

# The Struggle Over Project Troy's Successor: Economists and Other Social Scientists in the Making of MIT's Center for International Studies

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This paper provides a detailed account of the struggle over the Center for International Studies (CIS) and its mission. The center, a research institute established at MIT in the early 1950s, was an outgrowth of Project Troy, a 1950 top secret initiative devoted to the problem of "getting the truth behind the Iron Curtain." Troy brought over 20 academics—social scientists, engineers, and natural scientists—to MIT for an intensive three month work-sprint on propaganda and psychological warfare. Among the group's classified recommendations was a university-based institute cast in the Troy mold. The Center for International Studies ("Troy Plus," as it was called in the planning phase) was up and running by early 1952, with CIA support and the MIT administration's blessing.

The paper attends to a single, curious fact about the CIS: The center's intellectual agenda had very little to do with the propaganda questions that preoccupied the Troy participants. The focus, instead, was on the study of economic development, under the leadership of founding director Max Millikan, an economist and Troy participant. Millikan retained the previous initiative's close Cold War ties to government. But he maneuvered to abandon Troy's propaganda remit in favor of his own interests in international development.

As the paper recounts, Millikan's initial success in reorienting the center met resistance when he turned to the Ford Foundation to fund his economic development program. Hans Speier, a German emigre sociologist then helping to shape Ford's social science program, sought to block the the proposal, on Troy-betrayal grounds. Speier, a Troy participant and head of the RAND Corporation's Social Science Division, was a leading propaganda analyst. He pushed to make Ford's support for CIS contingent on the center's willingness to expand its scope to include psychological warfare—a restoration, in Speier's mind. Millikan reluctantly agreed to house a Ford-funded Research Program in International Communication (RPIC) within the CIS. With that concession, and with the help of fellow economist Richard Bissell—then an influential advisor at Ford—the foundation agreed to underwrite the economic development program. Once the RPIC got underway in fall 1953, the Center for International Studies operated as two distinct and autonomous

programs, one staffed by economists, and the second by other social scientists—until the late 1950s, when the communication program was phased out.

This paper has a pair of aims. The first is to provide a revisionist account of the early Center for International Studies. In most secondary treatments, the center is portrayed as an interdisciplinary formation, where (in particular) economists worked alongside other social scientists. There was indeed interdisciplinarity at CIS but, as I show, the economists did not partake. In practice the center's economists worked by themselves, on international development projects. It was, instead, the communications program, forced on Millikan, that housed a mix of social psychologists, sociologists, and political scientists—but no economists.

This de facto segregation provokes the paper's second motivation, to address U.S. economics' relationship to the other social sciences in the post-World War II decades. The struggle over what CIS should prioritize was a local expression—an applied Cold War installment—of an uneven and overdetermined separation between economics and the other social sciences in the postwar decades. The conditions important to the MIT case were contingent and peculiar, pitting two Cold War strategies promoted by overlapping, but distinct, networks of defense intellectuals, forged in World War II. Millikan and other CIS economists, notably Walt Rostow, positioned aid to spur economic growth among allies and non-aligned countries as the most promising strategy to thwart Soviet expansionism. Speier and the psychologists, sociologists, and political scientists behind the communications program were psychological warfare specialists; their claim was that sophisticated information campaigns—for example, targeting sympathetic local elites—were the crucial tool to contain the enemy.

One reason the MIT case is good to think with is that its central economists, and its stakes for the field, were at some remove from the disciplined postwar mainstream then in formation. Millikan and Bissell—the two figures responsible for the “Troy Plus” turn to economics—were not at the discipline's center, nor were they proponents of a formal, mathematized science of economics. They were, instead, much closer to policy-making networks, including the national security, science, and foreign policy establishments in Washington, DC. Millikan was a relatively marginal figure in MIT's economics program, and Bissell soon left Ford for a career as a CIA spymaster. Speier, while closer to his discipline's loosely defined center, was himself an action intellectual. The disputants on both sides drew on extra- and quasi-academic networks, with a degree—but only a degree—of overlap between them. If there's a broader lesson to take from the CIS partition, it's to remain attentive to sources of authority other than specialist sophistication. This seems especially important in the early postwar years, when reference to economics as tightly disciplined, model-driven, and deductivist is an anachronistic simplification. For *these* economists, it was proximity to power, via specific formations like Vannevar Bush's science-policy juggernaut, the Marshall Plan diaspora, and the Georgetown foreign policy set, that granted the levers to (partly) realize their go-it-alone ambitions.

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The impetus for Project Troy was the Truman administration's 1949 plan to expand the country's Cold War propaganda efforts in the wake of heightened tensions with the Soviets. The initiative, as Allan Needell recounts in his superb history, was a State Department project, motivated in part to establish the agency's propaganda bona fides in competition with the military and CIA. With a generous budget and cooperation from MIT and Harvard, the group of 22 academics gathered at MIT's Lexington Field Station for three months of discussion and research, organized into cross-disciplinary working groups. A number of social scientists active in World War II propaganda efforts—Speier and Millikan, along with Donald Marquis, Alex Bavelas, Jerome Bruner, and Clyde Kluckhohn, among others—worked alongside natural scientists, historians, and engineers. In the classified February 1951 report and accompanying appendices, the Troy participants outlined propaganda strategies—like targeted radio transmissions and leaflet-dropping balloons—and strongly endorsed more social science research as well as the establishment of dedicated, university-based institutes.<sup>1</sup>

Millikan's Troy invitation came from John Burchard, MIT's dean of humanities and social studies, who served as Troy's on-the-ground director.<sup>2</sup> Millikan (1913–1969) was the son of Robert Millikan, the former California Institute of Technology president and Nobel-prize winning physicist. Like Bissell and many other figures relevant to the CIS story, Max Millikan attended an elite boarding school (Phillips Academy), before studying at Caltech and then Yale.<sup>3</sup> At Yale Millikan studied physics like his father, but was exposed to economics by Bissell, then a young instructor at the university. Bissell (1909–1994), the scion of a Connecticut insurance executive, grew up in Hartford's Mark Twain House and attended the exclusive Groton School. Also a Yale undergraduate—a few years head of Millikan—Bissell took a history degree before spending a post-graduate year at the London School of Economics (where he took courses from Friedrich Hayek and Harold Laski).<sup>4</sup> He

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<sup>1</sup> Allan A. Needell, "‘Truth Is Our Weapon’: Project TROY, Political Warfare, and Government-Academic Relations in the National Security State," *Diplomatic History* 17, no. 3 (1993): 399–404; *Excerpts From Project Troy Report to the Secretary of State*, February 1, 1951, General CIA Records. My account of Project Troy (I use lowercase, though the all-caps TROY is intermittently used) is deliberately brief, given the extensive secondary treatment. On Troy's background and context, see Needell, "‘Truth Is Our Weapon’"; Daniel Bessner, *Democracy in Exile: Hans Speier and the Rise of the Defense Intellectual* (Ithaca, NY: Cornell University Press, 2018), 163–67; Donald L. M. Blackmer, *The MIT Center for International Studies: The Founding Years 1951–1969* (Cambridge, MA: MIT Center for International Studies, 2002), chap. 1; and Walter L. Hixson, *Parting the Curtain: Propaganda, Culture, and the Cold War* (New York: St. Martin's Press, 1996), 15–16. Speier spent some of TROY's three-month session overseas in Germany on government work. Bessner, *Democracy in Exile*, 164.

<sup>2</sup> Blackmer, *The MIT Center*, 7–8.

<sup>3</sup> It is telling, in the small-world elite network sense, that the father of Donald Blackmer (the CIS's future assistant director and the center's house historian) taught Max Millikan at Phillips Academy, as Blackmer mentions for the "principle of full disclosure." Blackmer, *The MIT Center*, 30n12. Many of Bissell's classmates at Groton and Yale ended up at the CIA and in other elite foreign policy roles. Bissell, in his memoir: "I think there was an Ivy League establishment in the sense of a body of men who had similar backgrounds and knew one another well, and the existence of that group had a good deal of influence on public affairs. It was not a self-conscious or exclusive grouping. If positions were available in various publications institutions and members of the establishment were invited to fill them, I think it was more because these men knew one another than because of a deliberate policy of selecting only from a particular social group." Richard M. Bissell, *Reflections of a Cold Warrior: From Yalta to the Bay of Pigs* (New Haven, CT: Yale University Press, 1996), 7.

<sup>4</sup> Richard M. Bissell, *Reflections of a Cold Warrior*, 2, 5, 10.

returned to Yale for an economics PhD, awarded in 1939 for “The Theory of Capital under Static and Dynamic Conditions.”<sup>5</sup>

As a graduate student, Bissell published a pro-free market weekly column in the *Yale News*, under the pen name Ricardo. He also organized an unofficial seminar on economics—an astonishingly influential gathering that counted, among others, Millikan and a 15-year-old scholarship student named Walt Rostow.<sup>6</sup> Millikan credited the seminar for altering his career path from physics to economics, while Rostow’s biographer described Bissell as Rostow’s “most significant influence” at Yale.<sup>7</sup> Bissell, in the informal seminar as well as official economic theory course he was assigned to teach, introduced Keynesianism to Yale—in what appears, by the limited evidence, to be an early iteration of what, after World War II, would come to be known as the “neoclassical synthesis.”<sup>8</sup>

Millikan and Bissell’s lives would remain entangled for the next fifteen years, up through the CIS. Upon his 1935 graduation, Millikan—by then converted to economics by Bissell—spent a year at Cambridge, where he may have studied with John Hicks.<sup>9</sup> He took up doctoral studies at Yale on his return, where he co-taught, with Bissell, the undergraduate theory course.<sup>10</sup> Millikan remained on the Yale faculty after defending his 1941 dissertation on industrial decision-making. The next year Bissell recruited him to the War Shipping Administration, a Department of Commerce agency Bissell had joined shortly after Pearl Harbor.<sup>11</sup>

The pattern continued after the war. In 1947 Averell Harriman, the Groton and Yale-educated Commerce Secretary, invited Bissell to join a presidential committee on European economic recovery—the prelude to the Marshall Plan. Paul Hoffman, then president of the Studebaker car company, was also on the committee—

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<sup>5</sup> Bissell, *Reflections of a Cold Warrior*, 13. He notes that he wrote the dissertation was “dictated and drafted at a rate of twenty pages per day.” Bissell may have been exposed to John Hicks at the LSE, who was lecturing there at the time, but there is no record in Bissell’s memoirs nor in the secondary literature.

<sup>6</sup> Bissell, in his memoirs, refers to the gathering as “a sort of ‘black market’ seminar in economics for my friends.” Bissell, *Reflections of a Cold Warrior*, 11. The unofficial “black market” is repeated in other accounts, though never explained. See, for example, David Milne, *America’s Rasputin: Walt Rostow and the Vietnam War* (New York: Macmillan, 2008), 24–25; Nils Gilman, *Mandarins of the Future: Modernization Theory in Cold War America* (Baltimore: Johns Hopkins University Press, 2003), 158; and Ethan Schrum, *The Instrumental University: Education in Service of the National Agenda after World War II* (Ithaca, NY: Cornell University Press, 2019), 62.

<sup>7</sup> Milne, *American Rasputin*, 24. See also Rostow’s own account: “Bissell commanded (and commands) extraordinary powers of lucid exposition. There were four students, one of whom was Max Millikan who promptly defected from physics to economics. Bissell’s impact on me was equally powerful.” Walt Whitman Rostow, “Development: The Political Economy of the Marshallian Long Period,” in *Pioneers in Development*, ed. Gerald M. Meier and Dudley Seers (Oxford University Press, 1984), 229.

<sup>8</sup> Bissell, *Reflections of a Cold Warrior*, 11. Bissell records that his students, in the official economic theory course, included the Rostow brothers, McGeorge Bundy, and Kingman Brewster.

<sup>9</sup> There are references, in the secondary literature, to Millikan’s year with Hicks at Cambridge, though the claims need verifying. See Gilman, *Mandarins*, 158; and Blacmker, *The MIT Center*, 8. Hicks was working on *Value and Capital\** (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 1939). In 1938, Millikan (by then back at Yale for his PhD) published a paper heavily indebted to Hicks: Millikan, “The Liquidity-Preference Theory of Interest.” *The American Economic Review* 28, no. 2 (1938).

<sup>10</sup> Bissell, *Reflections of a Cold Warrior*, 11.

<sup>11</sup> Bissell, *Reflections of a Cold Warrior*, 15. Millikan moved to the War Shipping Administration after a short stint at the Office of Price Administration. Blackmer *The MIT Center*, 8.

and already known to Bissell from their overlap at Yale. Hoffman and Bissell recruited Millikan, among others, to help draft its final report.<sup>12</sup> Hoffman was soon tapped to lead the Economic Cooperation Administration, and brought Bissell with him. Bissell served in a variety of Marshall Plan posts over the next three years; the effort's relative success helped convince him that spurring economic growth could be a key tool in what was, by the late 1940s, a Cold War.<sup>13</sup>

Millikan's tendency to follow in Bissell's footsteps extended to MIT. Back in 1946, Bissell had joined the Institute's Department of Economics and Social Science, where he remained—typically on leave, but with regular contact—until his departure for the CIA in 1952. Millikan himself joined the MIT department three years later, in 1949, and soon the two men collaborated on a proposal bound for the Ford Foundation.

Bissell and Millikan worked up the proposal, for a “Research Program in the Social Sciences,” with fellow MIT economist Rupert Maclaurin in the spring of 1950, mere months before Troy. The seven-page memo was intended, Millikan explained in an April 1950 letter to Burchard enclosing the draft, as the basis for an MIT-based “research program to be submitted to the Ford Foundation, centered around the idea of studying the factors affecting industrial growth, principally in foreign areas, but with provision for some domestic regional studies for comparative purposes.” The central theme of the would-be program, Millikan continued, might be “the idea of economic development, or industrial growth [...] the general process of growth.” In the letter to Burchard, Millikan noted how the other social sciences tend to focus on either small-scale or macro-level projects. One of the reasons “for such success as economics has had,” he wrote, is that economists had “shuttled back and forth between the individual consumer or producer and the total economy, and have developed techniques for doing this in an orderly fashion.” Their plan, he added, proposed to span the “microcosm as well as the macrocosm,” in the interest of producing results “helpful to the framers of policy at the regional or national level.”<sup>14</sup>

It is not clear whether the proposal was ever submitted to Ford. Its importance lies in its timing and content: Here were Bissell and Millikan crafting an appeal for Ford underwriting on economic development, on the eve of Troy. The two men, in Troy's aftermath—with Bissell installed at Ford—worked to leverage the “Troy Plus” momentum to realize their earlier designs. The proposal, in some sense, is the CIS's founding charter—a plan

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<sup>12</sup> Bissell, *Reflections of a Cold Warrior*, 34–38.

<sup>13</sup> Bissell, *Reflections of a Cold Warrior*, 40–73.

<sup>14</sup> Millikan, Bissell, and MacLaurin, “A Suggested Focus for a Research Program in the Social Sciences at MIT,” undated, sent to Burchard on April 4, 1950. Letter quoted in Blackmer, *The MIT Center*, 9–11. Burchard forwarded the proposal to MIT president James Killian, calling it an “extremely interesting [...] report on the progress of the deliberations between Millikan, Bissell and MacLaurin.” Quoted in Blackmer, 30n16. I intend to consult the Max Millikan Papers at the MIT Archives to inform future iterations of this paper, which is spun off another project. On MacLaurin's margin status at the department in these years, see Roger E. Backhouse and Harro Maas, “Marginalizing Maclaurin: The Attempt to Develop an Economics of Technological Progress at Mit, 1940–50,” *History of Political Economy* 48, no. 3 (2016).

for development studies that the pair managed, through skillful maneuvering, to graft onto a psychological warfare project.

Burchard invited Millikan to join the Troy project in the late summer of 1950. Millikan wrestled with the decision, largely because he was slated to begin a large-scale project on the economics of housing with Maclaurin. In explaining his dilemma in a letter to Maclaurin, Millikan cited the Ford plan that he, Bissell, and Maclaurin had drafted in the spring: “from the point of view of the long-run development of social science at MIT this [Troy] impresses me as an extraordinary opportunity.”<sup>15</sup> Millikan chose Troy.

There is no record of Millikan’s interactions with Speier during the Troy months.<sup>16</sup> A German student of Karl Mannheim and Emil Lederer, Speier had emigrated in 1933 and took up a sociology post at the New School for Social Research. His interest in elites and governance, as Daniel Bessner has shown, dates back to the Weimar trauma and the conviction that elites should, and normally do, make a society’s key decisions, even in the liberal democratic West. By the late 1930s, Speier had come to view the masses as gullible and dangerous—susceptible to demagogic and even totalitarian control. He endorsed elite-directed propaganda, at least during wartime, as a legitimate check on domestic publics, and argued for an aggressive, qualms-free propaganda posture toward existential enemies like the Nazis (and, a decade later, the Soviets).<sup>17</sup>

Working at the New School at the outbreak of war, Speier and his Austrian colleague Ernst Kris won Rockefeller funding for a proposal to analyze German propaganda. Speier was soon recruited into the bureaucracy, first at the Federal Communication Commission’s foreign broadcast monitoring agency, and then onto a succession of posts through to the war’s immediate aftermath.<sup>18</sup> He emerged from the war a specialist in psychological warfare.

After a brief, unhappy return to the New School in 1947, a restless Speier agreed to head up the Social Science Division of the Air Force-sponsored Project RAND, established the year before as a unit of the Douglas Aircraft Company.<sup>19</sup> RAND would remain Speier’s principal perch for over a decade. There he directed and

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<sup>15</sup> Quoted in Blackmer, *The MIT Center*, 9. For a treatment of the letter to Maclaurin, see 8–11.

<sup>16</sup> Troy hosted a number of consultants for briefings and discussions, Bissell among them. Needell, “‘Truth is Our Weapon,’” 408n40.

<sup>17</sup> Daniel Bessner, *Democracy in Exile: Hans Speier and the Rise of the Defense Intellectual* (Ithaca, NY: Cornell University Press, 2018), chap. 1, 69–72. As Bessner’s excellent account makes clear, Speier’s positive embrace of elite-driven politics—including a robust role for intellectuals—was in theory limited to crisis periods like the existential fight against the Nazis: “Speier exemplified the exile spirit, and his life illuminates the triumph and tragedy of an elite scarred by fascism and dedicated to saving democracy from the people, for the people.” 11. But the revival of crisis politics in the Cold War, with its peculiar bipolar stability, came to mean that democracy’s temporary bracketing, if still in democracy’s name, was in practice a steady and indefinite state.

<sup>18</sup> On Speier’s shifting views of propaganda over the 1930s, settling on its positive deployment in periods of democratic emergency, see Bessner, *Democracy in Exile*, 79–87. On the Rockefeller-funded Research Program on Totalitarian Communication in Wartime, including its glowing reception after the US entry to war, see 87–92. The main published work from the project, which continued under Kris’s leadership through 1944, was the jointly authored *German Radio Propaganda* (New York: Oxford University Press, 1944).

<sup>19</sup> It is relevant, but beyond the scope of this paper, that RAND, early in its existence, created separate Divisions of Economics, housed in Santa Monica, and Speier’s Division of Social Science, in Washington, DC.

commissioned dozens of studies—most of them classified—with a small staff of fellow Washington-based sociologists and political scientists. But he also used the RAND post to consult on a variety of other national security projects and initiatives.<sup>20</sup>

One of these was the Ford Foundation's late 1940s plan to reconstitute itself as a national foundation. Speier was there from the beginning, brought in by H. Rowan Gaither, the well-connected San Francisco lawyer charged with the foundation's re-imagining. In one expression of the tight knitting that connected military research, elite universities like MIT, and the large foundations, Gaither was—in this same late 1940s period, and with Ford funding—helping to transition RAND into an incorporated nonprofit. The double appointment was no coincidence: Gaither secured both posts through wartime connections made at MIT's Rad Lab. Gaither's two roles were, moreover, symbiotic. He turned to Ford for RAND's start-up funds and, in turn, enlisted RAND scholars in his late-1940s Ford overhaul.

Through RAND, Gaither had come to know and respect the Speier, and turned to him for advice on Ford's future—even before the foundation's official Study Committee first met.<sup>21</sup> The thick plan for Ford submitted by Gaither and his committee in 1949—widely known as the *Gaither Report*—was notable for its call to shower support on the social sciences.<sup>22</sup> Over the next half-decade, Gaither and Speier maintained their importance alliance. Gaither remained RAND's chair, and also stayed on at Ford, first as an assistant director and then, beginning in 1953, as the foundation's president. He retained Speier as a Ford consultant, and together the two men shepherded the foundation's massive early 1950s investment in the behavioral sciences. Gaither was, in effect, the program's internal protector, shielding the BSP from the foundation's often-hostile leadership. Speier, with nominal help from Marquis, was the program's intellectual architect.

The classified Troy report, delivered in February 1951, was almost certainly influenced by Speier, in its core psychological-warfare sections.<sup>23</sup> He was, among the Troy participants, the most experienced in the field, and

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<sup>20</sup> On Speier's fractious return stint to the New School, see Bessner, *Democracy in Exile*, 137–39. On Speier's time at RAND, see Bessner, *Democracy in Exile*, chaps. 5–8; Janet Farrel Brodie, "Learning Secrecy in the Early Cold War: The RAND Corporation," *Diplomatic History* 35, no. 4 (2011): 655–59; and David Raymond Jardini, *Out of the Blue Yonder: The RAND Corporation's Diversification into Social Welfare Research, 1946–1968* (PhD diss., Carnegie Mellon University, 1996), 98–104.

<sup>21</sup> "MemoConference - November 18th - Gaither, McPeak, and Brown," November 19, 1948, folder 19, box 2, series 1, 20003, FFA. Two other RAND figures were also named as paid consultants: RAND's founder Frank Collbold and the MIT biophysicist John R. Loofbourow.

<sup>22</sup> Indeed, it is likely that the Bissell/Millikan/Maclaurin 1950 proposal was drafted with the promise of the ample funding dangled by the report. Gaither et al., *Report of the Study for the Ford Foundation on Policy and Program* (Detroit: Ford Foundation, 1949). The report was not formally published until September 1950, on the eve of Troy, but was already circulating after its internal publication in November 1949. See Francis X. Sutton, "The Ford Foundation: The Early Years," *Daedalus* 116, no. 1 (1987): 87n12. On the *Gaither Report's* pronounced focus on the social sciences—which the report called, in a near-neologism, the "behavioral sciences"—see Jefferson Pooley and Mark Solovey, "Marginal to the Revolution: The Curious Relationship between Economics and the Behavioral Sciences Movement in Mid-Twentieth-Century America," *History of Political Economy* 42, Supp. 1 (2010).

<sup>23</sup> Speier was, according to Bessner, among the first social scientists invited. His invitation likely came via Edward Barrett, assistant secretary of state for public affairs and key figure in the Troy planning. Barrett had invited Speier, his former colleague in the Overseas Branch of the Office of War Information, and other affiliates of the military's Human Resources Committee, the social science unit of its Research and Development Board, to an April 1950 conference on "Propaganda and Political Warfare" that served as precursor to Troy in

the report's language is replete with his preferred "political warfare" terminology throughout, in calling for an "aggressive, integrated, and comprehensive" program, designed to draw on "all of our external lines of communication, governmental, private, and military." The report also echoed Speier's focus on elites, and endorsed his agenda for Soviet-directed psychological warfare with such fidelity that Speier was likely the section's main author. The report as a whole, moreover, is notable for its recommendation that the State Department and other funders underwrite academic research on psychological warfare targeting elites.<sup>24</sup>

As it happened, both Speier and Millikan missed some of the Troy sessions. Speier spent a stretch in the program's middle period in Germany on a federally sponsored trip, while Millikan departed for a six-month CIA appointment in January, before Troy had wrapped up.<sup>25</sup> Neither man had a hand, apparently, in a crucial annex to the report, which had called for university-based institutes to "carry out government research programs in the field of political warfare," on the model of Troy. The annex, crafted in coordination with MIT officials, was created with the intent, at least in part, to site an "extended Troy" at the Institute.<sup>26</sup>

What happened next was that Speier, joined by Marquis (who had co-authored the annex), worked to develop a Ford-sponsored Troy successor, even as MIT was developing its own, rival plan. Speier's Ford project retained Troy's focus on propaganda, while the parallel MIT planning lingered—in line with Bissell and Millikan's pre-Troy plans—on economic development. In the end, they both succeeded: The Center for International Studies was, in its first decade, characterized by an awkward co-habitation, one that separated economists from the center's other social scientists.

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Rowan Gaither, Ford's self-study architect, was lured back to the foundation as a part-time associate director, with de facto oversight of social science programming, just as Project Troy was wrapping up. He took up the post in early 1951, when the foundation opened its Pasadena, California, offices under Hoffman's presidency. Within days, Gaither retained Speier and Marquis to develop a plan for what Gaither, in his invitation,

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the fall. Allan A. Needell, *Science, Cold War and the American State: Lloyd V. Berkner and the Balance of Professional Ideals* (Washington, DC: Smithsonian Institution, 2000), 172.

<sup>24</sup> *Excerpts From Project Troy Report*, 4, 11. Bessner, *Democracy in Exile*, 165; Lowen, *Creating the Cold War University*, 200–2. The report also registered the credibility advantage of routing US messages through other nations' media systems, referring to the "psychological advantage" of "helping other countries to tell our story through their own radio program." *Excerpts From Project Troy Report*, 9.

<sup>25</sup> On Speier, see Bessner, *Democracy in Exile*, 164. On Millikan, see Blackmer, *The MIT Center*, 12, 15.

<sup>26</sup> Quoted in Needell, "'Truth is Our Weapon'," 415. The idea, the annex authors wrote, was to "permit university specialists to remain in their 'home atmospheres'" during leaves of absence from universities duties. The annex's authors were Jerome Bruner, Francis L. Friedman, Marquis, Robert S. Morrison, and Robert Wolff. 415n67. Marquis may have been in contact with Speier given their overlapping Ford roles at the time. Millikan, for his part, was invited to attend a January 1951 gathering with the five annex authors, together with MIT officials, on the as-yet-undrafted annex, intended—according to the invitation letter to Millikan—to serve as the "basis for an extended Troy." Quoted in Blackmer, *The MIT Program*, 15. There is, however, no indication that Millikan attended the meeting and email.



referred to as the foundation's "Behavioral Sciences Program" (BSP). Over the next two years, Speier labored to ensure that Ford's plans would include a Troy-like center for propaganda research—what would become, after a lengthy planning process, the Research Program in International Communication (RPIC), funded by a \$875,000 BSP grant.<sup>27</sup> MIT's new Center for International Studies would, of course, end up playing reluctant host: Speier's strategy was to make Ford's support for CIS's economics program contingent on the center's willingness to expand its remit to include psychological warfare. To Speier, his program's engineered placement at MIT was an annoying course correction, made necessary by Millikan's recentering of the CIS agenda on economic development. Under Millikan, CIS had betrayed its early, Troy-derived vision, so Speier used the foundation's financial leverage to force Millikan's hand.

Back in May 1951, Speier (with Marquis's nominal help), had drafted a five-page overview of a proposed "Institute of International Communication," as a centerpiece of their BSP plans.<sup>28</sup> Speier and Marquis urged that the institute be housed in a university, on the grounds that researchers would have more freedom to direct the research program. They also cited the intellectual cross-fertilization on campus, and pointed to the recruitment edge that joint appointments in traditional departments would provide. The new institute could seek government contracts, but Marquis and Speier stressed that the center—to maintain its independence—shouldn't rely on such funds.<sup>29</sup>

Marquis and Speier flagged the overlap with Project Troy, though with passive-voice circumspection: "The proposal," they wrote, "may raise the question of its relationship" to the initiative. The "two activities," they continued, "could supplement each other." Troy would be responsible for "work with classified materials" and for advising "policy and operations in government information services." The proposed institute, on this line of thinking, would conduct studies of a "more general and fundamental nature" that would, in turn, furnish "background knowledge" relevant to "current problems." They proposed, in effect, a division of academic

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<sup>27</sup> Gaither, at Ford's initial January 1951 staff meeting, recommended Marquis and Speier as "dependable consultants." The pair, he added, "will be interviewed either at New York in late January, or before." Excerpt from Minutes of Staff Meeting, January 5, 1951. The appointment of Marquis and Speier was not formally acknowledged until late June, in the press release announcing Bernard Berelson's hiring as Area V director. According to the press release, Marquis was set to devote "the major portion of his time" to the role for a full year, beginning in July; Speier, the document continued (without acknowledging the two men's extensive Area V consulting since January), will begin service as a consultant in August, "for a substantial period." Ford Foundation press release, June 27, 1951, Folder 5 - Behavioral Sciences - Development of Program Area V, box 1, series 1, Behavioral Sciences Division, Office Files of Bernard Berelson, FFR, 1. Marquis and Speier agreed to spend a quarter of their time on Area V planning, until a "permanent director can be obtained." Excerpt from Minutes of Staff Meeting, January 5, 1951, 1.

<sup>28</sup> Marquis and Speier, "Institute of International Communications," May 5, 1951, Series - Ford Foundation Grants - L to N, Series - Ford Foundation Grants - L to N, FFR. Speier is cited as the proposal's sole author in Dyke Brown, "Development of a Communications Policy," July 3, 1951, Series - Ford Foundation Grants - L to N, Series - Ford Foundation Grants - L to N, FFR, 1.

<sup>29</sup> Marquis and Speier suggested an east coast university, for proximity to government, though MIT was not on their initial short list. They floated, instead, Harvard, Columbia, Cornell, Princeton, Chicago and Michigan. Marquis and Speier, "Institute of International Communications," 2-3.

labor, with Troy's successor handling the secret, applied work, to be informed by the institute's basic-research findings.<sup>30</sup>

In Cambridge, meanwhile, MIT officials had other post-Troy plans. They retained the project's vision of campus-based academic collaboration on applied government projects, but largely stripped out the psychological warfare underpinnings. Even before the final report was delivered, MIT's Killian reported to the project's State Department sponsors that the Institute and Harvard were already working on Troy's "second phase." Plans for "TROY Plus as an M.I.T. Project," as outlined by Killian, included carrying on a trio of substantive projects: one on studying Soviet society (to be directed by Rostow), a second on interviewing Soviet and Eastern bloc defectors, and the third on a so-called "overload and delay" planning project.<sup>31</sup> As a permanent research institute, "Troy Plus" would also serve as a model for the centers called for in the Troy report annex—intended (as the annex stated) to "permit university specialists to remain in their 'home atmospheres' during leaves of absence from university duties."<sup>32</sup>

In the February 28 letter to State, Killian reported that none other than Richard Bissell had agreed to direct "Troy Plus." How and when Bissell—who at the time remained seconded to the Marshall Plan—removed himself from the prospective directorship is unclear.<sup>33</sup> In a by-now familiar pattern, Millikan followed on Bissell's heels, taking on the leadership of the CIS on his February 1952 return to Cambridge.<sup>34</sup> MIT officials were already soliciting Millikan's advice on the Troy Plus plans in early 1951 period, even before the Troy report was finalized.<sup>35</sup>

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<sup>30</sup> Marquis and Speier, "Institute of International Communications," 2–3. An undated memo on the proposed institute, grouped with documents from May 1951, also recorded that "Troy would coordinate functionally with emphasis on target stuff." Memo appearing with "Notes for Rowan Gaither on Program Five Conference," .

<sup>31</sup> Needell, "'Truth is Our Weapon,'" 415–416. The first project, on Soviet society, would get delegated by Millikan, in 1952, to his old Yale friend Rostow, serving as the letter's entry point to the CIS. See Rostow, *Europe After Stalin: Eisenhower's Three Decisions of March 11, 1953* (Austin, TX: University of Texas Press, 1982), 35–39. The second project, interviewing defectors, would evolve into the Refugee Interview Project, jointly operated with Harvard's Russian Research Center. See David Engerman, "The Rise and Fall of Wartime Social Science: Harvard's Refugee Interview Project, 1950-1954," in *Cold War Social Science: Knowledge Production, Liberal Democracy, and Human Nature*, ed. Mark Solovey and Hamilton Cravens (New York: Palgrave Macmillan, 2012). The third "overload and delay" project, said to be conducted by MIT psychologist Alex Bavelas, is difficult to trace, since almost all its details remain classified. See Needell, "'Truth is Our Weapon,'" 416n72.

<sup>32</sup> Needell, "'Truth is Our Weapon,'" 415, 416.

<sup>33</sup> Needell, "'Truth is Our Weapon,'" 416. Blackmer reports that, a few weeks earlier, Killian had listed four potential directors: Bissell, Jay Stratton (MIT's provost), Maclaurin, and the ubiquitous Rowan Gaither. Blackmer, *The MIT Program*, 18–19. MIT's Burchard had, ironically, cited Bissell, in a mid-Troy letter to the State Department, about the problem of faculty leaves for government work—referring to Bissell as a "a very long loan of a man" who may "overstay his usefulness to the government" and never return. Quoted in Blackmer, *The MIT Center*, 14–15. Burchard was right about Bissell, who in fact never returned to academia.

<sup>34</sup> According to Bissell, Millikan's short stint as assistant director of the CIA's Office of Research and Records involved the "analysis of worldwide economic trends." Bissell, *Reflections of a Cold Warrior*, 76. Blackmer, citing Rostow's recollection, has Millikan's portfolio more narrowly centered on the Soviet economy. Blackmer, *The MIT Center*, 15, 31n26.

<sup>35</sup> Blackmer, *The MIT Center*, 15. Millikan, still at the CIA, had also recruited his old Yale friend Rostow to head up the Soviet society study.

Around this same time, Killian reached out to Harvard president James Conant, who expressed interest in a collaborative Troy extension. At the time, everyone involved expected that the State Department would remain the government patron. In early spring, however, budget constraints at State led to a decision, in a still poorly-understood exchange, to draw on CIA funds instead.<sup>36</sup> The secret arrangement almost certainly led to Harvard dropping any official connection to the planned institute, though the university's Russian Research Center, under the directorship of anthropologist and Troy participant Clyde Kluckhohn, would go on to collaborate with the CIS.<sup>37</sup> Plans continued apace and by the fall of 1951, MIT was housing Rostow and a handful of staff at a warehouse in Cambridge, already at work on the Troy-derived Soviet society study. The MIT provost, Jay Stratton, was serving as interim director of what had, in late summer, been named the Center for International Studies.<sup>38</sup>

In the meantime, Ford had proceeded with its own plans for a Troy-derived Institute of International Communications. By late May, Speier, and Marquis had recruited Bernard Berelson, a well-connected library scientist and communication research, to direct the foundation's Behavioral Sciences Program. Gaither, Speier, and Marquis commissioned Berelson to prepare a staff study for the proposed institute over the summer.<sup>39</sup>

The late summer and early fall were decisive for the proposed institute. Plans for its intellectual scope, as well as its preferred institutional form, were made in this period. Speier and Berelson were the principal architects, while Gaither served as the initiative's internal custodian. Speier managed the institutional side—the effort to fold the institute into the then-nascent CIS.

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Speier visited Cambridge in late August to meet with the Harvard and MIT figures planning the CIS. "It is," he wrote in his seven-page report to Gaither, "an ambitious project that has grown out of *Project Troy* and"—he added coyly—"certain subsequent government contracts that are partly in operation and partly hoped for at the present time." Speier, in effect, apologized for his evasive prose: "Only the unclassified parts of the discussion are summarized here." As if to underline these covert origins, he added that the "long range aim" is the establishment of "an *overt* academic center" of social science research. The center, he wrote, plans work in four areas: (1) "Political Warfare," plainly Troy-derived; (2) Technical Studies (classified and government-

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<sup>36</sup> Blackmer, *The MIT Center*, 20; Needell, "Truth is Our Weapon," 416–417. See also Killian's later account, which corroborates the budget-constraint explanation. On the CIA arrangement, Killian wrote: "I shared in this decision and came to regret it." James R. Killian. *The Education of a College President: A Memoir* (Cambridge, MA: MIT Press, 1985), 67.

<sup>37</sup> See Engerman, "The Rise and Fall of Wartime Social Science."

<sup>38</sup> Blackmer, *The MIT Center*, 21.

<sup>39</sup> Hans Speier, Donald Marquis, and Dyke Brown to Rowan Gaither [memo], June 12, 1951, folder 75, box 7, Area Five - Individual Behavior and Human Relations, Series V, Office Files of H. Rowan Gaither, FFR, 1.

financed”); (3) “(Foreign) Economic Development and Political Stability”; and (4) “The Impact of Protracted Mobilization on Democratic Values in American Life.”<sup>40</sup>

The third area was, of course, a re-packaging of the economic development plans that Millikan, Bissell, and Maclaurin had hatched a year earlier. Bissell and Millikan would, over the next two years, work hard to secure international development as the CIS’s core endeavor. Even from his Marshall perch—having turned down the CIS directorship—Bissell was working to secure funds: He is “trying to find out how much ECA and the State Department will be willing to back” the economic development project, Speier reported, with the hope that Ford would cover the rest.<sup>41</sup>

Speier’s memo is sprinkled with understated disdain for the emerging CIS. He conceded that the “political warfare” projects are “interesting,” but that “no principle of integration can as yet be discovered.”<sup>42</sup> Rostow and the others, he wrote, could not articulate how the center’s four work areas would cohere. Speier had asked, and so he summarized, in sarcastic deadpan, the answer he received: “The ultimate aim of all the work...will be the production of an alternative to Marxism.”<sup>43</sup> Noting that an application to Ford was imminent, Speier asked for permission to intervene with MIT officials. He pointed to a series of “issues” with the plans, posed as skeptical questions. Should such a large grant go to a project whose “principle of integration remains somewhat unclear?” Speier closed the memo with his own answer, endorsing a smaller, shorter grant to give Ford time to assess the center.<sup>44</sup>

A few weeks later, Speier updated Gaither on a dinner he had had with Jerry Wiesner, one of the MIT planners. In the memo, Speier doubled-down on his criticisms of the emerging plans, including the lack of integration. Progress toward a “more definite formulation” for the center “had been slow,” he told Gaither. Speier also registered concern about the CIS commitment to its political warfare program: he reported that he warned Wiesner that, at Ford, “some disappointment had been expressed about the fact that the tentative

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<sup>40</sup> Hans Speier to Rowan Gaither, September 18, 1951, Series - Ford Foundation Grants - L to N, Series - Ford Foundation Grants - L to N, Ford Foundation Archives, Rockefeller Archive Center, 1. Speier reports that he met with MIT president James R. Killian, MIT economist Walter Rostow, Harvard anthropologist Clyde Kluckhohn, and MIT engineer Jerome Wiesner—the latter three all veterans of Project Troy.

<sup>41</sup> Hans Speier to Rowan Gaither, September 18, 1951, 6.

<sup>42</sup> Among the political warfare projects Speier listed was Clyde Kluckhohn’s work on Soviet defectors, sociologist Alex Bavelas’ “classified work,” Rostow’s “vulnerability” project, and studies underway in Indonesia, the Middle East, and the Far East. The memo, as a whole and in keeping with the Troy roots, suggests that Harvard in general, and its Russian Research Center (RRC) in particular, were slated to be more prominent partners in the CIS than the MIT-dominated center that emerged. The main exception, in fact, was Raymond Bauer’s cross-appointment with Kluckhohn’s RRC and the Ford-sponsored RPIC. 3.

<sup>43</sup> Hans Speier to Rowan Gaither, September 18, 1951, Series - Ford Foundation Grants - L to N, Series - Ford Foundation Grants - L to N, Ford Foundation Archives, Rockefeller Archive Center, 3, 5. Rostow, in particular, came in for thinly veiled criticism. Speier, for example, wrote: “W. Rostow, who recently spent some time in Washington canvassing resources and needs, was eager to give the impression that he and the Center had excellent Washington contacts.” 2. And, later in the document: “Rostow apparently conceives of himself as an integrator of a number of sub-projects that have not been definitely decided upon.” 3.

<sup>44</sup> The Ford funds sought were substantial, amounting to \$1.5 million over five years. Hans Speier to Rowan Gaither, September 18, 1951, Series - Ford Foundation Grants - L to N, Series - Ford Foundation Grants - L to N, FFA, 6–7.

plan did not show that international communication had been in the focus of their attention.” The center, the heir apparent to Troy, was drifting from its mission to study psychological warfare.<sup>45</sup>

Speier’s misgivings about the CIS plans continued to mount, even as formal planning got underway for his proposed center. Berelson’s December 1951 plan for Ford’s BSP featured the institute, now labeled the “Research Center on International Communication.” The plan stated that center should be placed at a university, though no mention was made of MIT. Four or five “senior people,” alongside assistants, would staff the center for an initial three-year grant period.<sup>46</sup> A more detailed proposal for the center, authored by Speier, was distributed as an informal appendix to the BSP plan. The 14-page document hews to the themes, and some of the language, of the original, five-page proposal co-authored with Marquis in May. “The increased importance of international communication in United States foreign policy,” the first sentence states, “is a consequence of the rise of the United States to the status of a world power with national and international responsibilities for the preservation of peace and the security of the free world.” International communication, Speier continued, is a “policy instrument” for enhancing alliances, for winning enemy respect, and for offering an “alternative to totalitarianism” for the “peoples behind the Iron Curtain and to Communists in the midst of the free world.” International communication, moreover, could protect people in “the contested areas of the world,” like Asia and the Middle East, against the “inducements offered by Communism.” More concretely—and in addition to spreading knowledge—international communication might be used to “deceive the enemy,” “agitate for certain actions” like “sabotage” or “revolt,” and to “undermine or strengthen beliefs.” Speier, in this document at least, dispensed with euphemism.<sup>47</sup>

Speier noted the recent ramp-up of federal “psychological warfare” initiatives. “All of these activities have increased in scope,” he wrote, “as the conflict with the Soviet Union has become more intense.” In concert with the uptick, research in the “fields of public opinion analysis, audience predisposition, audience response, foreign propaganda organization, political ideology, etc.” has also been “intensified.”<sup>48</sup> More broadly, “[m]uch progress” in communication research has been made in the last quarter-century. Speier pointed to the growth of university research centers, industry-sponsored studies, and the federal government’s “large research staffs” assembled during the war.<sup>49</sup>

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<sup>45</sup> Hans Speier, “Conversation with Jerry Wiesner”, October 4, 1951, Series - Ford Foundation Grants - L to N, Series - Ford Foundation Grants - L to N, FFA, 1.

<sup>46</sup> Proposed Plan for the Development of the Behavioral Sciences Program”, December 1951, Reports 002072, FFA, 45–46. The authors proposed to fund the center at \$200,000 a year, roughly 5 percent of the BSP’s planned \$3 to \$3.5 million dollar budget. 51.

<sup>47</sup> Bernard Berelson, “Conversation with Jim Young” (with draft proposal), January 7, 1952, Series - Ford Foundation Grants - L to N, Series - Ford Foundation Grants - L to N, FFA, 1–2.

<sup>48</sup> Speier singled out for mention the newly established Psychological Strategy Board (PSB), intended to coordinate policy across civilian and military agencies. 3–4.

<sup>49</sup> Speier’s history was a version of the broader “behavioral sciences” story that was, in these early postwar years, repeatedly invoked: Impressionistic, pre-scientific work had been “gradually replaced by scientific studies,” informed by new methods. “Although much work remains to be done,” he wrote, “it is a state of relative scientific maturity if compared with studies of public opinion at the time of Lord

The problem, Speier explained, is that most of the field's gains have come from domestic studies. International questions have been almost entirely neglected, owing to scarce overseas data, disinterest from communication researchers, and the domain ignorance of scholars actually doing international work—political scientists and area specialists. The result is a dangerous knowledge gap on international questions, one that government-commissioned work has failed to close. For these studies have had short-range, operational aims; long-range studies, informed by history and theory, have gone unfunded. There is, Speier wrote, an “urgent need” to underwrite such studies, freed from pressing military and political objectives. Universities won't do this work on their own, and no other foundation has shown an interest.

Late in the year, Gaither, Berelson, and Speier soon won the foundation's leadership approval for the BSP plans, including Speier's proposed center. Action on the research center was deferred until Speier could consult with government officials. The idea, Gaither wrote in a follow-up memo, was that Speier could then advise “the officers of the need for such a center in view of the large governmental interest in international communications.”<sup>50</sup> That government interest was soon confirmed. Speier, tasked with expanding his center writeup for the Trustees, arranged late December meetings with Edward Barrett, the Assistant Secretary of State, and with Gordon Gray, the former Secretary of the Army, both of whom had been involved in Troy.

As Speier began to outline the center plans, Barrett interrupted with “I am already quite enthusiastic” and proceeded to promise contracts from the State Department. The proposed center, Barrett told Speier, could take on research projects that State couldn't conduct itself, or even farm out.<sup>51</sup> Speier met with Gray the same day. Gray had just taken the helm of the Psychological Strategy Board (PSB), a new Cold War agency tasked with coordinating psychological warfare planning across the federal government, after serving as a close Truman advisor on national security issues.<sup>52</sup> Gray expressed strong support for the proposed center and—like Barrett, with the duplication concern in mind—called for its directors to be “informed of past and current research in the field, including classified studies.” Gray urged Speier to ensure that the center's studies get routed to the “interested government agencies,” and to hire staff who could hit the ground running. Speier also spoke with Gray's staff, including the physicist-turned-propagandist Henry Loomis. “All gentlemen I talked to,” reported Speier, “view with interest and approval the possibility of having a Center on

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Bryce.” Speier's account is, however, more ecumenical, downplaying the importance of quantitative survey methods, with an emphasis, instead, on philosophy, linguistics, and cultural anthropology. 4–5.

<sup>50</sup> Hans Speier, Donald Marquis, Bernard Berelson to Rowan Gaither [memo], December 20, 1951, folder 75, box 7, series V, 20046, FFA; and Rowan Gaither, “Program Five-Action of Officers”, December 28, 1951, Folder 5 - Behavioral Sciences - Development of Program Area V, Box 1, Series 1, Behavioral Sciences Division, Office Files of Bernard Berelson, FFA, 2.

<sup>51</sup> Barrett also recommended that the center's directors be “well informed of government research progress” to avoid duplication, and—in Speier's summary—added that the training of young social scientists in international communications “appears to be particularly important.” Hans Speier, “Conversation with Ed Barrett”, December 28, 1951, Series - Ford Foundation Grants - L to N, Series - Ford Foundation Grants - L to N, Ford Foundation Archives, Rockefeller Archive Center. Of course Ford and the other big foundations would soon come under fierce Congressional scrutiny themselves.—with the latter inquest indirectly responsible for the BSPS untimely shuttering in 1957.

<sup>52</sup> According to Needell, the Psychological Strategy Board was a direct outgrowth of Troy. Needell, “‘Truth is Our Weapon,’” 415.

International Communications supplement the current research agencies.” The national security community was backing Speier’s center—unsurprisingly, given the project’s origins in Project Troy.<sup>53</sup>

Speier soon circulated a slimmed-down proposal, in advance of the April Trustees meeting. He included a new selling point, the active support of officials “in responsible positions within the U.S. foreign information program.” He invoked again the substitution rationale, citing the unnamed officials: “They have stated that the Center could undertake certain duties which U.S. Government agencies cannot undertake for political reasons.” In place of his lengthy list of potential topics, Speier noted that the center could approach its topics geographically—with an intensive focus on one or two countries—or with a more general emphasis upon “neglected problems in communications research.” The two approaches, he concluded, are “not mutually exclusive” and could be adopted in successive phases of a Ford grant.<sup>54</sup>

The streamlined proposal was only five pages. In a second appendix, he listed thirteen scholars as potential consultants for the project, all of them prominent figures in the re-mobilized propaganda and morale network. More than half the names—Paul Lazarsfeld, Ithiel de Sola Pool, Daniel Lerner, Kluckhohn, Alex Inkeles, Walt Rostow, Wilbur Schramm, and Jerome Bruner—would have a hand in the center’s subsequent evolution.<sup>55</sup>

After a final revision, Gaither re-circulated Speier’s proposal to Hoffman, highlighting Gray and Barrett’s enthusiasm. As a final prophylactic, Gaither closed his memo with a trio of additional endorsements, including Hoffman’s irascible advisor James Young: “I might add,” he wrote, “that this recommendation is concurrent in not only by Jim Young but also Carl Spaeth and Richard Bissell, both of whom are highly interested in the proposal.”<sup>56</sup> The hyperkinetic Bissell had joined Ford, in early 1952, at Hoffman’s invitation. He was a roving consultant with a charge, in particular, to help flesh out the foundation’s work on economics.<sup>57</sup>

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<sup>53</sup> Loomis, the future Voice of America director, was “just completing,” according to Speier, the “most comprehensive survey of government research in the field of propaganda, psychological and political warfare and public opinion.” Hans Speier, “Conversation with Gordon Gray”, December 28, 1951, Series - Ford Foundation Grants - L to N, Series - Ford Foundation Grants - L to N, Ford Foundation Archives, Rockefeller Archive Center

<sup>54</sup> Hans Speier to Rowan Gaither (with draft proposals), January 23, 1952, Series - Ford Foundation Grants - L to N, Series - Ford Foundation Grants - L to N, FFA.

<sup>55</sup> The remaining four named figures were Philip Moseley (Columbia), Gabriel Almond (Princeton), Douglas Waples (Chicago), Eric Bellquist (UC Berkeley), and Robert Bower (American).

<sup>56</sup> The revised version cut to the Cold War chase even faster, opening with, “The central role of the United States in world affairs which has emerged so markedly in recent years is certain to intensify in the years ahead.” The “political future of the world” is at stake. Also new in this version—though really more of a revival of the original Marquis-Speier memo from May 1951—is the recommendation to affiliate the center with a “major university.” 1, 3. Shortened versions of the first two appendices were included, with the third dropped altogether. “Research Center on International Communications”, March 10, 1952, Series - Ford Foundation Grants - L to N, Series - Ford Foundation Grants - L to N, FFA.

<sup>57</sup> Sutton, “The Ford Foundation,” 66. Spaeth was a key stakeholder too: The dean of the Stanford Law School, he had recently joined Ford as director of the new Division of Overseas Activities. Spaeth’s Division of Overseas Activity was formed with an Advisory Board on Overseas Training and Research. In memos to Hoffman and the other Ford leadership, Gaither recommended that its members—Gordon

After a presentation by Gaither, Berelson, and Marquis, the officers gave their blessing for an initial three-year grant, at \$250,000 to \$350,000 a year. The approval was, however, conditional on Berelson and his team's development of more "specific plans."<sup>58</sup> In late April the Trustees granted their "approval in principle," with the expectation that the BSP team would report back in the summer. More significant, perhaps, than the tentative approval was that Trustees were told, at the meeting, that MIT was likely to host the center.<sup>59</sup>

From the documentary record it is difficult to reconstruct when, and exactly how, the MIT decision was made. It seems likely that the two key figures in striking a deal were Bissell and Speier in early 1952. The CIS, under Millikan's leadership, was of course keen to make overseas economic development its main focus. The problem, for Millikan, was that he needed Ford money, with Speier—unhappy with the pivot to development—standing in the way. Under the terms of the informal deal, the CIS would house Speier's Research Center on International Communications, re-christened as a Research *Program*. Ford, in turn, would help underwrite CIS economic development projects, in addition to Speier's program. Psychological warfare, in the spirit of Troy, was thus to be restored to the CIS agenda.

Some of the details of such a deal can be reconstructed. In February 1952, Speier visited Millikan in Cambridge. In Millikan's account of the meeting in a letter to Bissell, he ascribed the impetus to Gaither, with the aim to inform Millikan "of the Foundation's interest in a center to study international communications and to inquire as to the extent of our activities in this field at the moment." Speier, Millikan continued, had already spoken with Rostow, who had given Speier the impression that the CIS (in Millikan's summary) "had rather moved away from the communications field." Speier's visit, he concluded, was to probe Millikan's interest in hosting the international communications project. It was Bissell, Speier told Millikan at the meeting, who had suggested that the CIS as host to Ford's rival program.<sup>60</sup>

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Gray, Dartmouth president John Dickey, and the broadcaster Edward Murrow in particular—help advise the officers and Trustees on the center and its establishment. Rowan Gaither to Paul Hoffman, March 11, 1952, Series - Ford Foundation Grants - L to N, Series - Ford Foundation Grants - L to N, FFA.

<sup>58</sup> The officers authorized Berelson and his staff to develop a "specific plan," with the implication that—pending the initial Trustee approval-to-come—the center would still need a second round of endorsements. Weekly Report to the President, March 17, 1952, Series - Ford Foundation Grants - L to N, Series - Ford Foundation Grants - L to N, FFA. Note that this Weekly Report specified \$250,000 to \$300,000, while other documents from the period record \$350,000 as the upper bound. E.g., Excerpt from Staff Meeting Minutes, March 25, 1952, Series - Ford Foundation Grants - L to N, Series - Ford Foundation Grants - L to N, FFA. In a letter to Trustees, the center was described as oriented to the study of "the various channels of communication between countries and the effects of what is happening in thos channels. Exchange of information and ideas between both governing and non-governing elites, as well as between population masses, would be included...". Excerpt from Monthly Letter to the Trustees, March 26, 1952, Series - Ford Foundation Grants - L to N, Series - Ford Foundation Grants - L to N, FFA.

<sup>59</sup> Trustees were provided a slightly re-formatted version of Speier's proposal in their docket materials. Excerpt from the Docket, Board of Trustees, April 10, 1952, Series - Ford Foundation Grants - L to N, Series - Ford Foundation Grants - L to N, FFA; "While no final decisions have been reached as to location of the Center, discussions have been held with officials of Massachusetts Institute of Technology, where a Center of International Studies relayed is set up." Excerpt from Monthly Letter to the Trustees, April 30, 1952, Series - Ford Foundation Grants - L to N, Series - Ford Foundation Grants - L to N, FFA

<sup>60</sup> Quoted in Blackmer, *The MIT Center*, 37.



Millikan, in his letter to Bissell, wrote that he had been taken “somewhat by surprise” by Speier’s probe. Millikan was, he told Bissell, under the impression that Gaither knew that the CIS was primarily interested in economic development. He had been thinking, Millikan wrote to Bissell, “increasingly along the lines of developing a series of projects on economic growth,” and added that “our resources are almost ideally adapted to research in this field.” Millikan hastened to add that he didn’t want to give “the impression that we are not interested in [the communication] area or would not push it actively,” but he worried that moving in that direction could come “at the expense of effort devoted to launching the Economic Growth Program.” He requested that Bissell could inquire, “on a wholly informal basis,” about the Ford’s plans for “our request for support in this field.”<sup>61</sup>

As soon as Ford officers formally endorsed Speier’s center in March, Bissell sprung into action. What followed was a month of frenetic match-making orchestrated by Bissell, with Speier’s apparent blessing. Just days after the March approval, Gaither was in Cambridge at a Bissell-arranged meeting with Harvard and MIT representatives.<sup>62</sup> Bissell was, at the same time, aggressively promoting CIS itself within Ford. In a lengthy April 9 memo to the officers, he reiterated his “very great interest” in the CIS, adding this his “present judgment” is that Ford should support its activities. He cited three projects that Ford might underwrite, with Speier’s center as the first. The CIS, he wrote, may “turn out to be suitable” to host the international communications project. “This possibility has been discussed by Messrs. Berelson and Speier with Max Millikan, the Head of the Center, several times.” Gaither’s early-April trip to Cambridge to meet with MIT officials was, he noted, a success.<sup>63</sup>

The second CIS project, Bissell wrote, was to center on economic development, “with special reference to the less developed countries.” He noted that some of the research “will probably be financed” by a contract with the State Department’s Technical Cooperation Administration—adding that Ford’s Carl Spaeth “is informed of and is interested” in this contract.<sup>64</sup> Bissell outlined the CIS’s first planned initiative, in India, with barely

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<sup>61</sup> Quoted in Blackmer, *The MIT Center*, 38.

<sup>62</sup> Excerpt from Weekly Report to the President, April 7, 1952, Series - Ford Foundation Grants - L to N, Series - Ford Foundation Grants - L to N, FFA.

<sup>63</sup> Bissell described the center as established under “Joint Harvard and MIT sponsorship,” which was, at the time, and with Troy as precedent, the expected arrangement. Bissell recorded that Gaither, in Cambridge, had reviewed the plans to host Speier’s center with Millikan and Jay Stratton, the MIT provost who would go on to play a central role in the life of the Ford MIT Research Program. Richard Bissell, “Progress Report”, April 9, 1952, Reel C-1149, Series 1952 - General Correspondence, General Correspondence, FFA, 1. Gaither followed up, in a mid-April letter to Stratton, that he hoped to speak with Millikan, and stressed confidentiality to “to avoid any unnecessary publicity concerning the Foundation’s plans.” Rowan Gaither to Jay Stratton, April 11, 1952, Series - Ford Foundation Grants - L to N, Series - Ford Foundation Grants - L to N, FFA.

<sup>64</sup> The reference to Spaeth is likely in regard to Ford’s growing interest and investment in India, which the foundation was—in the months ahead—was to coordinate with substantial funding from the Technical Cooperation Administration. Richard Bissell, “Progress Report”, April 9, 1952, Reel C-1149, Series 1952 - General Correspondence, General Correspondence, FFA, 1.

contained enthusiasm. He urged Ford officers, in the strongest terms, to supplement whatever government funds CIS could secure for its economic development program.<sup>65</sup>

The third CIS project, Bissell wrote, was a series of public opinion studies of “Iron Curtain countries,” of allied nations, and of the U.S. itself, on “attitudes toward the East-West struggle.” This project, he explained, had grown out of government-contract work already underway, itself with roots in the “Troy project of last fall.” Bissell was, without naming the agency, referring to CIA-backed research. The project, currently focused on “psychological and political warfare” with the Soviet bloc, could—with Ford funding—be widened to include allies and “possibly” the U.S.<sup>66</sup> This potential widening was, more than anything, in support of Bissell’s own “Conditions of Peace” initiative—itsself a fascinating and influential Cold War project that Bissell had, a month earlier, outlined in a 16-page memo to Ford officers.<sup>67</sup> He “would like to see,” he wrote in the more recent memo, Ford “delegate” to CIS some of the “preliminary planning” needed as “preparation for any effort to create a climate of opinion more conducive to the maintenance of peace.” He raised, only to dismiss, the concern that Ford might end up subsidizing government work.<sup>68</sup>

Bissell was, without mentioning his own CIS ties, pushing hard for immediate, if necessarily informal, commitments of Ford support. “I believe,” he wrote, “there is a certain urgency” to the projects—especially the third, linked to his “Conditions of Peace” project. Millikan, he added, was on the cusp of sending Gaither a CIS prospectus. “I hope,” Bissell concluded, “with this document in hand to supplement the foregoing very rough notes, that the general attitude of the Officers, at least on the two projects of interest to me [ie., the second and third], can be crystallized before too long a time.”<sup>69</sup>

Bissell did not disguise his disinterest in Speier’s institute, nor did he detect the obvious overlap between the international communications program and his “third project.” His aim was to win Ford support for the CIS, which—he reasoned correctly—Speier’s project could help to secure. Meanwhile, Millikan traveled to New York to meet with Ford’s John Howard, a former chemist and lawyer with a Marshall Plan background then working on Hoffman’s Area I initiatives.<sup>70</sup> Though impressed by Millikan, Howard was baffled by the polyglot plans for the CIS, in particular the proposed mix of international communications and economic development. In a letter to Spaeth, Howard tried to reconstruct, based on the meeting, the center’s four main domains. The

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<sup>65</sup> The CIS India project plans, Bissell wrote, indicate that it would “involve pretty fundamental economic research, that it would be broad in scope and would avoid an over-emphasis on the economic elements of the problem, and that it would be undertaken with considerable sophistication as to the interplay of political and economic developments.” *Ibid.*, 2. He did not hedge, nor qualify, his endorsement: “All things considered, I believe the Foudnation should encourage the Center to make a formal submission of this project and to expect very sympathetic and probably favorable consideration thereof.” 2

<sup>66</sup> *Ibid.*, 2–3.

<sup>67</sup> Bissell, in the “Conditions of Peace” memo, saw the campaign as a tool of military de-escalation, but one that should prepare Americans and the world for a period of expensive co-existence with the Soviets—a “less war-like cold war.” Richard Bissell, “Creating the Conditions of Peace,” March 3, 1952

<sup>68</sup> Richard Bissell, “Progress Report”, April 9, 1952, Reel C-1149, Series 1952 - General Correspondence, General Correspondence, FFA, 2

<sup>69</sup> *Ibid.*, 3.

<sup>70</sup> Sutton, “The Ford Foundation,” 63–64.

first was international communications—a “direct outgrowth of the Troy project,” Howard reported. The center’s second area was something like holistic studies of those nations likely to get targeted in U.S. information campaigns—research, in other words, on the “social structure and attitudes” of “target countries in relation to communications.” The CIS’s current contract work, he added, is in this second domain. (He was, like Bissell before him, referring to CIS’s Troy-inherited, CIA-commissioned project on Soviet bloc vulnerabilities.) The third focal area, the letter continued, was economic development, which Millikan—in what was likely a bid for cross-domain coherence—had apparently pitched in communication terms. The fourth and final domain centered on international opinions of U.S. foreign policy—Bissell’s initiative which, again, Millikan had framed in communication terms.<sup>71</sup>

Howard wrote that the first two areas—those plainly related to communication—appear “to be quite solid and valuable.” Gaither and Berelson, he added in apparent approval, had “talked” with Millikan about their own “proposal on international communications.” If anything, it was the third and fourth areas that provoked Howard’s skepticism. In his letter to Spaeth, Howard recounted how he had told Millikan that he was “least clear about field 4.” Millikan, in reply, “said that he was also least clear about it, but Dick Bissell had encouraged him to expand this type of activity.”<sup>72</sup>

“I must say,” Howard concluded, “that the discussion with Milliken [*sic*] left me somewhat bewildered by the heterogenous and unrelated fields of interest of the International Center and confused by the vagueness of Milliken’s plans.” No wonder: Those plans were independent projects, united by little more than the prospect of Ford funding. Each of the projects’ respective champions—Speier, Millikan, and Bissell—saw the CIS as the well-resourced means for their specific, and barely compatible, ends. For Howard, this meant that Millikan and Bissell had their work count out for them: The CIS plans “need a good deal of shaking down before they acquire any unique character beyond”—again sparing the first two areas—“that of the communications work.”<sup>73</sup>

Millikan may have used Howard’s criticisms, along with other feedback that he and Bissell received in early April, to revise his CIS perspective, which he soon distributed to Gaither, Spaeth, and others. The document outlined the center’s origins in Troy. That project’s aim was, Millikan added, “on the face of it a problem in communications.” As the project wrapped up, its participants had the view that a “more permanent organization” should be established. Troy had, among other things, showed how “monkish research,”

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<sup>71</sup> Referring to the third, economic development area, Howard added: “... Millikan described this in theoretical terms of communications among people in under-developed countries as a means of spreading economic development.” The fourth domain too, judging by Howard’s summary, was also pitched (more plausibly) in communication terms. Referring to the existing Soviet bloc work, Howard wrote: “From a communications standpoint it appeared desirable to give them a correct understanding of these plans.” John Howard to Carl Spaeth, April 11, 1952, Series - Ford Foundation Grants - L to N, Series - FFA, 1.

<sup>72</sup> Ibid., 2.

<sup>73</sup> Ibid., 2.

properly conceived, could help inform the daily “operational decisions” that constitute the “tactics of our cold war effort.”<sup>74</sup>

Millikan’s crucial task in the prospectus was to justify the new prominence of economic development for the CIS plans. His warrant for the mission drift was cunningly grounded in Troy itself. He outlined four major “conclusions,” each attributed to Troy participants—and in each case the basis for an area of CIS focus. These were indeed the same quartet of domains that Millikan had shared with Howard: international communications research, the broad-based study of “target” countries, economic development, and opinion research on U.S. foreign policy. The first was plainly within the original Troy remit, so required no justification. The second Millikan cast in propaganda terms: “In the language of psychological warfare, we felt that much more study of the target was needed.”<sup>75</sup> The motivation for this second “lesson” was, however, *ex post facto*: As other documents from the period make clear, Millikan was hoping to secure funding for two country studies—one recently proposed for India, the other underway in Indonesia—with no discernible link to communications.<sup>76</sup>

So it was with Troy’s third “lesson,” one that Millikan keyed with special care: “some of us,” he wrote, “became convinced” of the limits of “what is narrowly defined as psychological warfare.” However skillfully deployed, propaganda alone, we concluded, could not “crack the power or alter the direction of the Kremlin.” Even the broader “instruments” of what “we came to call political warfare”—not just propaganda but inclusive of diplomacy and “other activities” too—were insufficient on their own. “We became convinced,” Millikan continued in the voice of Troy, that “our strongest psychological weapon” was the potential boost to countries’ “productivity and standards of living.” Here, then, was Millikan’s Troy-to-CIS logic: The original project had revealed the limits of its communications scope, so that broadening the Cold War toolkit to include economic uplift was a faithful next step.<sup>77</sup>

Millikan’s most audacious act of retroactive justification was, arguably, in the fourth domain—since this was in fact Bissell’s recently hatched “Conditions of Peace” initiative. Still referring to Troy, Millikan wrote that “we had brought home to us” the truism that policy success depends on “important segments of American opinion.” There was, in addition to the anachronous Troy attribution, an interesting twist: The work to be delegated to CIS, in this rendering, was entirely focused on *US* public opinion—a departure from the scope

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<sup>74</sup> “Origins and Objectives of the Center for International Studies”, April 1952, Series - Ford Foundation Grants - L to N, Series - Ford Foundation Grants - L to N, FFA, 1-2.

<sup>75</sup> *Ibid.*, 3-4.

<sup>76</sup> See, for example, Bissell’s recounting, in a May memo to Milton Katz, about CIS’s four projects: The country-target studies were, in Bissell’s telling, the “two country studies,” and presented with no link to communication as such: The pair of projects, he wrote, would “increase our knowledge about the particular societies that are to be studied, to begin with India and Indonesia.” Richard Bissell, “Conversation with Carl Spaeth on the Cambridge Center for International Studies”, May 9, 1952, Reel C-1149, Series 1952 - General Correspondence, General Correspondence, Ford Foundation Archives, Rockefeller Archive Center, 1.

<sup>77</sup> *Ibid.*, 4-5.

that Bissell and Millikan had recently outlined in memos and meetings with Ford officials.<sup>78</sup> The idea, as outlined here, was to engineer the public's consent to U.S. information campaigns. Major acts and policies can't, Millikan wrote, be "sustained in the face of general political opposition." American elites, in particular, must be brought on board if overseas communication campaigns are to succeed. So any "communications policy," if it is to be effective, requires a "consensus among at least some major 'opinion-leadership' groups in the United States." The aim, in this fourth domain, was for CIS to inform a domestic propaganda campaign—to study how "thoughtful and responsible U.S. opinion leadership can be encouraged to approximate" a consensus to the "extent necessary to provide a reasonably predictable and stable basis for governmental and private policy." The plan, in other words, was psychological warfare aimed at the homefront—with official or even "private" sponsorship.<sup>79</sup>

Millikan, in his bid to place economic development at the CIS core, had strayed from Speier's post-Troy vision. But he had, at the same time, outlined a research mode—one oriented to *action*—fully consistent with the German emigre's own stance. In the prospectus Millikan called for the "closest continuing contact" between research and "those responsible for action." In words that Speier could have written, Millikan asserted that "[o]nly by continued discussion back and forth will the action official develop a new way of arrange in his mind the alternative open to him." The reverse was true too: The researcher, in confronting the operator's practical problems, comes to recast his own reflections. The result is a "broadening and changing of the thinking of the operator and the academic man respectively as they mutually wrestle with a common problem." This symbiotic picture of research was, on its surface, compatible with the broadly held view of most early Cold War social scientists: that team-based, "applied" research often yields rich theoretical insight. But Millikan and Speier had in mind a tighter coupling, a more intense looping, of researcher and "operator." Even so—and again in keeping with Speier's own view—Millikan stressed that CIS should avoid short-run operational research.<sup>80</sup>

Bissell, meanwhile, kept up the internal sales campaign, traveling to Washington, Pasadena, New York, and Detroit to meet with various foundation officials. In yet another April memo, he redoubled his pitch for the CIS in general, and for economic development and his own "Conditions of Peace" initiative in particular. He cited, again, Gaither and Berelson's interest in locating Speier's research center at CIS as, in effect, a pot-

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<sup>78</sup> Recall that Bissell had presented the opinion research as centered on Soviet bloc and allied countries, with the U.S. public as a possible inclusion too. Millikan had described the project as exclusively focused on overseas opinion.

<sup>79</sup> Millikan made the point unflinchingly: Even if government policy could be sustained in the face of public opposition, it "cannot have the desired effect on attitudes abroad if important groups of Americans are continually making it very plain by words and acts that these policies do not represent their views." Whether "we like it or not," U.S. overseas communication is inevitably colored by the views "of America as a whole and not just those whatever 'policy makers' happen to be in office at the moment." 6.

<sup>80</sup> Millikan, who did not use the "behavioral sciences" term, surveyed the "intellectual resources" available in Cambridge, referring to the Harvard's Russian Research Center, clusters of social scientists at both universities, and even MIT's engineering faculty. Conspicuously absent from the lengthy inventory was any mention of communication researchers—a result, in part, of both institutions' indifference to the organized would-be discipline, but striking all the same. 21–25.

sweetening addendum.<sup>81</sup> With the aim to seal the agreement on hosting Speier's center, Millikan himself traveled to Pasadena in late April for two days of meetings with Gaither and Berelson.<sup>82</sup> The full-court press by Bissell and Millikan, together with the prospectus, was apparently enough to satisfy Gaither and Berelson that CIS should host Speier's research program. On Gaither's recommendation, the Trustees approved the MIT placement in principle.<sup>83</sup>

In the balance of the spring, Bissell and Millikan moved to lock down Ford funding for the CIS development and area-studies projects. Their tactic was, in effect, to piggyback on the international communications program. Speier's initiative, after all, was already approved and enjoyed firm BSP support. So in a May memo to Milton Katz—the Ford associate director overseeing international programming—Bissell vigorously stressed the all-in-one nature of the CIS plans. The four projects, he wrote, “are in fact only four facets of what will be a single and indivisible operation.” It “must be repeated,” he wrote at the end of the *same* short paragraph, that the four areas “will be the end products of a single operation.” Anticipating potential funding hurdles, Bissell even implored Katz to prevent the Trustees, and also the foundation's lay Advisory Board on Area Research and Training, from treating the projects separately. Both bodies, he wrote, should be “presented with a single project, not with four separate ones.” It should be “made clear,” he added, “that piecemeal action on the four aspects of the single project would be impractical or wasteful.”<sup>84</sup>

Bissell knew that the CIS omni-proposal was, at best, confusing. He attached, in his letter to Katz, an outline of five different “pieces of paper” that Millikan had or would be submitting, the prospectus and four distinct funding requests. There were, in this new outline of the CIS plans, some departures from what had, just a week or two earlier, been circulated to Ford officials. For example, references to a standalone U.S. public opinion project, linked to Bissell's “Conditions of Peace” initiative, were gone. And the country studies—which had been oriented to international communication, at least in their framing—were now squarely within the economic development program. Indeed, Bissell's presentation to Katz sketched what was to become, by the end of the year, the actual CIS structure: A core mission centered on economic development,

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<sup>81</sup> Richard Bissell to Joseph McDaniel, April 16, 1952, Series - Ford Foundation Grants - L to N, Series - Ford Foundation Grants - L to N, FFA. Bissell, as in the mid-April prospectus, characterized his own project in starkly domestic terms: “attitudes in the U.S. toward the East-West struggle.”

<sup>82</sup> Excerpt from Minutes of Staff Meeting, April 29, 1952, Series - Ford Foundation Grants - L to N, Series - Ford Foundation Grants - L to N, FFA. See also Excerpt from Weekly Report to the President, May 5, 1952, Series - Ford Foundation Grants - L to N, Series - Ford Foundation Grants - L to N, FFA.

<sup>83</sup> Excerpt from Monthly Letter to the Trustees, April 30, 1952, Series - Ford Foundation Grants - L to N, Series - Ford Foundation Grants - L to N, FFA.

<sup>84</sup> Richard Bissell, “Conversation with Carl Spaeth on the Cambridge Center for International Studies”, May 9, 1952, Reel C-1149, Series 1952 - General Correspondence, General Correspondence, FFA, 1-2. Almost anticipating that economic development and “political stability” might be vulnerable, Bissell took pains to pre-limit the Advisory Board's scope of input: “I believe we should ask for the Advisory Board's comments on the content of the whole research program proposed by the Cambridge Center but I do not believe they should be invited to comment on such matters as the decision to emphasize research in international communications, for general research in economic development and political stability, or on the decision to group various of these activities in one institution, or on any others of the decision [sic] of policy and procedure that have already been made by the officers.” 2.

supplemented by a separately funded international communications program. The development-oriented program would fall under Area III's jurisdiction—the Ford division focused on the economy—while Speier's institute would remain with the BSP.<sup>85</sup>

A few days later Millikan sent Berelson the promised “pieces of paper”: an updated CIS prospectus, and proposals for what he called the CIS's “two major programs in communications and economic development.” Millikan echoed Bissell's plea for the projects to be reviewed as a single, coherent whole—at least by the Trustees.<sup>86</sup>

The request was not honored. For the most part, the international communications program was treated as a distinct proposal, which Gaither delicately steered around the skepticism of other Ford officers and Hoffman's lay Advisory Board. Spaeth, the Overseas Project chief, was notably skeptical. For its part, the Advisory Board called for a sharper definition of the program's scope, and more detail on initial projects and personnel.<sup>87</sup> Gaither promised revisions to appease the Board, but argued that the foundation should privately assure MIT of the project's full, three-year funding in the meantime. In mid-June he traveled to Cambridge a second time,

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<sup>85</sup> Richard Bissell to Milton Katz (2), May 9, 1952, Series - Ford Foundation Grants - L to N, Series - Ford Foundation Grants - L to N, FFA. The Indonesia study was presented, in this document, as “one of the two country studies that the Cambridge Center would like to undertake within the more general field of economic growth and political stability,” though Bissell also referred to the study as a “case study in international communications” as one of its three main facets. On the Indian study, he wrote that the “communications emphasis will be less than in the Indonesian study.” Both studies, he noted, should be funded out of existing Area I appropriations for “Asiatic area studies.” 2.

<sup>86</sup> Millikan wrote that “Professor Oliver's Indonesia enterprise” should be construed as an “immediate request for funds” already allocated for Overseas Operations. Max Millikan to Bernard Berelson, May 13, 1952, Reel 1194, Series - Ford Foundation Grants - L to N, FFA, 1. The members of the Advisory Board on Area Research and Training, in line with Bissell's request, were only shown the first two documents: the CIS prospectus and international communications proposal. See Carl Spaeth to Edward R. Murrow, May 16, 1952, Series - Ford Foundation Grants - L to N, Series - Ford Foundation Grants - L to N, FFA.

<sup>87</sup> Rowan Gaither to Carl Spaeth, June 16, 1952, Series - Ford Foundation Grants - L to N, Series - Ford Foundation Grants - L to N, FFA. Gaither's letter to Spaeth—outlining steps to answer the Advisory Board's concerns, for Spaeth to pass on—is a pitch-perfect example of Gaither's preferred mode of bureaucratic persuasion: minor concessions and tonal deference to soften, and thereby circumvent, opposition. On Spaeth's skepticism, see his recounting of his conversation with Gaither, in which he, Spaeth, proposed withholding funds from MIT, proposing instead that Ford fund just the Indonesian study as a kind of test: “I suggested that a possible alternative approach might be the approval of the Indonesia project with a grant of additional funds to enable M.I.T. to work out the ‘communications’ implications of the Indonesian program.” Should the latter prove promising, Spaeth reasoned, further Ford support could follow. Carl B. Spaeth, “Conversation with Rowan Gaither Concerning Center for International Communications”, June 16, 1952, Series - Ford Foundation Grants - L to N, Series - FFA. On the Advisory Board meeting, see Excerpt from Weekly Report to the President, June 9, 1952, Series - Ford Foundation Grants - L to N, Series - Ford Foundation Grants - L to N, FFA. In preparation for the July Trustee vote, Berelson circulated the proposal to figures in the U.S. propaganda bureaucracy. For example, Waldemar Nielsen, director of the Office of Information in the Office of the US Special Representative in Europe, solicited responses from a number of colleagues, and offered his own assessment, in a late June letter to Berelson. Nielsen endorsed the proposal, but recommended a more robust “non-academic” orientation. “I feel the paper shows in a number of places deficiencies resulting from a purely academic approach.” Waldemar Nielsen to Bernard Berelson, June 20, 1952, Series - Ford Foundation Grants - L to N, Series - Ford Foundation Grants - L to N, FFA, 1.

to meet with MIT's Stratton and Paul Buck, the Harvard provost, and reported back assurances of the universities' support.<sup>88</sup>

The July Trustees docket recommended a four-year, \$875,000 grant to MIT, for what was now called the Research *Program* in International Communication. The document explains that, after a search, officers concluded that the "newly organized" CIS was the "most promising place" to locate the program. Detailed planning would take place in the program's first year, with proposals revised by an "advisory board on communications research composed of the best men available in the field." By "communications research," here and elsewhere in the docket, Ford's officers meant scholars from the mainline social sciences working in the area, not any organized, standalone discipline.<sup>89</sup>

The Trustees approved the Research Program at their July meeting, with Hoffman singling out Millikan for praise. The award called for a year of planning, funded at \$125,000, and three years of operational support at \$250,000 annually—the low end of the proposed range.<sup>90</sup> The CIS economic program was approved separately, though only for a one-year planning grant, also \$125,000. Trustees were provided with a revised CIS overview that stressed, despite the standalone proposals, the center's cross-program coherence.<sup>91</sup>

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<sup>88</sup> Gaither charged Millikan with revising the proposal, to "answer those who contend that the program should be more concrete before it is approved." Carl B. Spaeth, "Conversation with Rowan Gaither Concerning Center for International Communications", June 16, 1952, Series - Ford Foundation Grants - L to N, Series - FFA.

<sup>89</sup> A section on the "Background of the Center" refers obliquely to Troy: "Two years ago Government agency asked M.I.T. to organize a group of natural and social scientists to work on the problem of how we can communicate with foreign peoples." The docket summary notes that CIS is under MIT's administrative auspices, but "actually operates as a joint M.I.T. -Harvard enterprise." "Research Program in International Communication" [for Trustee Meeting], July 15-16, 1952, Reel 1194, Series - Ford Foundation Grants - L to N, FFA, 1. The formal Harvard co-sponsorship—almost certainly because of the secret CIA funding—was soon dropped. The powerful Ford trustee and Harvard Business School dean Donald David stressed the point at the July board meeting when the Research Program was formally approved: While some Harvard personnel participated, "the administration of the Center was entirely in the hands of MIT," and stated that the "arrangement was apparently working satisfactorily." "Excerpt from Minutes of Board of Trustees, July 15-16, 1952", July 16, 1952, Reel 1194, Series - Ford Foundation Grants - L to N, FFA, 10-11. On the program's interdisciplinary character: It's "work would be done by analysts with different professional backgrounds, including anthropologists, sociologists, psychologists, historians, economists, lawyers, political scientists, and natural scholars." Notably absent from the list is communication research itself. 2. The reference to interpersonal influence, in the implied Columbia mold, found its way into MIT's official press release, issued in September: "Since parallel studies in several other institutions have placed major emphasis on mass media such as radio and the like, it is anticipated that special attention will be given to other channels including personal and organizational media." J. A. Stratton to Bernard Berelson, September 10, 1952, Reel 1194, Series - Ford Foundation Grants - L to N, FFA, 2.

<sup>90</sup> Gaither promised a "critical appraisal by outsiders" at the conclusion of the grant, and reassured Trustees that Ford made no commitment to extend support beyond the grant's initial term. "Excerpt from Minutes of Board of Trustees, July 15-16, 1952", July 16, 1952, Reel 1194, Series - Ford Foundation Grants - L to N, FFA, 10-11. On the award, see "Research Program on International Communication" (Ford overview), October 6, 1952, Reel 1194, Series - Ford Foundation Grants - L to N, FFA. Gaither agreed to temporarily supervise the economic development grant, "in order to coordinate it with the communications research program." Rowan Gaither to Paul Hoffman, August 6, 1952, Reel 1194, Series - Ford Foundation Grants - L to N, FFA

<sup>91</sup> The approved annual funding for the economic development program—\$125,000—was half the expected amount, forcing late changes in funding priorities. See, for example, Rowan Gaither to Bernard Berelson and David McClelland, July 24, 1952, Reel 1194, Series - Ford Foundation Grants - L to N, FFA.



After the successful votes, Gaither and Berelson moved quickly to establish an advisory committee for the international communications program—a concession to the calls, by Ford insiders and consultants alike, for more detailed planning. Millikan, presumably with the input of Gaither, Berelson, and Speier, began issuing invitations to potential committee members. The names have a familiar ring: Harold Lasswell, Jerome Bruner, Edward Shils, Paul Lazarsfeld, and Wallace Carroll. Ithiel de Sola Pool agreed to serve as the committee’s executive secretary.<sup>92</sup> The members were well-known to each other, not least through shared service in the World War II propaganda bureaucracy. All seven had played significant roles in those wartime efforts, frequently alongside one or more of the other committee members.

Speier ultimately agreed to take the chair role, with Pool—Lasswell’s former student—handling logistics. It was Speier, too, who drafted the foundation’s press release on the MIT grant. The announcement was pitched in a high Cold War key. With the grant, Speier wrote, Ford aims to “counteract Soviet propaganda abroad and its vicious misrepresentations of the intentions of the United States Government and the American way of life.” There is, the press release continued, “an urgent need for improving the means of international communications, of studying obstacles to its free flow and the conditions of its success.” Speier noted CIS’s Troy roots—its past work on “the technological and the psychological aspects of international communication.” In a quietly bitter reference to the center’s subsequent neglect, he added that CIS’s “work on international communications has been limited however to the extent that it was done on short-term government contracts.” The RPIC grant will, by contrast, focus on “fundamental research...planned for a longer period of time.”<sup>93</sup>

By the fall of 1953, the RPIC was officially underway, under Pool’s leadership, with a staff that included the sociologist Daniel Lerner, journalist Harold Isaacs, and (half-time) the social psychologist Raymond Bauer. By then, the struggle over resources and direction had taken a different, more contained form. Economic development and international communications were facts on the ground. The jockeying now was mostly around funding. Millikan, at this time, was working to revive the CIS development proposal that Ford trustees,

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<sup>92</sup> Ithiel de Sola Pool to Bernard Berelson, August 14, 1952, Reel 1194, Series - Ford Foundation Grants - L to N, FFA. Millikan also frequently attended the Planning Committee meetings as CIS director. See Proposal for a Research Program in International Communication, fourth draft, January 29, 1953, Series - Ford Foundation Grants - L to N, Series - Ford Foundation Grants - L to N, FFA, 1. Berelson, in a letter to Millikan, reported that he, Speier, and Lasswell had each had “separate talks” with Pool, whom he called “first-rate.” “I am sure,” he wrote, that “he will participate as the staff man.” Bernard Berelson to Max Millikan, August 13, 1952, Reel 1194, Series - Ford Foundation Grants - L to N, FFA.

<sup>93</sup> Speier’s low-grade pique extended to the release’s last sentence which, after five paragraphs on RPIC, portrayed the CIS economic development grant as a sideshow: “The Ford Foundation has having also a small grant to the Center for International Studies for the purpose of aiding it in its planning of research on the economic development in foreign areas.” The press release was not circulated until December, after the Planning Committee had already met several times. The reason for the delay is unknown. Hans Speier, untitled memo, December 1952, Reel 1194, Series - Ford Foundation Grants - L to N, FFA, 1-2.

the summer before, had turned down. They finally succeeded: Between 1952 and 1961, Ford's economic division—established with Bissell's crucial intervention—granted Millikan's unit over \$2 million.<sup>94</sup>

Despite nods to interdisciplinarity, the economic development program was staffed exclusively by economists. The program's strength in economics was, according to Donald Blackmer's participant history, "not matched by a comparable investment in scholars working on the social, political, or cultural dimensions of development, although the Center never failed to insist on the importance of these factors." The center's planning documents, he added, "gave no indication of intending to recruit anyone but economists."<sup>95</sup>

This was, perhaps, the point all along. In his memoirs Bissell—retired from a long CIA career launched on his departure from Ford in 1954—claimed the credit. Citing his existing interest in economic development and political stability, Bissell wrote: "An opportunity to address this concern arose in late 1952 when Max Millikan resigned as an assistant director at the CIA [...] to become director of MIT's Center for International Studies. He and I had similar interests," Bissell continued, "and I was able to get the trustees of the Ford Foundation to fund research" on economic development.<sup>96</sup>

In the CIS case, the two men's similar interests—taken to include their pasts and social circles—was indeed decisive.

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<sup>94</sup> Blackmer, *The MIT Center*, 69–70. The competition within the CIS over mission and funds from 1951 to 1953 mirrored a larger contest at the Ford Foundation between economics and the other social sciences. As Mark Solovey and I have described elsewhere, the relationship of economics to the "behavioral sciences" was fraught from the moment the *Gaither Report* was approved in 1950. It's a complex story but the net result was that Bissell and others had, by 1953, successfully secured Program Area Three (by then renamed Economic Development and Administration) for economics. Pooley and Solovey, "Marginal to the Revolution."

<sup>95</sup> Blackmer, *The MIT Center*, 74–75.

<sup>96</sup> Bissell, *Reflections of a Cold Warrior*, 77.