The Institute's programs focus on the causes of such conflicts as well as the ideas, institutions, policies, and mechanisms relevant for eliminating, reducing, or managing conflicts that might lead to global war.

The mission of the Institute is to enhance the capability of the University to contribute to international security and cooperation by promoting and sponsoring research and education. First and foremost, it makes possible the exploration of ideas and the teaching of subjects not now adequately represented in the curriculum of the University of California.