Foreign Affairs Research: Review Process Rises on Ruins of Camelot

The scuttling a half year ago of Project Camelot, a social sciences research program financed by the United States Army, has produced some direct results that might have been anticipated and some indirect effects which may in the long run prove more important.

The State Department recently announced new procedures designed to assure the propriety of government-sponsored foreign-affairs research in respect to its effect on American foreign relations. Creation of review machinery within the State Department resulted from a Presidential order in August. The order was issued in the wake of a clamor in Chile caused by Camelot (*Science*, 10 Sept. 1965).

In recent months the Camelot affair seems also to have markedly increased communal soul-searching among social and behavioral scientists on the ethical implications of their growing involvement in government-sponsored research. Camelot has also prodded the same scholars toward coming to terms with the results of the swarming of social scientists into certain underdeveloped but no longer academically neglected nations.

Since Camelot was canceled early in the summer, social and behavioral scientists have watched for the new State Department regulations rather in the mood of an insomniac waiting for the other shoe to drop. And Camelot and the review machinery have been live issues at the fall meetings of various social and behavioral science associations and in the pages of the journals.

Responsibility within the State Department for fashioning this review apparatus fell to the Bureau of Intelligence and Research, the director of which is Thomas L. Hughes. The process required negotiation with other federal agencies having interest in foreign-affairs research, notably the Department of Defense. There were also less formal dealings with social scientists who represented professional associations or, in some cases, themselves. The academic grapevine carried the word that as a result of remonstrances from scholars the published regulations are considerably less comprehensive and restrictive than those first proposed.

It is possible that the scholars were fighting phantoms, but Hughes and his aides have taken pains to consult fairly widely and, recently, to reassure those who feared that the regulations would mean a clamping down of a bureaucratic censorship on research in the field of foreign affairs.

The new procedures were not made public until the end of November, but the essentials were made known some time before that. Perhaps the most concise summary available of the main points was contained in an address by Hughes delivered in late October at Hamilton College, appropriately before a society named for Elihu Root and Philip Jessup. Hughes's statement of "guidelines" is to be found in the excerpt from the speech which appears on page 1430.

University scholars seem to have been particularly concerned that a clear distinction be made between the handling of projects initiated by scholars and supported by grants from federal agencies and those conceived within the agencies and designed to produce answers to particular questions relevant to agency missions, and contracted out. Exemption of National Science Foundation and National Institutes of Health grants from the review process seems to have done a good deal to mollify the foes of "censorship."

When the Camelot pot boiled over last summer, one prominent issue was that of the alleged intrusion of the Defense Department into the foreign-policy preserves of the State Department. The debate on this particular point has not developed to the degree expected, in part at least because both sides have kept resolutely quiet about it. Tensions remains, however, and it is obvious that the new regulations most directly affect the research arms of the Department of Defense and the Agency for International Development. (The effect on the CIA can only be speculated on.) A number of nongovernment scholars are partisans of the military, and particularly of the Army, for having supported foreign-policy research in the days when nobody else did. And there are indications that DOD and its friends view the new arrangement as amounting to the unleashing of an unwelcome bureaucratic watchdog. At this stage, discussion must be based on theory rather than practice, and an attempt will be made in this space later to report how the new State-Defense relationship is working.

Within the State Department the review function will be performed in the Bureau of Intelligence and Research (INR). Since shortly after World War II, INR has served as a center for channeling intelligence and information to consumers in the department and in other agencies which qualify. In addition to handling the flood of cables and other incoming information, INR performs a variety of research and analysis functions.

Since its formation the bureau has been pulled two ways, being called on to service day-to-day operational requirements and at the same time acting as the department's only purveyor of depth research. The bureau is expected to act as a complement and sometimes as a counterbalance to the geographic "policy bureaus." At the beginning of the Kennedy administration, however, certain functions were split off from INR and assigned elsewhere, and some observers say that the result has been to move the balance in the bureau toward operations and away from research.

Review of foreign-affairs research projects is now the responsibility of a Foreign Affairs Research Council established within the State Department. Hughes is chairman, and other members include the chairman of State's policy planning council, the Deputy Assistant Secretary of State for Politico-Military Affairs, and, as appropriate, representatives of the geographic and functional bureaus.

Members of the council are obviously busy people with plenty of other work to do. It is expected that, in practice, each member will review projects in his own area and that not more than one or two members will pass on a given

project save in unusually sensitive cases.

Staff work, consequently, will be important, and responsibility for this will fall on INR's office of external research, which serves as the principal point of contact between the department and foreign-affairs scholars. The office has acted as a clearinghouse for information, has coordinated contract research, and has sought to foster cooperation among government agencies. It therefore has more experience and probably closer ties with social scientists than any other office at State.

The section handling review of research is being expanded by 16 persons, 12 of them professionals. The aim is to recruit six senior, doctoral-level professionals in an assortment of disciplines. They would hold civil service appointments at the GS-14 and -15 levels (base pay for GS-14 is $14,680; for GS-15, $17,055). Six junior professionals would be Foreign Service Officers with master's degrees in appropriate fields.

An opinion of INR and of the State Department in general which seems to be held fairly widely among social and behavioral scientists is that the departmental orientation to operations creates an inhospitable atmosphere for research. It is conceded that a number of officials can claim academic credentials and scholarly accomplishments, but these same officials are charged with a lack of familiarity or sympathy with newer techniques in the social and behavioral sciences. This reputation State must live down or live with.

On one major point, it appears, difficulties could develop. The framers of the new procedures have emphasized that the reviewers will not evaluate methods, cost, or objective of projects but will consider only risk to foreign relations. It would seem nearly impossible, or at least naive, in many cases to detach an estimate of risk from a consideration of how a project is designed and who exactly—competent or incompetent, ideologically Right, Left, or Center—is going to carry it out.

In line with its position that the State Department alone is best able to judge this element of risk, State has created no advisory group of nongovernment specialists. In failing to create such an advisory group State may not only have overlooked a chance to obtain useful advice but also may have missed an opportunity to open a new circuit to the scholarly community.

In the social sciences community at

Excerpt from Hughes's Address

Our review procedures, drawn up in consultation with the Bureau of the Budget, will shortly be in the hands of 20 other government agencies. Let me tell you what our guidelines will be. First, we are concerned only with research projects in the social and behavioral sciences dealing with international relations, or with foreign areas and peoples, conducted in the United States or abroad, which are supported by Federal agencies. We have no intention and no authority to review either private research or research conducted within an agency by government employees.

Second, we distinguish between two kinds of research: that supported by the foreign affairs, defense, and intelligence agencies; and that supported by all other government agencies such as the major domestic departments or the basic research agencies. To us this distinction is a very important one. We see a substantial difference between the foreign policy risks of research conducted abroad in support of the mission of the Department of State or the Department of Defense, for instance, and the research conducted with the help of such agencies as the Office of Education or the Department of Agriculture. Moreover, we think the grants made by the National Science Foundation to American scholars differ substantially from contracts and grants made by other U.S. government agencies which are usually designed to produce answers to questions of operational significance to the agencies. It does not seem to us desirable to impose on private research projects supported by the NSF the review and clearance necessary for foreign affairs research funded by operating agencies.

A Quick Reply Is Promised

In the first case—the overseas operating agencies—we shall in general request them to make no commitment until we have had an opportunity to review the proposal and give them our clearance. We have told them that they should expect our response within two weeks. In the second case—all other agencies, except the NSF—we shall ask them to inform us of their proposed projects. They will not need an explicit clearance from the State Department to go ahead.

Third, the procedures will clearly state the belief that the sponsoring agency is the best judge of a project related to its mission. We have no intention of second guessing any other government agency. Its views as to the value of a study will be taken fully into account. Our review will not mean State Department endorsement of a project, rather the purpose is limited to the avoidance of damage to our foreign relations.

Fourth, our review does not extend to grants to academic institutions for general purposes related to foreign affairs research. We are concerned with support of specific research projects having the explicit approval of other government agencies.

Fifth, we are concerned with the initiation of projects that could stir up sensitivities overseas, not with controlling the findings of government supported research. We will not censor research reports or in any other way attempt to influence the findings of scholars whose work enjoys government funding.

Sixth, and most important, the responsibility for the wise expenditure of research funds remains in each agency under the authority of the President and the Congress. The State Department has not become, and does not wish to be, the controller for government foreign affairs research.

In these procedures we have made every allowance for ease and speed so as to facilitate research. We hope these procedures will not prove cumbersome. Should they become so in spite of our best judgment at present, they can easily be modified. In fact we plan to review the procedures in six months in consultation with interested government agencies and the Bureau of the Budget.

large there seems to be considerable concern—although it is by no means universal—about the effect on social scientists of working for the government. This disquiet existed before Camelot, but the Chilean incident seems to have had a burning-glass effect on it.

A forceful expression of the sentiment is to be found in a recent American Universities Field Staff report by political scientist K. H. Silvert, director of studies for AUFS and an experienced and well-informed observer on Latin America. In his paper "American Academic Ethics and Social Research Abroad," subtitled "The Lesson of Project Camelot," Silvert makes these points.

"No problem of integrity exists for two polar groups of social scientists: those who work inside government on a long-term basis, and those who because of their disciplines, research interests, or convictions stay entirely inside the university world. (A third group, the commercial contract scholar, sells his services where he wishes. His product is sometimes of very high quality. In any event, he does not concern us here because he has neither the pretensions nor the security of the academic scholar.) It is the social scientist working both fields who is in danger of betraying both of his masters through the loss of his powers of independent analysis. And he adds to his other academic difficulties a partial silence imposed by his access to classified materials, so that paradoxically he is often able to muster fewer data for his students than his uncompromised colleagues."

There is no consensus on the view that working both sides of the street inevitably corrupts. On another matter, in which government-supported research figures, however, there seems to be wide agreement.

The phenomenon in question is the gravitation of increasing numbers of researchers—many of them doctoral candidates, recent Ph.D.'s, or incompletely retreaded transfers from other specialties—to certain countries, mainly underdeveloped, with the result that these countries are being excessively and often badly "researched." In certain African and Latin American nations, in particular, government officials are said to be growing weary of being interviewed, often on the same subject, by waves of American social and behavioral scientists. In the new emerging nations many people are reluctant to talk about old, disappearing tribal ways. Quite apart from the Camelot syndrome, many foreign social scientists are skeptical of new American techniques and resent being "used" by well-organized, well-financed North Americans. In the social sciences, increasingly, the problem is not the ugly American but the ubiquitous American.

The problem is serious enough to have been included in a memorandum sent to the board of the American Political Science Association by its current president, Gabriel Almond. In the memo, titled "Problems of Access for Field Research in Foreign Areas," Almond dealt not only with political-ideological problems of the Camelot ilk but also with the matter of "saturation." And the quotes he included from social scientists working in the field indicated that saturation is becoming a serious matter (even if allowances are made for the reactions of old hands who find a lot of new competitors in what they regard as their own backyards).

At its meeting in November the American Anthropological Society, in support of the independence and integrity of its discipline and in behalf of international cooperation, instructed its executive board and secretariat to examine "the widely ramified issues involving the relationship between anthropologists and the agencies, both governmental and private, that sponsor their research. Among these issues are those of access to foreign areas, governmental clearance, professional ethics, and our responsibilities toward colleagues at home and abroad, the people with whom we work, and the sponsoring agencies."

While Camelot exacerbated these issues it certainly did not create them. And there seems to be a general feeling among social and behavioral scientists that, if there had been no Camelot, something similar would have happened somewhere soon.—JOHN WALSH

International Cooperation: LBJ Gets Conference Proposals

The White House Conference on International Cooperation, described by its sponsors as a unique exercise in bringing high-level talent to bear on possibilities for a better world, ran its 3-day course last week. The extraordinary scale of the conference is suggested by its 30 reports, its 29 panel discussions, and the estimated 5000 participants who churned in and out of the meeting rooms to hear one another or to receive the exhortations of such leading U.S. officials as the Secretary of State, the Ambassador to the United Nations, and the Chief Justice of the United States.

As the conference was ending, Secretary Rusk offered an assurance. "I think you will be able to see promptly the footprints of some of your work here," he said. His remark was directed to the question many conference participants must have been pondering: What had they accomplished? Indeed, does any such conference repay the time and energy invested by the large number of persons who take part?

The White House Conference grew out of a proposal made in 1963 by the late Prime Minister Nehru of India that the United Nations observe 1965, its 20th anniversary, as International Cooperation Year. A resolution to that effect was adopted by the U.N.; the member nations were left to carry out the observance each in its own way. In October 1964 President Johnson announced that a White House Conference would be called to "search and explore and canvass and thoroughly discuss every conceivable approach and