

PLANETARY CONGRESS OF SPACE EXPLORERS  
SECOND ASTRONAUT/COSMONAUT PLANNING MEETING

MAY 1984

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Astronaut/Cosmonaut Project  
3105 Washington Street  
San Francisco, California 94115

## PLANETARY CONGRESS OF SPACE EXPLORERS

In April 1983, a private, informal meeting of astronauts and cosmonauts was held near Moscow in the Soviet Union. The purpose of this meeting was to explore in what ways the world's space travellers, regardless of their national citizenship or cultural backgrounds, might join together in the future as a symbol of the dreams and hopes of people around the world. All the participants were enthusiastic about forming an international organization of space explorers.

These individuals who have travelled in space have caught the imaginations of all peoples. Yet they had never before had the opportunity to join together for private dialogues about issues of interest to them, ranging from the peaceful uses of space to development of space rescue to the need for increased awareness of global interdependencies. The agreement to convene this unprecedented meeting was the result of careful negotiations through non-government channels over the past two years.

In March 1984, seven astronauts met at PepsiCo Headquarters in Purchase, New York to discuss a reciprocal visit by the cosmonauts to the United States. They decided to invite five cosmonauts to attend a planning meeting in the United States during May. Five astronauts will join them in a private setting to finalize arrangements for the first Planetary Congress of Space Explorers to be held in the near future.

Russell Schweickart (Apollo 9), Dr. Edgar Mitchell (Apollo 14), Michael Collins (Gemini 10, Apollo 11), William Pogue (Skylab 4), Alfred Worden (Apollo 15), Donn Eisele (Apollo 7), James Irwin (Apollo 15), Alan Bean (Apollo 12, Skylab 3), and Gerald Carr (Skylab 4) have participated in the planning process. 30 other astronauts have provided input toward this endeavor. James Hickman (Executive Director, Esalen Institute Soviet-American Exchange Program) is the American coordinator for the Congress.

This project is a non-government American initiative sponsored by the Esalen Institute Soviet-American Exchange Program, the Institute of Noetic Sciences, and CrossCurrents International Institute. Following the May meeting, an independent non-profit educational organization will be established to sponsor future astronaut/cosmonaut activities. The activities to date have been financed by individuals, foundations and corporations from the American private sector.

### ASTRONAUT/COSMONAUT FACE-TO-FACE MOSCOW MEETING

Few achievements in the history of science can equal the triumph of that series of events we associate with the phrase: "One small step for a man -- one giant leap for mankind." Although space exploration has continued since the 1969 lunar landing, nothing has quite captured worldwide public attention like the race for the moon.

Perhaps because they represent the hero in all of us, or because they were chosen for an exclusive journey no fortune and no political power could buy -- whatever the reasons, our fascination with the handful of men and women who orbited the earth has not dimmed in well over a decade.

And yet, we often forget that there are two separate and distinct teams of space explorers, one of which, the Soviets, is little known to the Western world. In the 21 years between the beginning of manned space flight and April 1983, neither group had ever been given the opportunity to exchange their personal experiences privately with colleagues from the other nation.

What might the USSR cosmonauts have in common with US astronauts beyond their physical reactions to weightless flight? What new insights and perspectives on humanity did these two teams develop as a result of their adventures? And what might the rest of us learn from them?

Until recently, heavy restrictions surrounding US/USSR diplomatic involvement gave little hope that such questions would ever be fully addressed. But during the summer of 1982, former astronaut Russell Schweickart (Apollo 9) visited the Soviet Academy of Sciences in Moscow.

His official mission on that trip, as Chairman of the California Energy Commission, was to lecture on energy at the Soviet Academy. What he accomplished outside the lecture hall, however, exceeded both the goals of that official assignment and the expectations of his hosts. It also set the stage for an historic event.

Between July 27 and August 3, Schweickart met with several cosmonauts and representatives of the Presidium of the Soviet Academy of Sciences, as well as three influential members of the Central Committee of the Communist Party. At those meetings Schweickart suggested to the Soviet officials that four astronauts, four cosmonauts, and two assistants for both groups be allowed to conduct private face-to-face dialogues over a seven-day period in April 1983.

The purpose of this first meeting would be to examine the possible long-term impact and value of establishing regular discussions between space travellers. It is felt that this could be important in increasing understanding between the US and the USSR and that these meetings might also create the genesis of fresh ideas on solutions to difficult global issues. The experience of these people, if shared with the world community, might provide important insights in the future and be widely accepted due to the high level of credibility and visibility which this handful of people command around the world. Of special interest in this first meeting would be the personal experiences during space flight -- particularly those which led several astronauts and cosmonauts to a profound awareness of our interdependence and essential unity as fellow dwellers on this planet.

It was agreed that Schweickart's proposal would be presented for consideration by the Central Committee of the Communist Party of the USSR.

Shortly after his return to the US, Schweickart received a telegram from the Academy of Sciences of the USSR stating that the Astronaut/Cosmonaut project had been approved.

Such rapid consent for a new and potentially delicate US/USSR exchange project rarely occurs without prior negotiations and planning. Schweickart's visit to the Soviet Union was in fact preceeded by extensive preparation and advance discussions.

Schweickart's trip to Moscow had been arranged through James L. Hickman, a businessman and psychologist who is Executive Director of the Esalen Institute Soviet-American Exchange Program. Over the past ten years, Hickman has developed communication with numerous Soviet scientists, economists and political philosophers. Since 1979 he has made 16 trips to the USSR to attend scientific conferences and negotiate private sector exchanges in science and the arts. He is currently coordinating nine different academic and cultural exchange projects involving the two countries.

During one of his 1981 visits to the Soviet Union, Hickman had conversations with two Russian cosmonauts, Georgi Gretchko (Soyuz 17; Soyuz 26) and General Alexei Leonov (Voskhod 2; Soyuz 19). Both of these high-ranking members of the Soviet space program expressed an interest in meeting with their American colleagues. Further, they felt that astronauts and cosmonauts might share similar views on a number of critical world issues such as global interdependence, given the unique perspectives from which they have observed the earth. Both were anxious to examine that possibility.

Hickman consulted with US astronauts Russel Schweickart and Dr. Edgar Mitchell (Apollo 14), both of whom responded enthusiastically to the idea. They commented that the possibility for such meetings had been discussed for years among the astronauts and cosmonauts when they occasionally met informally at international conferences, but no action had ever been taken on the idea. Prominent individuals within the US and USSR privately encouraged Hickman to pursue the plan.

Plans were made for Schweickart and Hickman to visit the USSR in July 1982 to negotiate an initial meeting of representatives from the astronaut and cosmonaut communities. Before the trip, Schweickart and Hickman discussed the project in detail with 13 astronauts (all of whom expressed their support) and American specialists in arms control and space policy. There was general agreement that a private channel for communication about space issues could be important in reducing tensions between the US and USSR.

The success of Schweickart's and Hickman's trip led to a five-day meeting in April 1983, at which three former astronauts -- Schweickart, Mitchell, and Michael Collins (Gemini 10, Apollo 11) -- and four cosmonauts -- Alexei Yeliseyev (Soyuz 4, Soyuz 5, Soyuz 8, Soyuz 10), Vitaly Sevastianov (Soyuz 9, Soyuz 18/Salyut 4), Alexei Leonov (Voskhod 2, ASTP), and Valeri Kubasov (Soyuz 6, ASTP, Soyuz 36/Soyuz 35/Salyut 5) -- explored possibilities for periodic meetings of all people who have flown in space. The American interpreter for the Moscow meeting was Harris Coulter, an independent Russian interpreter who is a frequent consultant to the US State Department. Hickman accompanied the American group as project coordinator, and Andrei Kokoshin, Department Chairman of the Institute of USA and Canada Studies, was the Soviet coordinator.

This first planning meeting resulted in a series of agreements between the participants as to membership eligibility, organizational design, meeting dates, finances, etc. At the conclusion of the meeting it was agreed that a final planning meeting would be held in the United States to conclude preparations for the first Congress.

## FINAL PLANNING FOR THE FIRST PLANETARY CONGRESS

On March 3, 1984 a pre-planning meeting was held at Purchase, New York in which seven of the participating Astronauts held discussions on the critical issues to be discussed in the final planning meeting with the Cosmonauts. The agenda and logistics for the Cosmonaut visit, the scheduling of the first Congress and a variety of logistical matters were decided. Following the meeting Mr. Schweickart sent a formal letter to Mr. Alexei Yeliseyev, the leader of the Cosmonaut delegation, inviting the Cosmonauts to a final planning meeting in the United States.

From May 25 to June 6, 1984, five cosmonauts and five astronauts will meet to complete arrangements for the first Planetary Congress of Space Explorers to be convened in the near future. James Hickman has flown to Moscow to coordinate arrangements for the cosmonaut visit. In mid-April the participating astronauts will meet to finalize the agenda. The Astronauts and Cosmonauts will meet privately from May 25-29, hold a press conference afterwards to announce the formation of the Planetary Congress of Space Explorers, and then visit New York City, Washington DC, Los Angeles and Boston to participate in educational programs and meetings with political and business leaders. The next event following this visit will be the first full meeting of the Planetary Congress of Space Explorers. The first Congress will involve not only an expanded cadre of Astronauts and Cosmonauts but will likely also include people from Europe and other nations who have now orbited the earth.

The cosmonauts' participation in these dialogues is sponsored by the Academy of Sciences of the USSR. The American sponsors are three organizations that have been able to accommodate the flexibility in planning necessary for the formative stages of this program. The Esalen Institute Soviet-American Exchange Program has supported its Executive Director, James Hickman, in coordinating the project, as well as providing additional financial support. The Exchange Program staff have provided logistical support. The Institute of Noetic Sciences has provided research assistance, and financial and logistical support. CrossCurrents International Institute has provided professional expertise and logistical support.

The American Academy of Arts and Sciences is currently considering affiliation with the project. Discussions on this were initiated by Schweickart in May of 1983 when he met with Dr. Herman Feshbach, the president of the Academy. At the invitation of the Academy, Schweickart and Hickman presented the history and status of the project at the November 1983 meeting of the Academy's Governing Council. Dr. Bernard Burke subsequently sat in as an observer at the March 3 planning meeting representing the Academy.

Other organizations that have assisted in these planning stages include the W. Averell Harriman Institute for Advanced Studies of the Soviet Union at Columbia University, where in preparation for the April 1983 meeting in Moscow, the American team attended briefing sessions with Soviet specialists from the US government and academia. PepsiCo, Inc. hosted the March 1984 astronaut meeting at its headquarters in Purchase, New York.

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In July 1975, General Alexei Leonov commanded the Soyuz spacecraft that made a docking rendezvous with American astronauts orbiting aboard an Apollo craft. In 1980, Leonov was interviewed by an American journalist on the topic of that successful joint effort. He had this to say:

"The most valuable thing about ASTP (Apollo-Soyuz Test Project) was that when the groups of both sides worked together on this flight, they not only got to understand each other better, but also found deep respect. I remember when we were getting ready for the flight. Tom (Stafford), Don (Slayton) and Vance (Brand) kept saying over and over again: 'Cooperation means friendship, and friendship means peace.' These words are still very true today."

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JAMES HICKMAN  
3105 WASHINGTON ST  
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THIS IS A CONFIRMATION COPY OF THE FOLLOWING MESSAGE:

TDRN BIG SUR CA 04-29 0334P EST  
INT DR ANDREI KOKOSHIN  
INSTITUTE OF USA AND CANADA STUDIES  
2/3 KHLEBNY PER  
MOSCOW (SOVIETUNION)

ALL PREPARATIONS FOR THE COSMONAUT VISIT FROM 25 MAY TO 5 JUNE ARE UNDERWAY. FINAL COMMITMENTS HOWEVER ARE AWAITING YOUR CONFIRMATION THAT THE PARTY WILL BE COMING. SECURITY ARRANGEMENTS AND COMMITMENT OF FACILITIES MUST BE MADE WELL AHEAD OF YOUR ARRIVAL. WE MUST KNOW BY NO LATER THAN MAY 4 THAT YOU ARE COMING OR THE MEETING WILL HAVE TO BE POSTPONED. PLEASE ADVISE US IMMEDIATELY ON YOUR PLANS.

RUSTY SCHWEICKART

COL 2/3 25 5 4

15:34 EST

MGMCOMP

26 April 1984

Dear

I have just returned from Moscow and am pleased to advise you that final arrangements for five cosmonauts and three translators to visit the United States from May 25 to June 7 have been completed.

Without your support we would not have been able to get to this critical step in the process of bringing astronauts and cosmonauts together so they can complete arrangements for the First Planetary Congress of Space Explorers to be convened in 1985. All the participants are enthusiastic about forming an international organization of space explorers.

In the first 21 years of manned space flight neither group had ever been given the opportunity to exchange their personal experiences privately with colleagues from the other nation until last April when this project was discussed in Moscow with several former astronauts and cosmonauts.

The final plans for this reciprocal visit were worked out last month when seven former astronauts met at PepsiCo headquarters in Purchase, New York to discuss details for the US visit and to extend the formal invitation which I took to Moscow. During the private dialotues at the Rockefeller estate (May 26-28) astronauts and cosmonauts will be able to join together to explore issues of interest to them, ranging from the peaceful uses of space, to the development of space rescue, to the need for increased awareness of global interdependencies and to work on the agenda for the 1985 Congress which will be open to all who have orbited the earth.

We have full funding for the first three days of the cosmonaut visit. I am writing to ask you to help support the additional costs for the trip which will give the cosmonauts an opportunity to meet Americans from many different backgrounds in a four-city tour to New York, Washington, D.C., Los Angeles, and Boston.

Will you please consider underwriting the cost for one of our eight Russian guests to travel around the United States to get better acquainted with our people and our nation? We estimate that \$5,000 will be required to cover the direct expenses for meals, travel, hotels, etc. for each member of the Soviet delegation plus our supporting escort services. The activities to date have all been financed by individuals, foundations and corporations from the American private sector.

I believe this visit and the creation of the Planetary Congress of Space Explorers can lead to a meaningful step in confidence building between this unique group of Russian and American citizens. As Einstein saie, "The world that we have made as a result of the level of thinking we have done thus far creates problems that we cannot solve at the same level as which we created them."

Astronauts and Cosmonauts have truly seen our fragile earth from a new level. It is vital for them to share finally their experiences and to move into a joint endeavor with the Planetary Congress.

Thank you for your consideration of this urgent request for \$5,000.

Sincerely,

James L. Hickman