

U.S., Russia Finally Sign Culture Pact

Exchange Accord,
Delayed 3 Days,
Runs Through '67

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By Lewis Gulick

Associated Press

The United States and Russia signed a new cultural exchange agreement last night, three days after the accord ran into a mysterious last-minute delay.

Soviet Ambassador Anatoly F. Dobrynin and John M. Leddy, Assistant Secretary of State for European Affairs, represented their countries at a brief signing ceremony at the State Department.

The new two-year pact extends through 1967. The program began in 1958 for a broad range of exchanges of artists, scientists, scholars and others between the two countries.

The avowed aim of the program is to promote understanding and better relations between the United States and Russia, and the two-year renewal was negotiated in Washington in a fortnight this month despite the U.S.-Soviet

differences over Vietnam.

Dobrynin told newsmen, "Everything came out all right."

The signing ceremony was originally set for last Wednesday—but it was called off by the United States just before the event was to take place.

President Johnson was reported later to have intervened, wanting to make sure that the new agreement gave adequate assurance that attractions selected by the United States would be permitted to perform in Russia. Last year Moscow refused to permit performances of the musical "Helly Dolly" and turned down an alternate selection, the Roger Wagner Chorale.

But neither the White House nor the State Department gave any detailed explanation for the U.S. postponement.

Meanwhile, the chief Soviet negotiator, Sergei K. Romanovsky, left Washington for home.

Friday night the United States informed the Soviets that it was now ready to sign the originally agreed-upon text. U.S. informants said a review had found it acceptable without change.

Buddhist leaders at rally deplore Viet conditions but urge restraint. Page A12.