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COMMITTEE ON INFORMATION AND CULTURAL RELATIONS

CONTACTS WITH SOVIET BLOC COUNTRIES

Note by the French Delegation

At the end of last year, the French Foreign Minister, pending decisions by the Western Powers on the attitude to be adopted towards exchanges with Soviet bloc countries in the fields of sport and cultural activities, issued provisional instructions to France's representatives in these countries.

These instructions may be summarised as follows:

Relations with the USSR

Bilateral cultural, scientific and technical arrangements to be broken off except in the case of non-spectacular, previously agreed arrangements of a durable character such as exchanges of scholarship winners.

No immediate response to be made to any new moves by the Soviet authorities.

Exchanges which normally occur in a multilateral setting (e.g. international congresses) can be allowed to continue.

No encouragement should be given to personal contacts (lectures, private visits of intellectuals, etc.) for the time being.

The visits to France of prominent citizens of the USSR for political or propaganda purposes (Franco-Soviet trade union congresses, meetings between former members of resistance movements, etc.) are temporarily suspended. Applications for visas will be refused.

Preparations for the visit to France of the Bolshoi Theatre Company to be slowed down but not brought to a standstill.

Relations with the popular democracies

Contacts with Poland are to be developed to the greatest possible extent. To this end, consideration might be given to sending a cultural attaché to Warsaw even before the resumption of conversations on cultural exchanges.

The case of Hungary has been left in abeyance pending clarification of the present obscure situation.

As regards Czechoslovakia, Bulgaria and Rumania, irrespective of their current political leanings, occasions should still be sought for the promotion of better mutual understanding in the

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cultural and technical fields, while avoiding the conclusion of formal cultural agreements for the time being, and, so far as is possible, participation in government-sponsored activities.

Albania is not considered worthy of any special effort as the Albanian Government puts every possible obstacle in the way of whatever cultural activities the French Legation attempts to encourage.

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