WEST to Host International Cold War Conference

In February 1999, Indiana University-Bloomington’s West European Studies National Resource Center (WEST) will host the second in a series of three annual international conferences commemorating the 50th anniversary of the onset of the cold war. The Cold War Conference Series focuses on the inception of the Marshall Plan, the ideological struggle on the cultural front that dominated West European intellectual life until the fall of the Berlin Wall, and the birth of the North Atlantic Treaty Organization (NATO).

The conference series is the joint effort of three West European Studies National Resource Centers, the other two being the New York Consortium for European Studies (comprising Columbia University, New York University, and the New School for Social Research), and the University of Washington.

This structure encourages intellectual stimulation and exchange of ideas between major centers devoted to the study of Western Europe, and faculty from the three institutions participate in the conferences at the other two institutions. Peter Bondanella, director of WEST, notes that “the cold war was the best thing that ever happened to U.S. education.”

In February 1998, the New York Consortium launched the series with a conference titled “The Marshall Plan and the Economics of the Cold War,” which dealt with such topics as political life in post-war Europe, impact of the Marshall Plan on French politics, U.S. government-business debates and foreign economic policymaking during the cold war era, the economic impact 50 years later of the European Recovery Program (presented by IUB economics professor Roy Gardner), direct and indirect influences on the creation of the European Community, effect of the Marshall Plan on European security and NATO, and public opinion surrounding the Marshall Plan.

Indiana University will host the second interdisciplinary conference, devoted to “Cold War Culture: Film, Fact, and Fiction,” Feb. 18-21, 1999. Subject areas covered will range from literature and cinema to politics, art, propaganda, music, architecture, cultural studies, history, European integration, and U.S.-European cultural interrelationships.

To date, more than 60 papers have been accepted for presentation. Plenary speakers will include Pulitzer Prize author David Halberstam, George Orwell biographer Michael Shelden, and authors Tony Judt, John Cawelti, and Michael Ledeen. In addition to the plenary sessions and presentations of individual papers, there will be a roundtable discussion on the last day of the conference which will bring together all the keynote speakers.

Finally, in 2000, the University of Washington will close the collaborative series with a conference on “European Security Policy: 1949-1999,” which focuses on NATO.

NAFSA from p. 4

NAFSA Executive Director and CEO Marlene Johnson, a former lieutenant governor of Minnesota from 1983-91, has been an outspoken advocate of international educational mobility and its relationship to economic dynamism abroad. She spoke of the successful relationships that NAFSA, which recently celebrated its 50th anniversary, has been able to develop with governmental agencies and educational institutions through focused strategies and strong leadership.

At the same time, she pointed out that global changes underscore the need for organizations like NAFSA to promote greater participation by U.S. students in study abroad programs. Some 1.5 million international students come to the U.S. to further their studies, compared to only 100,000 U.S. students who study and travel abroad.

Principal organizers of the conference at IUB were local committee co-chairs Marlin Howard and Susan Greer of the Center for English Language Training, and NAFSA Region VI Chair Kirk Robey (Ball State University) and Chair-elect Kristin Garvey (International Center of Indianapolis).

Cold War Culture:
Film, Fact, and Fiction
Feb. 18-21, 1999
Hosted by:
IUB WEST
For more information:
West European Studies
542 Ballantine Hall, IUB
Tel: 812/855-3280
Fax: 812/855-7695
E-mail: weur@indiana.edu
Web site: www.indiana.edu/~weur/Cwc.html