

M-103,377

S-216,550

NOV 8 1967

BOOK TALK

# 'Iron Mountain' To Raise Uproar

By LEONARD SANDERS ✓  
Star-Telegram Book Editor

Dial Press has a book scheduled for publication Nov. 30 that reads like a psychedelic - nightmare version of George Orwell's "1984" or Aldous Huxley's "Brave New World."



LEONARD SANDERS

But Dial Press claims that the book — identified as a suppressed government report — is true.

In essence the book, "Report From Iron Mountain on the Possibility and Desirability of Peace" (\$5), concludes that lasting peace — disarmament and the disbanding of armies — would be a catastrophe of staggering proportions. The "report" warns that "the war system cannot responsibly be allowed to disappear until we know exactly what it is we plan to put in its place, and we are certain, beyond reasonable doubt, that these substitute institutions will serve their purposes in terms of the survival and stability of society."

Some advance readers in the government have labeled the book a hoax. But Dial Press insists that the "report" is authentic. Esquire magazine is planning a 28,000-word condensation in its December issue and — hoax or not — the book promises to become the focal-point of some lively debate.

The author understandably chooses to remain anonymous.

\* \* \*

IN AN INTRODUCTION, Leonard C. Lewin, a New York free-lance writer, explains that an acquaintance — a professor of "one of the social sciences" — approached him with this story:

In 1963 the professor was asked by the government to participate in a study on the nature of the problems that would confront the nation if and when a condition of "permanent peace" should arrive, and to draft a "program for dealing with this contingency."

The group of 15 members, each proficient in at least two fields, met many times during the next 2½ years. The report was submitted in 1966. Later, the professor became concerned over the implications of the "findings," and felt that the material should be made public knowledge. With Lewin's help, the book was produced.

A New York Times news story quotes a State Department Arms Control and Disarmament Agency spokesman as denying that such a special study group ever existed. However he added that the book "is cleverly done, and whoever did it obviously has an appreciable grasp of the disciplines involved."

Arthur I. Waskow of the Institute for Policy Studies is quoted as saying that if the report is authentic it would probably have come from the Bureau of the Budget of the Central Intelligence Agency.

He added that one of his privately circulated reports is mentioned in the book. "As far as I know, only about 60 people in Washington ever saw my report. If it's a hoax, it must involve somebody high up."

P. SANDERS, LEONARD

IRON MOUNTAIN

THE BOOK HAS the analytical objectivity that has shocked readers of Herman Kahn's "On Thermonuclear War" and "Thinking About the Unthinkable," but even more chilling are discussions of other issues.

The advances of medicine, for instance, are viewed as a problem creating population gains that must be offset in some manner. Use of "the pill" in water supplies or certain essential foodstuffs is casually mentioned with the note that this plan "is already under development." (A footnote attributes these experiments to "biologists in Massachusetts, Michigan, and California, as well as in Mexico and the U.S.S.R. Preliminary test applications are scheduled in Southeast Asia, in countries not yet announced".)

In a search for an economic substitute for war, the report dismisses the "war on poverty" as "inadequate because it would be far too cheap."

"Space research can be viewed as the nearest modern equivalent yet devised to the pyramid building, and similar ritualistic enterprises, of ancient societies," the report observes. But it laments that "credibility, in fact, lies at the heart of the problem of developing a political substitute for war. This is where the space-race proposals, in many ways so well suited as economic substitutes for war, fall short. The most ambitious and unrealistic space project cannot of itself generate a believable external menace. It has been hotly argued that such a menace would offer the 'last, best hope of peace,' by uniting mankind against the danger of destruction by 'creatures' from other planets or from outer space. Experiments have been proposed to test the credibility of an out - of - our - world invasion threat."

\* \* \*

THE REPORT SUGGESTS that "flying saucer" incidents may be the results of "experiments of this kind."

The report also discusses deliberate pollution of the air, food and water supplies as a "threat," and the creation of a universal nonmilitary service — a compulsory Peace Corps — as a "sophisticated form of slavery" for social control in a world at peace (the code of military discipline would need little revision, the report notes).

Also suggested are "blood games" for the effective control of individual aggressive impulses, with the thought that "such a ritual might be socialized, in the manner of the Spanish Inquisition and the less formal witch trials of other periods, for purposes of 'social purification,' 'state security,' or other rationale both acceptable and credible to postwar societies."

The "world war industry" (with the Cold War as an effective substitute) has functioned well, the report notes.

One chapter attacks the oft-quoted theory that war is an extension of politics. "War itself is the basic social system, within which other secondary modes of social organization conflict or conspire," the report claims.

"War has provided both ancient and modern societies with a dependable system for stabilizing and controlling national economies. No alternate method of control has yet been tested in a complex modern economy that has shown itself remotely comparable in scope or effectiveness."