



April 1987 meeting, Ben Lomond, California.

Bottom row, left to right: Alexander Nitkin, Ross Lavroff, Martin Hellman, Elena Loshchenkova, Anatoly Gromyko, Kenneth Boulding, Sergei Kapitza.

Second row: William Busse, Linn Sennott, Harold Sandler, John Richardson, Steven Kull.

Third row: Theodore Taylor, Donald Fitton, Andrei Melville, William McGlashon, Jerome Frank, Richard Lagerstrom, Craig Barnes.

Writing This Book

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The process of creating this book began in October 1985 following months of concept discussions, by telex and in face-to-face meetings. These were followed by far-flung contacts with prospective authors to discuss the format of the book and the underlying principles which would guide the text. When manuscripts began to come in, there were concept discussions with nearly all of the authors, both in the USSR and the US. Discussions were followed by revisions, more discussions with the authors, and more revisions, all of which were tracked through two languages. During the last year of the work, there were a total of eight weeks of face-to-face discussions between Soviet and American editors and authors. By the end of the preparation, during one seventeen-day session in Moscow, counting the two languages, there were fifty-nine manuscripts in circulation being revised, translated, revised, and retranslated in an ongoing process until consensus was reached on final content.

Toward the close of the work on this project, some of the Soviet and American editors were sitting together, asking how it was that we had gotten this far. Why had this project succeeded when so many others had

ended on the rocks? What was different?

The project started simply enough, when some representatives from Beyond War* came to a committee of Soviet scientists† to see if we could agree on principles which could move our two nations beyond war. The Soviet reply was, more or less, that statements of principle are easy, how could we take some action?

One thing led to another, and at first we planned to do a conference together, asking scientists from all over the world to participate. Later, a book was proposed, and working on that book has been the experience of a lifetime for all of us.

There have been some difficult times. We have had passionate conversations about fear, and about military power and wars of liberation, and popular participation in government. And we have not yet resolved all those differences. So we didn't get to where we are because we solved all our disagreements.

That was probably the first thing we learned. We could go forward and work together for a common goal even if we didn't agree on many things. It is as if we learned by experience the point about diversity that is made by some of the writers in this book. Soviets and Americans come to the table bringing with them totally different backgrounds, vocabularies, and national ideologies. We had to learn that we would have to be not only tolerant of each other, but sensitive in the best sense to what makes the other person uncomfortable, nervous, or even wary of the opinion of his peers. And this is a problem which definitely goes both ways. ***We had to imagine what it would be like to live in the other culture and have the career obstacles, the public attitude, and the governmental leadership of the other side. And doing that made a difference in how we treated each other.***

* Beyond War is a non-partisan educational movement whose goal is to bring about an end to war as a means of resolving conflict. It is comprised of hundreds of full-time and thousands of part-time volunteers in the United States and abroad. The volunteers are from all walks of life, including business, the professions, agriculture, the arts, as well as the scientific and academic communities. The Beyond War National Office, located in Palo Alto, California, serves as a communication and resource center for the activities of the movement.

† The Committee of Soviet Scientists for Peace against the Nuclear Threat is a nongovernmental group of professionals, including physicists, chemists, biologists, and political scientists and other scholars who do most of their work in the area of arms control and disarmament. The Chairman of the Committee is Academician Evgeni Velikhov, and the three deputy chairmen, who were very helpful in supporting this project are Academician Roald Sagdeev, Prof. Andrei Kokoshin, and Prof. Sergei Kapitza. The latter is a contributor to this volume.

Sometimes we had the experience of being absolutely sure of what we knew and thinking that someone on the other side was completely wrong. But even when one person thought another might have the most profound misperception, we found we had to stay open to the fact that each of us has only a narrow, highly conditioned frame of reference through which we view the world. We are all novices when it comes to building a world beyond war. So we had to stay open to the possibility that it could be we, not they, who were misperceiving.

That attitude made a difference. We argued and we came to road blocks. And in the end we asked each other, how was it that we got around those road blocks? The answer seemed to be that different people with a common goal can find a way to work irrespective of all the differences in background and difficulties in communication.

The goal was survival. But survival doesn't convey all the right meaning. It isn't just the negative threat of extinction which drove us. There was a sort of inextinguishable desire to describe something about the future which was new and good. We were pulled by that, and pushed, at the same time, by the nuclear imperative.

And then, toward the end, we found ourselves on a slippery slope of a new kind. We could end up with a lofty statement about war, and the obsolescence of war, and the whole thing could be at such a high level of principle and abstraction that it could have practically no meaning. We didn't need just another statement of principle. There had to be an application of the principle. If, as the writers of the papers had convincingly persuaded us, a nuclear war is inevitable on our present course, then where does change begin? What is the action?

We had successfully avoided trying to identify all the bad American movies and Soviet posters, and we stayed away from the historical analyses of who started what in 1917, 1939, 1950, 1962, and 1979. But we had also to make clear that general statements of principle about ending war are not sufficient. The superpower relationship, and the arms buildup, and dependence upon force worldwide must be stopped if civilization is to survive. We are not only talking about the future. There are present discrepancies. By drawing attention to them it is our hope that they can be attended and eliminated.

So that had to be said, too. But it had to be said in a way which could be heard; a way that would not so alienate that it would fall on deaf ears. We were engaged constantly in an effort to discover a vocabulary that could be understood in common rather than emphasizing things that separate us.

In English, for example, there is a word "constituency" which does not exist in Russian. In Russian there is a word "mechanism" which has no English equivalent. Both words are important in the way they are used in

articles in this book. How could it be that something of so much importance to one side did not even have a word to describe it in the other? We discovered that when they did not have our word it would be very easy to think of that as a defect, but that when we did not have their word, it could seem that their word was really not very important. So, again, we lived the experience of the articles in the book, this time on images of the enemy.

In presenting the reader with the results of this effort, we understand its limitations. On the one hand, many concepts and phenomena of contemporary life are not examined. For example, we have not explicitly mentioned the American military-industrial complex or its Soviet counterpart. On the other hand, a multi-authored volume necessarily leads to some repetition. While aware of these limitations, we hope the reader will find that the advantages of avoiding blame and of drawing on the wisdom of many viewpoints outweigh these limitations.

The experience of doing the project was a validation of the things that the authors were telling us should be true. A common goal, basic goodwill, openness of mind, and a willingness to hear the other person out, were the things that brought the book to completion. For all of us it was a real exercise in new thinking.

In the process of working with each other, we had a fantastic cross-cultural experience. We became colleagues, genuinely able to agree and disagree, forcefully, but also kindly and with humor. We became even more than friends.