

## CHAPTER 2

Harvard Becomes a Base  
for an Anti-ABM Campaign

*At Harvard, from 1964 to 1966, while B.J. learns Russian, two books on arms control are produced, as well as quite a few articles, all primarily devoted to securing an ABM treaty; in 1964 a first trip to Moscow takes place to talk the Soviets out of building an ABM.*

I took up residence at the Harvard Center for International Affairs in June 1964 and began work on a book. I also prepared a string of memorandums for the Doty group, which I was eager to impress.<sup>10</sup> Meanwhile, I continued to write about the current status of ABMs.

By September 1964 Harold Brown, later secretary of defense, but then director of defense research and engineering in the department of defense, was concluding that for the “foreseeable future” the cost of an ABM system would be “substantially larger” than the extra cost needed to counter it by the USSR. Department of Defense (DOD) studies showed that missile offense had a two- to four-year lead over missile defense. In *The Bulletin of the Atomic Scientists*, I urged both sides to announce military budget reductions, which, it seemed, would “strengthen a tacit understanding not to provoke this new [and expensive] round in the arms race.”<sup>11</sup>

Not everyone was persuaded by my views on the ABM. Henry Kissinger was one of the three leaders of the strategic wing of the center (along with Thomas Schelling and Robert Bowie). One day he introduced me to a touring member of the Board of Visitors by saying sardonically, “He is trying to show that the ABM is so inef-

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fective that it won't work but so effective that it should be banned by treaty." Several years later, of course, it was the same Henry Kissinger who was successfully negotiating the very treaty in question and observing publicly that opponents of anti-ballistic missile systems were correct to observe that these ineffective systems were stimulating the arms race.<sup>[12]</sup>

From June 1964 to June 1965 at the Harvard Center for International Affairs, I completed my book *Containing the Arms Race: Some Specific Proposals*, which included as its first chapter much of my thinking about the ABM and moved on from there to bomber disarmament, missile disarmament, and, finally, a "negotiator's pause." The latter anticipated the "freeze" championed by Randy Forsberg almost two decades later. The chapter was stimulated by the American proposal in 1964 that the United States, the Soviet Union, and their respective allies "should agree to explore a verified freeze of the number and characteristics of strategic nuclear offensive and defensive vehicles." It was, really, Robert McNamara who invented the freeze.<sup>13</sup>

From June 1965 to June 1966, not finding any suitable position to move to, I stayed at the Center for International Affairs, courtesy of Thomas Schelling, and began work on a second book, *Strategic Persuasion: Arms Control Through Dialogue*.<sup>14</sup> At Harvard I had pretty well given up trying to attach myself to the Doty study group—which evidently viewed me as too young and lacking any special asset. My last effort was to see if the group could help me spend a year in Moscow, in residence, working on arms control. But Doty was characteristically aloof and noncommittal, and I could not figure out where I stood. □

Accordingly, by the summer of 1966, I had decided to become my own individual Pugwash movement. ♪ A Moscow Mathematical Congress provided an occasion. My first book was finally being published, and its good reviews would make an excellent calling card.<sup>[15]</sup> I was, obviously, not the world's greatest arms controller. But if I were *there*, in the center of the action, with all the relative advantage this implied, I might be able to make a difference. So I decided

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to give the Russians my advice personally. I wrote Glenn Schweitzer at the U.S. embassy in Moscow that I would be there from August 15 through September 5 and that I had already sent copies of my book to a “wide range of interested Soviet persons.”

The main impression of a first-time visitor of Moscow was one of drab poverty. The airfield seemed almost grass-covered, with little traffic. The apartments were old and run-down. People seemed very poor. There were few cars, and they were old. One suddenly realized that the Soviet Union was just a developing country. Half of the Soviet population lacked indoor plumbing; per capita ownership of cars was fifty years behind the U.S. rate. When, subsequently, some Soviet friends smuggled my wife into a computer center—her Ph.D. was in numerical analysis, and she had computing experience—she was shocked to see paper tape. They were years behind. It occurred to me then—and I acted on it often later (as this memoir will show)—that if Western leaders could visit Moscow, much of their fear of Soviet power would seep away, and the arms race would slow.

Donald Brennan had traveled to Russia in September 1965, a year before me, and a Soviet citizen, Nina Shakova, became his guide. An English teacher for scientists in the Academy of Science, she was cheerful, attractive, intellectual, and divorced, with a daughter. During his travels with her, they became intimate—something that was promptly learned by U.S. security and caused Brennan, who had many clearances, some difficulty later.

Brennan returned from the visit persuaded that the Russians had irrevocably decided to build an ABM and that, in any case, their position had some merit. He was the rare case in which a Western scientist was infected with Soviet ideas—normally the flow went quite in the other direction.<sup>[16]</sup>

Brennan and I later drifted apart as his support for the ABM grew. By 1966, however, we were still in reasonably close touch, and he urged me to seek out Nina Shakova on my trip, which I did. She lived in a one-room apartment with her daughter, Natasha, and her mother, whom we called Mama. It was against an old Stalinist law

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*Nina Shakova in the Kremlin  
in 1965*



*B.J. (center) with Nina's mother and Nina's  
daughter, Natasha, who became a mathematician*

to let foreigners see an apartment that did not have its own toilet and kitchen. But she let us visit at night, when the neighbors were out. We became very fond of the family. Their willingness to receive us and to tell us about Moscow life added a great deal to our visits.

With Nina, as with all other Russians we met, it seemed quite easy to determine who was working for the KGB, who was allied with them for privilege (such as travel abroad), and who was innocent of any desire to work with them. You could tell from their personalities and from what they said and how. Of course, anyone could be called in by the KGB, and all had to report to them—including high scientists. But some had been recruited, and others were just innocent bystanders. Shakova was innocent. For the most part, the KGB let her alone. The one time in our long association when our conversations indicated that they had called her in, she was badly frightened.<sup>17</sup>

### Anti-ABM Lectures at Dom Druzhbi

As far as lobbying against the ABM was concerned, however, Shakova could not help. Instead, I lectured twice on the ABM.

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Once was at the Institute for World Economy and International Relations (IMEMO), then on Yaroslavskaya Ulitsa, and headed by the academician N. N. Inozemtsov. It went well, but the audience was small in number and not very well informed. The second was at Dom Druzhbi (Friendship House), where the usual friendship organizations met. Well-dressed individuals who did not give their names—both characteristics made me feel they must be influential—convened, and I made my pitch. In particular, I gave them the following advice: “If you build an anti-ballistic missile system, we will build a much bigger one.” When asked why, I replied, “We are rich and not afraid to spend money.”

In fact, Emelyanov had returned from the Doty study-group meeting to write an article in the Soviet publication *New Times* that showed him expressing similar sentiments. He staunchly supported the Soviet line that defenses were good while quoting American strategists as saying, “If the whole thing is taken over by Big Business, arms spending will grow to monstrous proportions. . . . For it is a profitable business, and no capitalist is likely to forfeit his profits.”<sup>18</sup>

In Moscow, Emelyanov encouraged me to write an article in the English-language *Moscow News*;<sup>19</sup> in retrospect, I think he felt it would make me more “kosher” inside the Soviet system and help lay a political basis for our dialogue. I wrote a largely platitudinous piece about the importance of scientists speaking the truth to one another and not abusing their common trust—I wrote, “They must put this trust to work in the service of disarmament and arms limitations.”

A State Department political officer wrote to me on January 9, 1967, saying that my article was “something of an oddity for this journal,” inasmuch as the *Moscow News* rarely printed anything that diverged from the party line; he wanted to know whether they had changed anything. They had not.

Toward the end of my visit, at a meeting at the Academy of Sciences, Emelyanov mentioned that General Talensky had died and that it was a great loss for the academy’s arms-control group. Talensky, he said, had been their link to the Soviet Defense Ministry. B.J. and I

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decided to crash the funeral and took a taxi to the Red Army Club.

Attaching ourselves to the end of a long file of soldiers who were marching into the club to view the bier, we walked past a startled guard into the main room. Four friends of Talensky's, of whom one was Emelyanov, were standing guard around the coffin. Emelyanov looked startled but pleased as B.J. deposited the flowers on the coffin. In a quick look around, I saw at least two of the well-dressed men who had attended my Dom Druzhbi lecture.

Returning home in the privacy of the taxi, I burst, unaccountably, into tears. The poignancy of our representing Western arms controllers at the funeral of this well-intentioned general in the very heart of the enemy citadel overcame me.

Later, I received an unexpected appointment, requested earlier, with the famous arch-conservative *Pravda* editor, Yuri Zhukov. He turned out, in both physical and intellectual dimensions, to be a kind of Soviet Herman Kahn, a likeness that was confirmed when, in a cynical reference to my attendance at the funeral, he said, "You certainly have an ingenious way of getting appointments in Moscow."

Still, I was more and more convinced that my skills and personality were a key that could open some kind of Moscow lock. I was keenly aware, however, that the Soviet system, like a predatory male, enjoyed manipulating innocence.

I felt obliged, of course, to debrief someone about anything interesting that might happen during my trips. It had been reported, as a small part of a famous scandal of the day, that the CIA had threatened one of their sources with faked psychiatric documents, and I felt they played too rough for me.<sup>[20]</sup> I also considered it safer, all around, to be able to deny—on both sides of the Atlantic—that I had anything to do with *any* intelligence agencies in either country. Who knew when I or my wife might be picked up by the Soviet secret police and questioned or whatever. In the 1960s, travel in the Soviet Union was a rather unusual experience. So rather than get involved with the CIA, I chatted with officials of the Soviet desk of the State Department and some middle- to high-level friends in the Defense Department.