

ORIGINAL: FRENCH
20th December, 1956

COMMITTEE ON INFORMATION AND CULTURAL RELATIONS

EXCHANGES WITH THE USSR AND SOVIET BLOC
COUNTRIES DURING THE SECOND HALF OF 1956

Note by the French Delegation

I. FROM FRANCE TO THE USSR

1. Visits by political leaders and Parliamentary groups

A French Communist Party delegation, composed of M. SERVIN, M. ROCHET and M. FAJON had talks in Moscow with the Soviet Communist Party leaders (July).

M. Edgar FAURE visited the USSR (August-September)

Mr. Vincent DELPUECH, Senator for the Bouches-du-Rhone, arrived at Leningrad on board the liner "Antilles" (August).

President Jules MOCH, deputy, former Premier, visited the USSR from 4th August to 29th September.

M. Gaston PABEWSKI, deputy, former minister, invited by the Soviet Science Academy to visit atomic installations, made a stay in Moscow (15th October).

2. Cultural exchanges

Two journalists from "Paris-Match" left Paris for a 3 month visit to the USSR (July).

A visit to the USSR by groups of French University students, arranged by the French Teaching League, took place in July.

The TNP organised a theatrical tour in Moscow and Leningrad (13th September - 13th October).

Madame Monique Hass, pianist, gave a series of recitals in Moscow, Kharkov and Leningrad (October).

Géori Boué and Roger Bourdin, of the Opéra Comique, played the parts of Tatiana and Eugène Onéguine at the Moscow Opera (October).

Two young French musicians were granted a Soviet Government scholarship to study at the Moscow Academy of Music (October 1956 to June 1957).

Opening of the exhibition of French 19th century art at the Hermitage Museum in Leningrad (18th October to 25th November).

Picasso's 75th birthday was celebrated in Moscow under the auspices of the French section of V.O.K.S. and an exhibition of Picasso's works was opened at the Pouckine Museum. (25th and 6th October)

The Franco-Soviet friendship week, planned for 21st to 9th November, was cancelled.

Yves Montand temporarily cancelled his visit to the SSR

Scholarships were awarded, on an exchange basis, to French students at the Moscow University settlement - year 1956/57 -.

3. Technical exchanges

The Ministry of Reconstruction sent representatives to the USSR to visit work-sites and to see what had been done in the field of reconstruction (July).

French jurists visited the USSR at the invitation of the V.O.K.S. and the Ministry of Justice of the R.S.F.S.R. (August).

The President of the French Line (Cie Général Transatlantique) inaugurated the Leningrad shipping line (August).

4. Sporting events

13 parachutists represented France in the world parachutists contests in Moscow (25th July - 8th August).

2 French nationals attended the USSR peoples' PARTAKIADES in Moscow (5th - 16th August).

The French national chess team took part in the Chess tournament held in Moscow (31st August - 21st September).

5. Tourist Travel

(a) Characteristics

Few French tourists visited the Soviet Union although there was a slight increase compared with the previous year. With the exception of a few individual travellers, these tourists are generally in groups.

The French tourists spent longer in Russia than the Russian tourists in France. Ports of call were visited for from 4 to 6 days and trips offering tours of 12 to 25 days in the USSR were those most sought after.

Individual or group visits were generally made by air; few tourists travelled by rail.

(b) Organization

In the USSR all travel is arranged by Intourist. In France, the Agency Havas Exprinter organized a group tour of 23 days for 4 persons and the Agence Transtour organized 7 cruises and 20 group tours for 4,300 tourists; these are the two main agencies concerned in Franco-Soviet tourist exchanges.

Large scale cruises were, however, run by the shipping companies:

- two cruises to Leningrad, carrying 230 and 450 persons respectively, by the Compagnie Générale Transatlantique;
- a cruise to Odessa by the Compagnie des Messageries Maritimes.

II. FROM THE USSR TO FRANCE

1. Visits by political leaders

Mr. A. SOUSLOV, Chairman of the Foreign Affairs Committee of the Union and Mr. A. KIKITCHENKO, member of the Supreme Presidium of the USSR, visited France as leaders of a parliamentary delegation.

2. Cultural exchanges

Ilya Ertenbourg, President of VOKS, made a stay in Paris (July).

The USSR lent France four Cezanne pictures for the Aix-en-Provence exhibition. A Cezanne exhibition was opened at the same time in Leningrad (August).

An exhibition of Soviet architecture and an exhibition by the Leningrad Arts School, which were to have been held at the Pedagogic Museum in Paris at the beginning of November, were cancelled.

Seven Soviet students are the guests of the Cité Universitaire in Paris where they are studying the French language and literature (year 56/57).

Six young Soviet teachers are taking a six months' course at the Ecole Nationale de Sèvres (October, 1956).

3. Technical exchanges

Mr. Kartachev, Director of Economic Planning at the Ministry of Agriculture, paid an official visit to France (July).

A group of Soviet nuclear physics technicians visited the various scientific research centres in Paris (11th - 18th July).

A Soviet delegation of printing specialists attended a course in France (2nd - 10th July).

A group of Soviet engineers visited the Atlantic, Gironde and Ciotat shipyards where merchant ships for the USSR are under construction (July).

A delegation from the Soviet Academy of Sciences visited France (July).

Returning from London, a delegation of Soviet chemical research workers made a stay in France (August).

Mr. POTOKOFF, Deputy Minister of Works in the USSR., arrived in Marseille on 20th September to visit the fair.

A group of cellulose experts arrived in Paris to study cellulose manufacturing processes and machinery (October).

The President of the Psychological Research Institute attended the International Congress of Psychology which was held in Strasbourg - October.

Soviet delegates of the "Aeroflot" visited Paris at the invitation of SNCASE (18th October).

The Deputy Minister for Shipbuilding visited Paris for the Salon Nautique (October).

A delegation from the Soviet Ministry of Finance visited Paris (18th - 23rd October).

A Soviet trade mission came to France to renew trade agreements between France and the USSR (October).

A group of Soviet agricultural experts visited the exhibition "Journées Internationales de Mécanisation des récoltes du Maïs" (October - November).

Returning from Canada, a Soviet forestry commission broke their journey in Paris (1st - 5th November).

Visits by a group of radio engineers by a Public Health and Population delegation and by a RSFSR Social Security delegation, which were to have taken place in November, were postponed.

4. Sporting events

A Soviet team came to Paris to take part in the international Volley-ball championships (28th August - 19th September).

Two Soviet delegates attended board meetings of the Federation of Amateur Wrestlers in Paris (September).

On 21st October, the Soviet football team played in a FRANCE-USSR match at the Velodrome d'Hiver in Paris.

5. Tourist Travel

(a) General comments

In spite of a slight increase in tourist travel between France and the USSR, few Soviet tourists visited France. Only two major cruises and five or six trips were organized. All these were group visits, since the Soviet authorities do not yet issue exit visas for individual tourists.

The cruises included calls at several European ports and a stay of a few days in France.

Journeys by train or air enabled visitors to spend two weeks in France, but this type of travel was reserved for a very small number of tourists. Groups of about 450 persons could make a cruise as against groups of only about thirty travelling by train or by air.

Observations made during the stay of the Soviet tourists in Paris, revealed that they had very little freedom of movement. The number and variety of organized visits left them little or no leisure. It was almost impossible for them to leave their hotels except in groups, which included at least one member of the Communist Party to keep watch on them. Conversations of any length with strangers were frowned upon and liable to cause trouble for those who tried to evade surveillance. In the circumstances, therefore, although opportunity for making contact did exist, they were nevertheless comparatively few and far between.

(b) Organization

The second Pobeda cruise (Leningrad - Odessa and back) was arranged by Agence Transstour.

Other voyages were organized by the Compagnie française de Tourisme and the Agence Havas Exprinter.

At the invitation of the Albanian Government, M. Pierre SEUTT, chairman of the Committee on Electrification in the UNO Economic Commission for Europe, visited Albania (August).

B. Exchanges with Bulgaria

At the invitation of the Bulgarian authorities, the Atelier théâtre group gave performances in Bulgaria from 20th June to 3rd July.

An exhibition of reproductions of French contemporary painting was opened in Sofia on 10th August.

Mr. HIRSCH, director of the French lyric theatres, visited Sofia (7th September).

... from Hungary to Bulgaria ...

A Bulgarian primary education commission arrived in Paris to establish contacts with teaching circles (August).

A Bulgarian team took part in the international volleyball championships in Paris (28th August - 12th September).

C. Exchanges with Hungary

Several French musicians visited Hungary for the "Summer Festival" organized in Budapest: M. Georges TEIPINE, orchestra leader - M. Samson FRANCOIS, pianist and M. DAUY ERGICH, violinist.

For the first time, a Hungarian-French-Austrian co-production film was made in Hungary (August).

Several young French pianists took part in the international "LISZT" contest held in Budapest in September.

... from Hungary to France ...

The President of the Hungarian Central office of Statistics visited France (August).

A Hungarian team took part in the international volleyball championships in Paris (28th August - 12th September).

The Budapest Circus gave performances at the Cirque Medrano in Paris (September-October-November).

A Hungarian team came to Paris for the France-Hungary football match (14th October).

D. Exchanges with Poland

At the invitation of the Central Council of Polish Trade Unions, a French trade union delegation, led by the Secretary General of the steel and iron trade unions, visited Poland (July).

Two officers of the Paris Fire Brigade were the guests of two Polish colleagues and made a study of fire-fighting in rural districts (August).

An exhibition of French 19th century painting was opened in Warsaw (July).

A French delegation from the National Assembly commission for reconstruction, war damage and housing arrived in Warsaw.

An exhibition of French books was held in Warsaw from 15th to 20th September.

The French national radio-television orchestra and the WARRENIN Quartet gave two concerts at the Warsaw international festival of contemporary music.

A delegation of 9 Frenchwomen, representing various women's organizations in France, visited Poland, at the invitation of the Polish Women's League (October).

... from Poland to France ...

A representative of Cracow University and a representative of the Faculty of Philosophy at Lublin University visited Paris (August).

A group of Polish university students, specialising in social science, visited the major French universities (August).

A Polish team took part in the international volleyball championships in Paris (28th August - 12th September).

A Polish delegation attended the meeting of the Executive Committee of the International Cyclists' Union in Paris (24th/26th September).

An industrial productivity commission visited France (September).

A representative of the University (Academy of Science) visited Paris (October).

A professor from Warsaw University visited France for research on Poland's history and economic position in the 18th century (October).

Labour organization experts arrived in Paris for the "International Salon" of office equipment (11th - 21st October).

A road and air transport delegation visited France (8th - 22nd October).

A Polish team played in football matches in the north of France (October).

A group of 60 Polish painters came to France to establish contact with French artists (26th November - 3 months).

E. Exchanges with Rumania

An exhibition of reproductions of French paintings was opened in Budapest (July).

The Theatre de l'Atelier gave a number of performances in Budapest.

Two French experts in rural economy paid a visit to Rumania (8th - 31st July).

A French team took part in the international sports contests in Budapest (15th - 17th September).

A French parliamentary delegation stopped in Rumania on its way back from Czechoslovakia (24th - 31st October).

France sent representatives to the national Congress of Medical Science in Budapest (25th - 30th November).

An exhibition of medical books and of books and periodicals on public health was organized for the Bucharest Medical Congress by the Director of the French National Health Education Centre (November).

... from Rumania to France ...

The Rumanian national theatre company "I.L. CARAGIALE" took part in the international festival of dramatic art in Paris (June - July).

Rumanian students visited the universities of Paris, Nancy and Grenoble (10th - 25th August).

72 Rumanians took part in a sports contest in Paris (1st - 2nd September).

A Rumanian team played in the international volleyball championships in Paris (28th August - 2nd September).

A Rumanian team took part in the international junior table tennis championships in Paris (26th - 28th September).

A Rumanian economic mission under the leadership of the Deputy Minister for the Food Industries visited Paris (15th - 21st October).

A group concerned with the rehabilitation of the disabled visited Paris.

F. Exchanges with Czechoslovakia

Two French delegations from the Production and the Atomic Energy Commissions of the National Assembly and the Council of the Republic stayed in Prague from 15th to 17th September on their way back from Moscow.

M. TANGUY-PRIGENT, Minister for Ex-Service Men, arrived in Czechoslovakia, as leader of a French delegation (15th August).

The President of the Franco-Czechoslovak Chamber of Commerce visited Prague at the invitation of the President of the Czechoslovak Chamber of Commerce (17th - 26th September).

An exhibition of French books was opened in Prague on 3rd October.

A French delegation from the Economic Council went to Prague (16th - 26th October).

There was a French cinema week held in Prague, Brno and Bratislava from 23rd to 30th October.

... from Czechoslovakia to France ...

Two groups of railway technicians came to France to study the electrification of transport (one in July - the other in September).

From 16th to 28th July, an international film festival was held in KARLOUY-VARY. The prize-winning film was Christian Jacque's "Si tous les Gars du Monde".

A Czechoslovakian team took part in the international gliding contests at ST. YAN (Saône et Loire) - from 23rd June to 13th July.

8 Czechoslovakian athletes participated in the sports rally in Paris (5th - 11th July).

A Czechoslovakian delegation attended the International Congress of Pedology in Paris (24th August).

21 Czechoslovakians took part in the international mountaineering training course in Chamonix (17th August - 10th September).

2 Czechoslovakian representatives attended the Annual Congress of the International Amateur Rugby Federation (22nd - 23rd September).

A Czechoslovakian team played various basket-ball matches in Paris (27th September - 10th October).

A Czechoslovakian team took part in the France-Czechoslovakian kayak contest in France (29th-30th September).

4 Czechoslovakians played in a table tennis tournament in Paris (24th September - 1st October).

M. MILOS SADLO, Czech violin-cellist was invited to play with the Société des Concerts orchestra (21st October).

The Czechoslovakian Minister of Food Industries visited France (9th - 19th October).

A Czech paper and printing expert made a brief visit to France for study (October).

A group of Czech engineers visited work-sites and firms at the invitation of the Electricité de France (23rd October - 15th November).

A "Chemical Production" delegation visited nuclear research centres in France (18th - 24th November).

Sculptors and architects who had worked on the memorial to the French dead in Slovakia visited France (November).

G. Tourist travel between France and the Peoples Democracies

The Compagnie Française de Tourisme organized several group visits to Central Europe lasting on an average two or three days, and a few one week visits to Czechoslovakia, Hungary and Rumania.

These visits included coach tours from Switzerland or Austria, with return journey via Yugoslavia and Italy.

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A few air trips, on the occasion of sports events, also enabled a brief stay to be made in the Peoples' Democracies.

On the other hand, visits by the nationals of these countries to France lasted about 3 weeks.

If tourist travel between France and the USSR is to be expanded, certain administrative and economic difficulties must be overcome.

To make any real increase possible, the Soviet authorities would have to authorise individual visits, abolish exit visas and speed up the issuance of entry visas to French tourists.

The artificial exchange rate of F.frs. 88 to the rouble, which puts the cost of cruises at between F.frs. 350,000 and 450,000, considerably limits the number of tourists to the USSR.

These particulars refer to the period prior to the admission of the USSR, Poland and Rumania to the International Union of Official Tourist Agencies. Since 21st September, 1956, these three countries have been members of the Regional Tourist Commission for Europe. At the Vienna Congress last October, the Soviet delegate was nominated vice-chairman of this Commission. The latter, which is concerned with developing international travel, may well help to increase tourist exchanges between the East and the West.

MOVEMENTS OF TOURISTS
BETWEEN FRANCE AND THE PEOPLES' DEMOCRACIES

	TOURIST ENTER- ING FRANCE		TOURISTS LEAVING FRANCE FOR THE PEOPLES' DEMOCRACIES	
	<u>No. of persons</u>	<u>No. of days</u>	<u>No. of persons</u>	<u>No. of days</u>
CZECHOSLOVAKIA	-	-	416	824
HUNGARY	120	2,520	658	2,118
BULGARIA	108	3,020	45	90
RUMANIA	140	3,080	11	72
POLAND	220	4,900	-	-
	<u>628</u>	<u>13,520</u>	<u>1,130</u>	<u>5,104</u>

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Paris, XVIIe.