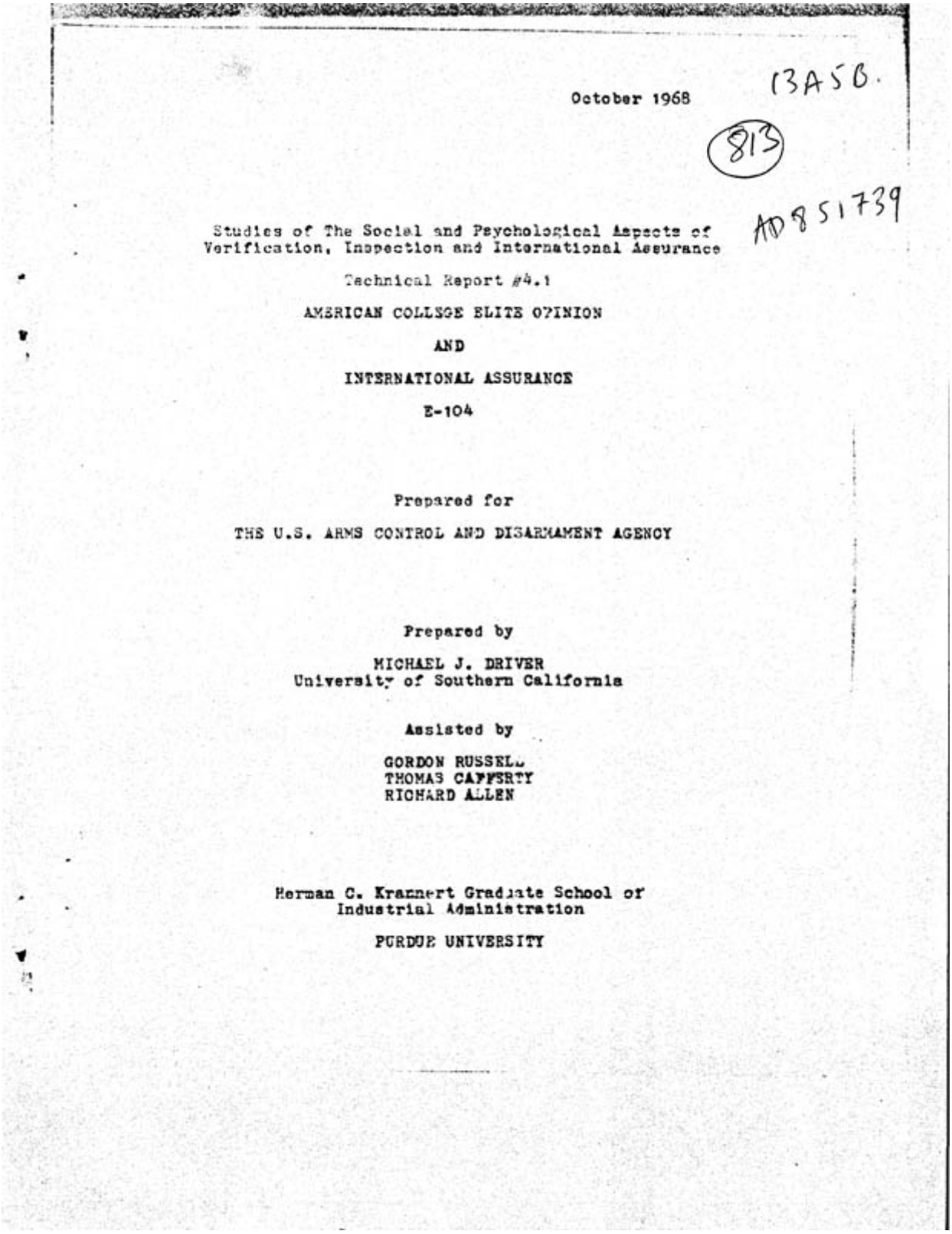
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Studies of the Social and Psychological Aspects of Verification, Inspection and International Assurance Technical Report #4.1



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Studies of The Social and Psychological Aspects of Verification, Inspection and International Assurance

Technical Report #4.1

AMERICAN COLLEGE ELITE OPINION

AND

INTERNATIONAL ASSURANCE

E-104

Prepared for

THE U.S. ARMS CONTROL AND DISARMAMENT AGENCY

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Public opinion has played and continues to play a big role in international negotiations. The opinion of the college elite needed to be positive in regards to long-term negotiations in arms control and disarmament between the USSR and the United States in order to bring credibility to the government's proposals. Assurance from the USSR- the expectation that, at the very least, the country will not attack one's own country- is one of the most important factors influencing public opinion. In order to align the college elite's opinion with American government policy, assurance needed to be elevated.

This report explores the relationships among international assurance, U.S. arms control policies and U.S. college educated elite opinion. The report focuses on the development of college elite opinion during the Kennedy and Kruschev period.

"One interpretation of these phenomena is that a power change induced a rise in trust and assurance. An alternate explanation is that the power change only reduced anxiety and fear of war - it permitted limited assurance and an 'openness' to new information on the USSR which could build a more complex view of the USSR as neither all good or all bad." (p 68).

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