Washington Post editor David E. Hoffman talks about new book, The Dead Hand

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Talk is 5:15 p.m. March 18 at Bradbury

LOS ALAMOS, New Mexico, March 22, 2010—David E. Hoffman will present his new book, *The Dead Hand: The Untold Story of the Cold War Arms Race and Its Dangerous Legacy*, during a talk at 5:15 p.m. March 25 at the Bradbury Science Museum in downtown Los Alamos.

Following his talk, "Gorbachev and Reagan: New Evidence on the End of the Cold War, Strategic Defense and Biological Weapons," Hoffman, a contributing editor to the Washington Post and formerly the paper's Moscow bureau chief, will sign copies of the book in the Otowi Station Bookstore and Science Museum Shop.

The Dead Hand tells, from both the American and the Russian perspectives, of the end of the Cold War arms race and its legacy of peril. Through original documents that cast fresh light on Mikhail Gorbachev's battles against the military, the book uncovers the inner workings of the Kremlin decision-making process in the Gorbachev-Reagan years. It reveals how the American and Soviet leaders, along with scientists, engineers, diplomats, soldiers, spies, scholars, politicians, and others, sought to slow down the arms race. "They recoiled from the balance of terror out of personal experience as designers and stewards of the weapons, or because of their own fears of the consequences of war, or because of the burdens that the arsenals placed on their peoples," Hoffman said.

The book also explores the origins and scope of the Soviet Union's efforts to produce biological weapons. "From 1975 to 1991, the Soviet Union covertly built the largest biological weapons program in the world," he said. "Soviet scientists experimented with genetic engineering to create pathogens that could cause unstoppable diseases. If the orders came, Soviet factory directors were ready to produce bacteria by the ton that could sicken and kill millions of people."

Hoffman covered the White House during the presidencies of Ronald Reagan and George H. W. Bush for the *Washington Post*. Later, he served as diplomatic correspondent, Jerusalem correspondent, foreign editor, and assistant managing editor for foreign news. He also is the author of *The Oligarchs: Wealth and Power in the New Russia*.

The Bradbury Science Museum is located at 15th Street and Central Avenue. For more information, call the museum at (505) 667-4444 or visit the museum's Web site at http://www.lanl.gov/museum.