



Bilderberg Group Met and Discussed — What?

In hindsight, the Steering Committee in charge of the annual gathering of elites known informally as the Bilderberg group could have chosen a better — or at least a safer — venue for this year's gathering than Sitges, Spain. The stunning Mediterranean resort near Barcelona, known far and wide as Spain's most decadent locale (think San Francisco's Castro district, New Orleans' Bourbon Street, and Palm Beach all rolled into one), just happens to be near one of several Ground Zeroes of the European economic meltdown — Madrid. (Another Ground Zero, of course, is Athens, near where the "Bilderbergers" convened last summer.)



It is impossible to understate the gravity of the unfolding crisis, which nowadays has investors worldwide watching Spain with far more trepidation than Greece. The former, after all, has the world's seventh-largest economy, and withal one that has gone from robust expansion to a 20 percent unemployment rate in two years' time. Like the American real estate bubble? You'll love Spain, where a decades-old real estate bubble, from the posh Mediterranean coastline to the splendid mountains of Andalusia, has burst with a report heard round the world. Spain isn't a third-tier economy like Greece; nobody can afford to bail out Madrid and everyone knows it.

As a result, the Spanish government is frantically imposing the usual austerity measures, to the consternation of the Spanish people. The current administration is walking a razor's edge, and the specter of national insolvency by summer's end looms very large indeed.

In the midst of the crisis, 125 of the world's fattest cats, Bilderberg invitees, arrived in Sitges, at the ultra-swank Dolce Hotel, to discuss what to do about it all. For once, the media was paying some attention. Intrepid reporters from the likes of the *Guardian* crawled around brushy hillsides within sight of the hotel strained to catch a glimpse of conference participants, while helicopters and police barricades kept the unwashed under surveillance and at bay. For the most part, the Spanish-Catalonian police were reported to be both friendly and sympathetic; they had, after all, just gone on strike a few days earlier to protest pay cuts and other austerity measures. Many of the locals were angry that such a cadre of globalist elites would descend upon their community to plan the world's future, and expressed frustration at being unable to do anything about it.

But what exactly did transpire behind closed doors at Sitges from June 3 to June 6? As usual, no agenda was made public, nor did any of the participants issue any statements to the media. Certain members of the media were present, as always — Donald E. Graham, chairman and CEO of the Washington Post Company; Peter Mansbridge, chief correspondent for the Canadian Broadcasting Corporation; and Vendeline von Bredow and Adrian D. Wooldridge, business correspondents for *The Economist*, for example. But following a decades-old tradition, they can be expected to maintain strict confidentiality



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about what went on behind the closed doors of the Dolce.

Although the meeting itself was swaddled in secrecy, an official list of participants was released after the event. Spain, as both the host country and the eye of the European financial hurricane, was disproportionately represented, with 12 participants in attendance, including the Secretary General of the Prime Minister and representatives of various Spanish mega-banking firms like Grupo Santander.

The Bilderberg group purports to concern itself with trans-Atlantic issues (i.e., European and North American; Latin America and Africa need not apply), but a surprising number of participants chose to be identified by affiliation with the international community instead of by nationality. They were:

- Karel de Gucht, Neelie Kroess, and Joaquin Almunis, commissioners of the European Commission
- Dambisa Moyo, economist and author
- Josette Sheeran, executive director of the United Nations Food Programme
- Javier Solana Madariaga, former Secretary-General of the Council of the European Union
- Robert Zoellick, president of the World Bank
- Gertrude Tumpel-Gugerell.

A total of 33 Americans and 6 Canadians were in attendance (not counting the aforementioned Robert Zoellick). Henry Kissinger, one of the leaders of the Bilderberg group for decades, was there, but 95-year old David Rockefeller, another of the group's most prominent leaders, was not. The other Americans at Bilderberg 2010 were:

- Roger Altman, chairman, Evercore Partners, Inc.
- Sonia Arrison, author and policy analyst with the Pacific Research Institute, who studies the impact of new technologies on society
- Martin S. Feldstein, professor of economics, Harvard University
- Niall Ferguson, professor of history, Harvard University (and author of recent *Newsweek* cover story predicting the end of American global hegemony stemming from American insolvency)
- Bill Gates, founder and chairman, Microsoft Corporation
- Philip H. Gordon, Assistant Secretary of State for European and Eurasian Affairs
- Donald E. Graham, chairman and CEO, the Washington Post Company
- Richard C. Holbrooke, Special Representative for Afghanistan and Pakistan
- Robert D. Hormats, Under Secretary for Economic, Energy and Agricultural Affairs
- James A. Johnson, vice chairman, Perseus, LLC.
- John M. Keane, senior partner, SCP Partners
- Klaus Kleinfeld, chairman and CEO, Alcoa
- Henry R. Kravis, founding partner, Kohlberg Kravis Roberts and Co.
- Kravis, Marie-Josée, senior fellow, Hudson Institute, Inc.
- Eric. S. Lander, president and director, Broad Institute of Harvard and MIT
- Jessica T. Matthews, president, Carnegie Endowment for International Peace



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- Craig J. Mundie, chief research and strategy officer, Microsoft Corporation
- Moisés Naim, editor-in-chief, *Foreign Policy*
- Peter R. Orzag, director, Office of Management and Budget
- Sean Parker, managing partner, Founders Fund
- Frank H. Pearl, chairman and CEO, Perseus LLC
- Richard Perle, resident fellow, American Enterprise Institute for Public Policy Research and former Assistant Secretary of Defense under Ronald Reagan
- Charlie Rose, producer, Rose Communications
- Robert E. Rubin, co-chairman of the Council on Foreign Relations and former Secretary of the Treasury under Bill Clinton
- Eric Schmidt, CEO and chairman of the board, Google
- James B. Steinberg, Deputy Secretary of State
- Lawrence H. Summers, Director of National Economic Council under President Obama and former president of Harvard University as well as Secretary of the Treasury under Bill Clinton
- Peter A. Thiel, president, Clarium Capital Management, LLC
- Christine A. Varney, Assistant Attorney General for Antitrust
- Paul A. Volcker, chairman, Economic Recovery Advisory Board and former Chairman of the Federal Reserve
- F.J. Bing West, author on U.S. military history and former Assistant Secretary of Defense (for Internal Security Affairs) under Ronald Reagan
- James D. Wolfensohn, chairman, Wolfensohn and Company, LLC, and former president of the World Bank

Overall, the list of attendees skewed political and financial. Eight members of the Obama administration were in attendance, as well as Queen Beatrix of the Netherlands (a perennial participant), Queen Sophia of Spain, and numerous high officials from European governments. Various ministers of finance and banking and investment moguls from across the Western world represented a significant portion of the totality of transatlantic wealth.

What such a distinguished coterie was discussing with their like-minded confreres across the pond is not difficult to divine: the economic crisis, the war on terrorism, and the ongoing occupation of Iraq and Afghanistan must have been high on the list. Planning the future of the Euro and the U.S. dollar was doubtless a priority. No doubt grand plans and revolutionary designs were set forth, given the tenor of the times. For, as Dominique Strauss-Kahn, head of the IMF and onetime Bilderberger, put it, "Crisis is an opportunity." From the perspective of the man on the street, a hot-selling tee shirt at Sitges said it all: "I went to Bilderberg 2010 and all I got was this lousy new world order."

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