



Ludwig Boltzmann Institut
für Kriegsfolgen-Forschung
EIN INSTITUT DES GESCHICHTE-CLUSTERS
DER LUDWIG BOLTZMANN GESELLSCHAFT
Graz – Wien – Klagenfurt



THE UNIVERSITY of
NEW ORLEANS

In cooperation with:



THE VIENNA SUMMIT, 1961: JOHN F. KENNEDY AND NIKITA KHRUSHCHEV

SYMPOSIUM AT HARVARD UNIVERSITY
Room S020, 1730 Cambridge Street (CGIS South), Harvard University

25 MARCH 2011



Friday, 25 March 2011

10:00 Welcome

Mark Kramer (Harvard University)

Stefan Karner (BIK Graz)

Viktor Ishchenko (Institute of Universal History, RAN)

Christian Prosl (Ambassador of the Republic of Austria to the USA)

10:30-12:00 Panel 1: Why Vienna? Austria and the Vienna Summit

Chair: Viktor Ishchenko (Institute of Universal History)

Peter Ruggenthaler (BIK Graz): Austria's Neutrality in the Conception of Khrushchev's Foreign Policy

Harald Knoll (BIK Graz): Diplomacy of Visits in Soviet-Austrian Relations after the State Treaty

Barbara Stelzl-Marx (BIK Graz): Preparation, Organization and Perception of the Vienna Summit

Commentator: Charles Maier (Harvard University)

12:00-12:15 Coffee Break

12:15-1:45 Panel 2: The Prehistory of the Vienna Summit

Chair: Stefan Karner (BIK Graz)

Irina Kazarina (RGANI): Khrushchev's State Visit to the USA in 1959

Richard Williamson (Louisiana State University): The Paris Summit of 1960: Berlin or Disarmament?

Günter Bischof (University of New Orleans): Kennedy and the Vienna Summit

Olga Pavlenko (RGGU): Khrushchev and the Vienna Summit

Commentator: Igor Lukes (Boston University)

1:45-2:45: Lunch

2:45-4:15 Panel 3: Fissures and Cohesion in the Opposing Camps

Chair: Igor Lukes (Boston University)

Mikhail Prozumenshchikov (RGANI): The Chinese shadow over the summit

Mark Kramer (Harvard University): NATO and the Warsaw Pact before and after the Summit

Anne Deighton (Oxford University): Great Britain and the Vienna Summit

Commentator: Robert Ross (Boston College)

4:15-4:30 Coffee Break

4:30-6:30 Panel 4: Discussion with eye-witnesses

Chair: Nicholas Daniloff

Sergei Khrushchev

Avis Bohlen

Jenny and Sherry Thompson

Kempton Jenkins

Reception

At the beginning of June 1961, the Cold War was supposed to take a breather. The leaders of the superpowers, John F. Kennedy and Nikita Khrushchev, met for a summit in Vienna. Yet the hopes were deceptive. Within months the Cold War had become very hot: in Berlin Khrushchev had the Wall built and in Cuba he attempted a year later to set up missiles with atomic weapons, aimed at the USA.

Was the Vienna Summit a failure? Yes, as there were no tangible results. No, as the superpowers saw more clearly than before that there was only one way to escape from the threat posed by their large and growing nuclear arsenals: dialogue. The 'peace through fear' and the 'hotline' between Washington and Moscow prevented an atomic confrontation. Austria successfully demonstrated its new role as neutral state and host. Vienna became a meeting place in the Cold War.

Using new Russian and Western sources, international experts analyse what really happened at that time. And how the parties had a close shave with catastrophe.

A Project of the Austrian-Russian Commission of Historians



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