

**INTERNATIONAL
COLD WAR MILITARY
RECORDS AND HISTORY**

**Proceedings of the
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Records and History
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TAB B

Foreword

The end of the Cold War has created many opportunities for greater openness and communication between former adversaries. Previously, occasional bilateral exchanges and visits involving military historians and archivists of the Western and Eastern blocs had occurred, but no international gathering to discuss mutual problems had ever taken place. The conference in Washington in March 1994 that brought together over 140 representatives from 17 countries thus marks an important milestone.

Histories of the Cold War have too often been written from narrow nationalist viewpoints. The French philosopher Pascal observed, however, that truth is "not displayed by standing at one extremity, but rather by touching both ends at once and filling in all the space between." In the spirit of Pascal's wisdom, the conference organizers and sponsors sought to begin a more meaningful search for the historical truth by building a more solid foundation at both ends of the former East-West political and multi-national rivalry through a greater understanding of one another's military archives and historical programs.

In the United States, the Under Secretary of Defense for Policy provided strong encouragement for this effort, while the Legacy Resource Management Program provided the funds for its organization and publication of its proceedings. The Legacy Program, currently administered by the Deputy Under Secretary of Defense for Environmental Security, was created in 1991 to enhance the management of Department of Defense (DoD) natural and cultural resources. One significant aspect of the program is the physical and literary history of the Cold War, hence the great interest of its program managers in this international meeting.

At the conference participants from 12 nations not only presented and discussed their formal papers, but also considered ways to maintain the spirit of cooperation through future joint programs. Possibilities included micro-filming records and inventories, preparing joint documentary publications, exchanging research scholars, and holding other international conferences on Cold War themes. Consideration also began on the future establishment of a regular mechanism for coordinating such exchanges of information.

As a follow-up to the conference, the U.S. Department of Defense set up a Cold War Historical Committee composed of representatives from the

Historical Office of the Secretary of Defense, the Joint History Office, and each of the military service history offices. The committee seeks to promote the exchange of information concerning Cold War historical activities among DoD historical offices, international military history and archives institutions, and other concerned governmental and private organizations. The U.S. Army Center of Military History serves as the executive agent for the committee.

So far the committee has undertaken two specific projects. With Legacy Program funds, it provided short-term grants to 15 international scholars to conduct research in the United States during the fall of 1994 on various subjects related to Cold War military history. Participants included scholars from Austria, Canada, the Czech Republic, France, Germany, Hungary, Poland, Romania, and the United Kingdom. In addition, the committee began publication and circulation of a semiannual newsletter, Cold War History Newsletter, the first issue of which appeared in January 1995.

It is my hope that the conference has established a foundation for the future sharing of information regarding military aspects of the Cold War. All, indeed, will benefit from a process that promotes greater openness among nations.

ALFRED GOLDBERG.