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COMMITTEE ON INFORMATION AND CULTURAL RELATIONS

ATTENDANCE AT THE AUGUST UNIVERSITY SPORTS
MEETING IN SOFIA

Note by the United Kingdom Delegation

At the meeting of the Political Advisers' Committee on 13th December, the Portuguese Representative raised the question of attendance at the University Sports Meeting to be held in Bulgaria in August, 1961(1).

2. This event is the International Student Games held under the auspices of the Federation Internationale du Sport Universitaire (F.I.S.U.). This organization is the main international organization for promoting university sport. Most West European university sport organizations are affiliated and there is a small membership from outside Europe. In 1959 the USSR, Bulgaria, Albania, Czechoslovakia, Poland, and possibly Hungary and Rumania, were admitted. This entry of the Communist bloc clearly gives some scope for the Communists to make political capital out of sporting events organized by the F.I.S.U., though there is at present no evidence that they have done so.

3. The F.I.S.U.'s Secretariat is in Belgium and the Executive Committee has a President from Luxembourg, Vice-Presidents from Italy, Switzerland, the USSR and Germany, a British Treasurer and four advisors from France, Czechoslovakia, Yugoslavia and Portugal.

4. The United Kingdom view is that there is no justification for official or unofficial discouragement of United Kingdom participation at the Sofia games. A boycott by Western athletes of an event which is ostensibly an entirely sporting affair would be widely misunderstood as a cold war gesture. The United

(1) AC/119-R(60)45, Item VI.

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Kingdom suggests, therefore, that Western athletes should attend, though it might be well for briefing to be given where possible about the dangers of the event being manipulated for political purposes.

5. Both COSEC and the I.U.S. have adopted resolutions agreeing that their respective members should participate in the games.

OTAN/NATO,
Paris, XVIe.