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DARTMOUTH CONFERENCE XIII

Background Information

The Dartmouth Conferences, a series of off-the-record informal talks between leading citizens of the United States and the Soviet Union, were initiated at the suggestion of President Eisenhower.

Since 1960 there have been twelve Dartmouth Conferences. The most recent was held in Williamsburg, Virginia, in May 1979. It was administered by the Charles F. Kettering Foundation and co-sponsored by the Rockefeller Foundation, with partial financial support from the U.S. International Communication Agency.

Following the Soviet invasion of Afghanistan, individuals from the United States and the Soviet Union long associated with the Dartmouth Conferences held a special consultation at the Rockefeller Foundation's Study and Conference Center in Bellagio, Italy. They discussed the deterioration in Soviet-American relations and its implications for the Dartmouth Conferences.

Dartmouth Conference XIII will convene on November 16, 1981, in Moscow and continue through November 19, 1981. The names of the American participants are attached. The chairman of the American group is Dr. David Mathews, President of the Charles F. Kettering Foundation and Secretary of Health, Education and Welfare in the Ford Administration. U.S. participation in the conference is again co-sponsored by the Charles F. Kettering Foundation and the Rockefeller Foundation. As in the past, the Soviet group will be led by Dr. Georgi Arbatov, Director of the Institute of USA and Canada Studies, and Yuri Zhukov, political commentator of Pravda.

The agenda of Dartmouth XIII will focus on an assessment of Soviet-American relations since the Bellagio consultation. This broad examination of the situation will be broken down into two general topics: first, political relations, including prospects and problems of arms limitation, and, second, competition and conflict in the Third World. Before leaving

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for Moscow, the American group conferred with the State Department and the Defense Department regarding the U.S. government's views on these issues.

The Dartmouth Conferences have served as a significant unofficial channel to search for means to minimize the consequences of the differences between the superpowers. The meetings occur at regular intervals, alternating between the United States and the Soviet Union. Over the years Dartmouth Conferences have been conducted against an international background that includes the downing of a U-2 spy plane over the Soviet Union, the Berlin crisis of 1961, the Cuban missile crisis of 1962, and the Vietnam war.

In the late 1950s, President Eisenhower asked Norman Cousins, then editor of Saturday Review, to see whether the Soviets would be interested in opening an informal, unofficial dialogue. It took almost two years before arrangements for the first meeting were successfully negotiated. A delegation of Soviet writers, scientists, disarmament experts, and church officials met with American academics, editors, scholars, and businessmen at Dartmouth College in 1960.

From the first meeting emerged the plan for an exchange of ideas and clarification of differences between the two nations on crucial issues in U.S.-Soviet relations, free from the pressure to produce official policy statements. At Dartmouth III in October 1962, during the Cuban missile crisis, there was general recognition that informal talks can help to keep channels open between the two powers in spite of seemingly irreconcilable differences.

A summary report covering the substance of the discussions is published in the United States following each Dartmouth Conference and is made available to the public.

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DARTMOUTH CONFERENCE XIII

November 16-18, 1981

Moscow, U.S.S.R.

PARTICIPANTS

SEWERYN BIALER

Director, Research Institute on International Change,
Columbia University

LANDRUM BOLLING

Research Professor of Diplomacy, School of Foreign
Service, Georgetown University.
Former Chairman, Council on Foundations

ANTONIA CHAYES

Attorney; former Undersecretary of the Air Force

WILLIAM T. COLEMAN, JR.

Attorney; former Secretary of Transportation

PAUL DOTY

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WILLIAM HYLAND

Senior Associate, Carnegie Endowment for International Peace;
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DAVID MATHEWS

President, Charles F. Kettering Foundation;
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DAVID ROCKEFELLER

Chairman, International Advisory Committee,
Chase Manhattan Bank

HARRISON SALISBURY

Writer; Editor Emeritus, New York Times

Dartmouth XIII Participants

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Resident Fellow, American Enterprise Institute for Public
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Former Assistant to the President for National Security Affairs

PHILIP STEWART

Professor of Political Science, Ohio State University;
Dartmouth Conference Rapporteur

JOHN STREMLAU

Associate Director, International Relations,
Rockefeller Foundation