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East-West contacts

in practice

East-West contacts in practice

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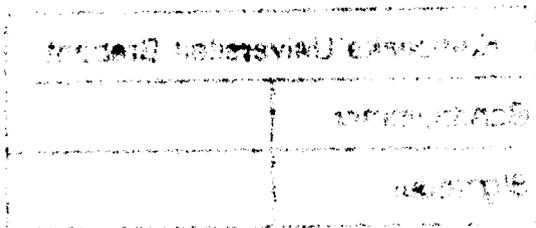
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Introduction

An international conference took place at Locarno, Switzerland, under the auspices of INTERDOC on the 9th and 10th of April 1965. The theme of the conference was:

"East-West contacts in practice".

During this conference members of the British, French, German, Italian, Swiss and Netherlands groups presented brief reports on the experiences of their respective countries in regard to East-West contacts.

An introductory paper, the shortened versions of the papers which were read, as well as the conclusions of the conference are presented in this booklet.

Problems of East-West contacts

Dr. E. Kux

Communism as a theory and in practice fundamentally differs from the pluralistic systems which it condemns as "bourgeois" and "capitalistic" and which it confronts with an absolute world conception, a totalitarian rule of a single party and the goal of world domination. Communism as a doctrine claims to represent the absolute truth and denounces all different views and persuasions as "false ideologies", with which in the long run it is impossible to maintain a good understanding and a balance of interests, and reactions. Starting from this claim to absoluteness Communism set out to put into practice an all-round system with totalitarian methods. One-party rule, determining everything, harsh punishment for anyone who does not obey, and the goal of domination in order to establish the one valid Communist truth, are the consequences of such a conception of life and world, proclaiming to be of an absolute character.

Besides, in the Marxist view man is not a sensible being, who is susceptible to education; his consciousness can only be altered through a revolutionary change in the "relations of production". In accordance with their tenet of class struggle the Communists assume the existence of two worlds, a rising world of "Socialism" and a declining world of "capitalist imperialism". It was the Soviet state, which when founded by Lenin, consciously placed itself outside the established international order which slowly and painfully developed during the 18th and 19th centuries. And it was the Soviet state that arbitrarily broke treaties and agreements and aimed at a separate "Socialist" order among the Communist states created afterwards.

In trying to realize their doctrine, the Communists had to face a dialectical conflict between theory and practice:

1. The Communist seizure of power and the changes in "the relations of production" did not all of a sudden destroy the historical and traditional trends in the Communist countries; ineradicable symptoms of **nationalism** affect the "construction of Communism" and the "coexistence of Communist states".
2. The realisation of Communism did not occur quite independently of and without any influences from the developments in

the non-Communist world, that did not by any means comply to the Marxist prognostics of a collapse accelerated by cyclic crises; rather the Western world, after a **second industrial revolution** through the development of nuclear energy and automation, surpassed the Communist world in scientific progress and in its transition towards a society of affluence and leisure. Furthermore, the first successful steps were taken towards its economic, military and political integration.

In the face of these facts which contradict their theory and practice, the Communists have been forced to seek:

- a. An **adaptation of their ideology** and a relaxation of ideological controls in certain fields by introducing "double truths"—a process that is somewhat incorrectly termed "de-ideologisation;"
- b. **Participation in the technical revolution** and the scientific achievements of the West and, for that purpose, introduction of the necessary structural and social changes and the creation of an intelligentsia of technical scientists which was put in the forefront instead of the "proletariat"—a change that is generally regarded as a tendency towards a "bourgeois" society;
- c. As a result of these developments and the methods used in achieving them and under the influence of continuing nationalist attitudes and interests, a disagreement grew between "**revisionists**" and "**dogmatists**", culminating in the Moscow-Peking conflict.

The crisis in world Communism that resulted from these changes and the difficulties in adaptation led to the following assumptions in the West:

- a. The modernisation of the Communist ideology must undermine its claim to absolute truth and, consequently, the justification of party control and must lead to a "polycentrism" of views and methods.
- b. The creation of a scientific intelligentsia needed for modern development must imply a social transformation of the Communist society through a "new class", and these "bourgeois" trends must lead to a "liberalisation" and "democratisation" and through these to the disappearance of party control.
- c. The growing adaptation and "convergence" of Communist and

capitalist societies will lead to a decrease and finally to a disappearance of East-West tensions.

- d. The Communist conflict will result in a lasting break and a weakening of revolutionary virulence in the struggle for world domination by the international Communist movement, and so it will become harmless.

Such reflections and expectations must serve to justify a policy of "détente" and "East-West contacts", which allegedly will promote the anticipated developments. This policy implies: intensifying the current process of a weakening Communist ideology through cultural exchange, accelerating "bourgeois" tendencies and "convergence" through economic concessions and lessening the dangers of a world revolutionary movement by taking advantage of the current Communist conflict. It cannot be denied that tendencies as described above exist within Communism. But it would be false to conclude from this fact that a causal evolution along straight lines is taking place in Communism, as though history were something like one-way traffic.

Besides these evolutionary, centrifugal tendencies, there exist in the Communist camp revolutionary, centripetal forces, including the—not to be underrated—interests of power of the party leadership now being in control, who of course are not in the least inclined to renounce their positions and their privileges. The dialectical relation between constant factors like the wish to preserve party control and the strive for fulfilment of Communist aims, and variable factors like the necessary modernisation of systems of government and relations of production with the corresponding changes of theory and practice, is extremely complicated and to a great extent unknown. We lack the knowledge needed for a to some extent safe prognostic on the further developments of the Communist system. Only recently Khrushchev's fall contradicted many calculations.

Furthermore, the historical fact should not be overlooked that the Soviet system has been able to overcome, with the direct or indirect aid of the West, similar crises in the past, like those of "war Communism" and of the introduction of collectivisation, and that the international Communist movement succeeded in arriving at a new unity of action after dangerous dissensions (Trotsky, Tito).

Some ideas on a practical approach to East-West contacts

Th. F. Krause

I should like to introduce here the term "contact model", a designation which of course will have to be understood as limited in range and specialised in its application. In this model case contacts are defined as those meetings between representatives of German youth organisations and of the Soviet youth which have taken place since 1960 within a framework of exchange programmes. There are many indications to suggest that the number of such meetings will increase in the years to come.

The term "contact" is not a very fortunate choice. It is hard to say when this originally technical term first spilled over into general usage. Although it does comprise the concept of polarity and thus fruitful interaction, it is devoid of that emotional connotation which is of great significance in properly dealing with Slavic people. There have been instances when the Soviet side noted with regret the choice of this "technical" and thus "lifeless" word as the key-term of a meeting of human minds. Unfortunately, "contact"—a handy term—has taken roots so firmly in overall usage that we cannot foresee a chance to introduce a term which would better suit the requirements of the partners concerned.

Before going into this model of youth contacts, it is perhaps useful to throw a glance upon Soviet tourism at large, into which the model under discussion is after all incorporated. It is thus subjected to a number of rules derived from the Soviet interpretation of tourism. It should be stated first of all that it is difficult if not altogether impossible to express in terms of Western standards the scope and form of what the Soviets call tourism. Here, as in many other cases, sharply divergent meanings exist where one and the same term is used. The individual tourist, a common species in the West, is so rare in Soviet tourism that he is of no relevance to our topic in either a positive or a negative sense.

For a number of reasons which cannot be enlarged upon in this

context, neither the total number of Soviet citizens going abroad as "tourists" nor that of foreigners touring the Soviet Union can be determined precisely. However, we do have the latest figures from a good scientific source covering both East-West and West-East tourism in 1960. These figures can be found in the Report of Exchange with the Soviet Union and Eastern Europe prepared by the Soviet and East European Exchanges Staff of the US Department of State. The report is based on the statistical data of the Soviet Intourist bureau. According to occasional reports in Soviet publications and other statements, some of them by leading Soviet functionaries, foreign tourism in the Soviet Union has increased considerably since 1960. On the occasion of the Leipzig trade fair, Intourist has stated that "by the 1965 season, tourist facilities will be improved by new vacation places, more accommodation facilities and special tourist attractions. The new plan provides for numerous new hotels, guest houses, restaurants, motels, and camping sites. Furthermore, the number of garages and filling stations for foreign motorists has been increased. (Note that Moscow has only eight filling stations!) Special attractions are to include not only deer hunting, but now also bear hunting expeditions to Siberia."

In September 1964 the head of the newly-founded (Aug. 64) Main Administration for Foreign Tourism (under the Soviet Council of Ministers) made a euphemistic declaration on Soviet tourist facilities. Since then, numerous advertisements of the above kind have been found in various press organs. For the 1965 May Day celebrations, a flood of tourists to Moscow was predicted by the official Soviet press agency TASS in March 1965, again not without a certain tendency towards exaggeration with regard to actually limited facilities. Such statements must be read with extreme caution as they are often sheer propaganda. Notwithstanding, it should not be doubted that the Soviet Union is interested in expanding tourist traffic as a potential source of foreign exchange. However, this interest is one-way only; Soviet eagerness to channel into the Soviet Union as many foreign exchange spenders as possible does by no means indicate the readiness to clear the path for an equally large number of Soviet citizens to go abroad as "tourists" in the proper application of the term.

In 1960, 730,150 Soviet citizens altogether travelled in foreign countries. Of these, as many as 602,503 were members of official

delegations. Another 4,165 attended sports events abroad. The remaining 123,482 persons may be compared with tourists in the Western sense of the word; however, 109,596 of these did not leave the Soviet bloc. Thus, only 13,896 Soviet tourists visited non-Communist countries.

This truly small number of short-term tourists can be further broken down according to the individual countries visited. (The figures given in parentheses below represent the corresponding number of visitors from these countries to the Soviet Union):

Austria	858 (866)
Belgium	476 (925)
Finland	3,197 (10,369)
France	1,398 (7,920)
Fed. Rep. of Germany	3,207 (3,302)
Great Britain	1,127 (5,526)
India	216 (390)
Italy	1,466 (1,997)
Netherlands	394 (501)
Norway	91 (328)
Sweden	793 (4,200)
United States	673 (14,209)

Total 13,896 Soviet citizens

In a statement made at the Leipzig trade fair, Intourist claimed that about 35,000 citizens of the Federal Republic of Germany had visited the Soviet Union in 1964, and that the figure for 1965 would be still larger. Compared with the mentioned 3,302 visitors (for 1960) this would mean a ten-fold increase between 1960 and 1964. Whether the new figures are based on facts cannot be ascertained at this point. However, it is not unlikely that they are exaggerated.

It is evident from the 1960 figures, that Soviet tourism is, for all practical purposes, fully dominated by the principle of "**delegations only**". It is futile to argue whether this situation is to the advantage or disadvantage of the development that we are interested in. The "Delegatsiya", the Soviet tourist group controlled by the head of the delegation, is a reality which will stay with us for some time to come.

We are here primarily concerned with two more specialised Soviet agencies which control the exchange of delegations be-

tween our autonomous and independent youth organisations and the dependent ones in the Soviet Union. These two agencies are:

1. Sputnik, the USSR state bureau for youth tourism; along with its headquarters in Moscow, it maintains branch offices in Leningrad and several other large cities.
2. The (State) Committee for the Youth Organisations of the USSR with headquarters in Moscow, headed by top functionaries, is the central organisation of the various state-controlled Soviet Communist youth organisations. It presumably influences, if not fully determines, the exchange programmes conducted by Sputnik (cf. 1 above).

The Soviet Union is at present faced with a relatively difficult situation with regard to the following developments:

1. The pressure exerted by the rising "flood of tourists" from abroad calls for investments and drastic new organisational measures. (Soviet press articles as well as experiences reported by our West German "contact" tourists point to the fact that both hotels and trained personnel are lacking. The Soviet press is full also of typically Communist "scientific" discussions on measures that ought to be taken within the framework of planned economy to remove such sources of grievances.)
2. The Kremlin will have to yield increasingly to the moderate but steadily growing pressure particularly from among the younger generation, whose desire to go abroad and compare has grown along with de-Stalinisation.
3. The Soviet Union cannot in the long run disregard tourism as a flowing source of foreign exchange.

This situation as a whole offers us certain chances. Here are the reasons why:

1. The difference between the fairly rigid Soviet control apparatus and the fairly loose-reined guidance on our side is noted to our advantage by both sides: Experience has shown that the young Soviets (though they won't openly say so) are in fact impressed by the great degree of independence enjoyed by our youth organisations, while our young people are rather

alarmed at the stiff regulations to which they find Soviet youth organisations are subjected.

2. The growing flood of tourists to the Soviet Union deepens our insight into the realities of everyday life there. Unavoidably, this development also increasingly enlightens the Soviet citizen, although he cannot go abroad himself, about Western standards of living. If this influence were to call for slowing-down or even cancelling measures on the part of the Soviet government for internal policy reasons, or, specifically, on account of the growing "meta-materialistic unrest" among the intelligentsia, this would lead to a loss of prestige both in the eyes of the Soviet population and abroad.
3. The Soviet youth's desire to travel abroad is directly related to those still largely latent processes of critical existentialist thinking which are currently going on in the Soviet Union. Thus the number of potential "propagators" on the Soviet side is growing more extensively and more rapidly than that of Soviet youth travelling abroad.

II

Against the background of this development it appears appropriate to analyse the nature of these contacts and the methods by which they are conducted.

Generally speaking, contacts occur on four different levels depending on the functions of the participants in their own societies. Although transitions are fluid of course, we can differentiate between these four categories and their criteria:

1. interstate relations (diplomatic contacts);
2. economic relations (economic contacts);
3. cultural relations (cultural contacts);
4. tourist traffic in the widest application of the term (private contacts).

Our experience would suggest yet another classification based on how influence is exerted, consciously or unconsciously, in discussions. By this standard we can differentiate between:

1. the aggressive approach;
2. the persuasive approach;
3. the pragmatic, or commercial, approach;
4. the elastic approach.

It should be stated clearly at this point that, in actual fact, at the core of all meetings with members of Communist societies, no matter just how convinced they may themselves be, or whether a meeting takes place in our country or in their own, there is always the contest of value standards and value systems, i.e. of the definitions, emotions and judgements underlying either social system, which, in the final analysis, determine life's reality on our side as well as on the other. It is significant then that, going on the conviction of the greater validity of our own value standards, we manage to achieve a maximum psychological impact, a task which requires finding the appropriate approach in any given situation to make the prevalence of the superior value system count when exposed to actual confrontation.

Over this question of what road to follow, what method to apply, schools are divided:

1. The advocates of the aggressive method try to attack the system of values of the Communist society head-on. Exposing the discrepancy between theory and practice as it appears in every-day life, and confronting the two systems of values, they try to shake, if not to destroy, the Communist view of life in the minds of their opposite numbers. This of course, is the method practised by real hundred per cent anti-Communists, especially by members of emigré organisations, such as the very active Russian NTS, whose members systematically "take on" the crews of Soviet navy ships when they appear in Western ports. Obviously this method requires a profound knowledge of Communist doctrine as well as of political, economic and cultural affairs in the Soviet bloc.
2. The "persuasive" method is designed, in pointing to the advantages of the non-Communist system of values, to stimulate the opposite number's critical reasoning in such a way that he himself begins to become aware of the flaws in his system of value standards. This method is good on university level. It is less apt to hurt the feelings of one's vis-à-vis than is the aggressive method.
3. The "pragmatic" or "commercial" method avoids comparisons between essential values. It appeals instead to the material and egoistic interests of one's opposite number trying to arouse, or increase, his readiness to collaborate. This method is appropriate only for business contacts.

4. The "elastic" approach, which might also be termed "skipjack" or "dodge-and-go" action, avoids any hard-headed or idea-heavy reference to value standards. Instead, emphasis is placed on

- (a) objective information,
- (b) unprejudiced description of reality,
- (c) acceptance, without critical repartee, even of clearly negative phenomena of the Communist world as well as of any defamation of our own system and standards.

This method is preferred by people who have a deep knowledge of the mentality found in people living under a Communist regime.

Needless to say, the contacts that actually take place cannot, all of them, be unequivocally grouped under one of the four "levels" or assigned one of the four "methods". "Levels" and "methods" as outlined above are an attempt to suggest a serviceable system of coordinates.

III

We are of course somewhat hampered in our assessment of concrete possibilities for furthering contacts by the well-known fact that happenings do not follow definitions. Yet our handicap is fairly well compensated for in the "contact model" by a number of facts:

1. contacts have been cultivated more or less systematically since 1960;
2. meetings particularly with youth representatives from the Soviet Union have offered an insight into the mentality and politics of that part of Soviet society whose attitude will in the near future influence the fortunes of people not only in the homeland of the October revolution;
3. contacts have been maintained by bi-lingual persons who, on account of their background, culture, education and experience are likely to avoid those mistakes which might be detrimental to our contact objectives.
4. during the last four years, relations with the aforementioned Soviet contact-steering agencies have been intensified to a

point where a certain measure of influence on the conduct of the programmes of these organisations appears possible.

IV

The organisational pattern of the contacts, which are conducted on the basis of an exchange of delegations, is in general quite simple:

1. Each delegation, guest or own, is composed of 15 to 25 members, the average age being 25 years. The male/female ratio is about 3 to 1.
2. Travel expenses within the host country (border to border), as well as all expenses of the stay (accommodation, food, entrance fees) are handled on an au-pair basis. Expenses other than transportation are figured on the basis of "Touro-days". Travel expenses are figured on kilometrage. Let me give an example: A 14-day sojourn of 25 tourists accounts for $14 \times 25 = 350$ Touro-days, the kilometrage of an assumed route Brest - Kiev - Odessa - Moscow - Brest would come to 3,857. The difference in kilometrage resulting from shorter distances within Germany is credited to Soviet delegations at a rate of 8 roubles per 1,000 kilometres per person. It is interesting to note that the Sputnik agency insists on having the stipulation included in every exchange agreement that the sum "shall be paid to the leader of the Soviet delegation for distribution among the delegation members".

The experience now at hand may be summed up as follows:

V

The Organisational Aspect

As has been mentioned, there is no German control apparatus at work which would correspond to those operated by the Sputnik agency and the KMO. There is no such agency in the making either, as it would violate the principle of independence adhered to by our youth organisations. On the other hand, there is much evidence for the necessity of creating an advisory organ which would have to take up these functions:

1. **Giving advice** to those German youth organisations who intend

either to send delegations to the Soviet Union and/or other Soviet bloc countries, or to invite delegations from these countries.

2. **Selecting** members for German delegations on the basis of their maturity and real interest.
3. **Preparing** both German guests and hosts for their tasks by providing them with systematic information on conditions in both their country and the home country of their guests or hosts.
4. **Finding** and **training** the interpreters required. (Under the present circumstances, interpreters are essential. They are the key to successful exchange programmes.)
5. **Preparing** suitable information material in the native languages of both host and guest organisations.
6. **Supporting** the maintenance and further cultivation of contacts:
 - (a) at home, by contacting authorities, institutions and individuals who sponsor exchange programmes;
 - (b) abroad, as a "clearing house" to deal with the foreign clearing agencies—e.g., in the Soviet Union, the KMO and the Sputnik agencies.

The headway which has been made in the efforts to establish first contacts with the youth of the Soviet Union has found recognition in many parts of the Federal Republic. For this reason the suggested advisory agency would best be set up in a big Centre, where it could base its work on compiled and evaluated data, on existing contacts established on the initiative of active German youth organisations with both Sputnik and KMO, and also on the help of volunteer work teams set up by experienced people.

VI

The Political-Mentality Aspect

1. On the German side:
 - The interest of the German youth in the Soviet way of life is just as keen as that of the Soviet youth in conditions prevailing in the West.
 - The majority of young Germans involved are aware of the

— importance of their "mission". In most cases, they handle themselves well in meetings and discussions with their Eastern counterparts.

— The psychological impact of Soviet conditions on young Germans is two-fold:

— They find the wide open spaces and "wide-open"ness in a more general sense attractive; at the same time they are repelled by the well-known flaws and shortcomings of everyday life under a totalitarian regime.

2. On the Soviet side:

— The young Soviet delegates display an insatiable hunger for information.

— Educational and occupational possibilities are the principal foci of their interest; very detailed information is sought. We should therefore supply objective information material in Russian, and German interlocutors should be prepared to answer all questions exhaustively and reliably.

— Preconceived resentment lurks behind the front of interest. It will melt away slowly and only to the degree to which young Germans are able to cope with this specific Soviet attitude.

— Soviet youngsters are not interested in a sight-seeing brand of tourism. They are extremely keen on contacts with people from all walks of life to study their ways and their homes. Highlights are weekend invitations to German families. They will have to be families who can accommodate two guests because only two Soviet delegates together are allowed to accept invitations.

— In view of our contact objectives, the delegation-type programmes offer better possibilities than contacts with individual tourists with their limited possibilities. Given the psychological disposition of young Soviets, only the group situation can create the atmosphere in which pre-conceived resentments are overcome.

Now a final remark: no matter under which of our headings a given individual contact may fall, every Western participant should be aware that the Soviet individuals he meets are human beings to whom Western standards do not apply. The Soviet individual to this day is the product of a specific development on which I need

not dwell. Whether he is merely exposed to, or himself an exponent of, Communist doctrine, his mental character will be composed of four strata. First, there is a relatively overt conscious layer, then a layer of what might be termed latent, or clandestine, consciousness; third, the subconscious; and fourth, "sosnatyelnosti" (to be translated roughly by "responsibility-consciousness"), the specific Soviet addition which makes the Soviet individual differ fundamentally from Western man.

"Sosnatyelnosti" has developed under the pressure which the regime exerts on both the mind and the soul. It is a "substratum of refuge" where thoughts and sensations as they are required by the regime and the doctrine have their place. Here the Soviet individual invokes the political philosophy of Communism in order to justify actions and ideas which would not normally be justifiable. The Soviet individual is subject to double-faced ethics. He partakes of both an official and a secret moral attitude. This psychological structure of the Soviet individual forms the basis also of his attitude towards the West. How the Western interlocutor can find his way into the labyrinth and how he can usefully conduct the exchange, depends on his personal adaptability and psychological understanding.

This problem of East-West contacts, like all other important problems, can therefore be solved only by the right man in the right place.

Men—not Measures.

East-West contacts: the British experience

C. H. Ellis

Any contacts between a free society and a totalitarian one present opportunities and dangers. This is true of both sides, but in different ways. A free society has less to conceal, by definition, than a closed and secretive one. The more we can show of our way of life and what it offers, the better. The rulers of a closed society have more to lose from such contacts than we have. On the other hand, the fact that on one side official control is absolute while on the other it is relatively minimal does contain dangers. The West's guard tends to be down: industrial design secrets may be too easily surrendered; the visitor to a Western country can see almost anything he likes and too often the visitor from Communist countries will report only the worst aspects of Western life on his return. On the other side, travel is more restricted and personal contacts are more difficult to make. There is therefore a general tendency for East-West contacts to be one-sided. The attempt to extend such contacts should not however be abandoned. But it does mean that Western negotiators should be on their guard and that the principle of reciprocity should be invoked wherever possible. Discretion must be used, however. To take one example—in the West we are so used to the free circulation of newspapers and other publications that it hardly occurs to us to make an issue of it. On the Communist side, however, restrictions are basic: if a restriction is removed, this is regarded on the Communist side as a "concession" which the Westerners must match.

Marked psychological changes are taking place in the USSR. There is a growing popular demand for spiritual and intellectual freedom and for consumer choice. Even the latter implies an abandonment of dogma, but the Soviet leaders have gone further in meeting consumer demands than they have yet dared to go in the intellectual sphere, as shown by the partial acceptance of Professor Liberman's ideas on the profit motive and consumer choice.

These changes have been marked by a weakening of popular acceptance of Communist slogans and possibly of the system itself, and by a corresponding thirst for information about the

West and interest in Western life and ideas. It is, therefore, desirable, as a general principle, to maintain existing contacts and develop them. This is all the more desirable in that the Soviet rulers are probably increasingly aware of the incapacity of their system, and of its outworn philosophical and political ideas, to meet the needs of the kind of an affluent industrial society. They are in a dilemma: how to maintain the system on which their power is based, and at the same time come to terms with the real world, that is, with the economic, political, social, military and technological facts of life.

This dilemma should, of course, be exploited, though for tactical reasons our awareness of it must be concealed in cultural and other negotiations. We must, at the same time, recognize that while the dilemma remains unresolved, the Russians will try to keep up their presentation of a false and one-sided picture of the outside world for internal consumption. Since this picture can be dissipated only by access to the facts and direct experience of Western realities, the Soviet authorities will try to keep contacts within limits, for instance by restricting the number of Soviet citizens allowed to travel abroad, and selecting, as far as they are able, "reliable" candidates for passports.

In general, the British, who have had commercial relations with Russia since the 16th century, are less disposed to regard Russia in ideological terms than as a great power that happens to have a peculiar government (the Tsardom, too, was regarded as peculiar). British historical memories tend to be short, and we have largely forgotten the British role in the 19th century in blocking Russian expansion. Memories of the Vienna Congress, the Crimean War, Lord Beaconsfield's actions in 1876, the Afghan wars and support for the Japanese in 1904-5, are dim on the British side. On the Russian side, however, such memories are vivid and condition the Soviet attitude towards Britain. This makes for a love-hate approach on the Russian side. They may love Shakespeare, Dickens and Burns, but this love does not obliterate their detestation of Lords Beaconsfield and Curzon.

During the Stalinist period, contacts between Russians and British were few. Even during the second World War, as Churchill and other chroniclers have recorded, they were limited and marred by suspicion. The Russians were our "gallant allies", but the Russian people heard more about our alleged reluctance to open a second front than about our help in the field and in the con-

voying of supplies. After the cessation of hostilities there was a resumption of anti-British (and anti-American) propaganda, and an effort on the part of Moscow to revive Russian suspicion of the West in general. Contacts were few and firmly controlled. However, after Stalin's death contacts began to increase and there is now a steady flow of British visitors to Russia. Most of these are tourists; but a fair number are students, artists, technicians and business men who go for specific purposes, often, but not exclusively under the various trade and cultural agreements that exist between Britain and the Soviet Union. There is a smaller, and of course more tightly controlled, flow of Russians, and to an increasing extent, Poles, Czechs and Hungarians, to the United Kingdom.

In this connection, the document that concerns us most at this conference is the new agreement between the United Kingdom and the USSR on "relations in the scientific, technological, educational and cultural fields," which came into operation on April 1 and which replaces the 1963 agreement and previous agreements.

These agreements are modest in scope, and to study them is to be made aware of how much remains to be done. Article II of the 1965 agreement provides for exchanges of scientists between the Royal Society and the Soviet Academy of Sciences, for periods of three weeks to two months, and for an annual exchange of two scientific research workers from each side for up to ten months.

Further exchanges are provided for in industry, transport and construction, and in agriculture. Perhaps the most hopeful provision for the future concerns professors, lecturers and students. In the field of medicine joint research has been conducted under the agreement in virology, anti-biotices and psychopharmacology. Ballet and the theatre are, of course, taken care of, but librarians are obviously considered potentially dangerous people, for the two parties merely agreed to "consider exchanges of up to three librarians" each year. The British Council was given the right to invite up to fifteen Soviet "individuals" each year to meet people in similar professions, and it was agreed that as many tourists as possible should be encouraged to visit their respective countries, and, as the agreement put it, to "be given all facilities to travel and to make contacts freely".

These agreements reflect both the embarrassments of the Soviet side and the difficulties which the British inevitably encounter in negotiations of this kind. The British have always

pressed, and will continue to press, for the widest possible variety of contacts and exchanges, while the Russians would like to limit these to relatively innocuous fields. For instance, the Russians are suspicious of requests for increased cultural and educational contacts, in which they see potential dangers such as a Western design to penetrate their ideological defences and raise doubts about Soviet philosophical self-sufficiency.

"Bourgeois" ideas of affluence and the external signs of comfort are suspect as likely to expose Soviet visitors to Britain to the "temptations of luxury". The appeal to Soviet youth of Western ideas, music, fashions, etc., is regarded as particularly dangerous, as young people in the Soviet Union, despite all efforts to condition them from childhood, are becoming increasingly indifferent to Communist slogans, pretensions and excuses.

For these reasons, the Russians try to minimise exchanges in the realm of ideas, restricting cultural exchanges, as far as possible, to the arts, and educational ones to languages, philology and techniques of teaching, etc. For converse reasons, they prefer technological contacts, which are by definition non-subversive, from their point of view, and which offer the advantages of brain-picking and, in special fields, opportunities to impress their hosts or guests. The Russians also feel the need to present a favourable picture of themselves, for purposes of prestige and propaganda. Some element of reciprocity is therefore present; and indeed if it were not, no bargaining would be possible.

In any bargaining, however, the dice are heavily loaded in favour of the Soviets. Since the Soviet Union is a closed society with rigid controls over travel, the press, communications and so on, they are able to "manage" their side of the operation in a way which the British neither can nor would wish to.

Tourism is a case in point. The British are, of course, free to travel as they please and the Russians are not. This makes for a heavy imbalance in Britain's favour. Not only are there more British visitors to Russia than Russian visitors to Britain, but the British tourists, being individuals unorganised and unbriefed—are often less effective standard-bearers of the West than might be wished. Many of them, for instance, through ignorance or indifference are unable to answer in a convincing way the many questions about conditions at home with which they are showered in the USSR.

In contrast, Russian tourists usually travel in organised groups

and stick to a pre-arranged programme. Some attempt is made on the British side, by bodies responsible for the welfare of visitors, which try, for instance, to prevent Communist front organisations, such as the British-Russian Fellowship, from monopolising Soviet visitors. Independent local efforts to guide the steps of Soviet visitors are, of course, resisted on the Soviet side, where the authorities aim at keeping the dangers of outside contacts to a minimum by shepherding their own citizens abroad, while channelling our tourists to show places, museums, art galleries or theatres. The fact that few British visitors to the Soviet Union speak Russian works to the hosts' advantage as the tourists, in particular, are dependent on guides, who are often in the pay of the KGB.

The question of free circulation of newspapers and other publications has already been mentioned, but further comments are justified by the importance of the subject. This is one issue on which the Soviets have proved extraordinarily stubborn. The only British newspaper on sale in the Soviet Union is the "Daily Worker"; no periodicals are admitted (with the exception of the Communist "Labour Monthly") and the Soviet negotiators have proved impervious to arguments in favour of admitting even a relatively "progressive" paper like the "Guardian". An exception to the general ban is the official British illustrated quarterly, "Angliya", which has a circulation of 50,000 mainly in the large cities. "Angliya" avoids controversial political issues and polemics, but it must be presumed to have some influence on its readers, as it is known to have a much wider readership than its circulation figure would imply, being resold and passed from reader to reader.

On balance, the official view in Britain is that we gain from present exchange arrangements, inadequate though they are. It is clear that Russians want to travel, to read foreign books, to see foreign plays, etc.; and the fact that opportunities are restricted gives them a scarcity value and fosters the suspicion that the authorities have much to hide. Conversations with Soviet citizens, including students, show beyond doubt that official limitations on travel make them suspicious of their own domestic propaganda and disinclined to accept the authorised evaluation of the "bourgeois" world.

The majority of Russian students and others who visit Britain for longer periods than the more customary 30 days, take full

advantage of travel facilities, accessibility of newspapers, books etc., and in many cases, after a few weeks, show a marked disinclination to abide by the official injunctions of their own authorities to keep clear of bourgeois contamination through social contacts.

It is worth pointing out, incidentally, that the policy of the present British government on East-West exchanges does not differ significantly from that of the Conservative government which it succeeded. The Labour government is vigilant concerning Soviet mischief-making, while at the same time it is doing all it can to encourage more and closer personal contacts, especially with the other Communist countries of Eastern Europe.

Eastern Europe

The events of 1956 and 1957 have brought about profound changes in Eastern Europe, affecting both domestic conditions in the Communist countries and the relations between these countries and the Soviet Union. It is perhaps no longer accurate to lump the European Communist countries together under the label of "satellites", though East Germany must still be regarded as one. They must be considered as individuals and treated accordingly on a selective basis. True, they have Communist governments which are, in the final analysis, dependent on the Soviet Union. But the bulk of the populations of these countries is acquiescent rather than loyal and it no longer serves a useful purpose to treat governments and peoples as uniformly hostile. Techniques that were appropriate to the worst phases of the cold war must be revised, even though the cold war goes on in various forms, especially in the underdeveloped countries.

General de Gaulle is not the only one to have noticed that the changing relationship with the Soviet Union and the emergence of a new generation of leaders, have brought innate national tendencies to the surface again. The new leaders—and in some cases, adaptable older ones—have taken advantage of post-1956 conditions to seek ways of improving their countries' status and economy without recourse to Soviet help; and indeed to win a wider measure of public support by asserting their independence of the Soviet Union. These factors have combined to open new opportunities for developing Western trade with these countries, despite their existing ties with the USSR and their reciprocal arrangements within the Council for Mutual Economic Aid

(Comecon). Indeed the failure of Comecon to lead to the degree of economic integration the Soviet leaders had hoped to achieve was largely due to the desire of Rumania and other countries to escape from the limitations of the international Communist economic system.

The increasing trend in Eastern Europe towards economic independence of the Soviet Union has created a thirst for foreign exchange, which Britain, in selected cases, is prepared to meet, where credit worthiness exists. Individual cases, however, differ widely. Economic independence is not necessarily accompanied by willingness to accept non-Communist ideas. In Rumania's case, such independence is matched on the ideological side by neutrality in the Sino-Soviet dispute. Yet internally, Rumania remains a closed Communist society, though a less oppressive one than it was at the height of Stalin's rule. This is clearly also true of Bulgaria and Czechoslovakia. Poland and Hungary are the two countries where domestic revisionism has gone furthest, and contacts—including informal individual contacts—have been easiest with Poles and Hungarians. In Poland, freedom has been curtailed to some extent since the exuberance of the first post-1956 period. But more and more Hungarians are permitted to travel to the West, and do so. This indicates a clear revival of the tradition of Western orientation in countries where it had been suppressed by Communism, and the British view is that this trend should be given every encouragement. In general, it is felt in Britain that the chances of making fruitful contacts are greater in Eastern Europe than in the USSR. In the Eastern European Communist countries, the people are less loyal to their governments than the Soviet people are; and in all, except Bulgaria, Russia is regarded with suspicion and even dread. In Russia, itself, outside a few cities, there is almost complete ignorance of the Western world. While this implies a fund of unsatisfied curiosity, it also means that the going is hard.

Objections considered

It is often argued in Britain that contacts with the Communist countries should be avoided or kept to the minimum, on the grounds that the Communists use trade for political purposes, that their main interest in exchanges of technological information and experts is to gain Western secrets, and that in general, such contacts are more valuable to the Communists than to ourselves.

The right attitude is surely to make selective use of the opportunities for contacts now opening up, and to widen as far as possible the application of the principle of reciprocity, especially in the distribution of Western publications, while bearing in mind the dangers which our natural liberalism tends to obscure. As a great trading nation, Britain does perhaps tend to think of trade as fundamentally non-political. Some attempt should be made to distinguish between trade for political advantage and trade for economic ends. In general, the Soviet Union's trade with underdeveloped countries tends to be political in character, but there is a strong case for considering Soviet trade with the advanced Western countries as primarily economic. Russia, for instance, needs sophisticated Western machinery for its own developmental purposes. Here again, however, careful selectivity is needed. In agriculture, for instance, Communist methods have failed utterly. Khrushchev's answer was to propose a vast expansion of the Soviet chemical fertilizer industry, and indeed of the chemical industry as a whole with special emphasis on plastics, to widen the range of consumer choice. How far should the West help or hinder the Russians in these aims?

As regards personal contacts, there is surely no substance left in arguments favouring a total ban. The Communist empire shows signs of breaking up, and in the world Communist movement the process of disintegration is already advanced. A ban on contacts would help the Communists paper over the cracks in their erstwhile monolith. Moreover, in the nuclear age, there is no easy way of rolling back the historical events of the past 40 years. The Communist regimes will probably continue to exist for a long time, even though revisionism may make some of them unrecognisable by Stalin's standards, or even Khrushchev's. Contacts accelerate the process of change.

Some French experiences on East-West contacts

P. R. Dubien

Not being qualified to give a complete picture of the practical experiences being gained at present in France in the sphere of East-West relations, this paper is intended to convey only one aspect of the subject.

1. The so-called "Russisants" (Students of Russian studies)

There are at present about 2,000 university students in Paris studying the Russian language and culture, not counting almost the same number of high school students who take final examinations in the language for their baccalaureate.

Why do they study the Russian language? The answer is, seldom for ideological or political reasons. On the contrary, Communist organisations do not encourage their members to study this language. They know only too well that it is difficult to avoid arriving at a clear and true realisation, and a less optimistic one, of the Soviet scene, when one is able to read the Soviet Press in the Russian language, or as a Russian speaker if one can make a trip to the USSR, or go there for a longer stay.

It is mainly for professional reasons that these young people study the Russian language: to become future interpreters, secretaries, professors, engineers, commercial agents, diplomats, technicians, scientific investigators, etc. . . .

Russian language courses in Paris (grammar; literature, history, geography, economics, civilisation, etc.) are organised especially at the Sorbonne and at the "National School of Oriental Languages", as well as other schools with less comprehensive courses. However, difficulties arise when it comes to practise in the language. The presence of quite a number of Russian emigrés in the Paris area, though useful, cannot entirely substitute for the benefit, even the necessity, of a stay in the country itself. What then are the possibilities open for a prolonged stay in the USSR?

2. Visits to the USSR

In general, two possibilities are available for Westerners who

want to visit the USSR, or go there for a longer stay: as a member of a "delegation" or as a tourist.

In the first case, a distinction must be made between delegations, undertaken under the official or semi-official auspices of the French and Soviet governments. These opportunities are growing in number and scholarships for students, scientific congresses, business trips, etc., are usually organised on a base of reciprocity, more or less bilateral. This form has the disadvantage of being occasionally too official in character, but on the other hand it does lessen the effect of adhesion by members of Western delegations to Communist demands.

Delegations, which are invited by, or travel independently of the intergovernmental agreements or under the auspices of "private" organisations, are far more suspect in Communist eyes, and are regarded as being more dangerous. If, in fact, these private organisations, on the Western side, present an absolute neutral front, this is not the case on the Soviet side, where all cultural, trade union and youth organisations are directly controlled by the Communist Party, and by the Communist youth organisations (Komsomol). The disadvantages which arise from this circumstance are evident, as well as the confusion that can be created, and the opportunities it provides for one-sided propaganda, among the Western guests as well as within the Soviet public opinion.

The second possibility of travelling to the USSR, i.e., **tourism**, has been open to foreigners since 1958. Since this date, any foreigner can apply for a visa to enter the USSR, whatever his political, ideological, or religious opinions may be, but always under the condition not to engage in any anti-Soviet, that is to say anti-governmental activities. However, tourist possibilities are rather limited. Only certain cities, certain roads, certain regions (practically only European Russia) are accessible, and in these districts for the most part only cities, seldom the countryside. Tourists, whatever their means of transport are, are received and guided by guide-interpreters of Intourist, the obligatory agency through which application for a visa has to be made. The price for a stay is very high (board and lodging per day 30.00 to 25.00 dollars, 10.00 dollars a person if travelling in a group). These prices must be paid in foreign currency. And yet, notwithstanding these inconveniences and the limitations of such a formula, it does have the advantage of a wider liberty of action. The fact is, the

"client" has paid his trip and, owing nothing to his host, he can ask, politely and firmly, for the maximum possible autonomy.

It is, as has been said, chiefly to practise the Russian language, that the so-called "russisants" students of Paris seek to travel to the USSR every year. As the number of scholarships is limited, the only possibility left to students is either to travel in a delegation or as simple tourist.

The writer was fortunate enough to accompany seven groups of male and female students, all studying the Russian language, during the past six years, each time for a stay of 4 weeks in the USSR, and for a few days in the other Eastern countries. We have travelled by train, by car, or by airplane, along nearly all the tourist routes of the Soviet Union. In six years this amounts to 321 travellers (225 different persons, as some of them took several trips) whom the writer had the privilege of accompanying.

On each occasion we behaved more or less in the same way, that is to say, we tried to present ourselves as we are: viz.

Tourists, not a delegation; that means that participants come on their own initiative, without having been sponsored by anyone, so that we are free to choose our date, our route and, up to a certain point, our programme;

Students of the Russian language who are taking the trip to be able to practice the language and to come to know the Soviet civilisation and mentality better;

Western citizens, French or others, whose world concept is not Communist, but based on their own traditional values, the common heritage of the West; as the majority of these students are Christian (among them here and there a priest) they do not attempt to hide their religious convictions.

3. Conclusion

For the **travellers** themselves these trips seem generally to be beneficial, as the preparation itself and knowledge of the language allow participants to penetrate the deceiving "facade" and get closer to reality.

For **the West**, in general, the ever increasing harvest of observations, facts and testimonies, even if not all of equal importance; and above all the accumulation and convergency of these observations, constitute a basic knowledge of daily life within the Soviet Union, which is growing more and more useful.

Lastly, as regards **Soviet citizens**; the large number and constant increase of meetings with people from the West, superficial and ephemeral as they may be, provide them with a growing opportunity to acquire a more correct idea of Western reality, and correct abusive and distorted aspects of official propaganda. This increasingly important Western presence also compels the authorities to act with more circumspection in imposing such measures of coercion which they feel obliged to exercise upon the population. It is evident that the surveillance and control of contacts between the Soviet population and foreigners grows more difficult and ineffective, the greater the number of foreign travellers and the wider their travels.

Without therefore feeling too restricted and inhibited by the limitations imposed deliberately by the Soviet authorities, and without minimising the efficiency of surveillance, or wishing to enlarge the drop of water in the sea, this drop does represent the limited possibility of "basic" contacts between East and West, and is thus far from being negligible. An increase of direct contacts seems to be the best corrective to lies and misrepresentation.

4. What can be done?

Without underestimating the value of other possibilities of establishing concrete contacts—even the most official and the most "channelled"—it seems unquestionably important to give preference to tourism as the force which while it may appear to be less interesting, is in fact more effective.

It is clearly desirable to give these various groups, as well as individual tourists, the greatest possible help in preparations for such trips. This help should possibly take two forms, i.e., one concrete, that is to say, to help the traveller in relation to all elementary questions concerning the organisation of his trip; the other, more general, to help the intending traveller to obtain a general view of the history, geography, culture, etc., of the country he is visiting. Even a rudimentary knowledge of the Russian language is far from being negligible, even for the hurried traveller who is not competent in this sector. But any form of preparation, while not obligatory, should be conducted with intelligence; a purely political preparation, which, if it only stresses the need to be on guard, can mislead the traveller and can produce a result contrary to what is desired. To assist the traveller

to observe is likely to be much more efficacious than to attempt to forestall his own observations or try to determine in advance his conclusions.

Above all, a determined effort has to be made to help students of Russian and Russian affairs in the various Western countries, to prepare themselves better to meet people of the Eastern countries, especially the USSR. The training of both male and female students of the Russian language is in fact of primary importance, since practically all other contacts, be they professional, cultural, economic, scientific and political, between East and West, must ultimately go through them. Already, for the most part, these "Russian study" groups have, generally speaking, a correct view of Soviet reality. In any case, such trips, if well prepared and conducted, are a determining factor in confirming their attitude and giving it a firmer basis. The influence, at present and in the future, of such "sovietologists", can be considerable.

East-West contacts and Italy

Dr. R. Mieli

The question of Italy's relations with the Soviet bloc has never been one of particular difficulty. Since the midfifties, when the thaw had already set in, contacts with the Soviet Union have grown in frequency on various planes, with the virtual consent of all sectors of public interest and opinion.

The development of relations has taken place on an economic as well as on a cultural level. We shall confine ourselves to a word or two only on the first aspect, but will deal later more fully with the cultural side of the question.

Economic relations

These present three significant aspects: a. political implications; b. private and public business enterprise; c. long term credit.

- a. As regards the first point, many people hold the view that trade with the Communist countries brings in commissions and other financial benefits to the PCI (Italian Communist Party). This is probably true, but it only represents a relatively marginal aspect of the USSR's financing of the PCI. If the Italian government wished to control or limit this subsidy, it would be a mistaken policy to begin with the nation's economic relations with the Communist bloc. The development of Italian economic relations with the East is a good thing, and financial advantages that the PCI may derive from it do not really affect the issue. Theoretically, one could raise here a question of reciprocity. Since economic organs exist on the Soviet side and are **the only channels through which** Italian business men can operate, one might consider setting up similar Italian bodies (without the PCI's direct or indirect presence) through which Soviet business men would have to operate. But in practice this question would seem to be impractical.
- b. Strong political implications derived from the fact that for a while Italy's most active relations with the Iron Curtain countries were developed by a State-owned organisation (ENI) within the framework of its own general policy, and which created problems for the West.

This stage is now past. Private Italian firms today are widely

interested in trade with the East and ENI has modified its general policy.

- c. This issue, which gives rise to so much controversy elsewhere, does not appear substantially, to affect Italy.

On the whole, then, Italy's economic relations with the Communist bloc do not give rise to any especially acute issues or political tension.

Cultural relations

We have passed through various phases in this field. In an earlier phase (1957-60) the Communists' uncritical enthusiasm for the USSR was matched in widespread sections of public opinion by an equally undiscerning underestimate of Soviet development in particular fields. A better knowledge of the facts in a phase of rising Soviet prestige (space achievements, economic challenge to the USA) engendered in one sector of public opinion, something in the nature of a shock, mingled with admiration, coupled with fear of Russia's potentialities.

This phase can now be regarded as over. The wider knowledge acquired and the stepping up of relations between Italy and the Communist bloc since the beginning of the sixties have helped to establish a clearer scale of values in which the points of advantage and superiority of the West are discernible. Of course, the West is still lacking in many respects; just as Soviet society shows to advantage in certain sectors (schools, scientific research).

These objectively favourable conditions for a confrontation of social systems from which Western standards could gain strength are not exploited in Italy for two reasons: a. the strong part played by the PCI; b. the lack of non-Communist initiative either by the State or by private bodies.

On this last score, the most spectacular enterprise undertaken so far (news of which has also spread to other countries), has been that of a manufacturer from Capri who at his own expense organised trips to the Communist bloc for Communists and non-Communists, mainly resident in Emilia. The results of this undertaking, while useful in some respects, were nevertheless disappointing in others. The fact that the unfavourable impressions gained by the Italian observers (including Communists) during their stay in the USSR did not bring about any decrease in votes

for the PCI is proof, in our opinion, of the limited effectiveness of this effort.

The Communist monopoly

The PCI is the strongest, besides being the most competent and active, Communist Party in the West. It virtually monopolizes relations with the Communist bloc, mainly through the Associazione Italia-URSS (and parallel Italo-Rumanian, Polish, etc. associations).

The representatives of Italian culture who visit Russia, and their Soviet counterparts (often cultural civil servants) who come to Italy, travel about and meet under the exclusive guidance of the Associazione, directed by a Communist MP and university professor who is a man of considerable ability and cultural standing. The whole organisation of these contacts is based on lines designed to boost PCI propaganda.

The gatherings assume a form of **cultural diplomacy** rather than an exchange of experiences and criticism. The general impression derived from them is that Soviet culture tends to spotlight structural efficiency (means or tools, etc.) and completely neglects the substance at the subordinate position in relation to political power. This is the real taboo argument which, in view of the general policy governing these gatherings, would seem to be positively inadmissible, or regarded as a sign of rudeness or wilful argumentiveness. Soviet representatives are either cultural officials to whom there is no point in presenting problems; or else they are potential critics, in which case, to discuss certain themes places them in an awkward position, without being able to help them. It is well-known that the broadmindedness shown by Voznessensky in Italy was one of the things held against him, while Evtushenko was not even able to come.

In these contacts one thus ends up by accepting implicitly what would be rejected **a priori**, in other words, the subordination of culture to political power in the Communist bloc. This does not mean that culture is entirely unconditioned in the West: political power and industrial culture often weigh down artists and scholars here. Furthermore, our attention is continually being drawn to the fact. This pressure must be criticized and resisted. But there is no comparison between pressure of this kind in a pluralistic society and the political sway of an authoritarian society. Naturally, this side of the problem of relations between scholars and

cultural exponents from the East and West disappears altogether in PCI-formulated contacts.

The dearth of autonomous enterprise

In this situation, it would be beneficial to open up contacts outside the PCI's field of control. But this does not happen. Officially autonomous organs such as "Europe Letteraria" are in reality dominated by a conformism of the same type as that of the Communist organs, which, in fact, profit by the widespread opportunism of a large part of Italian culture. Little space is given to Silone, for example, who sets problems, but a great deal is given instead to someone like Vigorelli who sets none at all.

Political power, by its very nature places relations on a similar level of cultural diplomacy. Contacts have grown more frequent: cultural agreements have been drawn up between Italy and the USSR, Poland, and now Czechoslovakia, with exchanges of groups, TV programmes, etc.

Obviously this cultural diplomacy is based on the principle of non-intervention in the respective politico-social systems and their influence on culture. But in this way an authoritarian type of power such as that existing in the Eastern bloc imposes its image of society (which includes the subordination of culture to political power) even through the official Italian institutions.

The agreements between one country and another bring about exchanges which enable Italians to admire the Bolshoi or Bohemian puppet-shows, and the Communist countries to enjoy the Scala or the De Filippo theatre company. There is no exchange of real experiences, cultural issues, or relations between such issues and society in general.

Future outlook

We find ourselves in a situation in which the Communist formulation comes off best from the point of view of propaganda. What is to be done?

We can refer back to the most useful projects accomplished so far. For example, the exchange of press correspondents between respective capitals; the showing of Italian films in the USSR, from neo-realism to the latest Fellini.

This exchange has helped to produce more enlightened information and a better confrontation of non-diplomatic and non-official activities. It has in itself helped to make Italian Com-

A Swiss view on East-West contacts

Dr. R. Dubs

I

In the course of the last fifteen years public opinion in Switzerland with regard to East-West contacts has changed considerably. Under the influence of the thesis of peaceful coexistence and the impression made by the present schism in world Communism, a spontaneous rejection of anything related to Communism has been replaced by a general uncertainty in the mental attitude towards Communism. Three phases may be distinguished in this development.

1. The revolts in East Germany and Hungary made such a deep and lasting impression in Switzerland that any form of contact was rejected by the great majority of the Swiss during the years from 1953 to 1961. The deeply rooted spirit of liberty of the Swiss was demonstrated most clearly in the spontaneous campaign for anti-tank training, as a result of the Hungarian revolt. Rejection of any cultural relations was a logical consequence of that attitude.
2. Under the influence of the thesis of peaceful coexistence, however, the objections rapidly waned in the course of 1962 and 1963 and increasing efforts were made to enter into business relations with the Eastern countries. Ex-Communists asserted themselves in the Social Democratic Party and the Communist front organisations operated more publicly, especially in Western Switzerland, without encountering the same opposition of public opinion as in previous years.
3. From 1964 on a general uncertainty may be noticed in Swiss opinions on the situation of Communism. The "tendencies of liberalisation"—which rather would be termed "temporary exercises in relaxation"—made East-West business almost "bon ton" and tourist journeys to East bloc countries will soon be the fashion. A great part of the population is no longer sceptically disposed towards cultural and sports contacts. Nevertheless, spontaneous and comprehensive contacts have not yet occurred, as there is still a public discussion being

munists and public opinion in the Communist bloc think and reflect. Italian newspaper correspondents over the last few years have provided an objective and informed picture of Russia, whereas the "Pravda" correspondents in Rome have been reiterating the usual propagandistic clichés. Russian films in Italy have been the subject of discussions as is the case with any other cultural event. But Italian films in the USSR have created excitement, stimulated artists and raised problems.

These efforts have been made within the framework of the cultural agreements mentioned hitherto, but autonomously, by groups covered by these same agreements (be they journalistic organisations or film producers).

The experience gained suggests that this is the road to be followed and that its possibilities are worth enlarging upon. Official cultural diplomacy must be replaced by actual study and research.

These contacts between the exponents of culture and learning ought firstly to have a precise and specific theme. For example, recent historiographical trends in Italy and the USSR, or recent sociological studies on the diffusion of information in Italy and the USSR. An examination of the real form of the cultural activity could bring out the differences between the two contexts to the complete advantage of the pluralistic attitude in contrast with the authoritarian one.

Secondly, this weighing-up of what has already been done can be a source of suggestions as to what still remains to be done. For instance, Italo-Soviet common study groups, for the investigation of a certain period in the history of the workers' movement and the sociological features of immigration in recently industrialized centres; television surveys of similar aspects of Italian and Soviet society.

In this way, diplomatic relations would be supplemented by common experimental research; the static presentation of cultural situations to public opinion would be replaced by a dynamic and more problematical presentation. We are ready to learn, to adjust our ideas by confrontation with those of other people. But the introduction of this same principle into the Communist cultural world, even if only in a rudimentary fashion, would be of great value.

carried on between some fierce anti-Communists and an avant-garde of blind coexistence-enthusiasts on the pros and cons of contacts with the East. It is true that a democracy is characterized by diversity of opinions. But a discussion becomes pointless, when the adversaries stoutly persist to their respective standpoints and when emotional, traditional views are confronted with idealistic, illusory wishful thinking. The Swiss discussion is marked by this kind of opposition, while the participants often lack a comprehensive knowledge of the substance of Communism and in most cases have no personal experience of East-West contacts, so errors of judgment are inevitable. It is, therefore, the wide-spread ignorance and inexperience of the Swiss population that have prevented the formation of a general opinion, if only on the main points. The following factors have contributed to these defects:

1. The younger generation in Switzerland has never seen the existence of their state threatened. They grew up in prosperity, which generally leads to lack of interest in the State and politics, while the schools for the most part do not provide sufficient and effective instruction in the fields of politics and citizenship. The broad masses are therefore lacking an objective, sound knowledge of matters related to Communism.
2. Switzerland is also lacking—contrary to the German Federal Republic—in efficient institutes spreading useful information among the general public. It is true that there exist several, well managed university institutes, but most of them are engaged in scientific research on Communism, and therefore do not reach the ordinary citizen, who has little knowledge of Communism. The only exception is the Swiss "Ost-Institut" at Bern, which endeavours to make the results of scientific research in this field accessible to the Swiss population in popular form, while not denying its own, anti-Communist position.
3. Youth organisations and political parties are at most concerned with the emotional aspects of East-West contacts.
4. With a few exceptions the newspapers do not always provide objective sound information on Communism. Only too

often they represent phenomena of the Communist orbit in a form agreeable to the public.

5. There is hardly any university in our country that offers the student a more or less comprehensive course on Communism.

These circumstances are hardly likely to further an objective view on East-West contacts. It may rather be expected that the entire Western bloc will continue to waste its energies in fruitless debates on questions of principles, while Communist or pseudo-Communist organisations, by using well-calculated methods, will take advantage of the present uncertainty.

II

What future developments may we expect, when the Western attitude does not change? The divergence of opinions in the Free World, which renders it impossible to arrive at solid action, favours the attempts of Western Communist organisations to control Western contacts with the East and to act as the so-called rightful representatives of the West at Communist-staged manifestations.

First of all, the travel agencies in the Communist countries and their representations in the West will seek to increase the number of controlled **tourist contacts**. Consequently, in the years to come there will be an increasing offer of cheap trips to East European countries. As a new attraction, these trips will become increasingly popular. Group tours will doubtless be most in demand, as individual trips will be too expensive and will also appear not quite safe to many tourists. Ignorant tourists will no doubt be surprised at the achievements that will be shown during these trips, especially so, as the black-white information often given in the West, will not be in keeping with their own observations. This will be the case anyhow, as they will not be shown the reality in the visited countries, a fact that is not discerned by unprepared tourists. Such people often return to the West in naive credulity, inclined to an uncritical attitude towards conditions in the Eastern countries and so contributing considerably to a further confusion in the discussion on East-West contacts.

Scientific contacts have recently been gaining importance. It is particularly the search after refined planning methods that forces

economists from the East bloc to look for contacts with Western colleagues, which not infrequently results in the exchange of scientific assistants and students. This exchange may lead to the third category, i.e., **personal contacts**, which are not much appreciated on the side of the Communist authorities, on account of the impossibility of keeping them under control.

Finally the contacts in the fields of **sports and culture** should be mentioned, which differ from the other categories in being completely manoeuvrable and offering the totalitarian regimes possibilities of direct propagandistic effects.

In order to judge the importance of these different categories of contact, we must first retrace how this problem of contacts gained its prominence.

III

The totalitarian Communist society fundamentally strives for spiritual autarchy, because it believes it possesses absolute truth. Communism mistrusts all alien ideas, which are to them strange and false, and threatening the purity of their own, true doctrine. Truth being a given fact, there is no need to search for it. This does not imply, however, that there is no discussion in the totalitarian state. To the contrary, there is plenty of it, but it is different from discussion in the pluralistic society in that it is never concerned with a search for truth, but only serves the interpretation of the established truth and its adaptation to new situations, and the extermination of wrong ideas. All ideas in the non-totalitarian world being wrong, the totalitarian state must cut off all possibilities of such ideas penetrating into its domain, it must remain in **isolation**. On the other hand, complete isolation must hamper the possibilities of **expansion** that Communist ideology is seeking in order to attain its aim of world domination. For the latter purpose the achievements of Communist countries must be displayed to the broad masses of the West, and the progress of Communist industrialisation must be shown as an example to people from developing countries. In the struggle for world domination diplomats, ideologists and scientists throughout the world have to conduct propaganda for the Communist doctrine in every possible way. The present search for expansion renders a complete isolation impossible. With the arrival of tourists, sportsmen and groups of students and scientists, and with the dispatching abroad of prop-

agandists, an exchange of information is slowly growing. Consequently some ideas of the West are introduced into the East bloc and here the question whether the East bloc population is already immune against Western influences, becomes important. There are some indications that, owing to the improved educational level in East European countries, problems are arising there that are accentuated by the current contacts with the West.

One of the central problems is constituted by the revolutionary character of the Communist doctrine, which has become somewhat "relaxed" in Russian orientated Communism, but only for the sake of an ideological and economic offensive, and certainly not as a historically determined trend of developments. In this connection the publication of Khrushchev's various reversals has had a harmful effect in East European countries. The Party had already suffered a shock in its claim to truthfulness by its de-Stalinisation and again in Khrushchev's dismissal. The dishonesty of Soviet publications on the Sino-Soviet conflict became known to the greater part of East European countries and has dealt a final blow to the slogan: "The Party is always right", so the new Kremlin authorities will have greater difficulty in appearing trustworthy. In this manner the Party's claim to truthfulness is being gradually destroyed. It will therefore be hardly possible to overcome future failures by a dismissal of leaders and a condemnation of the personality cult of former leaders, while these arguments are fully contradictory to the Communist dogma.

However, the Communist ideology is not only questionable on the issue of political developments. The economic and natural sciences as well often come into conflict with the ideological dogma; it is not without reason, that the expression "the empty fields of ideology" is being used. It is often believed in the West that a "de-ideologisation" is taking place in the Communist world. But anyone who has lately participated in discussions between Western and Communist scientists, will affirm that, although discussion is sought, the issue will always be the adaptation of old dogmas to the new reality, as demonstrated above; the ideology as such is never questioned. The Communist regime has not become more peace-loving, it remains totalitarian and tyrannical, but it no longer kills on every occasion. It is still striving for world domination, but its policies have become more rational and less revolutionary. There are changes in accent, never has there been question of changing the system; yet the occurring changes may

not be overlooked by the West. The ideology becomes more vulnerable as new insight grows, and the attempts at adaptation offer new possibilities of argumentation in the debate.

Summarizing it may be concluded that the East bloc is obliged to draw back the Iron Curtain somewhat under the present circumstances, in the interest of its policies of expansion. Its revolutionary theories are in growing conflict with reality, and the ideology has to be continually adapted to the new reality. This adaptation can never be achieved, as the dogma, retained as before, will be defended as long as possible by the party, as, otherwise, the entire Communist ideology would be in danger of complete disintegration. Under these circumstances the question of East-West contacts must be considered anew.

IV

It has been argued above that the totalitarian regime will seek the isolation of its population in order to prevent the introduction of influences that might reveal the system's shortcomings. It follows that the West can only gain by the opportunities presenting themselves as a consequence of the Communist wish for expansion, to enter into contact with people behind the Iron Curtain and so to end their isolation. Every contact with Western people will give the East European new views on the West, afford him opportunities to make comparisons, and weaken his aggressiveness, especially when he meets Western people not as decadent as they are depicted by the Eastern ideology. As these contacts become more frequent, more and more private initiatives will be taken in the pluralistic Western world and the Eastern authorities will encounter increasing difficulties in trying to keep abreast of these numerous initiatives and to keep them under control. It is often asked whether this will not one day lead to new isolation. The Communist authorities are doubtless already considering whether, if the situation might arise, they could give up the revenues in foreign currency from tourist contacts after having recently made huge investments to further tourism. But even if a new complete isolation would follow—which is hardly likely—East-contacts would have had positive results.

If, under the present favourable circumstances, we do not accept the opportunities for contacts, we share in the responsi-

bility for the East European people's isolation with the Communist authorities themselves. Our loss would even be the greater, as we, on our part, can never completely prevent Communist contacts. If our Western democratic groups stand aloof, we leave the contacts with the East to the Communist organisations in Western countries, which are competing in slandering the West. This is most clearly demonstrated at student congresses and youth festivals. Were this abuse uttered only among Western Communists, there would be no reason to pay attention to it. But those manifestations are attended by people from the developing countries. We can only answer these attacks by joining in East-West contacts and attending as many of these manifestations as possible. However, if we agree to this policy, we need consider in some detail the various categories of contacts.

V

Tourist and sports contacts rarely yield positive results. For this there are several reasons:

1. The tourist and the sportsman do not know either the ideology or the Communist reality; besides, they do not speak the language, so they can hardly obtain an objective picture. The chances are great that they will be misled.
2. Most tourists travel in groups and lack the experience and the initiative to seek to obtain an objective impression of everyday life, apart from what they are shown in the official conducted tours.
3. The official guides are trained in ideological matters. They conduct tourists and sportsmen's trips in East European countries with psychological insight and they have comprehensive and well set-up programmes.
4. Should a discussion arise during a visit, the tourist in most cases will be no match for the Communist adversary, not only because he does not know the Communist terminology, but because he has no great knowledge of his own state and economic institutions either.
5. Finally, many tourist groups confirm the prevailing bad opinion on Western people, for instance by bad behaviour after

drinking bouts of cheap champagne or vodka or by becoming insulting over something they disapprove of.

The problems with regard to scientific contacts are slightly different. More and more scientific congresses are held nowadays. These meetings often lead to very interesting and positive discussions. But as soon as ideological or even political subjects are touched upon, Western scientists, who—contrary to their Communist opponents—completely lack political training and experience, often cut a poor figure. On the Western side, it is often attempted to keep the discussion in the purely scientific field, without mentioning ideological or political matters, but in most cases this is completely wrong, since science and ideology are still indissolubly connected in the Eastern bloc. In these meetings we have often noticed a Western readiness for far-reaching compromise, which appears as a weakness on the Western side.

All private contacts maintained as a result of journeys, congresses, etc. through correspondence and further visits, may be very effective. In such cases there is a confrontation of two people willing to arrive at a positive, constructive dialogue.

The critical remarks in this section give rise to the question what kind of contacts should be furthered in order to attain favourable effects for the West.

VI

In all contacts it is the personal meeting that is decisive. Opponents of contact with Communists hold the view that, since the Communist partner has a dialectical training and, as an experienced propagandist must get the better of his Western adversary, all contacts are pointless. The Communist will try to ridicule his Western opponent and finally try to humiliate him in representing him as a flunkey of capitalism. Consequently everyone participating in congresses and meetings in the Communist bloc, must **prepare himself** by ideological training, not only for the purpose of being able to defend his viewpoints in the discussion but in order to comprehend Communist tactics and the real Communist everyday life. In such ideological and political discussions the viewpoints on both sides will no doubt remain rigidly fixed. The chances of bringing about any understanding are slight. Nevertheless, the Western debater should keep up the fight and oppose the boundless demagogics of the Communists with a

different viewpoint. In the end this will not remain without effect on the audience.

For those untrained in the Communist debate it is pointless to participate in such discussions. Like Western scientists they should seek the personal contact, or in any case in as small groups as possible. However, they too should study Communism, since any Communist they meet will be versed in his own ideology or at least in its most topical theses. It is always completely pointless to touch upon ideological or political subjects in the beginning of a discussion, even in small groups. This will only lead to monologues on both sides recommending the respective systems, never to a dialogue resulting in straightforward exchange of thought. It is necessary to open on subjects either non-ideological or at most bordering upon ideology.

By talking on simple everyday subjects, the Western traveller in the East bloc should try to broaden the outlook of the people he meets on life in the West and to dissipate the distorted images spread by Communist propaganda. The Western system should not be deliberately recommended, but critical thinking should be furthered, leaving the Communist discussion partner to recognize for himself the empty fields of his ideology and to overcome his belief in the infallibility of its dogma.

VII

And this leads to our conclusions on Western contacts with the East: **these contacts should be welcomed in any form.** But a very important condition for anyone involved is a comprehensive knowledge of Communism and a training in its debating methods. Furthermore visitors from the West—tourists and sportsmen included—should have a sufficient knowledge of their own democratic government systems enabling them to give the correct answers to the manifold questions they may be asked and to maintain their position in an argument.

If these conditions are fulfilled, these what we may term **prepared East-West contacts** will yield the following essential results:

1. We shall demonstrate to the people under Communist rule that we are not only exploiters, war-mongers and people possessed with feelings of revenge, but human beings.
2. We shall make them think, when we tell them objective truths about Western life.

3. We shall point out to them the emptiness of their ideology.
4. This will diminish the unrestricted influence of the party and we shall thus end their isolation.
5. We shall offer them possibilities for the exchange of visits, students, scientific assistants and scientists.

It is quite certain—and this must be clearly stated—that with these prepared contacts we still cannot change the Communist system of government. At most they may contribute to a new public opinion on the West and to less aggressiveness in the Communist revolutionary attitude. Besides, these contacts will offer us the advantage of obtaining our own objective information, for even the group tourist is allowed to move about fairly freely in the Communist countries.

In concluding we must point out that East-West contacts do not imply a relaxation of tensions. Communism has never shown yet any intention of abandoning its ultimate aim of world domination, for the ideological struggle continues and is even accentuated. Therefore our prepared contacts as described above, must not mean a relinquishing of our own opinions and a willingness to renounce our own values, but they must constitute **our strongest weapon by far in this ideological struggle.**

A Dutch view on East-West student exchanges

G. H. O. van Maanen

INTRODUCTION

Amidst the many contacts between East and West, those between students are of a very special nature. Whereas political contacts are concentrated on carefully manoeuvring, economic contacts on gaining economic advantages and scientific ones on exchanging knowledge, student contacts are of quite a different level. They are primarily directed towards getting to know one another and one another's conditions of life, ideas and opinions etc. They are pre-eminently the contacts which can further the growth of knowledge and understanding one another.

It must be acknowledged that these contacts have come about very slowly and irresolutely. It is true that interest existed, but the climate in which the projects had to be worked out hampered progress. The hesitancy of the Netherlands student to go and see for himself in the East was in no small measure due to United States visa policy. Up to the close of the 1950's this restrictive policy on travellers to Eastern Europe compelled one as it were to make choice. It was not always possible to foresee all the consequences of such a choice, and it was therefore preferable not to make it.

To this must be added the sceptical attitude of the Netherlands government, who were for some long time doubtful as to the value of the exchange of delegations. It was not believed that it was possible in the student world to make preparations which would be adequate to enable the students to hold their own in discussions with dialectically trained partners. At this stage it was considered not impossible that the latter might influence the Netherlands students. All this led to a very reserved attitude, which did not facilitate the preparations and the raising of funds. This led to many promoters already losing heart at an early stage.

Partly due to the influence of the Netherlands Embassy in Moscow and also to the increasing amount of initiatives amongst

students this attitude has now been abandoned and the constructive nature of well-organised and well-prepared exchanges has come to be appreciated. An increase in cultural agreements with East European countries provides opportunities for student initiative.

II

SUGGESTIONS

A. Visits to Eastern Europe

1. Within the framework of this exposé the political-informative contacts of student leaders are the most important. The highest standards are required for these contacts, but the standards apply to a greater or lesser extent for other types of delegation. It will be necessary to judge each case individually to ascertain whether a delegation has had sufficient preparation and this will vary from sports delegations to scientific ones. Let us not forget, that without a thorough preparation, students will be inclined to improvise, and they will realise too late the chances they missed. Moreover the very fact, that they will get in touch with students, being more interested in life and world than the average citizen, will provide them with a greater responsibility.

As soon one is getting in touch with East European organisers one should make demands. In the first place because it gives an impression of extreme indifference if one has no desire to have a part in the programme; secondly because it appears possible to increase the effectivity quite considerably by doing so; thirdly because it is up to the other party to reject or fulfill our wishes.

a. It would be advisable to press the East European organisers for a greater geographical range. Dozens of delegations have now followed the Moscow-Kiev-Leningrad route, whilst interest could be shown in many other towns and universities. **Co-ordination** of initiative in Western Europe is necessary. If the visits were to be systematically divided out it would be possible to visit two thirds of the East European universities within two years, instead of visiting a few showplaces as is now done.

b. Secondly as far as possible specific items to be included in the programme—attuned to the capabilities of the delegation and the possibilities of the hosts—must be demanded. Only thus can

it be prevented that the visit has a purely tourist character and that only those things are done which have been decided by the organisers. Special faculties, newspapers, organisations and people to interview could be included in the programme.

c. Thirdly one must try to achieve reciprocity in the exchanges. "One-way traffic" should only be accepted if nothing better can be achieved. East European reserve is well-known. It is, however, advisable that there should be more frequent visits from Eastern Europe. Only thus can one reach the middle group, who react more flexibly than the top figures. According to the frequency of the visits a decision will have to be taken as to whether priority should be given to the visitors coming here, so that our students go there afterwards. Co-ordination is also important in this connection.

2. If agreement has once been reached on the exchange, then great attention must be paid to preparing the participants. They must realise that they belong to the small group of people with whom the East European students can verify their views on the West. This demands a great sense of responsibility among the participants and the greatest concentration on their objective. The next point of importance is to analyse the fields in which the delegate must not be found wanting. Attention should be paid to the following:

a. Knowledge of the country, its problems, its history, its national susceptibilities, its leaders, etc. Nothing is worse than a delegation which has not taken the trouble to go into these subjects. Several members of the delegation should have a knowledge of the language, but not necessarily all of them. The delegation must certainly not appear to be composed of active shock troops.

b. A certain knowledge of the other's ideology and terminology. Still more important is knowledge of the crucial points of ideological contradictions. Experience is here of the greatest value. Not to drive the discussion partner into a corner, but simply so that one is not tongue-tied, if it comes to the point. It need scarcely be added that it is most important that one's own view of society should be a well-considered one. It has been said often during this conference, that ideological discussions are not of great importance. However, for students this is quite different. Official

delegations must be prepared to join a platform discussion, where ideological questions are raised. The average student wants to compare ideologies, and I see no reason to avoid this.

c. Knowledge of the questions which may be expected in the political field. One should be able to discuss the most topical points of friction between East and West and political sore points. It must be realised that it is just such matters which receive very one-sided propaganda and that the Western standpoint is only shown as absolute and forbidding as possible. Even though one may not agree with the Western standpoint, it is still important in any case that one knows how to make it comprehensible.

d. Knowledge of one's own country. One should be sufficiently well documented to be able to answer questions on the most varied subjects. Unsolicited documentation inevitably bears the odium of propaganda. Documentary material is read with much greater attention if it is given on request or sent on afterwards.

e. Knowledge of customs and etiquette. To know what gives offense and should therefore be avoided. Behaviour towards older people, the other sex, officials. Even table manners are important. It is useful to have at hand small presents which have no propaganda bearing, preferably items which are typical for one's own country rather than things which are in short supply in the host-country.

f. Knowledge of what should not be done at all costs. Regulations concerning currency, taking of photos, internal security.

3. I am well aware that the points mentioned above can hardly be realised in their entirety. Nevertheless, there is no reason not to try to realise them. If the participants themselves are aware of the value of these points, this is already a great step forward.

The following points are of importance in carrying out the preparatory work:

a. The participants must remain fully concentrated on the aim of the visit right up to the last day. A daily half-hour for discussion of experiences and problems is of great importance and provides an opportunity for drawing attention to certain people and assessing results. It is a familiar phenomenon that, after an intensive programme, the participants cannot always muster up

sufficient energy for this. However, the daily discussion should be adhered to since a regular check increases the effectivity. It is easy enough for the hosts to draw up a programme which leaves no time for this. There are, however, more than enough arguments for demanding that time for this should be left.

b. The effectivity of the exchange is also dependent on the extent to which there is a follow-up. For the hosts this means that the last handshake is not to be seen as the end of the contact. The results achieved and the understanding engendered will be more durable if, once one has returned to one's own country, it is found possible to continue the contact for a year or two. The participants should be encouraged to send documents on subjects which have been discussed and to pay small attentions on the personal level. It goes without saying that note should be taken of these points during the visit.

As far as the internal follow-up is concerned, the importance of inter-European co-ordination must once more be emphasised. The exchange of names, documents and reports can have considerable influence on the coaching and guidance of subsequent delegations. An international centre which would deal with this and which enjoyed the confidence of the student organisations would not lack work.

Finally it is taken for granted that the participants will not limit the story of their experiences to the family circle, but will make them known in a wider circle by means of lectures and publications.

B. Visits from Eastern Europe

1. It is a well-known fact that delegations from Eastern Europe are usually composed of eighty percent top-cadre, supplemented by reliable middle-cadre members. A hundred percent student delegation is not to be expected and it does not seem as though the situation will alter in the near future. It is important to know what this delegation expects to see in Western Europe and what they expect to be confronted with. The fact that they expect to see the show-places of our society must not be a reason for not showing them. If this is not done, they will attach their propaganda label to things of secondary importance. Apart from these subjects, which must certainly not be withheld from them, it is intended that they should be brought into contact with aspects of our society about which there appears to be misunder-

standing. This is with the aim of giving them a picture of the actual situation in fields in which they are interested. And this must be done in such a way that the word propaganda loses its power because they are confronted with that what is irrefutably reality.

It must once more be emphasised that in the first instance information is more important than the political dialogue. The results of the dialogue can be expunged in their homeland, but well-presented information will remain with them longer. They should be allowed time to absorb this information. One should not be too quick in asking for a reaction or providing a commentary, since this hinders the assimilation by forcing them to take refuge in the official line at too early a stage.

2. I should like to name some of the aspects of Western society which must not be missing from the programme, though I make no claim to giving a complete list:

a. The workings of parliamentary democracy, of the voting system, sessions of parliament and/or municipal council, introduction to the party system, talks with members of parliament, etc.

Closely connected with this is the workings of the press. Visits to news agencies, editorial offices, etc. Possibly a journalists forum over topical questions.

b. Labour relations and social security. Trades union activities, in particular the tension area between strike action and negotiation; a visit to a company with a well-functioning factory-council; safety contests; sick fund organisations; old age benefit schemes and homes for the elderly.

c. Finally some aspects of the daily life of an average citizen. Spend a few days with a family with an average income. Visits to working-class families, where they can join in the family meal and talk to the family through an interpreter. Attend a secondary school class camp or participate in a student camp. In short, all the activities in which daily life manifests itself. I would emphasise this last point in particular, since here there is no political stress and there is an opportunity to mix with other people as an ordinary person.

3. As regards the length of the programme, one must take into account the fact that the items mentioned above cannot be carried

out in an atmosphere of hustle and bustle. Nevertheless if one is to give a far-reaching picture of our society in a short space of time, at least four to five weeks will have to be taken. The programme could be as follows:

10 days sightseeing:

This would include the more official part of the programme and the visits and activities which no tourist wants to miss. Points under 2(a) and (b) could be worked in here.

A week's visit to a family: *

The host should see that the tourist aspect is rounded off and at the same time pay attention to points named under 2(b) and (c), which lend themselves to an informal and individual visit.

A week at their own choice:

This could be according to the wish of the delegation as a whole, or the delegation could be split up into groups with special interest in different aspects. If this week comes at the end, it can be realised as far as the organisation is concerned.

Seminar:

Finally a seminar lasting two to three days at which there can be a summing up. Mutual agreement on invitation of experts and organisation of forums. Students from the host country should in any case be present at the seminar.

4. A point which must be considered in the organisation is that of destructive activities by Communist youth groups. If the delegation gets the impression that they are being kept away from these groups, the atmosphere will not be improved. Nevertheless means must be found to reduce this to a minimum. During the first part of the visit a tight programme which has not been published in the press beforehand, directed by a large number of experienced guides, can prevent attempts at obstruction from outside. Outside the group programme the individual participants should be accompanied by some students of their own age and—if possible—of the same faculty, in order to avoid feelings of

* If the leaders refuse to split up their delegation for any length of time, this situation could be reached by letting the participants spend a few nights with families. In smaller cities, where the hotel-capacity is poor, this could be easily arranged.

isolation. If contact with Communist organisations is strongly insisted upon, then this could be dealt with by having a representative at the forum during the closing seminar, where he could only put his points in public, where they could be neutralised straight away.

C. Student contacts of longer duration

1. Since student exchanges of short duration give the best returns, they should in future receive more stimulation. That does not mean that other forms of contact should be ignored. These forms should be attuned to the aim that one has in view.

Study grants, which enable a West European student to spend a year or more in Eastern Europe, are of great value if the students concerned can handle the situation.

The lack of real attention to the foreign student in Western Europe makes it very doubtful whether we could achieve any results in this way. After a time these students feel they stand alone and they do not get to know our Western society from its most unselfish side. Lack of interest amongst their fellow students for prolonged contact all too often calls forth negative generalisations on the host country. It is not for nothing that too many of the students from developing countries who are in Paris return to their homeland with strong leftish inclinations or very mixed feelings. (Although more attention is paid to the foreign student in Eastern Europe, the lack of real contact is also apparent there).

Unless much greater attention is paid to these students (e.g. through tutors, weekends with families, integration in students' hostels, development of international student clubs) it is an insufficient basis for a good contact simply to rely on the fact that they are all studying together. This often demands too much of the student's power of perseverance.

2. A possibility which is worth consideration is that of gathering together post-graduates or those who have almost completed their studies to do their specialisation jointly under pan-European supervision. For the arts faculties this will be unacceptable for Eastern Europe, since these very branches of study are penetrated by the ideological background. Specialisation carried out without this background would not receive much support.

For the scientific faculties the situation is somewhat different. An institute for specialisation, in which both East and West make

their scientific contributions, could be realised. There could be courses of 4 to 6 months in the field of cardiology, cancer research, architecture, oceanography, etc. The investments necessary for laboratories would render it impossible to make this institute into a travelling university. There could conceivably be a division of medical and technical subjects between Prague and Vienna. The advantages gained from such an institute would be primarily scientific. The East-West advantages to be gained would be small, but not to be ignored. The "building of bridges" would be more noticeable here than at many scientific congresses, since here we deal with the education of future scientific experts. Further research into possibilities in this field is certainly worthwhile.

D. East Germany and Hungary

When I have spoken of Eastern Europe, I have not been able to include contacts with East Germany and Hungary, since the contacts between the National Student Unions are non-existent as regards the former and almost non-existent as regards the latter. The Free German Youth (F.D.J.) has built up such a reputation that it is impossible for West European unions to co-operate with this organisation. Its unpopularity in East Germany is exceptional. Although membership is not compulsory *de jure*, the situation is in fact such that more than 90% have to be members, only about 5-10% of whom are whole-hearted. To recognise the F.D.J. as the democratically chosen voice of the East German student would mean strengthening the position of this organisation both internally and externally, which we cannot permit ourselves *vis-à-vis* the East German student. In Hungary the situation was until recently of a similar nature. Article 17 of the statutes of the K.I.S.Z. still reads: "K.I.S.Z. is led on every level by the competent Party organisations or bodies. The Central Committee of the K.I.S.Z. is under the direct guidance of the Central Committee of the Hungarian Socialist Workers Party". The student rising of 1956 made the attitude of the students towards the K.I.S.Z. very clear. It is impossible for the Western unions to ignore this. There are, however, changes taking place in the K.I.S.Z. which should be followed closely and stimulated. After a strenuous campaign against the refugee organisation, U.F.H.S., which operates from Switzerland, Budapest now seems to view them more kindly, thanks to a more constructive policy on

the part of the U.F.H.S., who have nevertheless refused to compromise their democratic principles. However, whilst it is impossible to co-operate with the F.D.J. and the K.I.S.Z., without letting the East German and Hungarian students down, one must also bear in mind that the baby (the student) must not be thrown away with the soapsuds (the union). Contact with these students should be encouraged at other levels, e.g. faculty organisations and other specialised organisations, so that they are not left completely isolated.

III

CONCLUSION

Student contacts between East and West are of exceptionally great importance. Groups of people are thus brought together, the members of which will later occupy positions in which it will be vital for us and for them that we are able to judge each other fairly and that we know what to expect from each other. In the long run this can lead to a normalisation of relations, which must not be neglected.

The effectivity of these contacts are determined by the way in which they are carried out. The discontinuity in student circles is high, so that support and a constructive attitude from the outside world are both necessary and indispensable. These activities should be positively approached both by governments and by East-West experts in Western Europe. Co-ordination on the international level will further continuity and increase effectivity. Many mistakes and disappointments can thus be avoided in the carrying out of an activity which is in everyone's interest.

Summary

1. The purpose of this conference was to inform the participants on practical experiences in regard to East-West contacts. Looking back, there is more than one reason to feel positive about the results of this conference. There was a useful exchange of information, not only through the papers which were read but also through animated discussions.
2. The theme of the conference was treated in the realisation that East-West relations are changing and that East-West contacts should no longer be regarded only negatively, but more from the point of view that they help to bring the presence of the Western world to the Communist countries.
3. Still, some of the participants felt that the Western countries should be very careful with these contacts. In spite of some changes in the Communist world they still think that Communism presents certain dangers and that the so-called "peaceful coexistence" might be a strategy to undermine our will to resist to Communism.
4. Most of the participants believed that the time is ripe now for increased and planned efforts to influence the Communist world. Although the people in most Communist countries more or less accept their form of government, and in spite of certain feelings of distrust towards the West, our chances to transfer Western ideas to that part of the world are increasing. The people there are becoming more and more interested in the various aspects of Western life, from everyday matters to politics and economy and also the spiritual and cultural foundations of our society. This curiosity takes the form of endless questioning which demands concrete, clear and simple answers.
5. In regard to the results of East-West exchanges there were different views. In general it was thought that we should not expect too much for the near future of the possibilities to influence the Communist world. Something we might be able to do is to help to change the wrong image of the Western world existing there. Some, however, were more optimistic. They thought that the results will depend largely on the people engaged in these

East-West contacts. Although it is very hard to influence trained party functionaries, these, fortunately, are not the only ones involved in these contacts. So, for instance, the exchange of students might provide good opportunities and chances.

Especially the younger participants felt that much more could be done in the field of East-West exchanges. We should invite people from the Communist countries on a much larger scale than we have done up to now. We should present to them our Western values, ideas and institutions but in a very subtle way, that means no boasting about our achievements and no black-white comparisons.

6. In regard to the preparation of those who are actually involved in these East-West contacts, all participants agreed that this is a necessary condition. The more one is prepared the better results can be expected.

Some thought that psychological preparation is more important than ideological preparation. On the other hand it was thought that a certain knowledge about the ideology of Communism is essential.

If one does not know anything about their way of thinking, their dialectical approach to things, their ideological foundations, a useful exchange of thoughts is not likely.

Another thing that was stressed more than once was that representatives of the Western world contacting representatives of the Communist world should have a good knowledge of the foundations and institutions of our Western society.

7. Another question that came up was how to guide in every country the rapidly increasing East-West contacts. Some thought that an institute that would direct all activities in this field is not wanted in most Western countries. On the other hand, however, it was felt that it seems to be useful to create a centre where representatives of interested groups or institutions exchange information and documentation. This should also be done on an international level.
8. It was generally felt that a thorough knowledge of the various aspects and implications of the East-West confrontation is more than ever necessary. This knowledge should especially be brought to the attention of those who are actually involved in East-West contacts.

The preparation of these people must be regarded as one of the most essential tasks. That is why it was decided to devote to this subject a special conference, which would be attended by a limited amount of experts from various Western countries and which should provide practical guidance for those who are actively engaged in East-West contacts.