

# Amherst panelist decries impact of anti-Soviet films



JOHN E. MACK  
Urges "planetary hygiene"

By Jean Caldwell  
Special to the Globe

AMHERST — A professor of psychiatry at Harvard Medical School has suggested that limits to free expression may be proper when it arouses national hatred.

John Mack, author of numerous articles on the psychology of the arms race, was a principal speaker during a three-day conference last week on "psychological analyses of war and the nuclear arms race" held at Amherst College.

Mack pointed out that once two nations see themselves as adversaries, a special way of thinking emerges that he called an "enmity system." Everything the other side does is systematically distorted. Sometimes the distortion is willful and sometimes it is unconscious, he said.

Mack said this kind of thinking exaggerates the differences between the Soviet

Union and the United States and becomes an obstacle to working constructively to end the arms race.

As an example of the "enmity system" in action, Mack cited the "current anti-Soviet media campaign" illustrated by movies such as "Rambo," "Rocky IV" and "Red Dawn." Another example, he said, is the ABC program called "Amerika," which is based on the premise that the KGB has taken over the United States without a war. Criticism caused ABC to cancel broadcast. One critic blasted that decision as a "triumph of censorship," but Mack praised it as "good for planetary hygiene."

Mack said it is dangerous to have the Russians replacing the American Indian as villains on the American screen because the problem of the 21st century is going to be ecology, not ideology.

Professor Ralph White of George

Washington University in Washington, a psychologist who devoted 20 years to analyzing Soviet thought, said Russians are shocked when Americans see the Soviet Union as an aggressor nation.

White said Russian leaders realize that they are behind in the arms race but are afraid to admit this to their people or to the world. This is in sharp contrast, he said, to what happens here where "President Reagan glories in claims of US weakness." White charged that assertions that the United States is behind in strategic weapons come from people who focus narrowly on land based missiles and ignore US superiority in air- and sea-based missiles.

Professor Michael Klare, director of the Five College Program in Peace and World Security Studies, organized the conference. He said it was planned in the hope that the insights of academic disciplines

could break the "logjam" that has stymied the efforts of arms control experts to halt the arms race. Klare said the conference was the first of a series that will bring together psychologists, anthropologists, sociologists and historians to examine the arms issue.

The 50 participants included faculty members from nine New England colleges and representatives of a half-dozen agencies concerned with peace.

Klare reported that the conferees were pleased that events seemed to overtake their discussions when the Soviet leader, Mikhail S. Gorbachev, made his arms reduction proposal Wednesday. Although those present did not analyze details of the proposal, there was agreement that it was an example of the kind of process that is essential if arms reduction is to be achieved, said Klare.