

Dr. Herbert York's book on arms race published

July 23, 1970

"Race to Oblivion: A Participant's View of the Arms Race," a new book by Dr. Herbert York, Dean of Graduate Studies at the University of California, San Diego, will be released by the publishers Monday (July 27).

York, who has been named Acting Chancellor of UCSD effective Sept. 1, provided a permanent chancellor has not been appointed by that date, has been an intimate observer of the nuclear-arms race since the beginning of World War II.

"Ever since Germany invaded Poland and started World War II just two weeks before I entered the University of Rochester in September, 1939, my professional life has been completely dominated by the nuclear-arms race," York notes in the book.

In the early 1940's, York was among the nuclear physicists who developed the atomic bomb. The following decade he became director of the Livermore Radiation Laboratory, and in the 1960's served as a top official of the Defense Department under Presidents Eisenhower and Kennedy and as an advisor to President Johnson. He has testified frequently as an expert witness before congressional hearings in opposition to the ABM and MIRV weapons systems.

Described by the publishers (Simon and Schuster) as "a manual for survival in the age of overkill," York's book discusses "the complex technological considerations involved in arms development and, most important, the human forces which propel us into the illogic of stockpiling of nuclear weapons."

"The power to make life-and-death decisions is passing from the hands of statesmen and politicians to lower-level officers and ultimately to computing machines and the technicians who program them," York writes.

York, 48, was named UCSD's first chancellor in 1961, and returned to full-time teaching in 1964. He was appointed Dean of Graduate Studies last December.

York holds A.B. and M.S. degrees from the University of Rochester, and a Ph.D. in physics from UC-Berkeley. In 1961, while a full professor on the Berkeley faculty, he joined the UCSD faculty. From 1968 to 1969 he was chairman of UCSD's physics department.

In 1962, York received the Ernest Orlando Lawrence Memorial Award for "important contributions to our knowledge of elementary particles..."

"Race to Oblivion" is York's first book. He has authored numerous articles for technical journals.

York and his wife, the former Sybil Dunford, of Berkeley, California, have three children: Rachel, Cynthia and David. They reside in La Jolla.