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COMMITTEE ON INFORMATION AND CULTURAL RELATIONS

EAST/WEST VISITS

Note by the Belgian Delegation

SPORTING CONTACTS

I. VISITS OF BELGIAN ATHLETES TO COUNTRIES BEHIND THE IRON CURTAIN SINCE THE SPRING OF 1955

EASTERN GERMANY

On 15th and 16th October 1955, 35 Belgian men and 13 women athletes took part, at Iena, in the International Athletic Contest, Eastern Germany - Poland - Belgium.

BULGARIA

On 6th and 7th August 1955 a team of 15 Belgian amateur cyclists took part, at Sofia, in contests organized by the Bulgarian Cycling Federation.

On 9th and 10th October 35 men and 13 women athletes took part in the International Athletic Contest Bulgaria v Belgium.

POLAND

From 2nd to 17th May, a team of 6 Belgian amateur cyclists took part in the "Peace Race" which is run each year between Prague - East Berlin - Warsaw.

In May 1955, the "White Star" football team played a series of matches in the main towns in Poland.

On 24th June, the Belgian national women's basket ball team played a match in Warsaw against a picked Polish team.

On 26th June the same, in an international encounter, played Poland v Belgium 12 players made the journey.

From 1st to 9th August the St-Gillois la Nage Club took part in a water-polo tournament and swimming contests organized by the Polish Swimming Federation as part of the World Youth and Students Festival for Peace and Friendship held in Warsaw 13 athletes made the journey.

From 7th to 11th August, a team of amateur cyclists took part in cycle races organized in Warsaw in connection with the International Youth Friendship Sports Meetings.

During August 1955, 4 Belgian swordsmen took part in a fencing match held in Warsaw.

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RUMANIA

The international football match Rumania v. Belgium, was held on 28th September in Bucharest.

35 men and 13 women athletes took part in the International Athletic Championship held in Rumania on 2nd and 3rd October.

CZECHOSLOVAKIA

On 10th and 11th April, the football team "La Gantoise" played in Prague.

The international football match Czechoslovakia v. Belgium, was played in Prague on 25th September.

II. VISITS TO BELGIUM OF ATHLETES FROM BEHIND THE IRON CURTAIN

The following list does not claim to be complete. A few events only have been recorded from memory.

1. The European Rowing Championships were held in Ghent at the end of August and teams from Russia and its satellites took part.

2. At the end of October, a football team from Warsaw beat the Beerschot team in Heysel Stadium.

On All Saints' Day, the same team played a selected team from Liège in this town.

3. During the cross country meeting organized by "Le Soir" in November, various athletes from Yugoslavia, Czechoslovakia, etc., took part in the "Champions' Race".

4. The 12th International Basket-Ball Tournament was won by the Spartek team from Prague. This tournament was organized by the Brussels Racing Club.

NOTE

It is not possible to mention all the events organized abroad during this period in which a few athletes may have taken part as representatives of their respective clubs.

Furthermore, the Cultural Relations and Information Department is not always advised of the visit to Brussels of a team from behind the Iron Curtain.

CULTURAL CONTACTS

I. BELGIAN CULTURAL VISITS TO COUNTRIES BEHIND THE IRON CURTAIN SINCE SPRING 1955

BULGARIA

First fortnight in October:

Professor Henri GREGOIRE stayed in Sofia as guest of the Bulgarian Academy.

POLAND

From 10th to 23rd March 1955:

H. M. Queen Elizabeth attended the Chopin contest in Warsaw.

RUMANIA

Concerts were given by the violinist, André Gertler, under the auspices of the Rumanian State Institute for Cultural Relations with Foreign Countries.

CZECHOSLOVAKIA

May 1955:

The Violinist, Carlo Van Neste, took part in the "Prague Springtime" Festival.

1st January 1955:

Showing of P. Haesaerts film "Un Siècle d'Or" on the initiative of the Belgian Legation in Prague.

USSR

27th May 1955:

Showing of the film "Un Siècle d'Or" at the Architects' Centre in Moscow.

1st June 1955:

Showing of the film "Un Siècle d'Or" before the Diplomatic Corps in the Soviet capital.

Coming events:

Belgian Film week in the USSR.

Belgian Art Exhibition in Moscow.

II. CULTURAL VISITS TO BELGIUM FROM COUNTRIES BEHIND THE IRON CURTAIN

BULGARIA

May 1955:

"Bulgarian folk songs and dances":

- 9 May : performance at Ghent
- 10 May : performance at Charleroi
- 11 May : performance at Antwerp
- 12 May : performance at Liège
- 13 and 14 May : performances in the Palais des Beaux-Arts, Brussels.

CHINA

July 1955:

Peking Opera and Liaoning Arts Theatre tour (official troupe of the Chinese People's Republic):

- 5th to 9th July : performance in Brussels.
- 11th to 16th July : performance in Antwerp.

HUNGARY

February - March 1955:

Hungarian Ballet Company on tour in Belgium:

- 23rd to 27th February : performances in the Royal Circus, Brussels.
- 1st to 6th March : performances in Antwerp.

POLAND

30th April to 16th May 1955:

Polish Poster Exhibition in the Palais des Beaux-Arts, Brussels.

October 1955:

A group of Polish scientists visited Liège to present the Liège Museum with a moulding of the portal of Gniezno Cathedral.

RUMANIA

Summer 1955:

Exhibition of Rumanian Popular Art at the Decorative Arts Museum. Ghent.

12th July 1955:

Opening of the same exhibition at the Central Station Gallery. Brussels.

7 January 1956:

Transfer of the exhibition to the Walloon Art Museum in Boverie Park, Liège.

USSR

May 1955:

Recitals given by the Russian violinist, David Oistrakh:

- 2 May : at Antwerp
- 3 May : at Liège
- 16 May : at the Philharmonic Society, Brussels
- 17 May : at Ghent
- 31 May : at Brussels

June 1955:

Various concerts given by the prize-winners of the Queen Elizabeth Musical Contest with :
Julian Sitkovetsky
Igor Politkowsky
Mariné Yaschvili
Victor Picaizin

as guest artists.

November 1955

The Piatnitsky Company from Moscow made a one-month tour of Belgium:

26th November to 14th December in Brussels (Palais des Beaux Arts, Palais des Sports, etc.)

14th to 25th December 1955 : at Charleroi, Ghent, Luxembourg, Mons and Ostend.

Coming events:

10th to 16th February 1956:

Soviet Book Exhibition to be held in the Rotonda, Palais des Beaux-Arts Brussels.

February 1956:

Soviet Circus on tour at the Royal Circus, Brussels.

Very shortly:

Russian Film week in Belgium.

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CONTACTS IN THE POLITICAL, ECONOMIC AND
SCIENTIFIC FIELDS

I. VISITS OF BELGIANS TO COUNTRIES BEHIND THE IRON CURTAIN

BULGARIA

M. GILLON, Chairman of the Senate, was received in Sofia by the Chairman of the Presidium (October 1955).

CHINA (PEOPLE'S REPUBLIC)

Visit to China of a Belgian mission led by M. Van der Schueren (October-November 1955).

Franco-Belgian medical mission to China (September 1955).

Visit to China of a Delegation of Belgian Women (20.9.55 to 16.10.55).

Voyage to China of a Delegation of 10 young people (May 1955).

POLAND

Visit to Poland of Belgian Members of Parliament (4.10.55 to 12.10.55).

USSR

Tour of USSR by Belgian Members of Parliament (5.9.55 to 29.9.55).

Visit to the USSR of a Delegation of Belgian women (October 1955).

YUCOSLAVIA

Visit to Belgrade of M. Max BUSEP and a B.S.P. Delegation (August 1955).

II. VISITS TO BELGIUM FROM BEHIND THE IRON CURTAIN

CHINA (People's Republic)

Visit to Belgium of a Delegation of young Chinese (21.11.55. to 19.12.55).

USSR

Visit to Belgium of a Delegation of Soviet agricultural experts led by the Soviet Deputy Minister for Agriculture, Mr. Pachikov (November 1955).

YUGOSLAVIA

Visit to Belgium of M. Markovitch, Yugoslavian Minister of Labour (June 1955).

Visit to Belgium of Yugoslav trade unionists (October 1955)

Palais de Chaillot,
Paris, XVIe.