



# CENTER REVIEW



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Fall, 1987

## A Message from the Executive Director:

### "CHALLENGING OLD HABITS OF THINKING AND CREATING NEW DEFINITIONS OF NATIONAL SECURITY"

Moving into the second half of 1987, we acknowledge that the public consciousness has grasped the dangerous reality of the nuclear age – the potential annihilation of the human race – but we still have not yet seen the transformation of the mindset that makes us dependent upon nuclear weapons for power and defense. This mindset creates a world of enemies with whom no peaceful resolution seems plausible. The Center's future goals are to understand the psychological background for this mindset and to explore new modes of thinking.

While the psychological and sociological aspects of the nuclear age are relatively new topics of study, they are quickly becoming a permanent part of our sociopolitical discourse. The Center is striving to fill the serious need to provide relevant data to the scientific, academic, and policy communities, as well as the general public. The Center is the most active research and educational organization in the United States approaching the nuclear weapons issue and the East-West conflict from a psychosocial perspective.

The Center's objectives are to develop strategies for change through research and far reaching collaboration.

We are examining the effects of living in the nuclear age on individuals, families, and nations. We are studying the historical and cultural forces that lead persons and groups to behave in ways that threaten their own survival. We seek to understand how children come to define "us" and "them" and learn to stereotype human groups, how images of the "enemy" are developed, and how societies influence this development.

Insights in this area are vitally important to understand the cycle of conflict and war

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## SOVIET AND AMERICAN FILMMAKERS MEET AT "ENTERTAINMENT SUMMIT"

A delegation of nine Soviet filmmakers met with their American counterparts in Hollywood last March to discuss ways in which the medium of film could be used more to bridge than to divide and dehumanize the American and Soviet people. The whirlwind tour of Hollywood

was followed by a two-day retreat at the Rockefeller Estate in Pocantico Hills, New York. Dr. Richard Chasin, Director of the Center's Project "Assumptions and Perceptions that Fuel the Arms Race," organized and facilitated the Retreat in

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Left to right: Mark Gerzon, producer and Summit organizer; Alan Arkin, American actor; Lyudmila Chursina, Soviet actress; Tolomush Okeyev, Soviet director; and Natalia Tomich, interpreter.

## THE CENTER SPEAKS IN MOSCOW

Members of the Center played key roles at the seventh World Congress of the International Physicians for the Prevention of Nuclear War, held in Moscow from 29 May - 1 June 1987.

Dr. Paula Gutlove, Executive Director of the Center, moderated a panel discussion entitled "Psychological and Behavioral Implications of the Nuclear Age." The panelists were Tytti Solantus, MD, a Finnish child psychiatrist; Professor Galena Andreyeva, Head of the Department of Social Psychology, Moscow State University, USSR; Susan Goldberg, a Canadian psychologist; and Milton Schwebel, PhD, an American professor of psychology and

editor of two books on psychology and the threat of nuclear war. Emphasis was placed on the importance of appreciating the impact of the nuclear threat on children and addressing this with children, families

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## IMAGES OF "THE ENEMY" ON CHILDREN'S TELEVISION

At a panel discussion on Images of the Enemy sponsored by the Center last November, Eric Chivian suggested that the Soviets are commonly depicted as "unhappy with their way of life and the system that controls them. They would leave readily if they could. They are drab and grey. The majority are humorless and uncultured peasants with no interests or talents. They lack incentive to work and do nothing well. Finally, they are fat and ugly, thugs and liars." Sam Keen, in his book "Faces of the Enemy" has developed a classification based on a careful analysis of warposters, cartoons and other pictorial information. Keen suggests that enemies are commonly portrayed as strangers, aggressors, criminals, torturers, rapists, and barbarians. They frequently have no faces, and are depicted as death, Satan or as animals.

The images of the enemy documented by Chivian and Keen, are commonly found in children's TV shows. She-ra and He-man fight Skeletor and Hordak, who both look like fleshless, deadly skeletons. Other enemies on the two shows are bizarre, archaic creatures, part animal, part human. What they all share is that they are evil through and through. While He-man and She-ra do not seem to have any overt political intentions, She-ra fights a rebellion for freedom and He-man is the strongest man of the universe. Both of these themes may prepare children for key elements of US patriotism: the struggle for dominance among the superpowers, linked to the defense of freedom and democracy in the world.

While it could be argued that He-man and She-ra are politically innocent, Rambo and GI Joe are definitely not. The themes covered by those shows are international terrorism, nuclear blackmail, and the competition for military secrets, cultural treasures, and scientific discoveries. General Warhawk and his S.A.V.A.G.E. forces "threaten the peace-loving people of the world." Rambo is "liberty's champion," "the protector of the innocent," representing the "the force of freedom." General Warhawk and his entourage have German, Eastern European, and Middle Eastern accents. Rambo and his associates are clearly American. General Warhawk is a

criminal aggressor and also a greedy barbarian who steals and destroys the cultural and scientific treasures of other nations.

Through these and other TV shows, children are socialized to believe that heroes are all good, and the enemy is all evil. Furthermore, it is conveyed to them that there is one ultimate enemy, a Nazi-Soviet stranger who is the personification of all evil and needs to be contained and destroyed. These TV shows also reinforce children's inherent inability to integrate conflicting feelings about themselves and other people. People are either good or bad, they can never be both.

At the Center's "Images of the Enemy" Project, we are now in the early stages of a study of children's TV shows. With the

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help of Action for Children's Television, we have identified a number of highly rated children's TV programs in which enemies and political conflict play a significant role. They are: He-man, She-ra, Rambo, GI Joe, Gobots, Transformers, Voltron, Ghostbusters, Superman, and Defenders of the Earth. We are now in the process of taping and analyzing the content of these shows with the following questions in mind: What are the images of heroes and enemies? What is the nature of their conflicts? What models of conflict resolution are presented to children?

Preliminary findings indicate that enemies are depicted as animals, as machines, and as people with foreign accents or strange facial features. Furthermore, enemies tend to have undesirable personalities. They are infantile, ruthless aggressors who "attack the innocent people of the world," and they are unwilling to compromise.

Heroes, on the other hand, are handsome, mature human beings; they use aggression only to defend themselves when attacked; they are champions of liberty and dedicate their lives to the protection of the innocent all over the world.

The themes of the shows range from theft of cultural treasures to the competition for natural resources and military secrets, to warfare in outer space. Children are introduced to cartoon versions of a variety of political institutions: the White House, the Kremlin, the Pentagon, the Federal Reserve Bank, and the U.N.

As to the ideological messages, the heroes with whom the children tend to identify fight for freedom and democracy, they are good and strong, and they will continue to fight "as long as there is evil in the world." The enemy is vicious and evil, an aggressor controlled by an oppressive regime or organization. The conflicts tend to be violent. They arise out of competition for political and economic influence, and they tend to be resolved by violent means. With frequent and regular exposure to these shows, children are unlikely to consider that there might be alternatives to violent conflict resolution.

We do not expect that images of the enemy can be fully eradicated, but we do expect that our study will inform adults about the enemy images and the ideological messages conveyed on children's television. Many parents do not seem to know what their children watch on prime time television. For years, parents have been concerned about the violence on children's television, yet there has been little interest in the enemy. We hope that our work will serve to focus more attention on the images of the enemy in the media and that it will stir debate about the political education children receive as viewers of children's television. Under the pressure of parental objections to the current commercial fare, the media may consider offering portrayals in which we are not *all* good and the opponent *all* bad. In the process, it may become impossible to think of any individual or any national group as the enemy.

—Petra Hesse, PhD



Members of the Soviet delegation

Left to right: Tolomush Okeyev, director; Victor Dyomin, film critic; Lyudmila Chursina, actress; Vladimir Posner, television commentator.

## INTERNATIONAL CHILDREN'S PROJECT FINDINGS

### Soviet and American Teens Share Fears About Nuclear War; Soviets More Optimistic About Future

Three quarters of American and Soviet teenagers agree that "There can be no winner in a nuclear war since most countries would be totally destroyed." At the same time, more than four in ten US students believe a nuclear war will take place in their lifetimes, while fewer than one in ten students in the USSR share that view.

These are two early findings from the ICP's collaborative survey of American and Soviet teenagers' attitudes. The study was directed by Dr. Eric Chivian of the Center for Psychological Studies in the Nuclear Age and MIT's Center for International Studies, and Dr. Nicolai Popov of the Soviet Academy of Sciences' Institute of the USA and Canada. In a joint statement, Dr. Chivian and Dr. Popov explained, "For the first time, we've been able to simultaneously ask Soviet and American young people their views on the major issues of our time. The results reveal striking similarities in the attitudes of teenagers from the world's superpowers."

Among the similarities Chivian and Popov discovered were:

- More than 65% of teens in both countries felt the US and the USSR should immediately stop building and testing nuclear weapons.
- Fewer than 20% of both American and Soviet adolescents said they never thought about the likelihood of nuclear war.

The joint survey involved more than 3,000 secondary school students in the state of Maryland and more than 2,000 of their peers in the Tambov and Rostov regions of European Russia.

Drs. Chivian and Popov also noted questions on which the American and Soviet teenagers' answers differed:

- In contrast to the 11% of Maryland students who thought life for their children would be worse than their own, only 1% of the Tambov and Rostov students held this belief.
- While 68% of the Soviet sample believed the world's greatest problems

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## Entertainment Summit

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collaboration with the Summit organizer, Mark Gerzon of Mediator Productions in Los Angeles.

The New York Retreat provided an opportunity for reflection on the meetings held in California and for concentrated brainstorming about ways in which filmmakers from both countries could continue to work together to foster more accurate and authentic portrayals of each other's people. The accomplishments of the group far surpassed expectations. After two days of probing discussion an international organization was born: The American-Soviet Film Initiative. A declaration founding the organization was issued in June. It read, in part:

*The participants in this unique "entertainment summit" meeting expressed their commitment to professional cooperation between Soviet and American filmmakers and to the production of films in both countries which represent the authentic characters, the critical problems and the spiritual hopes of our two nations.*

*An agreement was reached to create an "American-Soviet Film Initiative". Through this organization we will initiate exchanges of film programs and publications, and distribution opportunities for each other's films in our respective countries.*

*The American and Soviet Film Initiative is based on a commitment to cross-cultural understanding and to the promotion of artistic expression without censorship. The ASFI will be led by a board of directors with*

*equal representation from both countries.*

*We support the creation of the American-Soviet Film Initiative and the artistic, educational and humanitarian goals for which it stands.*



Left to right: Richard Chasin, retreat facilitator and Alan Pakula, American director.

A report on the Entertainment Summit Retreat is available from the Center. ■

The Center would like to thank Hewlett-Packard Computer Corporation for its generous donation of two Hewlett-Packard personal computers to the International Children's Project. These computers will certainly improve the efficiency and productivity of our work! We are grateful for the Corporation's generosity and its vote of confidence!

## Message

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that has characterized human history and that has become increasingly dangerous in the nuclear age.

Researchers at the Center collaborate with Soviet counterparts and work with economists, political scientists, and other scholars to learn more about ideologies that feed unhealthy political processes and institutions. Faculty of the Center work with diplomats and others directly responsible for foreign relations to apply the Center's research findings in the international political arena.



*Paula Gutlove, Executive Director*

The Center welcomes two new members to the Board of Directors this Fall, Conn Nugent and Robert F. Ryan.

**Conn Nugent** is the chief administrator of the Five College (Amherst, Hampshire, Mount Holyoke and Smith Colleges and the University of Massachusetts) programs and projects. Mr. Nugent was the Executive Director of International Physicians for the Prevention of Nuclear War (IPPNW) from 1983 through June 1987, and the Executive Director of the Vingo Foundation prior to that. IPPNW received the Nobel Peace Prize in 1985, during Mr. Nugent's tenure as Executive Director. and Company, a human resources consulting firm in Boston. In addition, he serves as a consultant to senior managers focusing especially upon the integration of human resource issues with organizational strategy and planning. Mr. Ryan's clients have included Mobil Oil, Digital Equipment, and the US Navy. Mr. Ryan was formerly Dean of Students at Roxbury Latin School.

The task which lies before us is an ambitious one. I welcome our new Board

members and other new friends, and look forward to working with them to make the 1987-1988 academic year a fruitful one. At the same time, I wish to express gratitude to our continuing friends and Board members for their ongoing support.

— Paula Gutlove

## Center Speaks

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and teachers. In addition, a call for developing a substantially new manner of thinking was put forward, and emphasis was placed on the key role psychiatrists and psychologists could play in this development. As the lively discussion of over 200 participants concluded, it was agreed that international sharing and collaboration such as that which took place during this meeting would play an important role in the development of new manners of thinking in the nuclear age.

**Dr. Eric Chivian**, Director of the Center's International Children's Project, moderated a panel discussion entitled "Reports on Studies of Children and Nuclear War." This panel was presented to an overflow audience of more than 300 people. Panel participants included B. Wasilewski, MD, of the Polish Medical Association; Nikolai Popov, Senior Research Fellow, Institute for the USA/Canada Studies, USSR; Alexandra Bergstrom, a Swedish psychologist; Vappu Taepale, MD, Director-General of Welfare in Finland; and Inge Rapoport, MD, of the Humboldt University Medical School, German Democratic Republic. Panelists reported on international children studies and questionnaire surveys they have been engaged in. A more detailed report about international research on children and nuclear war appears on page 3 of this newsletter.

**Dr. Richard Chasin**, Chair of the Center's Board of Directors, worked with Soviet psychiatrist Marat Vartanyan and

Soviet sociologist Nikolai Popov to design and facilitate a unique workshop entitled "Assumptions and Perceptions that Fuel the Nuclear Arms Race." In this "experiential" workshop individuals from the USA, the USSR, NATO Countries, Warsaw Pact Countries and non-aligned countries discussed the assumptions and perceptions that they believe Soviets and Americans hold about each other, particularly those assumptions and perceptions that might fuel the nuclear arms race.

This discussion was conducted in a particularly fruitful manner through Dr. Chasin's use of a therapy family technique called circular questioning. Circular questions do not ask an individual about his/her own beliefs or feelings, but about the beliefs and feelings of others. In the context of family therapy this technique heightens curiosity, minimizes defensiveness, and generates new thought-provoking information. In the context of the workshop in Moscow, circularity was applied in the following manner: Soviets and their allies were asked to list assumptions they felt Americans held about Soviets. Americans and their allies were asked to list assumptions they felt Soviets held about Americans. Non-aligned countries performed both tasks.

The workshop generated new and highly sensitive information about Soviet/American relations, information which in another setting could have created more heat than light.

The Center will be offering this workshop to other groups engaged in international exchange programs. A written report describing the process and findings of the workshop is available from the Center upon request. ■

## A Center Library

The Center is expanding its circulating library. We would appreciate donations of any books, journals, and other publications which pertain to psychological studies in the nuclear age. Furnishings, such as bookshelves, are also welcome.

Please call Ken at the Center:  
(617) 497-1553

## Volunteers, Work-Study

### Students, Interns and Externs:

Consider working at the Center office. We have a wide range of interesting projects and tasks. For more information call Ken at (617) 497-1553.

## A PERSPECTIVE ON THE INTERNATIONAL FORUM FOR A NUCLEAR-FREE WORLD

by Judith Eve Lipton, MD  
Senior Research Scholar, CPSNA

Until Mikhail Gorbachev began to speak, I had been excited, but controlled. As he stood up, to begin his address to the "International Forum for a Nuclear Free World, for the Survival of Mankind" my heart roared, and I felt acutely nauseated and shivery. "This is the man who will murder my children," I thought. "This is the man whose orders will send hellfire down upon my home, my city, and my country. I am a victim, looking into my murderer's eyes." Yet as I listened to his words, and looked around the room, I realized that the reason for the entire lavish gathering was that he didn't want to do it.

Gorbachev was saying,

*We reject any right for leaders of a country, be it the USSR, the US, or other, to pass a death sentence on mankind. We are not judges, and the billions of people are not criminals to be punished... Our principle is simple: all weapons must be limited and reduced, and those of wholesale annihilation eventually scraped... Humanity must get stronger and overcome the nuclear sickness, and thus enter the post-nuclear age. It will be immune to violence and to attempts to dictate to others. Today, international relations are made soulless by worship of force and militarization of mentality. Hence the goal of humanizing international relations...*

He repeatedly said that humanity must move beyond "stone age methods" to find new ways of thinking about peace and security, engendering a nonviolent world without the threat of nuclear war.

Mr. Gorbachev was the final speaker at "The Forum," held from February 14 to 16, 1987 in Moscow. A thousand people, from all over the world, had been invited as guests of the Soviet government, to participate in two days of open round-table discussions with professional peers and a one day formal reception at the Kremlin, all on the subject of nuclear disarmament. World press attention was guaranteed by the presence of formidable superstars, such as Gregory Peck, Yoko Ono, Peter Ustinov,

Kris Kristofferson, Grahame Greene, and numerous others. Nobel laureates and Pulitzer prize winners commingled with Order of Lenin cultural heroes, Tibetan lama, hasidic rabbis, NATO and Soviet generals, ballerinas, Russian Orthodox Metropolitans, anthropologists, and astronauts. It was quite a party.

The idea for such a gathering apparently emanated from Academician Velikoff, a notable Soviet physicist and veteran of the Pugwash meetings, and Professors Eugene Chazov and Bernard Lown, Co-Presidents of the International Physicians for the Prevention of Nuclear War (IPPNW). Psychiatrists and behavioral scientists had repeatedly spoken in the physicians' organization about the psychological effects of stereotyping in the development of enemy

***There is something unbearably pretentious about nuclear weapons and high technology, analogous to the long black robes, huge headdresses, and heavy jewelry of the Metropolitans. Such costumes are designed to intimidate, suggesting to us ordinary people that these priests have special powers and authority from God. Nuclear weapons are similarly intimidating — if not more so — such that "national security" is now vested in precisely the same psychological effect.***

images. To reframe the image of "enemy" to that of "partner" has been an unspoken but powerful goal of international programs such as Pugwash and IPPNW. This has been accomplished, to a remarkable degree, by creating an *in vivo* cooperative endeavor among physicians and physicists dedicated to the prevention of nuclear war. I think that Mr. Gorbachev was expressing sound psychological reasoning, verified at least in part by the physicians' and scientists' experiences, when he said,

*Confidence needs to be built up through experience in cooperation, through knowing each other better, through solving common problems. It is wrong in principle to say that first comes*

*confidence, and then all the rest: disarmament, cooperation, joint projects. Confidence, its creation, consolidation, and development comes from common endeavor.*

My understanding is that the Soviet government had three goals for the forum. The first was to bring religious leaders, artists, writers, political scientists, military leaders, and businessmen together for discussion and dialogue along the lines that physicists and physicians had pioneered. With common goals of peace and nuclear disarmament, the best minds of this generation would focus on a common search for new ways to understand and abolish the nightmare of nuclear war. The immediate goal was the initiation of a process, designed less to find instant new solutions than to create an atmosphere of international understanding, cooperation, and familiarity. As guests of the Soviet government, invited into the inner rooms of the Kremlin and feted by the highest Soviet officials, we could not demonize the Russians; in fact, we could only be impressed by their hospitality and apparent sincerity. I am certain that both Soviets and guests felt gratified by the initial results.

The second goal was Mr. Gorbachev's wish to show the international community of artists and intellectuals that he was seriously committed to "new ways of thinking," both domestically, in the policy of *glasnost*, and internationally, in the pursuit of complete worldwide nuclear disarmament. I think that he wanted Westerners to see for themselves, beyond the inevitable distortions in the media, that there is a "second revolution" going on in the Soviet Union. Andrei Sakharov's presence at the physicist's forum was emblematic of the welcome change. For me personally, the willingness with which my hosts discussed controversial issues, such as Jewish emigration and alleged psychiatric political abuses, was even more striking. I had the sense that there were no forbidden topics.

Finally, I was told that Mr. Gorbachev and his supporters wanted to show the

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## CENTER COLLOQUIA REPORTS

SEX AND DEATH IN THE  
RATIONAL WORLD OF THE  
DEFENSE INTELLECTUAL

Presented by Carol Cohn, a Senior  
Research Fellow at the Center  
February 12, 1987

Are nuclear weapons friendly, fun, sexy, or tame? Hardly. Then why, Ms. Cohn asked, do defense intellectuals talk about them as if they are? Some examples: Countries are said to have *nuclear virginity*; *penetration aids* enhance effectiveness; nuclear attacks may be *protracted* or *spasmodic*; missiles are kept in *silos*, or in subs on *Christmas tree farms*; weapon systems *couple* and *marry up*; stockpiles are assessed from *shopping lists*; multiple warheads leave *footprints*. In the midst of nuclear commotion, the President will direct a war from his "*kneecap*" (for NEACP - National Emergency Airborne Command Post).

What is this language doing in techno-strategic discourse? Ms. Cohn suggested many answers. Some of the sexual metaphors seem to suggest that a vicarious thrill can be had through association with the power of nuclear weapons. Commonly, defense experts taking tours of missile sites will be asked if they'd like to "pat" the missile — and they often accept this offer. Is it, perhaps, thrilling to become "intimate" with such power? Does it tame the power to treat it like a cat or a youngster's head? Does the lethality disappear through the use of sexual or domestic images?

Certainly the use of such images distances the user of the language from the subject matter at hand. But if distancing were all that was required, Ms. Cohn argued, simple abstraction would be sufficient. It seems that more attractive and transforming images are required to allow defense intellectuals to talk about nuclear war *without thinking about it* in terms of human injury and deaths (a.k.a. "collateral damage," in a counterforce attack).

One of the ways in which the language seems to transform the subject matter is by inspiring a sense of control, mastery, and rationality. While the images of this language are friendly, its arcane quality is

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## OLD AND NEW TRENDS IN SOVIET EDUCATION

Presented by Mr. Fred Hechinger, New York Times Company Foundation, Inc.;  
Professor Urie Bronfenbrenner, Cornell University; and Ms. Inna Galparin,  
PhD student at the Harvard Graduate School of Education  
March 20, 1987.

In her welcoming remarks Roberta Snow, Co-director of the International Children's Project quoted a young Soviet emigre as saying, "I don't like to answer which system of the two I prefer, because that is not the point. I would say that each system has its good and bad points. I like aspects of each. The ideal system would be to incorporate the best features of both of them." This notion — that the educational system of each superpower could be improved if the most valuable features of each were adopted by the other — captures the essence of the analyses presented at the Center's March colloquium.

Mr. Hechinger, author of *The Big Red School House*, a book about the educational system in the Soviet Union, spoke about school reform and the use of computers in Soviet schools. The most recent school reform plans, written by a team of officials and specialists that included Gorbachev before he became General Secretary, resulted in making the Soviet school system comparable to US schools in terms of years in school; the entrance age was raised from five to six, and one grade (12) was added. A second major reform involved the establishment of a relationship between high school students and an enterprise, e.g. a factory or a business, which Mr. Hechinger described as a trend "perhaps similar to one in the US where schools are increasingly adopted by businesses."

With regard to his second topic, computers in the Soviet school system, Mr. Hechinger pointed out that the reform plans included a proposal that all high school students take a course in computer science. For this purpose 60,000 teachers were trained in the use of computers. However, at present, there are not enough computers available in the schools, which limits computer education for most students to studying a textbook about computers. Those few adolescents with access to one of the 4,000 computers currently available in the USSR display the



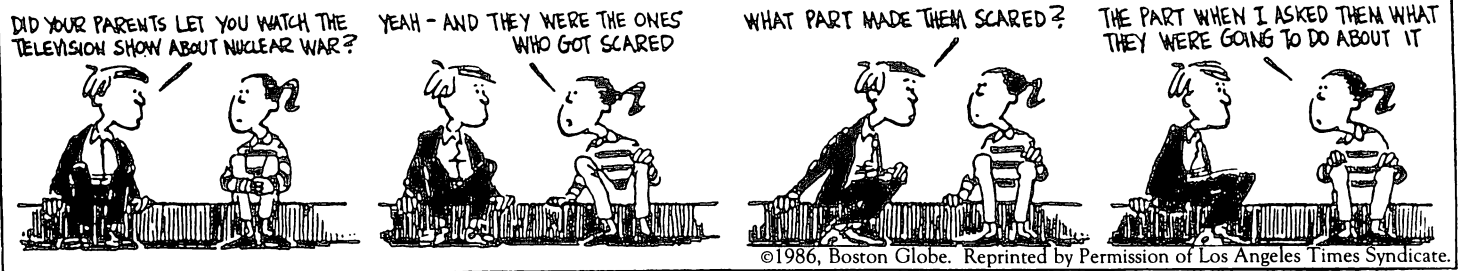
*Professor Urie Bronfenbrenner*

same enthusiasm and potential for computer work as American kids. Mr. Hechinger believes that the "computer question" in the USSR is a reflection of two essentially opposing forces: on one hand, the *Academy of Science* which is totally committed to computer education, and, on the other hand, the *Ministry of Education* and the *Institute for Pedagogical Sciences*, which are hesitant about making computers available on a large scale. It was interesting to note that, while Mr. Hechinger saw this conflict as a question of control ("If you have computers, it makes it difficult to control communications"), Prof. Bronfenbrenner later interpreted the resistance of the educational profession to computers as "reflecting some vital theoretical concerns, specifically, the fear that the strong communal context characteristic of Soviet education, could be harmed."

Ms. Inna Galparin, who emigrated from the Soviet Union six years ago after graduation from a special language school, described the overall goal of the Soviet educational system as producing "well-rounded individuals." Toward this end, students are required to take courses in all subject matters including humanities, social sciences, science, art, music, sports, and military training. The latter, she said,

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## NO REASON TO TALK ABOUT IT: FAMILIES CONFRONT THE NUCLEAR TABOO

Presented by Steven J. Zeitlin, PhD,  
Clinical Psychologist and member of  
the Center Board of Directors,  
April 2, 1987

Despite its undeniable relevance to family life, the threat of nuclear war is a topic which is shrouded by silence in most American households. According to Dr. Zeitlin, the reason for this is that the nuclear threat blatantly imperils the successful fulfillment of the fundamental parental responsibility — that of establishing a secure future for forthcoming generations. The nuclear threat directly assaults parents' generative instinct and impugns their protective capacity. As a result of this personal offense, parents become disinclined to engage themselves and their family in the issue, and children tend to follow this parental model for dealing with dangerous and disturbing realities.

Dr. Zeitlin contends that it is this form of parental avoidance, and not the actual existence of nuclear weapons, that causes the greatest psychological damage to children in the nuclear age. As children have generally learned of the exigencies of the nuclear threat through media exposure, they tend to interpret their parents' behavior as an indication of apathy and irresponsibility. They also feel resentful and abandoned by their parents' apparent disregard for their future and well-being. Such feelings and perceptions can make it far more difficult for children to enthusiastically commit themselves to the adult community and to undertake adult roles.

In the process of interviewing families from a variety of ethnic and economic backgrounds, Dr. Zeitlin has discovered, however, that the nuclear taboo can be effectively broken. Tacit feelings of despair, resentment, and alienation among family members can be transformed into discernible feelings of hope, commitment, and

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## SYMBOLIC DEFENSE: THE STRATEGIC DEFENSE INITIATIVE IN AMERICAN POPULAR CULTURE

Presented by Edward Tabor Linenthal,  
professor of religion and American  
culture at the University of Wisconsin  
and Post Doctoral Fellow at MIT  
May 7, 1987

Immediately following President Reagan's "Grand Vision" speech in 1983 calling for ballistic missile defense, news anchor Dan Rather asked State Department reporter Bob Schieffer for his reaction. Schieffer responded, "I don't think it's going to generate very much comment." To the contrary, however, a remarkable amount of comment has been generated concerning the technological feasibility, strategic wisdom, and arms control implications of ballistic missile defense.

In this colloquium, Dr. Linenthal detailed the far-from-neglected life of the SDI in American popular culture through presentation of editorials, television newscasts and advertisements, reports, political cartoons, and the impassioned rhetoric of grassroots organizations. Many of these images, he said, especially those emerging from SDI enthusiasts, are dangerous because of the seductive power of their misleading claims. A summary of his presentation follows.

The cultural roots of SDI's appeal are easy to trace. SDI is the most recent response to the horror of vulnerability to nuclear weapons. Since the bombing of Hiroshima, this sense of vulnerability has led to the persistent hope that someday a defense against nuclear weapons would be found. This hope motivated enthusiasm for air defense in the 1950's, and the call for ballistic missile defense in the late 1960's. True believers in missile defense, like Edward Teller and Lt. Gen. Daniel Graham, never gave up the dream, and they found a powerful ally in the President.

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## WHAT IS IT REALLY LIKE TO LOOK INTO THE NUCLEAR ABYSS? THE ADAPTIVE ROLE OF FEAR IN THE CUBAN MISSILE CRISIS

Presented by James Blight, PhD,  
Executive Director of the Center for  
Science and International Affairs,  
Harvard's JFK School of Government  
May 14, 1987

One might expect from the title of Dr. Blight's colloquium that those who managed the Cuban Missile Crisis — each and every one of them — looked into the nuclear abyss, felt fearful, and acted accordingly. Not so, said Dr. Blight. In fact, only the "doves" of the group (JFK, RFK, Robert McNamara, McGeorge Bundy, George Ball, Dean Rusk and Theodore Sorensen) so acted. The "hawks" (Maxwell Taylor, Douglas Dillon, Paul Nitze, Dean Acheson and John McCone) experienced the crisis in a dramatically different way. They felt no fear because they looked not into the nuclear abyss, but rather into the missile gap: We had 5000 nuclear weapons and the Soviets had only about 300 of questionable quality. Now is the time, the hawks calculated, to strike decisively against the missile sites, to invade the island, and to unseat the Communist regime of Castro. Khrushchev would have to be crazy, they thought, to start a world war with such a strategic imbalance.

What was a uniquely terrifying experience for the doves was a lost opportunity for the hawks to put theory into practice and to take advantage of American superiority while it lasted. The behavior of the doves seemed inexplicably spineless and sophomoric to the hawks, who not incidentally had spent many more years working in the world of defense policy. Had the hawks' belief systems been so permeated with the so-called rationality of strategic thinking to render them fearless with 5000 nuclear weapons at their side, and "only" 300 aimed at them?

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## Sex and Death

*continued from page 6*

not. Mastery of the language seems to serve as a rite of passage into a small and powerful elite group. Questions from 'outsiders' are easily identified as such, and can be readily dismissed. Learning to manipulate the language itself may very well promote a sense of control over nuclear weapons, and over those who question their legitimacy in any circumstances.

Perhaps more worrisome than the linguistic boundaries around the initiated and the subject matter are the conceptual boundaries. There is a logic as well as a language of nuclear strategy, and it hangs together quite nicely if undisturbed from the outside. It represents, Ms. Cohn argued, a hypothetical world in which rational and calm actors have sufficient information to determine the exact nature of an attack made on their own soil and to devise an appropriate retaliatory strategy. It is a world in which humans play little part; our weapons "take out" theirs, theirs "take out" ours, and the winner is the one with the most threatening stockpile left over when the rubble settles (presuming, of course, that there is a nation left to defend with the remaining weapons).

The central point of Ms. Cohn's talk was that in the process of learning to become a "defense intellectual" one's thinking is transformed. The conceptual system of the field makes rational and tame a horrifying subject matter, and limits discussions of security to the prevailing doctrine of nuclear deterrence. It makes more humane definitions of security irrelevant and "out of touch with reality" — its reality. From within, it places strict boundaries upon one's thinking. From without, it is impenetrable. It pervades and dominates the world of politics, keeping it relatively "safe" from more creative and humane conflict resolutions. This may be the most dangerous problem created by the inner sanctum of nuclear strategy: power over politics.

The paper on which this colloquium was based is available at the Center. A slightly different version of that paper, entitled "Slick 'ems, Glick 'ems, Christmas Trees and Cookie Cutters: Nuclear Language and How We Learned to Pat the Bomb" was published in the June, 1987 issue of the *Bulletin of the Atomic Scientists*.

— Margaret Herzig

## Trends

*continued from page 6*

"was a fun class, no one took it seriously." Also contributing toward the well-roundedness of students is the sense that the school provides children with a "second family," i.e. a close-knit community of students and teachers who respect and support each other and are ready to suffer for each other. The "rules" essentially put "the other," the friend, above effectiveness, efficiency and expediency. The strong attachment and solidarity among Soviet classmates, who share the same classroom for 10 years, 6 hours a day, 6 days a week, is evident when students share lunches and homework or cheat together on exams. If a student refuses to share his or her homework or to help with an exam, he or she will be despised by the rest of the class for the rest of ten years.

Professor Bronfenbrenner, author of *Two Worlds of Childhood*, in which he compares American and Soviet child development, supported Ms. Galparin's view that camaraderie and community among Soviet school children are highly positive and health promoting components. He noted that the "spirit of collectivism" is quite deliberately nurtured in elementary schools and is also strongly supported by the Soviet family, which shows enthusiastic commitment to education and strongly encourages respect for teachers. "There is a sense that your identity as a member in the community is tied up with your adventure in the

educational life-course." Bronfenbrenner concluded by pointing to the paradoxical situation across the two great superpowers of our time. "On the one hand, we have the US school system, characterized by a lack of both stability and linkages between the classroom, family and community, which makes it difficult for schools to function. Thus, despite extraordinary opportunities stemming from vast resources and superior technology, US schools are characterized by an unraveling of the social fabric that supports the development of character and competence. On the other hand, we have a rather tight, fairly standardized system which is emotionally positive but which does not provide computers to work with; after graduation, the student often fails to get the job he or she wants. Two sets of paradoxes in two different worlds of childhood. Somewhere there is a golden mean — not here, not there."

— Rita Teusch

## Public Education

For a complete listing of reprints, video-tapes and audio-tapes available through the Center please write to: Public Education Coordinator, Center for Psychological Studies in the Nuclear Age, 1493 Cambridge Street, Cambridge, MA 02139. Or call (617) 497-1553.

## A Day at School in Moscow

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**No Reason . . . continued from page 7**

connectedness. The initial stage in this transformation occurs as the family begins to learn about the emotions and ideas of each individual member with regard to the nuclear issue. According to Dr. Zeitlin, for most families this experience is at first startling and distressing. Families are generally unprepared to deal with the profundity of the material that often surfaces in the interviews. Consequently, blame, denial, and silence are tactics frequently employed by family members to defend against the powerful, unfamiliar effects that an honest discussion of the nuclear threat inevitably evokes. If properly handled, however, such defense mechanisms can eventually give way to more positive approaches to dealing with the grim prospect of nuclear warfare.

Once it becomes apparent that the accusatory or seemingly insouciant forms of communication on the part of other family members are the result of a shared sense of fear and powerlessness, the family undergoes a change in its response to the nuclear threat. Children are relieved to learn that the parental tendency to avoid discussion of the issue is not caused by indifference, but that, instead, it is the result of reluctance to reveal feelings of inadequacy and impotence. Parents, on the other hand, are relieved to find their children so responsive to confessions of vulnerability. The ultimate result is that family members come to experience one another as equally vulnerable, fearful, and caring. Such an experience serves to highlight for the family the interdependent nature of human existence and to increase the family's sense of connectedness. As a result, the family's ability to constructively confront the realities of the nuclear world is increased.

Dr. Zeitlin suggests that the larger implication of his work is that the global family could benefit enormously from the establishment of a forum for the expression of the taboo feelings typically engendered by the threat of nuclear war. The genuine confession of vulnerability coupled with the public acknowledgment of mutual connectedness, if implemented in the proper forum and manner, could assist the world community in overcoming the malignant forms of international communication that presently sustain the perilous nuclear arms race.

— Michael Davies

**SDI . . . continued from page 7**

President Reagan believes there are no limits to American technical creativity, and that such creativity can produce a secure post-nuclear world that will reap the benefits that space has to offer. All that is needed is the resuscitation of the American *patriotic spirit* to make SDI work. "Naysaying" scientists have been infected with the liberal belief that there are indeed limits, but such a belief has no role in the reawakening of the American spirit. SDI is thus, in part, an ideological symbol: it is a crucial element in Reagan's restoration of America.

SDI has been presented as another in a long line of scientific victories including the Manhattan Project and the moon landing. The President and other SDI enthusiasts have used familiar symbols, including that of the frontier, in their efforts to "sell" SDI. This symbol is most boldly used in a drawing in Lt. Gen. Daniel Graham's *The Case for Space Defense* in which a coonskin-capped pioneer and an astronaut standing on the edge of the earth become one figure: the celestial pioneer.

Supporters of SDI have also claimed the moral high ground. Using the language of transformation that had previously been the property of anti-nuclear activists of the Left, they claimed that missile defense was the only appropriate response to Einstein's famous call for "new modes of thinking." In its information packets, the Coalition for the SDI included a "Clergy Statement" declaring that since SDI posed "no threat to human life," it is morally obligatory for "the American people and their government" to deploy it.

Such "image achievements" have made the task of opposing SDI a formidable one. Are many people comfortable with the homey analogies used by the President? Do memories of the Challenger and Chernobyl disasters engender reflection on the dangers of technological hubris? To be sure, with Presidential candidates like Jack Kemp supporting the vision of population defense, the battle over the public image of SDI seems likely to continue. ■

**No Reason to Talk About It: Families Confront the Nuclear Taboo** is available from the Center for \$22 (includes tax and postage). Make check payable to: CPSNA and send to CPSNA, 1493 Cambridge St., Cambridge, MA 02139.

**FORUM**

March 26, 1987

To the Editors:

The commentary, "When Ideology Drives," in the Spring issue of the Center review was wonderful, so wonderful that I shared it with my juniors and seniors in a comedy and tragedy class. After having taken them to the A.R.T. production of *End of the World*, your article helped clarify the key issue of "manipulation of our thoughts and feelings" by ideologues and was illuminating when we discussed the film *Dr. Strangelove* too.

Thank you for writing so eloquently about this topic. I just wanted to let you know that one teacher put what you said to good use.

Sincerely,  
Kay Cottle  
High School Teacher

*The Forum* is a regular feature of **Center Review**. We invite readers to write to us in response to articles printed here, or to address other related topics of interest.

**Nuclear Abyss . . . continued from page 7**

Their belief systems may have protected them from fear, but we will never know how vulnerable they would have become had their recommendations to attack Cuba been accepted in JFK's EXCOMM. In retrospect, it appears that the fearful members of the EXCOMM were rational, and the "rational" hawks were somewhat out of touch with the realities of irrationality; they failed to account for the virtual inevitability of irrational — even crazy — behavior during periods of stress and terror, and therefore discounted the potentially disastrous global consequences of a "surgical" nuclear strike.

Dr. Blight is the author of a forthcoming book entitled *Fear and Learning in a Nuclear Crisis: A Psychological Study of the Resolution and Implications of the Cuban Missile Crisis*. He has conducted extensive interviews with several managers of the Cuban Missile Crisis and is writing a book about their divergent experiences to be co-authored with David Welch and published by W.W. Norton in early 1989.

— Margaret Herzig

## Ongoing Projects of the Center for Psychological Studies in the Nuclear Age

### International Children's Project: International Questionnaire Survey

*Project Director: Eric Chivian, MD*

After three years of preliminary work, the international survey was administered in 1986 to more than 9,000 teenagers in the US, USSR, New Zealand, Sweden and Hungary. (See page 3 for a report on the preliminary findings.) Additional data will be gathered in Italy and Spain. This first collaborative East-West opinion poll of teenagers received support from the highest levels of Soviet government, which, in an unprecedented move granted full access to the Soviet raw data. The next years will be spent analyzing and reporting on the results, developing pilot surveys in China, India and Japan, and designing a research instrument to continue monitoring attitudes towards the future among American, Soviet and other teenagers.

### International Children's Project: Videotape Education Project:

*Project Co-Directors: Eric Chivian, MD,  
and Roberta Snow, MEd*

Three videotapes produced thus far focus on the lives, attitudes, beliefs and fears of Soviet and US youth, and challenge traditionally held "images of the enemy." One of the videotapes, *A Day at School in Moscow*, was nominated for an award at the 29th American Film and Video Festival. This tape has been distributed to over 1,000 schools along with a teachers' guide.

### An Exploration of the Assumptions and Perceptions that Fuel the Nuclear Arms Race

*Project Director: Richard Chasin, MD*

*Project Advisor: John E. Mack, MD*

*Project Coordinator: Margaret Herzig*

In order to explore the assumptions and perceptions that fuel the nuclear arms race, we have developed a working group, including Soviet colleagues at the USA-Canada Institute and the Academy of Medical Sciences, to explore jointly new ways of thinking in the nuclear age. This project aims to advance our understanding of the ways in which beliefs, attitudes, expectations, and cultural habits sustain the threat of nuclear war, and has as its ultimate goal the improvement of US-

Soviet interactions on the official governmental level. The methodology employed in this project draws upon group process theories and concepts from family systems theory. Two of the project's recent activities are the Entertainment Summit Retreat (see page 1) and the Experiential Workshop at IPPNW (see page 1).

### Exploring the Decision-Making Process

*Project Director: John E. Mack, MD*

*Senior Research Fellow: Carol Cohn*

Through an exploration of the decision-making process we are seeking to learn in greater depth about the individual and collective forces which shape nuclear decision-making. A major portion of this research will entail interviews with a selected sample of individuals from the United States and other nuclear powers who are involved in the high level decision-making process with regard to nuclear weapons design, procurement and deployment. Through these interviews, we expect to gain insight into the political and psychological forces, conceptual systems and institutional structures which allow the perpetuation of the nuclear arms race. In addition, we expect that the interview component of this project will affect policy choice and reformulation, thereby contributing to interrupting the acceleration of the nuclear weapons production and deployment cycle.

See page 6 for a report on the Center colloquium presented by Carol Cohn.

### Images of the Enemy — Their Development During Childhood and Adolescence

*Project Director: William Beardslee, MD*

*Research Affiliate: Petra Hesse, PhD*

This project has four parts:

— *Stereotypes of national and ethnic groups:*

Attitudes toward 16 national and ethnic groups are explored through a questionnaire study conducted with students with and without expertise in international relations; military personnel and civilians; and people representing diverse socioeconomic backgrounds. This study will test a number of major beliefs about the social correlates of stereotyping.

— *Developmental perspectives:* Through interviews with children and adolescents,

Drs. Beardslee and Hesse are seeking to identify the childhood origins and development of images and feelings about personal and political enemies.

— *Cross-cultural perspectives:* In order to explore the impact of universal and cultural factors in the development of enemy images, a study of drawings is being conducted with 4,000 children and adolescents in the US, West Germany, Norway, Switzerland, Israel, Colombia, Samoa, and Argentina.

— *Children's television:* Ten highly rated cartoon series are being analyzed for their images of enemies and conflict resolution. The results of the study will be published in popular and professional magazines, and an educational tape will be produced for use by educators and parents. See page 2 for a more detailed description of this work.

### Family Coping Strategies and the Threat of Nuclear War

*Project Director: Steven Zeitlin, PhD*

Dr. Zeitlin has interviewed families to determine how the nuclear threat affects family structure and roles. His findings are discussed in his recently published book: *No Reason to Talk about It: Families Confront the Nuclear Taboo*, and are briefly reported in this newsletter on page 7. In conjunction with this research, the Center is planning to sponsor a series of workshops designed to train teachers and mental health professionals to assist families in confronting the nuclear threat.

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volunteers and work study students.**

# Perspective

*continued from page 5*

people of the Soviet Union that there is widespread support and enthusiasm from the West, both for disarmament and for *glasnost*. My hosts told me, almost giggling, that the Soviet government had initially expected no more than five hundred people at the Forum. They were delighted and almost overwhelmed by the enthusiasm with which people flocked to Moscow. I believe that the Forum was a valuable asset to Mr. Gorbachev and his reformers as they combat inevitable skepticism and reaction within the Soviet Union, and I hope that Mr. Gorbachev heard our thunderous applause, and felt more certain than ever of his course.

After the Forum ended, I spent three more days touring in Moscow. Among other things, I visited a school for musically gifted children, and a psychiatric research institute. I felt like a supersaturated sponge, full of new impressions about Soviet society. Yet perhaps, as I look back, I was even more full of impressions about humankind as a group. I felt like a small child, exploring a very big and interesting new world.

I don't think I was alone in that feeling. Perhaps one little vignette will illustrate. At the final reception at the Kremlin, all one thousand of us were brought together in one large room. Twenty or thirty tables loaded with food and wine were surrounded by the most amazing gathering of

people that I have ever seen. As I stood talking with Martin Voessler, a psychiatrist from Switzerland, he suddenly caught sight of Friedrich Durenmatt, the renowned Swiss playwright, now at least 90 years old. We went together to meet Durenmatt, who was excitedly explaining to a fascinated group, "I was just in the men's room, and I finally got to see those Metropolitans pee! They really have to struggle with their long robes, and while they try to hold them up, the pee dribbles into their socks."

A bit crude, perhaps, but to me, there is something important in Durenmatt's child-like fascination with the human beings inside the forbidding black robes. It reveals the paradox of the human condition: for all our technical achievements, social proprieties and worldly airs, we are each still lowly mammals. There is something unbearably pretentious about nuclear weapons and high technology, analogous to the long black robes, huge headdresses, and heavy jewelry of the Metropolitans. Such costumes are designed to intimidate, suggesting to us ordinary people that these priests have special powers and authority from God. Nuclear weapons are similarly intimidating — if not more so — such that "national security" is now vested in precisely the same psychological effect. And, like the Metropolitans, burdened with the absurd weight of our efforts to be impressive, we threaten to besmirch ourselves . . . far worse than by peeing in our socks.

By contrast, I found Moscow and my hosts to be refreshingly unpretentious. My hotel was reminiscent of my grandfather's small apartment in the Bronx, thirty years ago. Gorbachev made no effort to claim invisible authority (whether from Marx or Lenin or History). Rather, I had the sense that he was calling on humankind to behave decently, and to continue a search for wisdom as yet revealed. If each of us could only see the other's quintessential humanness, and laugh with Durenmatt, then there might indeed be hope for the world. ■

## Children's Project

*continued from page 3*

could definitely be solved, only 19% of the American sample agreed.

• In assessing the future of US-USSR relations, more than one third (34%) of the Soviet teenagers were very optimistic compared to only 8% of the American teenagers.

The American data were collected by the Survey Research Center of the University of Maryland under the direction of Professor John Robinson. The Soviet data were collected by the Soviet Academy of Sciences' Institute of Sociological Research led by Professor Vladimir Andreyenkov. Grant support was provided by the MacArthur Foundation, the Ploughshares Fund, the CS Fund, the Center for International Studies at MIT, the University of Maryland and individual donors. ■

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