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COMMITTEE OF POLITICAL ADVISERS

RELATIONS BETWEEN NORWAY AND THE EAST EUROPEAN COUNTRIES
(EXCLUDING THE SOVIET UNION AND EAST GERMANY)

Note by the Norwegian Delegation

It will be recalled that in April this year a note by the United Kingdom Delegation on relations between the United Kingdom and the East European countries was circulated under reference AC/119-WP(63)16. It will also be recalled that at the Committee's meeting on 9th April this year, other delegations were encouraged to circulate similar notes, commenting on their countries' relations with Eastern Europe, in preparation for a continuation of discussion in the Committee(1). The attached note deals with relations between Norway and the East European countries.

2. It will be seen that the term "satellites" to describe the East European countries has been systematically avoided throughout the note. The status of "satellite" is not one which the Norwegian authorities would like to see perpetuated for the countries concerned. Furthermore, present evolution tends to indicate that the expression "satellite" for the East European countries is no longer an adequate description of their status.

OTAN/NATO,
Paris, XVIe.

(1) AC/119-R(63)14, Item II

NATO CONFIDENTIAL

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Political

Norway's post-war political relations with Poland, Czechoslovakia, Hungary, Rumania and Bulgaria have on the whole been of limited scope.

2. Poland is the country within the group which is most actively interested in the political and military problems of Northern Europe. Poland has generally been backing up Soviet initiatives in the Baltic and the Scandinavian areas. During 1962 this aspect of Polish foreign policy was reflected in Polish press and propaganda rather than in specific diplomatic moves.

3. During 1962 no prominent political visits took place between Norway and the five countries.

4. In matters of foreign policy these states do not to-day represent any serious problem for Norway. Relations with them are to a large degree a function of the general East-West situation, and as a rule they constitute a factor of importance in Norway's foreign policy only as part of the established East-West balance.

5. It is the view of the Norwegian Government that within the framework of this balance best possible relations with the East European countries should be worked out. In general Norway has consistently maintained the view that contacts in the fields of commerce, culture, tourism and sports should be encouraged, as such contacts will serve the general interest of the West while meeting the interest and desires of the great majority of the East European peoples.

6. Experience has shown, however, that differences in the internal situation, historical experience and political development of these countries require differentiation in the type of contact and scope of co-operation that should be sought with each of them.

Diplomatic

7. Norway maintains diplomatic relations with the five countries, but has a resident diplomatic mission in Poland only, Czechoslovakia and Hungary being covered by Norway's embassy in Vienna, and Rumania and Bulgaria by the embassy in Belgrade. Czechoslovak representatives have suggested reopening of the Norwegian mission in Prague, which was closed in 1958. Hungarian government officials have also expressed the desire to have a Norwegian diplomatic representation in Budapest.

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8. Poland, Czechoslovakia and Hungary maintain diplomatic missions in Oslo while Bulgaria has a commercial representative there.

9. (In 1962 Norwegian diplomatic representatives were approached by Albanian colleagues suggesting the establishment of diplomatic relations between Norway and Albania. This was informally turned down through the same channels with reference to the fact that common political, economic and other interests were not of sufficient importance to permit Norway, as a small country with limited representation abroad, to establish such relations with Albania)

Trade

10. During the last decade Norway's trade with Eastern Europe has been stagnant. In 1962 exports to and imports from these five countries accounted for only 1.6% of Norway's foreign trade as compared with 4.3% in 1937. (Norway's trade with Albania is negligible). Although the exchange of goods with certain countries is showing a rising trend no dramatic increase in this trade is expected in the near future. Reference is made to the attached statistical information (see Annex).

11. Interest in strengthening trade relations with Norway has recently been expressed in proposals for long-term trade arrangements, reflecting no doubt also the uncertainty felt by these countries as to the future of their market in Norway in view of the economic integration in Western Europe. Since 1961 three-year agreements have been concluded with Poland, Bulgaria, Czechoslovakia and Hungary, replacing the former annual agreements. Particularly the prospects for the trade with Czechoslovakia are encouraging and it is noteworthy that following the conclusion of the new long-term agreement Czechoslovakia may replace the Soviet Union as the most important of Norway's Eastern European trading partners.

12. In view of the requirement for a balanced exchange of goods, imports from Eastern Europe are by and large the main factor determining the volume of trade. Consequently, Norway has pursued a liberal import policy towards these countries during the post-war period in an attempt to help them earn the necessary currency to pay for purchases in Norway, one of the main objectives of the Norwegian economic policy towards Eastern Europe being to ensure the export of goods of which these countries are traditional buyers and for which it has been difficult to find a steady outlet in the West.

Cultural relations

13. Norway has concluded cultural agreements with Poland, Czechoslovakia and Bulgaria. During 1962 a limited exchange was also carried out with Hungary on an ad hoc basis.

14. In general the results achieved during 1962 seem promising. Exchanges are expanding and a further development of cultural contacts is foreseen.

Poland

15. Relations with Poland are now well established and meet with relatively few obstacles. The exchange programme is fairly comprehensive and follows the general pattern established for East-West cultural relations.

16. Contacts have been facilitated by the establishment in Norway of a non-political friendship association, with the tacit approval of both Norwegian and Polish authorities. The association has close relations with the Polish-Norwegian friendship association in Poland, and has taken over practically all the activities of its Norwegian Communist-dominated rival.

17. Co-operation in the university field has been particularly fruitful, and the experiment of maintaining a jointly financed assistant professor of Norwegian language and literature at the University of Poznan has proved a success. Though the formal appointment is made by the University itself, candidates are nominated by the Norwegian Ministry of Foreign Affairs.

18. The emphasis of the cultural co-operation with Poland is still on the exchange of individuals, though a successful exchange of exhibitions was organized in 1962 and a number of other artistic events have taken place or are in preparation. As the beginning of a modest general information programme a Polish-language booklet on Norway is being prepared. The next step will be a Polish version of a general information film on Norway.

Czechoslovakia

19. Dating back to pre-war days, the cultural agreement with Czechoslovakia was inoperative from 1948 until 1962, when a limited exchange programme was agreed upon. No serious obstacles have been encountered in the implementation of this programme, which includes exchanges of exhibitions, students, scientists, etc.

20. In the past cultural relations between Norway and Czechoslovakia were close, and last year's experience shows that possibilities of contact still exist. A desire for closer contacts is often expressed, though much less openly than in Poland.

21. The exchange programme established for 1963 and 1964 envisages increased activities and it is worth noting that the negotiations leading to this new programme were singularly easy. The Czechoslovak authorities seem eager to keep one of their few formal agreements with a Western country running smoothly.

Bulgaria

22. Under the terms of the first exchange programme with Bulgaria, valid for 1962 and 1963, an exchange of exhibitions will take place in the spring of 1963 and regular student exchanges are scheduled to begin in the autumn.

23. From the limited experience gathered it seems that student circles in Bulgaria offer opportunities for relatively free contacts.

Hungary

24. Though several Hungarian proposals for the conclusion of a cultural agreement have been turned down as being politically premature, a number of ad hoc exchanges were organized in 1962.

25. There is reason to believe that recent developments in Hungary have made that country particularly interesting as a partner in cultural exchanges. Norwegian authorities are prepared to take advantage of the possibilities of contact by increasing the number of exchanges.

Travel

26. Up till now only a small minority of the persons visiting Norway from the five countries have been tourists, the majority being officials, business people, chauffeurs and technicians.

27. In 1962 a total of 1,332 visas were granted to persons from these countries, of whom 7 came from Rumania, 91 from Bulgaria, 291 from Hungary, 333 from Czechoslovakia and 610 from Poland.

28. Among the visitors from Poland last year there were 102 members of Polish yacht clubs, who were permitted to call on certain Norwegian ports with their yachts.

29. Hudging from the number of visa applications received over the last months the Hungarian authorities are now permitting their nationals to go abroad as tourists to a greater extent than before. As far as Norway is concerned this was not the case previously. In 1962 most of the Hungarians visiting Norway came to see relatives who settled in Norway after the events in 1956.

30. The volume of travel in the opposite direction is modest although details are not known. All the countries are, however, encouraging tourism from the West, including Norway, by offering guided tours at reasonable prices (particularly during the summer months).

NORWAY'S TRADE WITH EAST EUROPEAN COUNTRIES

1,000 kr.

Country	1957		1960		1961		1962	
	Imports	Exports	Imports	Exports	Imports	Exports	Imports	Exports
Czechoslovakia	31.129	14.123	65.619	50.619	79.626	60.924	74.216	67.688
Poland	23.013	9.907	31.594	30.640	34.224	27.796	53.417	48.597
Hungary	6.414	835	13.726	8.501	15.156	12.793	15.219	16.384
Bulgaria	1.050	141	1.133	4.373	2.058	16.174	7.647	7.802
Rumania	4.327	626	19.017	14.795	16.873	10.076	4.968	10.107
Total:	65.933	25.637	131.089	108.928	147.937	127.763	155.467	150.578
Total trade turnover	91.570		240.017		275.700		306.045	
Norway's foreign trade (chips included):	<u>2.115.975</u>		<u>16.737.372</u>		<u>18.194.295</u>		<u>18.765.245</u>	
East European countries' share of Norwegian foreign trade:	<u>4.3%</u>		<u>1.4%</u>		<u>1.5%</u>		<u>1.6%</u>	