Waging “Protracted Conflict” Behind the Scenes

The Cold War Activism of Frank R. Barnett

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Introduction

Referring to the significant political impact of the anti-détente Committee on the Present Danger (CPD) in the late 1970s, Samuel Huntington observed, “When deep concern and deep knowledge are combined, they can be an important influence in the American policymaking process.”¹ During the Cold War, the idea that the West could not coexist with the Soviet Union and instead must “roll back” or “liberate” it, was initially popular in U.S. policymaking circles. However, by the early 1970s even the mainstream of U.S. conservatives had accepted the détente in U.S.-Soviet relations.² This article argues that the resurrection of hardline anti-Communism in the mid-to-late 1970s was directly related to an epistemic community that had developed over previous decades. Commentators often referred to this community as the “Soviet threat” or “Cold War” lobby, and it consisted of tough-minded experts in such fields

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². Francis H. Marlo, Planning Reagan’s War: Conservative Strategists and America’s Cold War Victory (Washington, DC: Potomac Books, 2012), pp. 37–70. For a brief discussion of Ronald Reagan’s “transformation” of U.S. Cold War strategy, at least prior to Mikhail Gorbachev’s rise to power, see John Lewis Gaddis, Strategies of Containment: A Critical Reappraisal of American National Security Policy during the Cold War, rev. ed. (New York: Oxford University Press, 2005), pp. 349–362. Gaddis depicts Reagan as being personally responsible for promoting a hardline worldview and downplays the CPD’s influence except on arms control (pp. 351–352). Gaddis’s analysis is flawed in two respects . First, the ideas he attributes to Reagan were hardly original and were not very different from the views held by other officials in the Reagan administration, most of whom were part of the same intellectual milieu. Thus, rather than crediting Reagan with these ideas, my analysis here examines the broader intellectual milieu of which he was a part. Second, the CPD may have focused on arms control, but one can scarcely disassociate their views on this issue from their broader ideological views and assumptions about the Soviet Union. This broader perspective was a prominent aspect of the hardline arguments they promoted.

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as U.S. national security policy, strategic studies, Soviet studies, and arms control. Moreover, the community extended well beyond the membership of the CPD and included an important international component. One of the key individuals responsible for creating and sustaining this community was Frank R. Barnett. Recognizing the limits of government-sponsored activities in prosecuting a more aggressive strategy to counter the Soviet Union, he sidestepped U.S. officialdom and created a parallel and less-constrained private network to engage in a “war of ideas” both at home and abroad. From the end of World War II to the demise of the Soviet Union, he took upon himself the crucial role of linking foundation money with ideas and building a network to transmit those ideas. Within the Cold Warrior “fraternity,” Barnett’s efforts were highly regarded, although thus far they have received little scholarly attention, particularly compared to the activities of the well-known CPD.  

The methodology Barnett developed for promoting an anti-Soviet agenda was qualitatively different from that of mainstream Cold Warriors. It was predicated, ironically, on Leninist ideas of cadre organization and the need for a generational outlook. Barnett set about developing networks and educational fora for policymakers, lawmakers, industrialists, reserve officers, and scholars. With the financial backing of private foundations, Barnett helped create the Institute for American Strategy (IAS) and later founded the National Strategy Information Center (NSIC). Unlike most think tanks and public policy institutes that aim to inform policymaking through their scholarly activities, IAS and NSIC were primarily designed to serve as focal points and clearing houses for waging the Cold War. Barnett used these institutions as a mechanism to shape public and elite discourse, including by supporting programs to educate the next generation of scholars in such fields as strategic studies and intelligence studies. Furthermore, he internationalized these activities, thus developing a global network of scholars and anti-Communist elites who would not only influence policy in their individual countries, but also provide a mutually supporting system across borders. Arguably the most notable achievement of this network was that it kept the ideology of hardline anti-Communism on the “back burner” during a period when the mainstream discourse of “peaceful coexistence” and “détente” prevailed. However, when political circumstances changed, particularly in the mid-to-late 1970s, this ideology made a comeback.

3. No study of Barnett has yet been attempted. Nor does he feature in any mainstream works on U.S. anti-Communism. At most, he is mentioned in passing or as a minor footnote. This lack of interest is, perhaps, as it should be, for Barnett did not seek high office and was content to operate mainly behind the scenes. Although often treated as a “star” by many of the most important officials in the country, he was relatively unknown outside elite circles.
Its revival would never have been feasible if Barnett had not helped to ensure its survival during the “wilderness years.”

The lack of attention to Barnett’s activities within the field of Cold War studies can probably be attributed to a more traditional reluctance of scholars to appreciate the importance of private-sector individuals and groups, as well as epistemic communities, in the making of foreign policy. In recent years, though, historians and political scientists have increasingly taken account of the role played by philanthropic foundations, think tanks, citizen groups, and “state-private” networks, and this article seeks to contribute to the emerging literature. Among the key points these scholars have highlighted is the crucial linkage between ideas and their transmission through epistemic communities. In some instances, a concept is already popular and therefore in a dominant position in the “marketplace of ideas.” In other instances, the idea must overcome opposition before it becomes respectable. The role of an epistemic community consisting of acknowledged experts on a given subject can be essential in transforming an idea from the margins to the mainstream of policymakers’ worldviews and discourse. When these experts are organized, well-funded, and have respectable outlets to express their views to an audience that is willing to listen, they can make a considerable political impact. Given Barnett’s integral role in providing the organization, funds, and respectable outlets for the Cold Warrior “fraternity,” a study of his activities can shed important light on how this group was able to attain such far-reaching influence on U.S. policy.

Although a good deal of scholarship addresses the role of informational, cultural, and other non-military activities employed to wage the Cold War, there are still important gaps in this literature, especially in its coverage of “state-private” networks. The existing literature tends to focus on the state’s manipulation of the private sector to realize its Cold War aims, rather than the other way around. Consequently, research in the field has not dealt much

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with private-sector efforts to mobilize, promote, and sustain national and international anti-Communist coalitions for the purpose of “rolling back” the Soviet “empire,” an objective that was distinctly at odds with the official policy of “containment” and “détente.”

One exception to this shortcoming in the literature has been the study of the CPD. Extant accounts of the CPD convey a misleading impression; namely, that the 1970s “growth industry” of publicizing the Soviet threat came out of thin air. But in fact one cannot appreciate the rise of the “hardline” epistemic community, of which the CPD was perhaps the most visible element, without taking into account the less visible Cold War activism of Barnett over the previous two decades. His activism was at least as important as the CPD’s efforts in promoting the anti-détente agenda, though the activities of the two were complementary rather than conflictual. The founding head of the CPD, Eugene Rostow, wrote that the new organization’s activities would be “comparable [to] if more limited” than Barnett’s activities. Such a characterization demonstrates the esteem in which Rostow held Barnett—a view shared by others in the community of Cold Warriors. Barnett’s impact as a promoter of an anti-Communist “hidden curriculum” in relation to both civilian and military education, although impossible to measure, is particularly noteworthy. The impact of a “hidden curriculum” is difficult to quantify, but this does not prevent it from being a legitimate subject of analysis. At the very least, the time, money, and effort expended in promoting this approach to the

7. Although the original CPD was prominent in the 1950s and then declined, the discussion of the CPD in this article refers only to the group that formed in the mid-1970s. For more information on both groups, see Jerry W. Sanders, Peddlers of Crisis: The Committee on the Present Danger and the Politics of Containment (Boston: South End Press, 1983). Unfortunately, Sanders’s account examines the CPD in isolation from other groups, particularly those that maintained the “hardline” discourse during the “wilderness years” of the 1960s through the mid-1970s. The same limitation is present in critical studies of the “Team B” controversy. See, for instance, Anne Hessing Cahn and John Prados, “Team B: The Trillion Dollar Experiment,” The Bulletin of the Atomic Scientists, April 1993, pp. 23–27. Another useful study of the backgrounds and influence of four hardliners prominent in the Reagan administration is Jay Winik, On the Brink: The Dramatic, Behind-the-Scenes Saga of the Reagan Era and the Men and Women Who Won the Cold War (New York: Simon & Schuster, 1996). However, Winik’s study fails to examine the broader intellectual milieu in which these individuals existed.

8. Rostow to Barnett, 1 June 1976, in Committee on the Present Danger (CPD) Papers, Box 284, Hoover Institute Archives (HIA), Stanford University, Stanford, CA; emphasis added.

9. Although there is no evidence that Barnett ever used the term “hidden curriculum,” its use here is deliberate. Scholars typically use this term in relation to the socializing and ideological impact of education, and it often refers specifically to classroom practices and relationships. Nevertheless, it is an appropriate term to use in relation to Barnett, and I use it here to describe how he facilitated funding for the teaching of topics such as “arms control,” “strategic studies,” and “intelligence studies” with the expectation that these subjects would promote a particular worldview, especially about threats and ways of countering them. The students, and possibly the teachers as well, were not necessarily aware of this agenda. For examples of how the term is used, see Fulya Damla Kentli, “Comparison of Hidden Curriculum Theories,” European Journal of Educational Studies, Vol. 1, No. 2 (June 2009), pp. 83–88.
communication of ideas demonstrates that those who sponsored it believed it had a major impact. The same was true of political figures who opposed the hardline agenda. They worried that the “hidden curriculum” would shape public policy, and they therefore were vocal in denouncing it.

This article provides an overview of Barnett’s activism and its impact on the development of an epistemic community of Cold Warriors. The article is divided into five sections. The first section examines Barnett’s background and highlights the origins of his thinking on the importance and organizational methods of waging a “war of ideas.” The second section discusses how Barnett refined his methods and approach in the 1950s and became a key figure in the Cold Warrior community, particularly after receiving philanthropic backing. This section also shows how Barnett formed a network of like-minded and respected hardliners, many of whom later became prominent in the 1970s anti-détente movement. Third, it investigates how Barnett played a crucial role in expanding and institutionalizing this network during the 1960s and early 1970s. The fourth section focuses on the important part he played in the 1970s in helping to undermine détente and his later efforts to support the Reagan administration. The final section discusses Barnett’s international activities, specifically his efforts to create a mutually supporting transnational network.

The Education of a Cold War Activist

A brief look at Barnett’s background is essential to set the stage for understanding his ideological motivation and the origins of the methodology he employed during the rest of his career to promote his Cold War views. Born in 1921 in Chillicothe, Ohio, Barnett began his career as a Cold War activist during the final days of World War II when he was serving as a corporal in the 69th Infantry Division. Because the U.S. Army had previously sent him to study Russian at Syracuse University, he served as an interpreter when his unit met up with the Soviet Army on the Elbe in 1945. During this period, Barnett was involved with the repatriation of Soviet prisoners who had been captured by the Germans. Many of these Soviet prisoners had begged to stay in the West, knowing that they would be harshly treated by the Soviet authorities if they returned to the USSR. As Barnett later recounted, the experience of sending many of these prisoners to certain death or imprisonment haunted him and helped to clarify the stakes of the Cold War.10

In 1945–1946, Barnett finished his military service and briefly served as a public information official attached to the staff of General Lucius Clay, who was then heading the U.S. occupation of Germany. A year later, Barnett moved to the United Kingdom as a Rhodes Scholar based at Oxford University. Most likely Oxford was where he became familiar with the works of Vladimir Lenin. Although Barnett had an aversion to Communism as a political ideology, he was impressed by how the ideology spread. The key lesson he derived was that for Lenin, Communism was not simply an idea or philosophy; more importantly, it was a “power technique” and a triumph of organization. In Barnett’s eyes, Lenin’s great achievement was the way the once exiled and unemployed lawyer, who was “confined to a rented room in Zurich,” was able to change the course of history. Lenin succeeded through a combination of organization and education, which required forming a “vanguard” of dedicated activists to spread and institutionalize Communist ideas. Throughout his later life as a Cold War activist, Barnett would regularly cite Lenin’s 1902 pamphlet *What Is to Be Done?* as a model on which anti-Communists could pattern their strategy. Indeed, the epistemic community of hardline anti-Communists that he would play a meaningful role in fostering over the next several decades took its cue from his reading of Lenin.

Following his stint at Oxford, Barnett returned to the United States in 1949 and became an assistant professor of English at Wabash College in Indiana. Although teaching was his main job, he also became involved in part-time work aiding refugees from Soviet-controlled areas. Through this work Barnett made initial contact with key figures in the burgeoning community of Cold Warriors. In 1951, Barnett was introduced to a former operative in the Office of Strategic Services (OSS), William Casey, who had gone on to work with the International Rescue Committee. Barnett also met former OSS head William “Wild Bill” Donovan. Both Casey and Donovan were working to support refugees and encourage defections from the Eastern bloc. Taking leave from Wabash College, Barnett helped Casey and Donovan found American Friends for Russian Freedom and became its executive director. This organization, which lasted for several years, aimed to get “Red Army personnel in Berlin and Vienna to desert, to get them papers, find them jobs, resettle them

13. Ibid., pp. 440–441, 455.
in the West, and make propaganda hay out of their defections.”

In 1951, Barnett produced a pamphlet titled *Cold War, Atomic War or Free Slavic Legion.* He distributed it to politicians in Washington such as Senator Henry Cabot Lodge and Congressman Charles J. Kersten. The pamphlet particularly impressed Kersten, who placed its entire text into the *Congressional Record.* In the pamphlet, Barnett called for the United States to establish military units of Iron Curtain refugees, which he dubbed the “Free Slavic Legion.” Consisting of approximately five divisions and headed at the staff level by U.S. commanders but with refugee line officers, this unit would be based in West Germany. In the event of war, the unit could be airlifted behind Soviet lines where it would be invaluable in the establishment and support of underground movements carrying on a guerrilla war against the Soviet Union. The “Free Slavic Legion” plan also called for U.S. recognition of the governments-in-exile of countries under Soviet control, the adoption of full-scale psychological warfare, and an end to all East-West negotiations.

Among the other recipients of Barnett’s pamphlet in the summer of 1951 were two New York investment bankers, Frank A. Willard and Clifford Roberts. Both were friends and golfing companions of General Dwight D. Eisenhower, who was then serving as Supreme Allied Commander Europe. Willard forwarded the pamphlet to Eisenhower. Shortly thereafter, Eisenhower replied: “It certainly looks to me like there is a great deal of sense in the

18. Barnett to Douglas, 8 February 1951, in Henry Cabot Lodge II Papers, Legislative Subject Files, Box 39, Massachusetts Historical Society.
19. At this time, Kersten successfully proposed an amendment to the Mutual Security Act of 1951 that allowed the expenditure of $100 million from the 1952 defense budget to aid the enlistment of escapers and refugees from Soviet-dominated countries “into elements of the military forces supporting the North Atlantic Treaty Organization or for other purposes when it is determined . . . that such assistance will contribute to the defense of the North Atlantic area.”
21. I have been unable to ascertain precisely how Barnett first came across Willard and Roberts. Most likely the connection derived either from one of Barnett’s acquaintances or possibly those of Donovan or Casey, both of whom were well connected socially.
whole idea if the practical problems implicit in it can be solved.”

Eisenhower subsequently sent the pamphlet to “officials in Washington who have to do with this kind of enterprise” and instructed his staff at the Supreme Headquarters Allied Powers Europe to study it. Among the “officials in Washington” with whom Eisenhower discussed Barnett’s plan was the deputy director of the Central Intelligence Agency (CIA), Allen Dulles, who agreed to discuss the plan with Barnett in person. Following a meeting with Dulles on 17 August, Barnett was instructed to prepare a memorandum for review by Gordon Gray, director of the Psychological Strategy Board.

In late September, Eisenhower wrote to Roberts, “I understand that Mr. Barnett has already been asked by Washington to submit a detailed memorandum for consideration by the officials in the Defense Department.” Although Eisenhower noted, “There have been quite a number of plans similar to that one advanced by Barnett,” he also observed, “I think it is always possible that he has a better idea than any other that has been advanced.” Eisenhower discussed Barnett’s proposal with Army Chief of Staff General Joseph Lawton Collins and Director of Central Intelligence Walter Bedell Smith. However, the feedback he received highlighted the political and practical complications inherent in Barnett’s proposal. Eisenhower asked Willard to convey to Barnett that, if any action was taken, it would have to be delayed for “at least the next six to eight months.” Yet Eisenhower also wanted to reassure Barnett that “I am having the staff here study the entire question of utilization of anti-Communist persons and groups.”

In the following years, Barnett maintained an ongoing dialogue on this issue with Dulles and other policymakers. These officials were ideologically

24. For a general overview of other U.S. efforts around this time to mobilize Iron Curtain defectors and refugees, see Lucas, Freedom’s War.
28. Barnett had discussed his proposal with Army Chief of Staff Collins before the latter’s departure for Europe to meet with Eisenhower in October. Collins explained that although he realized “the resistance potential of the proposed force, he believed that the US Army had no authority to recruit a foreign legion and that the task might better be the responsibility of NATO forces.” Ibid., p. 655.
29. Ibid.
sympathetic but were ultimately noncommittal. Although the ideas of Barnett and others about forming a military unit consisting of refugees came to the fore during the Eisenhower administration and later be referred to as the “Volunteer Freedom Corps,” they were never put into practice. Even so, Barnett’s early Cold War activities in this area make clear that he was able to communicate his ideas directly to senior policymakers despite being an unknown junior professor from a Midwestern college. Perhaps more importantly, the connections he developed with senior officials, as well as his growing reputation within the Cold Warrior community, were crucial to his subsequent efforts to expand exponentially his anti-Soviet activities from a relatively small focus on assisting Soviet émigrés to the waging of a full-blown “war of ideas.”

**Forming a Vanguard**

Not until the mid-1950s did Barnett have his first major opportunity to put into action some of his earlier Leninist concepts about achieving political change. At this time, Barnett was introduced to H. Smith Richardson, Sr., whose family ran the philanthropic Richardson Foundation (later Smith Richardson). The two of them shared similar views about the nature of the Soviet threat, and Barnett persuaded Richardson of the political impact foundation funding could have in promoting these views on a national scale. Impressed by Barnett’s ideas, Richardson appointed him the foundation’s research director in 1955.

As research director, with access to considerable funding, Barnett was ideally placed to promote his ideas about the Cold War, mainly through the channeling of subsidies to like-minded individuals and groups. The key idea Barnett was propagating at this time was the need to wage “political warfare” against the Soviet Union. Apart from efforts to raise awareness about the Soviet threat specifically, Barnett advocated the study of geopolitics and strategy more generally. In his view, studying these subjects would cultivate a mindset inclined toward competition with the Soviet Union and would encourage individuals to enter government service, where they could have an influence on policy. Another key theme Barnett promoted was the need for bipartisan consensus.

30. Barnett to Dulles, 21 April 1952; Dulles to Barnes, 30 April 1952; and Barnett to Dulles, 14 December 1953, in CIA Records Search Tool (CREST), National Archives II, College Park, MD.
He felt that McCarthyism and the increasingly polarized politics of the period undermined the U.S. position on the international stage. As such, waging the Cold War more effectively meant promoting a non-partisan environment in which U.S. citizens in the political mainstream could engage in a dialogue about national strategy and have “rational” discussions about Communism.33

Although Barnett worked for Richardson, he found the philanthropist’s views to be simplistic. To secure funding from Richardson, he would advise his preferred grant applicants on the best means to demonstrate the value of their work.34 Two key relationships he developed during this period became increasingly important in the ensuing decades. The first was with William Kintner and Robert Strausz-Hupe of the Foreign Policy Research Institute (FPRI).35 Barnett was able to supply funding for FPRI, and the think tank generated ideas on how to wage the Cold War, which he then assisted in disseminating.36 Barnett and Strausz-Hupe held similar ideas, most notably their views of Communism as a doctrine and technique of conflict and the necessity for professional revolutionaries to be in the “vanguard.”37 They also agreed on the need for a geopolitically informed government strategy and on the requirement for geopolitics to be part of the educational curricula for military personnel. Shortly after FPRI’s founding, and with the support of the Richardson Foundation, the institute began a study of the concept of “protracted conflict.” In 1959, the completed study was published as a book of the same name. As Strausz-Hupe states in the book’s preface: “It is to be hoped that this book will help establish a conceptual consensus among American policymaking groups and opinion elites on the protean nature of the Communist challenge.”38 Subsequently, the book was used as a key text in the seminars Barnett helped to organize in the years ahead.

The second key relationship was with R. Daniel McMichael, later an aide to the conservative philanthropist Richard Mellon Scaife. Barnett and McMichael first met in 1955 while collaborating on a three-day National

33. Ibid.
34. Barnett to Kintner, 10 October 1960, in William R. Kintner (WRK) Papers, Box 67, Folder 5, HIA.
35. FPRI was founded in early 1955 and based at the University of Pennsylvania. Other FPRI staff and associates with whom Barnett developed relationships included Stefan Possony and Robert Pfaltzgraff.
37. Pfaltzgraff, interview.
Military-Industrial Conference (NMIC) in Chicago.\(^{39}\) The annual NMIC meetings, which began that year and lasted until 1961, attracted roughly 1,000 “military officials, representatives of federal agencies, executives from defense corporations, scientists, strategic intellectuals, spokesmen for conservative foundations, publishers, and veterans groups.”\(^{40}\) Rather than concentrate on military-technical issues, Barnett persuaded the conference organizers to focus the agenda on “geopolitics, defense, and policy imperatives concerning the Cold War.”\(^{41}\) Impressed by Barnett’s ability as an activist, McMichael was eager to join forces with him, and the two became close friends.\(^{42}\) Through McMichael, Barnett developed long-standing links with the Scaife Foundation. Dulles approved CIA officials to attend the NMIC meetings and in September 1960 sought Barnett’s help to assist with promoting anti-Communism in the U.S. education system. Such was the close social and ideological relationship they developed over the preceding years that Barnett ensured that Dulles’s proposal became the topic of the April 1961 conference.\(^{43}\)

One of the byproducts of the NMIC was an agreement by its organizers to implement plans for a “permanent year-round program” to “awaken the public to the all-encompassing nature of the Soviet Communist challenge.”\(^{44}\) This effort to engage the public was achieved, in part, through the setting up of an institute or, as Barnett described it, a “traveling civilian war college.”\(^{45}\) In 1958, Barnett helped create the IAS and served as its programs director. The primary means of IAS engagement with the public was by conducting seminars on Cold War topics around the country. Whereas the work of the FPRI formed the intellectual basis for Barnett’s anti-Communist message, the IAS, through the organization of meetings and seminars, acted as a means to

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42. McMichael, interview.
43. Dulles to Barnett, 21 September 1960; Barnett to Dulles, 8 February 1961; Dulles to Barnett, 25 February 1961; Dulles to Barnett, 13 July 1961; and Barnett to Dulles, 10 July 1961. Evidence of Barnett’s relationship to Dulles prior to this period can be found in Barnett to Dulles, 13 December 1957; Dulles to Barnett, 8 February 1958; Barnett to Dulles, 15 January 1958; and Dulles to Barnett, 20 March 1959. Each of these letters is available in CIA, CREST.
communicate this message to the public. As Barnett later noted: “The rather passive business of conducting seminars, studying strategy, and steeping the mind in the operational techniques of communism may strike some practical men of affairs as a waste of time. Yet effective action does flow from doctrine, doctrine so thoroughly absorbed that it guides the intuition and governs the reflex of statecraft.” The IAS also had an important capacity-building function, providing materials and support to regional organizations as well as advice on how to fundraise locally and spread the message.

Over the next several years, the IAS emerged as a leading anti-Communist organization with high-profile connections in both the public and private sector. For instance, in July 1960, the IAS held a meeting in Washington, DC, to discuss its future activities. The key theme discussed was how best to promote the notion that U.S. Cold War strategy had to be offensive rather than defensive. The meeting’s list of participants is notable. In addition to Barnett and other senior IAS and FPRI members, they included senior officials in the military, State Department, and Federal Bureau of Investigation (FBI). The minutes of the meeting make clear that all participants shared a hardline outlook. The only issue being debated was the most effective means of promoting their message.

Throughout this period, Barnett urged the establishment of a “Cold War University” to train business executives, educators, politicians, and military personnel in techniques appropriate to wage the Cold War. Despite the lack of any official interest in this idea, Barnett nonetheless came close to putting it into practice. An important milestone in his career as a Cold War activist, and one that gained him some public notoriety, came in the late 1950s, when he persuaded the U.S. military to create a two-week course at the National War College for Reserve and National Guard officers. This was made possible by a National Security Council (NSC) directive issued in early 1958 stating that

47. Barnett in Hahn and Neff, eds., American Strategy for the Nuclear Age, p. 454.
48. Barnett to Chamberlain, 7 November 1960, in WRK Papers, Box 67, Folder 5, HIA.
U.S. government policy was “to make use of military personnel and facilities to arouse the public to the menace of Communism.”

Among the contacts Barnett had developed was Rear Admiral William Mott. In 1958, Mott introduced Barnett to the U.S. chief of naval operations, Admiral Arleigh Burke. This introduction was the start of a long-term partnership between the two. In May 1958, Burke created an advisory panel, the purpose of which was to stimulate ideas about raising awareness within the Navy about the Cold War. Burke’s panel recommended that naval officers pattern their public statements on Barnett’s speeches. In September, Barnett discussed with Burke the possibility of using the facilities of the National War College, which closed its doors during the summer, to run a Cold War seminar in a format similar to the one used for the NMIC. Barnett argued that the 25,000 Reserve and National Guard officers who in civilian life were educators, lawyers, media professionals, advertising and public relations executives, business and labor leaders, and members of local or state governments, represented an ideal source for disseminating Cold War ideas throughout the United States.

The topics Barnett wanted the officers to cover as part of a two-week cram course included Soviet grand strategy; the military balance in Europe and the Pacific; the geopolitics of the Middle East; Leninist tactics in insurgency, disinformation and ideological warfare, and the theory and practice of arms control. Following the course, the officers would be encouraged to return home and lecture, write, debate in civic forums, and organize local seminars on international security topics for civilian groups. The audience Barnett principally sought to influence and mobilize through these seminars was what he referred to as the “gray area.” This audience consisted of intelligent and reasonable laymen in the political mainstream who were not “literate” about national security affairs. Admiral Burke noted the basic purpose of the two-week summer course would be “to train cadres of citizen-soldiers who are active in civic and public affairs and who can, through their positions in civilian life, help create a resolute national climate of opinion. . . . This will strengthen

51. This memorandum and related correspondence can be found in the Congressional Record—Senate, 2 August 1961, pp. 14,433–14,439.
52. In 1960, Mott became the Navy’s judge advocate general.
55. McMichael, interview.
national defense programs and bolster the national will to resist communist peace and propaganda stratagems."\(^56\)

Because the U.S. military had not appropriated funds for this activity, Barnett and the Richardson Foundation offered to cover the expenses. To teach the course, known as the “Defense Strategy Seminar,” Barnett turned to the FPRI for assistance.\(^57\) The course was initially based on Strausz-Hupé’s *Protracted Conflict*, though a separate book was developed by the IAS and FPRI titled *American Strategy for the Nuclear Age*.\(^58\) This publication was to serve as a textbook that would give seminar participants background readings in geopolitics, propaganda analysis, Communist ideology, and history.\(^59\) It also included a final chapter written by Barnett titled “What Is to Be Done?” in which he laid out a program of action for engaging in “political warfare.”\(^60\) Apart from the FPRI staff, lectures were given by well-known personalities in the national security field such as Dean Acheson, Henry Kissinger, Maxwell Taylor, and Dulles. The first seminar, held in July 1959, was attended by “218 reserve officers (representing all branches of the armed services as well as the 50 states and Puerto Rico), 2 governors, 3 congressmen, 70 educators, and over 40 members of the media from newspapers, radio and television.”\(^61\) Among the officers with whom Barnett became acquainted through these seminars was John Marsh, then a National Guard officer and later Army Secretary under President Ronald Reagan. Barnett also developed a close association with Brigadier General Donald Armstrong, the summer school commandant of the war college.\(^62\)

The National War College seminars quickly expanded into a series of local seminars IAS organized throughout the country, of which more than 25 were held by 1961.\(^63\) As part of the IAS effort to “spread the word,” the institute distributed some 10,000 copies of *American Strategy for the Nuclear Age* to

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57. This course was later renamed the “National Strategy Seminar.”
61. Ibid., xviii.
62. Pfaltzgraff, interview.
63. For instance, seminars were organized in New York, Cleveland, New Orleans, and Wilmington, North Carolina, as well as in California, Massachusetts, Texas, and Washington, DC. See Lyons and Morton, “School for Strategy,” p. 103. According to Barnett, “During these two-day Seminars (usually on Friday and Saturday) six to eight experts analyze the threat we face from world communism, counterstrategies for the US are discussed by a panel and from the floor. Proposals for civic education,
public school libraries and debate groups throughout the country. Barnett also became a “frequent lecturer to the National War College, Industrial College of the Armed Forces, the Army and Naval war colleges . . . the National Association of Manufacturers, and the Reserve Officers Association.”64 Much as he had influenced the NMIC agenda, Barnett pushed the National Association of Manufacturers away from industry-centered discussions at their meetings in favor of Cold War topics.65

A key theme of Barnett’s lectures was the need to avoid domestic infighting. He was quoted as arguing that “only communists gain by Americans libelling each other as ‘pinkos’ and ‘appeasers.’”66 Nevertheless, one of the key problems that emerged with the National War College seminars was that they occurred against the backdrop of increasing fears that far-right groups such as the John Birch Society were attempting to indoctrinate the U.S. military with their “extreme” views. In July 1961, Senator J. William Fulbright sent a memorandum to President John F. Kennedy and Defense Secretary Robert S. McNamara titled “Propaganda Activities of Military Personnel Directed at the Public.” Fulbright singled out the activities of the IAS and FPRI in his criticism, warning that their activities and their “particularly aggressive view” of Communism might seriously hinder domestic and foreign policies. Moreover, he complained, “Basic material . . . under the title of American Strategy for the Nuclear Age, prepared and disseminated by private organizations with close military connections . . . can be said to be contrary to the President’s program.”67 Fulbright’s memorandum was leaked to the press and put the spotlight on Barnett as the guiding force behind the seminars.68

Even though Fulbright looked dimly on Barnett’s educational activities, several important voices spoke up in his defense. Among these was a Life Magazine editorial, reportedly written by C. D. Jackson, the magazine’s editor and a former Eisenhower administration official responsible for managing U.S. “psychological warfare.” The editorial stated,

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65. McMichael, interview.
If Barnett’s brand of anti-Communism were as dangerous as Fulbright seems to fear we would be lost indeed. But the opposite is the case. The danger is rather that because crackpots and witch-hunters are often found in and around the anti-Communist movement, all attempts to study and fight the Cold War will be lumped together and opposed en bloc by faculty club liberals who don’t like warriors of any kind, hot or cold.  

Likewise, although the FPRI was “lumped together” with the anti-Communist political right, the Harvard sociologist Daniel Bell observed: “The Strausz-Hupé group is neither part of, nor should it be identified with, the lunatic fringes of the right. Its arguments are serious and subject to the debate and rival assessments of other scholars.”

After receiving Fulbright’s memorandum, McNamara appointed a committee to investigate his complaints about troop information programs and anti-Communist indoctrination. Curiously, the committee members McNamara selected to investigate this issue were mostly hardliners and included several of Barnett’s acquaintances. Among these was the committee’s head, Karl Bendetsen, a former undersecretary of the Army, who later served on the board of NSIC. Burke and Dulles also served on the committee. In the aftermath of the controversy, both the IAS and FPRI were barred from involvement with the seminars, at least from an institutional perspective, and the war college even went so far as to remove *Protracted Conflict* from the syllabus. Nevertheless, links with individuals working for the IAS and FPRI remained intact, and Barnett continued to be a member of the seminar faculty until 1967.

**Developing an Epistemic Community**

Despite the setback with the summer seminars, Barnett continued to pursue ways of encouraging voluntary partnerships between the armed forces and
the private sector, and of disseminating his anti-Communist agenda.\textsuperscript{73} During the latter period in which Barnett was organizing the war college seminars, he decided to institutionalize his connections with like-minded officers by forming the League to Save Carthage. This group initially consisted of several of the alumni from the 1959 seminar. The reference to Carthage derived from General Armstrong, a classics enthusiast who later wrote a book about the Third Punic War replete with numerous Cold War themes.\textsuperscript{74} Described as both “whimsical” and a “classic case history of voluntary civil-military partnership,” the League to Save Carthage eventually consisted of nearly 100 individuals.\textsuperscript{75} Approximately once every twelve to eighteen months the group convened for a few days in a workshop to receive expert briefings, discuss changes in Soviet strategy and tactics, and devise practical ways to counter them.\textsuperscript{76} One of the League’s members, David Abshire, referred to it as “an eclectic ad-hoc group of leading citizens” who consulted with each other on Cold War issues.\textsuperscript{77} Barnett, who was known as “Hamilcar,” headed the League, which in effect meant organizing the meetings at his own initiative. League members, all known as “field marshals,” included Abshire, Burke, Scaife, McMichael, Marsh, Casey, and numerous other prominent individuals, the majority of whom were from the United States, although the League also consisted of some ten foreigners.\textsuperscript{78} According to Barnett, the League’s membership included

Liberal conservatives and conservative liberals… The League takes no position on internal social, religious, economic, tax or welfare policies. It seeks only to enlist Republicans and Democrats, Tories and Social Democrats (and their like),

\textsuperscript{73} See, for instance, Barnett, “A Proposal for Political Warfare,” p. 3.
\textsuperscript{74} Donald Armstrong, \textit{The Reluctant Warrior} (New York: Krowell Publishing, 1966). In the book’s preface, Armstrong states, “The Roman pattern of conquest has a startling relevance for our own time. For more than forty years prior to the final conflict, Rome conducted a cold war that weakened Carthage materially and spiritually. This cold war included all the tactics used today by Communist nations against the Free World: proxy warfare, terror, blackmail, psychological warfare, deception, subversion, and propaganda.” Admiral Burke wrote the book’s introduction, in which he noted, “General Armstrong is apparently the first student of the Punic Wars to observe Rome’s employment against Carthage of every cold war device, from a proxy power to propaganda and psychological warfare, all of which we seem to consider modern communist inventions. His book is the first to analyze Rome’s strategy of the indirect approach in this ancient example of unconventional warfare.”
\textsuperscript{75} “The League to Save Carthage,” April 1988, in McMichael private collection.
\textsuperscript{76} Barnett to Casey, 3 March 1967; Barnett to Casey, 27 December 1963; Barnett to Casey, 2 March 1967; and Barnett to Casey, 25 August 1966; each of these letters can be found in William J. Casey (WJC) Papers, Box 79, Folder 10, HIA.
The Cold War Activism of Frank R. Barnett

Catholics, Jews, Protestants and agnostics . . . to stand shoulder to shoulder against the expansion and barbarism of the Gulag Archipelago.79

The League remained in existence through the end of the Cold War. Through it, Barnett introduced Abshire and Burke to Charles Ford of T. Mellon & Sons and McMichael of the Scaife Foundation to provide the start-up funds in 1962 for the Center for Strategic Studies at Georgetown University (later the Center for Strategic and International Studies, CSIS).80 Through the end of the Cold War, CSIS played an important role in promoting conservative views on U.S. foreign and defense policy, though by the 1990s it had become more centrist.

In addition to the “informal” League, Barnett was instrumental in institutionalizing his ideas within the U.S. legal profession. He helped to create, and served as the first director of, the American Bar Association (ABA) Standing Committee on Law and National Security. Because of the importance of Congress in creating and approving national security legislation and because large numbers of congressmen and their staffs were lawyers, Barnett believed that having members of the profession learn about national security affairs would likely shape their outlook in this area, ideally in such a way as to build a bipartisan consensus. In 1962, he brought together Lewis F. Powell, Jr. (later an associate justice on the U.S. Supreme Court), Chicago lawyer Morris I. Liebman, and Admiral Mott (then judge advocate general of the U.S. Navy), to lobby for the creation of a standing committee. Each of these individuals shared a belief in “the important role members of the legal profession could play in educating the nation about the competing values involved” in the Cold War.81 In 1963, Barnett and his associates successfully made their case before the ABA House of Delegates, and the standing committee was subsequently formed.82 In the aftermath of its formation, the committee had an “impact from high school classrooms and college campuses to boardrooms and the halls of government.”83

Barnett’s most important legacy, the NSIC, was also created during this period. He resigned his post at the IAS on the grounds that it had become

82. Ibid.
too extreme and was therefore undermining efforts to attract mainstream anti-Communists from across the political spectrum.\textsuperscript{84} In 1962, he turned his attention to setting up a non-profit corporation that would serve as a “catalogue” and “clearinghouse” for “materials on national defense and the nature of the challenge from the Sino-Soviet Axis.”\textsuperscript{85} The key audiences for these books, films, and other materials were “inquiring educators, lawyers, reserve officers and the general public.”\textsuperscript{86} Barnett noted that prominent individuals had been “turned off by extremists who discredit the struggle against communist aggression,” but “if these leaders can be provided with a scholarly, non-partisan analysis, I am sure they will do their part to strengthen national will in the face of pressures for massive disengagement, unilateral disarmament and/or a new isolationism.”\textsuperscript{87}

Upon being established, the New York City–based NSIC was officially described as a tax-exempt institution organized to conduct educational programs on national defense. Its board consisted of many of Barnett’s long-standing associates, including Casey, Joseph Coors, and Frank Shakespeare. Like the IAS, NSIC received its funding from a conservative philanthropist, though this time through the Scaife family instead of the Richardson Foundation. By all accounts, Barnett enjoyed the complete confidence of Richard Scaife. Having access to large amounts of foundation money allowed Barnett to channel financial resources via NSIC into areas he deemed important. Contrasting Barnett’s approach to NSIC with his own management of CSIS, Abshire observed: “Whereas I was more oriented toward trying to shape the Congress and the presidency, he was the outside man to develop strategic consensus with colleges, universities, lawyers, and other professionals.”\textsuperscript{88}

NSIC was mainly involved in shaping public policy through its educational activities, particularly its Defense Strategy Seminar series.\textsuperscript{89} In Barnett’s view, students trained in the discipline of national security studies “would quickly gravitate to Washington to serve as aides to Senators and Congressmen; others become media specialists in defense matters.” Moreover, they

\begin{itemize}
\item \textsuperscript{84} Barnett to Fisher, 17 January 1963, in WRK Papers, Box 68, Folder 1, HIA.
\item \textsuperscript{85} Barnett to Kintner, 28 August 1962, in WRK Papers, Box 68, Folder 1, HIA.
\item \textsuperscript{86} Ibid.
\item \textsuperscript{87} Barnett to Kintner, 22 June 1962, in WRK Papers, Box 68, Folder 1, HIA.
\item \textsuperscript{88} Abshire, “Winning the Cold War.”
\item \textsuperscript{89} As Barnett noted in 1982, “We organize, in Washington, DC, a Defense Strategy Forum six times a year—for about 250 executives from the Pentagon, defense aides on Capitol Hill, journalists and aerospace industry types. Previous speakers have included Gene Rostow, Secretary of the Army Jack Marsh, John Lehman, Bing West, and Admiral Tom Moorer.” See Barnett to O’Neill, 18 August 1982, in Liddell Hart Centre for Military Archives (LHCMA), Menaul 9/84.
\end{itemize}
would “offer some balance in the public debate with . . . ‘pacifist and unilateral disarmament’ academics.”90 As one U.S. military officer put it, NSIC “is involved in a variety of activities designed to influence public opinion through the intellectual elite that leads the way.”91 Building on the model and contacts Barnett had developed earlier, educational programs for both civilian and military audiences were a core feature of NSIC’s activities. For instance, in the late 1960s, to counterbalance the anti-Reserve Officers’ Training Corps (ROTC) movements that had sprung up on many campuses in response to the Vietnam War, NSIC helped fund and organize the ROTC Enrichment Program. This program entailed paying guest lecturers to give talks to ROTC instructors and cadets. During this period Barnett also worked with universities across the United States to sponsor summer institutes in comparative politics for high school teachers.92

One of the key relationships Barnett developed was with New York University (NYU) professor Frank Trager, who also became NSIC’s head of studies. In the late 1960s, Barnett and Trager developed the National Security Education Program at NYU, a summer seminar for teaching about national security. As part of this program, a series of conferences were sponsored “for college and university faculty members interested in the teaching of national security, defense policy, civil-military relations, defense economics, and related areas.”93 One of the aims of these seminars was to coordinate the efforts of “scattered scholars in the field of strategy.”94 Faculty included senior officials, retired generals, and numerous well-known academics in the field, such as Klaus Knorr, Fred Sondermann, and Bernard Brodie, as well as junior academics such as Paul Wolfowitz. These strategy seminars were then expanded into a series of Regional National Security Education conferences, such as the summer seminars held in Colorado and Chicago in the early 1970s.95 Textbooks were also

90. Frank R. Barnett, “Is There Any Further Need to Sustain University Education in Geopolitics, Defense and Military Affairs?” August 1990, in FRB Papers, HIA.
92. Barnett to Walters, 6 July 1973, in CIA CREST. In this letter Barnett states, “During the five years of the ROTC Enrichment Program, we commissioned 233 civilian professors to give 1,503 lectures to ROTC cadets on 201 campuses. . . . Finally our Strategy Papers were distributed to 500 campuses for use in upgrading the ROTC curriculum.” See also Michael S. Neiberg, ROTC and the Ideology of American Military Service (Cambridge, MA: Harvard University Press, 2000), pp. 142–144.
94. Pfaltzgraff, interview.
designed to provide readers with “an introductory course in national security affairs.”

**From the Margins to the Mainstream**

Political interest in pursuing a hardline anti-Communist agenda probably reached its low point in the early to mid-1970s because of a combination of the weariness caused by the Vietnam War, the perceived success of the Nixon administration’s détente with the Soviet Union, and the normalization of U.S. relations with China. Under such inauspicious circumstances it was highly unlikely that the epistemic community Barnett had helped to foster over the previous two decades could make any significant impact on U.S. policy. By the mid-to-late 1970s, however, the political environment shifted to one that was more accepting of taking a stronger stance against the Soviet Union. The epistemic community of anti-Communist hardliners was ready to exploit this shift, with Barnett playing a leading role.

In 1976, Barnett moved from New York to Washington, DC, to create a new NSIC office there. He envisaged the Washington office as allowing NSIC to “interact with officials, tutor congressional staffs and brief congress members, work with trade associations with an interest in defense,” and generate more public information.97 In a letter to Eugene Rostow, who was one of the lead figures responsible for setting up the CPD during that period, Barnett noted that NSIC “had been granted $1 million to ‘crank up’ an all-out effort to meet the current and growing threat from the USSR.”98 Rostow was impressed with the size and scale of Barnett’s activities relative to those envisaged for the CPD. In the following years, Barnett maintained a close relationship with CPD organizers such as Rostow and Charles Tyroler II, and was also a CPD member himself. NSIC sponsored many of the CPD’s members to give talks to elite audiences and published papers authored by them. In this way, NSIC played an important role in amplifying their common message.


97. Barnett to Rostow, 24 May 1976, in CPD Papers, Box 284, HIA.

98. Ibid. I have been unable to obtain any further details about this funding, such as its source, whether NSIC was paid $1 million as a lump sum, and so forth. As a subject for future research, addressing the issue of the funding of the anti-détente movement during this period would shed important new light on the backstory of the movement’s success.
Whereas the CPD’s activities were quite visible, NSIC opted for more low-key methods of spreading the same messages. Barnett’s center thus remained in the background, and the CPD attracted the limelight. Among the less-visible aspects of NSIC’s “all-out effort” was the influencing of Congress. Working with James E. Dornan, Jr., of Catholic University and John Tierney, executive director of the Congressional Caucus on National Defense in the U.S. House of Representatives, Barnett organized a lecture series beginning in 1976 for members of Congress and “senior staff members of the United States Senate and House of Representatives who have professional responsibilities in the area of U.S. national security policy.”

In typical fashion, Barnett was apolitical, seeking to convey the anti-détente agenda to Republicans and Democrats alike. An additional national security affairs textbook was produced based on these lectures. As for NSIC’s role in building up grassroots political support, the center created an “international labor program,” headed by Roy Godson, and worked closely with the American Federation of Teachers.

Throughout this period, the number of NSIC publications expanded considerably. In addition to the national security textbooks, NSIC produced two series of shorter topical publications known as “Strategy Papers” and “Agenda Papers.” The authors of these papers were well-known academics, both in the national security field and in Soviet studies. A consistent underlying theme to these publications was that from Moscow’s perspective détente was merely a means to an end rather than an end in itself. Thus, the USSR’s goal of “world domination” had not fundamentally changed. Another consistent theme was that the United States was falling behind the Soviet Union and that plausible “remedial steps” needed to be taken to reverse this trend. As such, the tone was one of concern rather than alarm, with the desired audience being the political “middle ground.”

Although their precise impact is difficult to determine, NSIC’s publications provided one of the few outlets available for hard-line experts to present their views to a policymaking audience. Furthermore,
Barnett’s ability to attract these experts further enhanced the respectability and importance of NSIC within the anti-détente milieu.

By the late 1970s, Barnett was involved in supporting Reagan’s election campaign. In the run-up to the election, Barnett was officially named one of Reagan’s defense policy advisers. In addition, he was a strong proponent of missile defense and served on a panel along with Edward Teller dealing with X-ray lasers, otherwise referred to as the “High Frontier Panel.” However, rather than become an active member of the Reagan administration, Barnett preferred to continue to work from behind the scenes, including in support of the administration’s public diplomacy efforts.

Throughout the 1980s, NSIC remained active in two key areas supporting the Reagan administration’s stepped-up efforts to confront the Soviet Union. First, NSIC supported efforts to resuscitate ideas on “low-intensity conflict” that had fallen out of favor within the U.S. military in the aftermath of Vietnam. Barnett’s friends and colleagues Casey and Marsh had been appointed director of central intelligence and Secretary of the Army respectively, thus giving NSIC the advantage of unique access to two of the key policymakers responsible for running clandestine and covert operations. Working with the National Defense University, NSIC cosponsored two important conferences and published the proceedings. The first conference focused on the topic of “special operations.” The second returned to Barnett’s long-standing interest in “political warfare.” Both conferences drew impressive crowds of senior civilian and military officials dealing with these subjects.

106. See, for instance, Raymond, Jr., to Clark, 25 September 1982; and Raymond, Jr., to Clark, 3 March 1983. Both memoranda are available via the Declassified Documents Reference System.
107. Many individuals associated with NSIC and the CPD took up senior posts in the Reagan administration. By one count, some 32 of the 182 members of the CPD served in the administration. See David Shribman, “Group Goes from Exile to Influence,” The New York Times, 23 November 1981, p. A20. While serving as director of central intelligence, Casey continued his correspondence with Barnett and took an interest in NSIC activities. See, for instance, Barnett to Casey, 5 August 1981; Casey to Barnett, 17 August 1981; Casey to Barnett, 27 October 1983; and Casey to Barnett, 9 March 1984; all in WJC Papers, Box 320, Folder 1, HIA.
A second major focus area for NSIC was in the field of intelligence studies. Hoping to reverse the trend in the 1970s when the intelligence community was rocked by scandals and criticism, NSIC sought to shift the U.S. debate on intelligence “away from issues of constraint, charters, legislation and accountability towards the issues of effectiveness, efficiency and capacity.” To this end, the Consortium for the Study of Intelligence was created within NSIC in 1979. Godson led a multiyear project that resulted in a multivolume study on Intelligence Requirements for the 1980s. This study had the dual purpose of trying to influence public policy as well as provide a “model syllabus” for the teaching of intelligence. An important part of the Consortium’s purpose was to promote education in this area. Apart from sponsoring seminars on intelligence pedagogy, the Consortium was also responsible for setting up the Intelligence Studies Section of the International Studies Association.

A Transnational Network

Much of the literature on anti-Communist groups outside the United States assumes that the U.S. government was their main sponsor. Although this was true for many such groups, particularly before the late 1960s and early 1970s, after which many of the CIA’s covert connections to them were exposed and subsequently abandoned, relatively little attention has been paid to the sponsorship role of U.S. private networks. Similarly, there has been little appreciation of the differences between government and private sponsorship. Whereas government sponsorship required these groups to have an agenda consistent with U.S. foreign policy, private sponsorship required them to have an agenda consistent with that of their private sponsors, who tended to be more politically hardline.

111. Shultz, interview.
112. As Arthur Hulnick observes, “Courses on intelligence are now [the early 1990s] being taught at dozens of colleges and universities. Most of these courses have been developed by academics who have either been connected with the intelligence system in some way, or who have received a boost by participating in the series sponsored by the Consortium for the Study of Intelligence.” See Arthur S. Hulnick, “Learning about U.S. intelligence: Difficult but Not Impossible,” International Journal of Intelligence and Counter-Intelligence, Vol. 5, No. 1 (Spring 1991), p. 96. See also Marjorie W. Cline, ed., Teaching Intelligence in the Mid-1980s (Washington, DC: National Intelligence Study Center, 1985).
113. For a recent study highlighting the importance of taking a transnational approach to the analysis of anti-Communist state-private networks during the Cold War, see Luc van Dongen, Stéphanie Roulin, and Giles Scott-Smith, eds., Transnational Anti-Communism and the Cold War: Agents, Activities, and Networks (Basingstoke, UK: Palgrave Macmillan, 2014).
As head of NSIC, Barnett regularly travelled abroad to give lectures and establish links with other Cold Warriors.114 During these travels, especially in Europe, he was often treated like a visiting dignitary.115 One of the reasons for this special treatment was that one of Barnett’s self-assigned jobs was to identify like-minded organizations in need of funding. As the Cold War progressed, many anti-Communist groups found themselves in increasingly dire financial straits. Thus, Barnett’s role was particularly important during this period given his access to large amounts of foundation money.

Perhaps the most important of Barnett’s international relationships was with Brian Crozier, an anti-Communist journalist who headed Forum World Features and was probably Barnett’s closest equivalent, at least in the United Kingdom.116 Barnett first met Crozier in Madrid in the late 1960s. Through Barnett’s connection with McMichael, Crozier was able to acquire the funds to set up the controversial Institute for the Study of Conflict (ISC) in London in 1970.117 NSIC also cosponsored the first of ISC’s *Annual of Power and Conflict* series.118 After Crozier’s resignation from the ISC in 1979, Barnett maintained a close relationship with his successor, Michael Goodwin.119 Barnett’s other key UK contacts included former Air Vice-Marshal Stewart “Paddy” Menaul, head of the Royal United Services Institute from 1968 to 1976; Admiral Sir Louis Le Bailly, former director general of intelligence at the British Ministry of Defence

114. According to one account: “At least once a year, Barnett visits with statesmen, scholars and defense officials in Europe. He has lectured to the NATO Defense College in Paris and to similar institutes as far apart as Taiwan, Panama, and Great Britain. He regularly attends the European-based seminars of the Institute for Strategic Studies in London and INTERDOC in the Hague. This year he will be helping to produce a film on NATO for US and European television. . . . Barnett also lectures at annual conventions of the U.S. Chamber of Commerce, the Young Presidents Association, the NAM, the Reserve Officers Association, and the International Association of Insurance Counsel.” “PB Atlantic Will Dedicate American Studies Institute,” *Palm Beach Daily News*, 14 March 1970, p. 1.

115. Although Barnett’s main contacts were in Europe, he was also concerned with Pacific security issues. For instance, he developed close links with Jun Tsunoda, then director of the Japanese Center for Strategic Studies. During his UK visits, Barnett often met many Conservative politicians, former military and intelligence officers, and businessmen. Typically, these meetings were set up by former Air Vice-Marshall Paddy Menaul. Details of the meetings can be found in Menaul’s files at the Liddell Hart Centre for Military Archives at King’s College, London.

116. Forum World Features was a CIA-funded propaganda operation working under the cover of a commercial news service.


and later ISC vice chairman; and Geoffrey Stewart-Smith, a Conservative politician who founded the Foreign Affairs Research Institute.\textsuperscript{120}

Although Barnett made numerous trips to the UK to give lectures, his work as an organizer of international strategy conferences is what stands out as his main achievement. Barnett used his long list of European contacts to build personal and institutional bonds across the Atlantic and to advocate on behalf of a strong North Atlantic Treaty Organization (NATO). He also helped to sponsor and organize transnational conferences that extended beyond Europe. His objective was to create a consensus on anti-Communist strategy among a global network of “Cold Warriors,” especially those who were active in strategic studies or who headed foreign policy institutes.

The first major conference Barnett helped organize was held in Winchester in November 1976. Participants included the Supreme Allied Commander Europe, General Alexander Haig, and Strausz-Hupé, then U.S. ambassador to NATO.\textsuperscript{121} The second conference, on “NATO and the Global Threat,” was held in Brighton in June 1978 and included delegates from twenty countries.\textsuperscript{122} The most important and high-profile of these conferences was the Annual World Balance of Power series he organized with Stewart-Smith. Held at Leeds Castle, the first of these conferences took place in July 1980 and was considered a pilot conference for those to follow.\textsuperscript{123} Stewart-Smith remarked that the purpose of the conference was “to establish whether or not one could get a group of Americans, Europeans and Japanese to agree on a core of common thinking” regarding the Cold War.\textsuperscript{124} Over the next several years, additional conferences were held at Leeds Castle, though with a more global list of participants.\textsuperscript{125} The conference series had the endorsement of Reagan, British Prime Minister Margaret Thatcher, and NATO Secretary General Joseph Luns, all of whom wrote short letters in support of it. However, even

\begin{itemize}
\item \textsuperscript{120} Whether Barnett and Stewart-Smith had met each other as of the mid-1960s is unclear. However, the latter quotes the former in his 1966 book. See Geoffrey Stewart-Smith, \textit{No Vision Here: Non-Military Warfare in Britain} (Petersham, UK: FAPC, 1966), pp. 4, 116.
\item \textsuperscript{121} Barnett to Menaul, 28 July 1977, in LHCMA, Menaul 11/110/4.
\item \textsuperscript{122} Barnett to Haig, 26 January 1979, in LHCMA, Menaul 11/110/4.
\item \textsuperscript{123} The proceedings from this first conference can be found in Geoffrey Stewart-Smith, ed., \textit{Towards a Grand Strategy for Global Freedom} (Richmond, UK: Foreign Affairs Publishing, 1981).
\item \textsuperscript{124} Stewart-Smith to Barnett, 7 October 1981, in LHCMA Menaul 11/110/8.
\item \textsuperscript{125} “The aim of this conference is to consider and develop a global response by the nations of the non-Communist world to the growth of Soviet military might, political warfare, and subversion. . . . Participants shall be Ministers, Ambassadors, High Commissioners, heads of strategic studies institutes, professional strategists, defence analysts and financial sponsors. The numbers shall be limited to 90 and will be invited from some 30 countries.” Geoffrey Stewart-Smith, “Second Annual World Balance of Power Conference: A Description of Purpose,” December 1981, in LHCMA, Menaul 11/110/8.
\end{itemize}
though the conference was no doubt useful in bringing like-minded individuals together, which for Barnett was probably its main achievement, Stewart-Smith came away somewhat disappointed. He had originally hoped that one of the “deliverables” would be a strategy document, like NSC-68 but global in scope, that would serve to guide a renewed anti-Soviet strategy in the 1980s. Such a document failed to materialize, however.

In addition to his relationships in Britain, Barnett had numerous dealings with like-minded groups in continental Europe. From at least the mid-1960s on, he maintained contact with former Dutch intelligence official Cees van den Heuvel, head of the International Information and Documentation Center (Interdoc). The purpose of Interdoc was “to increase the level of understanding of communist doctrine and practice by stimulating and making available well-researched information on the policies and realities of the Soviet bloc.”

In addition to providing research publications, Interdoc was also involved in training intelligence analysts and sponsoring academic conferences. Though initially a Western European project sponsored by West Germany, the Netherlands, and France, its sponsors had cut off funding by the mid-1960s. Barnett served as an intermediary helping van den Heuvel secure new financial support from the U.S. private sector. However, important ideological differences between Barnett and van den Heuvel ensured that their relationship, though cordial, was not optimal. Whereas Interdoc sought to engage with the Soviet bloc as a way to spread Western ideas, Barnett viewed any interaction with the “enemy” in negative terms.

Throughout the 1980s, Barnett continued his efforts to build international coalitions to “challenge both the Soviet Empire’s military threat and ideological weaponry across the whole spectrum of public opinion.” These efforts included fundraising for pro-NATO and anti-Soviet groups in Europe. Barnett also developed and sponsored a seminar series based in West Germany modeled on the seminars NSIC held in the United States. In November 1980, Barnett and Werner Kaltefleiter of Christian-Albrechts University in Kiel created an annual summer course for up-and-coming students of strategy.


128. Barnett to Casey, 3 February 1984, in WJC Papers, Box 320, Folder 1, HIA.

129. Barnett to Casey, 11 August 1982, in WJC Papers, Box 320, Folder 1, HIA.
Each summer course, known as the “International Summer Course on National Security,” consisted of “future opinion leaders” from about 30 countries. Topics included the “global Soviet threat” and “communist subversion.” The course was mainly funded through NSIC and continue beyond the end of the Cold War, by which time Barnett was eager to invite students from former Soviet-bloc countries to participate.130

**Conclusion**

On the evening of 15 December 1982, a celebration was held at the International Club in Washington to celebrate NSIC’s twentieth anniversary and to honor Barnett, its president. The guests consisted of a “who’s who” of the U.S. national security community, the conservative foreign policy establishment, and well-known Cold Warriors. Sitting at Barnett’s table were Casey, Marsh, Under Secretary of Defense for Policy Fred Iklé, Prescott Bush, Jr., and McMichael.131 Although this gathering of notables was relatively inconsequential, it nevertheless probably represented the pinnacle of Barnett’s career as a Cold War activist and reflected the important position NSIC held within this community. That Barnett was not well-known outside this community is hardly surprising given his preference for working behind the scenes. Rather than seeking a high-profile position to shape public policy, Barnett was content to serve as a focal point and organizer of networks of like-minded policymakers, scholars, and philanthropists. Thus, knowledge of his activities was limited to an elite audience, with the consequence that those activities have heretofore received little scholarly attention.

Even if Barnett’s views on the nature of the Soviet threat were hardly original, his approach to Cold War activism most certainly was. Yet, his achievements can be properly appreciated only in the context of the wider epistemic community he helped to create and sustain, and their instrumental role in generating and disseminating ideas. Perhaps the key difficulty lies in trying to assess or quantify the impact of an epistemic community and the individuals who compose it. In the case of Barnett, this is most certainly a difficult task,


131. Notes from the dinner, in LHCMA, Menaul Papers, 9/83/1.
even though he attempted such assessments himself, regularly citing the output (seminars, publications, etc.) of the institutions he headed. However, whereas “capacity building” can to some degree be assessed in quantitative terms, it is essential to consider qualitative factors that are more difficult to measure. As Barnett himself observed, the vast majority of the day-to-day work associated with waging a “war of ideas” was rather banal and seemed to achieve little, at least in the short term. Instead, assessing the long-term impact of Barnett and his “fellow travelers” requires focusing on their key role over two decades in shaping the political, bureaucratic, and expert discourse on the “Soviet threat.”

The evidence presented in this article underscores how U.S. policy discourse during the Cold War was crucially influenced by private individuals working outside the political mainstream. The article revises the traditional reductionist interpretation that attributes to the CPD more credit than it probably merits for the anti-détente shift in U.S. policy in the latter half of the 1970s. The key problem of this interpretation is that it ignores the much larger and more long-standing epistemic community of which the CPD was a part. Examining the origins and evolution of this epistemic community—and the integral role Barnett played in fostering it—sheds light on a missing dimension of the private sector in the Cold War. Scholars will, one hopes, finally recognize Barnett’s activism as being of a similar or greater importance than the work undertaken by better known groups such as the CPD. Both the quantity and the quality of Barnett’s activities, as well as those of the wider community he helped facilitate, suggest his impact was far-reaching. They are, therefore, a worthy subject of analysis in the field of Cold War studies.

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