Member's Forum

The Cold War Is Melting But The Arms Race Continues

By Sam Marullo, Georgetown University

Sam Marullo is currently an arms control fellow in the office of Congressman Lee Hamilton (D-IN). His fellowship, from the American Association for the Advancement of Science, is to work on arms control and international security, with a particular focus on examining the spread of alternative security models in the defense policy-making process. Since this is such a timely event, as well as an unusual experience for sociologists in the Peace and War Section, we asked Sam to share some of his observations with us.

Under ordinary circumstances, this would have been a great year to work on Capitol Hill to examine the defense policy-making process from the "inside." With Gorbachev proposing arms control deals and taking unilateral initiatives, there promised to be much action in reining in the arms race. However, with the additional rush of events in Eastern Europe, the opportunities seem limitless for ending the arms race. But even as the cold war seems to be thawing, there has been no perceptible slowing of the arms buildup. One of the most widely hoped-for benefits of ending the superpower competition was supposed to be a huge savings from cuts in military spending. However, as I am sure you have no doubt heard by now, there is not going to be much of a "peace dividend" in the short run. What I would like to do is make a few observations based on my fellowship experience thus far to examine why the arms race continues even though the Cold War is thawing.

A chorus of incredulous, even indignant, cries is now being heard. "How come there is no peace dividend?" is the question Congressional leaders have been asking the White House and the Pentagon. "My boss" (the term staffers use to refer to the Members of Congress for whom they work) Lee Hamilton, has been asking this question as Chair of the House of Representatives (Continued Page 4)

Race, Gender, Ecology — Their Relationship

By John MacDougall, University of Lowell

I propose that we in the Peace & War Section collaborate more closely with other sociologists and scholars interested in questions of race, gender and ecology. Many of us in these fields share a common goal of creating a more just and livable world and confront the same issues

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Report of the Ad Hoc Committee on Awards Policy

By David Segal, University of Maryland

The Ad Hoc Committee on Awards Policy was established by John Lotland, the current chair of our section, and Louis Kriesberg, the chair-elect, to consider policies the section ought to adopt with regard to the second award the section is authorized to grant under ASA rules. The committee would like to broaden its mandate and make recommendations with regard to the Elise Boulding Award (Continued Page 6)
Meetings, Calls For Papers

At the American Sociological Association meetings in August there will be an informal roundtable entitled "WILL THE END OF THE COLD WAR CREATE A CRISIS IN AMERICAN POLITICAL CULTURE?" Section members are especially welcome to contribute their thoughts. Please contact the session organizer, J. William Gibson, 2931 S. Sepulveda Boulevard, Suite C, Los Angeles, CA 90064-3912; Phone 213-473-0119.

The XII World Congress of Sociology will be held in Madrid, Spain, from July 9-13, 1990. The Research Committee on Armed Forces and Conflict Resolution (Research Committee 01) has a full schedule of sessions on the following topics:

Armed Forces during the Transition Process
Military Related Social Research in the Mainstream of Sociology
Armed Forces in a Warless Society
Armed Forces in the USSR and China
Impact of Democratization on Military Policies
Sociology of Non-violence: Facilitating and Deterring Conditions for Non-violent Conflict Resolution within and between Nations
Military Profession
Impact of Armed Forces on Public Perceptions
Sociology of Navies

Among the many other activities at the World Congress of potential interest to members of the Peace and War Section is a session of the Research Committee on Social Psychology (Research committee 42) on "SOCIAL PSYCHOLOGY OF PEACE AND DISARMAMENT". For more information about the World Congress and registration forms, write to the International Sociological Association, Pinar 25, 28006 Madrid, Spain. The phone number is (34-1) 261 74 83.

The International Cooperation and Conflict Division of the Society for the Study of Social Problems will sponsor a roundtable on "WOMEN, WAR AND MILITARISM." Send a 2 page synopsis or completed paper by March 1 to either of the co-organizers:

Christopher Dale, Dept. of Sociology, Box 82, New England College, Henniker, NH 03242, Phone 603-428-2306

Jen Hlavack, 14933 Oaks North Drive, Dallas, TX 75240, Phone 214-392-2649

The second annual meeting of the Peace Studies Association will be held on March 8-10, 1990, at the University of Oregon. The theme is "Are The Walls coming Down? Challenges For Peace Studies in a Dramatically Changing World". For further information, contact the Kansas Institute for Peace and Conflict Resolution, Bethal College, 300 E. 27th Street, North Newton, Kansas 67117; Phone 316-283-2500, extension 217, 218.

The Sixteenth Congress of the International Society for Intercultural Education, Training and Research will be held April 7-12, 1990, in Kilkenny, Ireland. Some general topics to be discussed include community and industry conflict resolution, global interdependence and development cooperation and working with communities of foreign and ethnic origin. For further information contact SIETER International, 1990 Congress, Newpark Mews, Castlecomer Road, Kilkenny, Ireland. phone +353-56-61499/Fax 63220.

The biennial conference of the Inter-University Seminar on Armed Forces and Society (IUS) was held October 27-29, 1989, in Baltimore, Maryland. Unfortunately, the Fall 1989 Newsletter reached you just after the meeting. About 200 people attended the meeting; about 40 of whom were from outside the U.S., representing 14 different countries. The interesting and varied program included presentation of 125 papers. Topics at this conference, as always at IUS meetings, included many that are of interest to members of the Peace and War Section.

For information about this or future meetings, or for information about IUS in general, contact the IUS Secretariat, Social Science Building, University of Chicago, 1126 E. 59th St., Chicago, Illinois 60637.

The Groves Conference on Marriage and the Family invites persons interested in the area of peace as it relates to the family to attend the 1990 conference to be held June 12-17 in the tranquil Rocky Mountains of Montana at the Big Sky Resort near Yellowstone National Park. Proposals for papers, workshops, and/or seminars are being solicited in the following areas:

- the economic, social, and psychological consequences for families of living in context of a dominance-violence oriented society.
- families as change agents in developing ways of thinking and behaving which promote, maintain, or undermine peace.
- the role of family professionals in developing policies and actions to promote peace.

Send one copy of your abstract to each of the following conference directors by February 15:

Charles L. Cole, PhD, 41 C LeBaron Hall, Iowa State University, Ames, Iowa 50011, Phone 515-294-8671

Carmen Knudson-Ptacek, PhD, Herrick Hall, Montana State University, Bozeman, Montana 58717, Phone 406-994-3299

Remember to encourage your students to submit papers for the Boulding Student Award Competition!

Social Science Quarterly invites contributions for a planned issue on THE MILITARY IN AMERICAN SOCIETY. Their preference is for articles of short to medium length (14-25pp). For style and format see recent issues or write for style sheet.

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Co-editors are Curtis Gilroy, Army Research Institute; Peter Karsten, University of Pittsburgh; Aline Quester, Center for Naval Analyses; David Segal, University of Maryland; and James Thomas, Seaside, California. Manuscripts will be considered for this issue until March 1, 1991, and should be submitted to:

Social Science Quarterly
Will C. Hogg Building
University of Texas at Austin
Austin, TX 78712

The Sociological Forum is planning a special issue on the study of peace and war. For information, contact Allen Grimshaw, Department of Sociology, Indiana University, Bloomington, IN 47405; Phone 812-855-3633.

Deadline is May 1, 1990.

Funding & Employment Opportunities

The Department of Sociology at University of Southern California announces an expansion of its faculty search for Fall, 1990. (1) the position of Chair is open to senior applicants with established stature in such core areas as social organization, social psychology, and theory, as well as strengths in such areas as family, demography, medical sociology, aging, and deviance. (2) Up to three additional positions are open at the assistant and associate professor levels for clearly outstanding applicants in the above core and specialty areas. Both quantitative and qualitative research skills are being sought. Screening will begin on January 31 and continue until the positions are filled. Vitae and three letters of reference should be sent immediately to Malcolm W. Klein, Chair, Search Committee, Department of Sociology, University of Southern California, Los Angeles, CA 90089-2539. We are an Affirmative Action/Equal Opportunity Employer.

OPTIONS, A University Outreach Project on Nuclear Policy, awards grants to colleges and universities to organize a faculty speakers bureau for off-campus, community education on international security issues. For more information, write Marta Daniels Troy, Executive Director, OPTIONS, Box 875, Juniata College, Huntingdon, PA 16652. Phone 814-643-6293.

New Publications

Vietnam Generation is a new academic journal devoted to publishing articles about the Vietnam war and the effect of the war upon American culture, politics, and society. It is an interdisciplinary journal encompassing both the humanities and the social sciences.

The new double-issue for summer and fall of 1989 (just released) is devoted to "Gender and the War: Men, Women and Vietnam." Jacqueline Lawson edited this issue and quotes Jean Bethke Elstain to frame the journal: "Wars are not men's property, rather, wars destroy and bring into being men and women as particular identities by canalizing energy and giving permission to narrate." Lawson proudly contends that the nineteen articles in this issue "represent the most current, vital, and sophisticated discourse on the subject to date. The range of opinion in the essays collected here attests to the remarkable dedication of scholars working in the related fields of feminism, masculinism, gender studies, and Vietnam war studies." In addition to the articles, there is also a special "Bibliography of Unusual Sources on Women and the Vietnam War."

Personal subscriptions (four issues) cost $40 while institutional subscriptions cost $75. Single issues are available at a reduced rate. In 1990 Vietnam Generation will feature special issues on "The GI Movement and After," "The Kent State Killings," "Teaching the War," and "Southeast Asian American communities." Please write or call Kali Tal, Editor, Vietnam Generation, 10301 Proctor Street, Silver Spring, Maryland 20901; Phone 301-681-9541.

Increase Section Membership
Recruit at least one new member!

Member News

JEROME RABOW, University of California, Los Angeles and colleagues have completed cross-cultural research on college students' attitudes on nuclear issues. Some articles that have come out of this research are "Nuclear Fears and Concerns Among College Students: A Cross-National Study of Attitudes" and "Cross-National Research on Nuclear Attitudes, Normative Support, and Activist Behavior: Additive and Interactive Effects."

PAUL WEHR, University of Colorado, is currently on sabbatical working on several interesting projects. One is involving the establishment of a faculty position at the University of Central America in Managua, Nicaragua, to teach the concepts of civilian based defense. Another project named "Disarming Conflict in Central America" involves studying the conflict management process of the "Arias" peace plan with special emphasis on how it is operating in Nicaragua. If this was not enough, Paul is also studying local peace movement organizations in the United States and Europe to determine what conditions exist that allow some to survive and others to disintegrate. From this analysis, he hopes to build a preliminary model of collective action useful for peace activities at the local level.


JAMES SKELLY, New York University, is now Associate Director for International Projects at the Center for War, Peace and the News Media.
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Foreign Affairs Subcommittee on Europe and the Middle East and Chair of the Joint Economics Committee. He has already held a number of hearings (which, when properly conducted are Congress's equivalent to graduate-level seminars) on changes in the Soviet Union, changes in Eastern Europe, the meaning of U.S. national security in a global economy, and the peace dividend. I will not bore you with trying to summarize the conclusions of these dozens of hours of testimony from expert witnesses, but instead will point out a few of their highlights. Before making any substantive observations, I offer some comments about the process of introducing new ideas into the policy arena. In the next issue, I will offer a more substantive critique of conventional explanations of why the Cold War is coming to an end and what research topics sociologists should be examining.

The Process

My first observations relate to the hearings themselves. One of the purposes of a hearing is to educate the Members on recent developments on an issue. Expert witnesses, often academics or think-tank residents who specialize in foreign affairs or defense issues, are brought in to give background information, update recent developments, and provide policy analysis and recommendations. Executive branch officials, in our case State Department and Pentagon officials, are also brought in to explain policy and provide a rationale for it. The information conveyed in the hearings process becomes one of the inputs influencing Members when they vote on relevant legislation.

During my congressional Fellow's orientation program, one of the required readings contained a tongue-in-cheek list of Parkinson's laws on how the Hill operates. One of the laws states that the prominence of a hearing is inversely related to the importance of the issue being discussed. Taking this "law" with a grain of salt, I was somewhat pleased to see only a moderate turnout for these hearings and limited press interest. I thought it might be onto something important! However, the very poor attendance of Members at most of these hearings led me to believe that the process has only limited input at best. From my discussions with staffers, I believe that this pattern of attendance is the norm. Members learn about what happened at the hearing after the fact from their staffers who usually condense the testimony into a single page summary.

What is even more discouraging, however, is the nature of the "experts" who are invited as witnesses. They are usually academics and beltway bandits, primarily from the D.C. area, New York, occasionally Boston, or others who are known to be passing through Washington. Obviously they present only a limited view of reality, but a lack of funding to bring in experts is a real constraint. (The lesson here is obvious, even for grassroots peace groups who want to influence policy, that they must have a presence in Washington.) Furthermore, the experts sought as witnesses are those that have name recognition (even celebrities), so that attendance is greater and the media more likely to show up. Former government officials, executives of large corporate entities, and analysts who popularize their work, (most of whom share the characteristics of being successful, older, white men) are most likely to be called on to testify. Other popular witnesses are former bosses and professors of staff members (who do much of the organizing for the hearings), and those whose work has impressed the staff.

In all of this, the role of the media is powerful. Some of the mechanisms through which the media wields influence are: topics and witnesses are selected so as to try to attract the media; topics that the staff or Members perceive to be important to the media are those they (the media) are currently covering; the important questions are "framed" by the media and the range of analysis is limited to what the mainstream media provides; and Members, staffers, and the experts rely on the media for the most recent "factual" information. After the fact, if the media does not report on a hearing, the evaluation of its importance is lowered. One of my first observations on the Hill was the enormous role of the media (especially print) in informing staffers and Members as to what is reality and what are appropriate topics for political debate and even routine conversation. Essential reading materials include the New York Times, Washington Post, Wall Street Journal, Time, Newsweek, National Journal, Congressional Quarterly, and for Hill gossip, Roll Call. Two corollaries about the media are quickly deduced: 1) if it is in the papers, it is real; and its converse, 2) if it is not in the papers, it is not worth talking about. A related corollary is that authoritative information is that which is printed in the media or what an expert says. Obviously, being well-read and well-connected are important assets.

Although hearings are just one influence, others operate in much the same way. Lobbyists are less well respected as sources of information than experts but typically come from the same kinds of vested interests as do experts. Constituents lobbying on foreign and military policy have been virtually nonexistent on East-West relations for the past several years. Public opinion polls are an interesting topic of conversation, but unless they are from the Member's district or state, they are not taken very seriously. And, in the three months I have been here, less than a handful of peace lobbyists have met with Mr. Hamilton.

Given the nature of who the experts are, how the Members and staffers are so heavily influenced by the media, and the other constraints on the process, it is no surprise that the sources of input are quite conventional. What little analysis exists is presented within a narrow confine of the political spectrum, ranging from moderate liberal to New Right conservative. Critical analysis, unconventional perspectives, progressive policy options, and women and minorities, are rarely heard. My boss often quips after hearings that most of the analysis presented is not new and that the recommendations about alternative policies are not particularly well-developed. It is not surprising that mainstream experts, many of whom regularly spin through the revolving door among Executive, Congressional, Pentagon, and think-tank positions, who are heavily influenced by mainstream media, and who operate within narrow institutional constraints rarely promote visionary alternatives to current policy. It is only when a Robert McNamara or William Crowe make calls for deep cuts in U.S. military forces, which they have done within the last month, that Members take note.

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Substantive Factors Propelling the Arms Race

Even though the Cold War is thawing, the arms race will continue for quite some time into the future because we have not as yet negated several of the factors that propel it forward. The mainstream experts and Administration officials that come before Congress to testify, and the bureaucratic operations that maintain the status quo, cannot be expected to act as sources of change. The forces that propel the arms race are only briefly enumerated here because there are so many of them. It is only by better understanding these strategic, economic, and political factors, however, as well as the procedural impediments discussed above, that we can hope to reverse the arms race. It is in these areas that sociologists can make a real contribution to creating a more peaceful future.

Strategic: The Cold War may be warming, but the United States strategic policy of pursuing its broadly conceived national security interests throughout the globe, backed by a policy of nuclear deterrence, is still in effect. Even though the exact missions of our military forces may change over time — halting communist expansion at one point, stopping the drug trade at another — we reserve utilizing whatever force necessary as a means of implementing our national interests in a way that we alone define. Deterrence ideology maintains its grip by redefining itself to meet the military material conditions. For example, when we had a nuclear monopoly, a massive retaliation policy was felt to be the means of deterring the Soviets. When there was parity, we relied on "escalation dominance" to deter Soviet aggression. In the face of superior Soviet forces in Europe after the INF agreement, military officials now stress the "fundamental" nature of deterrence — i.e. the mere existence of any nuclear forces in Europe is believed to deter Soviet aggression. This explains the official opposition to arms control talks that could lead to a "third zero" in Europe. After such an agreement occurs, which undoubtedly will happen midway through the 1990’s, deterrence can still be maintained, if need be, by reliance on NATO assigned SLBMs and U.S. strategic forces.

Our belief in deterrence ideology and our "right" to intervene militarily anywhere in the world will continue to propel weapons modernization even if the Soviets stop competing in the arms race. The military can always think up new missions that require better weapons to accomplish them. Until we redefine national security in terms of mutual security, along with the Soviet Union and the other major military powers, there will always be rationalization for new weapons. We have just barely begun to critically examine military strategies — such as follow-on-forces-attack and forward-basing — that require continuous weapons modernization. Lacking alternative security strategies, the economic and political factors discussed below provide continued incentives for building new weapons.

Economic: At the rhetorical level at least, the operations of the military-industrial complex are fairly well understood as factors contributing to the continuation of the arms race. Major corporations depend on defense contract profits to stay in business and local officials depend on the influx of money and jobs into their communities. Members of Congress benefit as well from the jobs created in their home districts and they are loath to cut such contracts or close military bases.

The revolving door between private industry, the Pentagon, and government agencies creates an economic commonality of interests among major players in the military-industrial complex. These shared interests also include analysts in universities and independent think tanks. Many careers, promotions, and much professional prestige are linked with the advancement of a particular weapon, thereby creating vested interests to further its development and production. On top of this are corporate lobbyists, political action committees, and public relations professionals who have access to enormous amounts of information and financial resources, and whose careers also depend on advancing weapons production. In contrast, lobbyists for halting the arms race are far fewer, less well funded, have less and less technical information, and have little ability to demonstrate their political clout. Even many arms control experts who call for weapons cuts typically preface their analysis with ritual condemnations of past Soviet aggressions and proclaim their support for U.S. national security goals — "differing on the means to achieve those goals" — thereby demonstrating their mainstream credibility. It should come as no surprise that deterrence ideology remains largely intact despite the dissolution of the enemy threat.

The federal budget process also contains several features that prevent the realization of a peace dividend in the near future. Pentagon planning for defense budgets has been based on wildly optimistic estimates of spending growth since 1979. Even though defense spending has been stable since 1985 (a decline in real funding due to inflation), the Pentagon continues to plan for two percent growth beyond inflation through the mid-1990s. Zero growth or (gaspir) zero-based budgeting are unheard of at the Pentagon. This leads to the Bush Administration’s Orwellian talk of defense cuts of $96 billion over the next five years because the yearly budgets will increase only from $290 to $350 billion (under a no "real growth" scenario) rather than to $380 billion as originally planned.

In addition to confronting the Pentagon’s assumption of built-in growth, contracting practices hide the costs of weapons purchased over many years. Here it is simplest to use the "camel’s nose in the tent" analogy. Relatively small amounts of money are appropriated for early development of a weapon and production begins slowly. Once production lines are fully opened, the bulk of the costs make a direct hit on the budget, but by then too much has already been spent on it to stop it. The B-2 "camel," for example, now has its larger-than-expected head in the tent and the Congress is terrified at how large its hump will be when it moves into the tent in the mid-1990s. On the other hand, the Congress is extremely reluctant to "waste" the $25 billion it has already invested in the B-2 by cancelling the program, even though such an act would save at least $50 billion in the long run.

Finally, there is no easy mechanism for the Congress to beat the funding for swords into plowshares. Various committees have authority over different parts of the budget so that, for example, even if the Armed Services Committee decided the Pentagon should get less money, there is no way to earmark the savings to go to patching the tattered social safety net, or reinvesting in our infrastructure.

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or protecting the environment, or any other worthy cause. In fact, the large federal budget deficit and the Gramm-Rudman-Hollings "remedy" virtually ensure that the Pentagon savings will not be transferred elsewhere in the budget but will instead go toward deficit reduction. Ronald Reagan is having the last laugh on liberals who thought G-R-H was a mechanism for cutting defense spending.

Political: The political leadership is still trapped in a Cold War frame of mind. It has been five years since Gorbachev took office and many political elites still debate whether he is for real. Since the Wyoming and Malta mini-summits, President Bush and Secretary of State Baker admit that Gorbachev and his reforms are real and that they would like them to succeed, but claim there is very little the United States can do to respond to them. The intelligence community has only recently announced to the American public that Soviet defense spending has been declining and that the threat of a Soviet conventional attack on Western Europe is virtually nonexistent. These begrudgingly altered assessments have had minimal impact on U.S. policy, however, for fear that any response will be criticized from the Right as "being soft on Communism." The Republican party remains captive to the hardliners who will accept nothing short of a rollback of the Communist revolution, while the Democrats flail about with no party unity other than to avoid appearing soft on defense. A positive vision of constructive diplomacy, common security, and nonviolent resolution of international conflict have not yet made inroads into the political mainstream from their marginal home bases. To the extent that new foreign policy priorities are being articulated as replacements for containment, they are to increase the spread of market mechanisms, political pluralism, and commercial enterprises into previously closed areas.

Career interests in the foreign policy arena are as strong as those in defense, so it is not surprising that a commonality of perspectives develops among career civil servants, foreign service agents, and policy-makers in executive agencies and the Congress. Under many circumstances individuals responsible for carrying out policies are the same individuals charged with evaluating them. Even so-called "independent policy reviews" take place, the evaluators are different individuals from the implementors, but they share the same frames of reference, values, experiences, career paths, and positions. It is difficult for new ideas to be injected into these conditions as well.

These procedural and structural components of foreign and military policy-making help explain why the arms race continues despite a thawing of the Cold War. They also explain why the peace dividend so many of us had hoped for is several years away at best. Furthermore, it is by no means assured that the peace dividend will be used to fund economic conversion or any other government initiatives beside deficit reduction. For groups working on social justice issues and federal budget priorities, now is the time to make your voices heard in Congress.

Much of the political elite and the American public are ignorant of nonviolent conflict resolution efforts, the growing number of negotiated settlements of disputes, and the powerful role played by grassroots peacemaking efforts. Just think of all those 1980s retrospectives produced in recent weeks and recall how few of them mentioned the nuclear freeze campaign or any other grassroots initiative. Conversely, recall all the recent public statements and op-ed pieces that attribute the end of the Cold War to the Reagan military build-up. These issues will be discussed in my next Newsletter column.

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issues regarding fundamental American values like fairness and technological progress. We find that these four areas of inquiry are inherently interdisciplinarrian.

In my opinion, the peace movement has been too inbred. It first defined its own agenda and then patronizingly "reached out" to women, blacks and environmentalists. I suggest that peace scholars/activists start by listening to these people and together with them formulate basic assumptions and goals. This should significantly enhance the attractiveness and strength of peace studies/peace activism.

In order to do this, I call upon the Section members to solicit papers from colleagues studying race, gender or ecology for our various paper sessions. In doing so, we could have some fascinating intellectual interchanges and recruit new members for the Section as well. These actions support John Lofland’s article in the summer 1989 edition of the Newsletter in which he proposes that the Section become more of an arena organization.

In addition, I urge the Section’s nominating committee to include in its nominees equal proportions of white women and people of color as are found in the general population of the United States.

Report of the Ad Hoc Committee  
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Distinguished Student Paper award as well. The members of the committee are David R. Segal, University of Maryland; Edward Sabin, Towson State University; and John Wattendorf, United States Military Academy.

The committee has reviewed ASA policies on Section awards and is prepared to make recommendations on the nature of the Elise Boulding Award. It has also begun discussions among its members, and with other members of the Section, regarding whether we should give a second award; what we should call it if we do give one; what it should be for; and how often it should be given.

Members of the Section are invited to communicate their views on these matters to any member of the committee at any time. In addition, members of the committee will be available for discussions at all Section activities on Section Day at the 1990 ASA Meetings in Washington, DC.