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COUNTRY

: USSR

SUBJECT

: Review of Soviet Diplomatic Activities
in Fulfillment of the Decisions of the
XXIIInd CPSU Congress

DATE OF INFO:

July 1962

SOURCE

: A fairly reliable Soviet official (C)
with good contacts in the Ministry of
Foreign Affairs

The following is an account of a seminar held in Moscow from 2 through 13 July 1962 by the Ministry of Foreign Affairs (MID) for the benefit of Soviet diplomatic personnel stationed abroad. The seminar was devoted to an appraisal of Soviet installations abroad in fulfillment of the decisions of the XXIIInd Congress of the CPSU. After a general session, there were meetings of regional groups.

PART I - GENERAL SESSION

Propaganda Activities Relating to the XXIIInd Congress of
the CPSU

1. In response to instructions from the Ministry of Foreign Affairs, USSR, over 220 million copies of a brochure containing propaganda concerning the XXIIInd Congress of the CPSU were published in 75 countries. Plans developed by the embassies for propagandizing the materials of the Congress were cited. Methods which have been used include the following: the mass publication of materials; the

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publication of articles in the local press and bulletins; radio appearances and appearance of embassy staff personnel before local audiences; letters to the local populace explaining the materials; trips through the country for the same purpose; and the use of motion pictures and window displays. It was pointed out that letter writing is a useful method of establishing contact with local individuals of interest, through careful preparation of the letters and through follow-up correspondence.

2. Concerning publications, it was noted that the volume of material printed varies greatly; in France, about 650,000 copies of Congress materials were published, while embassies in other countries may publish as few as 300 copies. Much of the capitalist press is not interested in publishing Congress materials, and the embassies were urged, therefore, to propagandize the materials as much as possible through their existing channels.

3. Embassy personnel were asked to familiarize themselves with Marxist-Leninist theory on Soviet domestic and foreign policies. Cited as an example of such awareness was the embassy in India, which has instituted a whole series of improvements in the internal activities of the embassy, including the establishment of a polyclinic, where all the physicians and family members work without pay. Such polyclinics also exist in Iraq, the UAR, Sweden, and Finland.

Reports of Embassy Activities in Various Countries

4. The following are extracts of reports summarizing the propaganda activities of embassies in various countries in response to the decisions of the XXIIInd Party Congress.

The United States

- a. In 1961, about 28,000 letters were processed, and many of these letters were used to publicize the decisions of the Congress. A great deal of work was also done with embassy visitors.

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During the first half of 1962, about 150 groups of students visited the embassy; they were shown movies and given literature, and discussions were held with them. Seventy brochures were printed in 700,000 copies. In 1961, 900 articles were published in the United States press.

India

b. Every event in India which was related to the USSR, for example, the opening of the Bhilai metallurgical combine or the signing of a contract, was widely noted in the press. The embassy attempted to react to all anti-Soviet reports in the press. The embassy is also pursuing extensive social aid measures within the embassy, such as the polyclinic cited above, a library, and a children's room maintained by embassy personnel during their free time. The magazine The Land of the Soviets is published in 15 languages. Khrushchev's report was published in 14 languages, in the volume of one million copies. The Indian press has printed 5,000 articles about the USSR. Well known magazines have published, free of charge, articles by the ambassador and the trade representative. Other activities included the reading of 250 lectures to the local populace by embassy members, one of which drew an audience of about 4,000, and appearances before the Academy of the General Staff.

Scandinavia

c. In Norway, lectures were given in 30 large cities, and the ambassador addressed a meeting of Norwegian Foreign Ministry employees. In Sweden, 100 talks were given to the local populace during the first half of 1962, and, for the first time, the embassy

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succeeded in organizing a series of weekly lectures in the educational center of the socialist party. The series comprised 34 lectures and was opened by an address by the ambassador.

West Germany

- d. Despite the repressive activities of the authorities, the embassy succeeded in publishing articles, materials, and photographs in the local press. There have been difficulties, however, including the confiscation by the police in March 1962 of over 220,000 copies of a brochure containing information on the Congress from a bookstore. A great deal of work is being done in the reading of lectures on the Congress through the friendship societies. These groups and their facilities are also being used by embassy members in other countries to publicize the proceedings of the Congress. Embassy personnel have, in addition, lectured to a West German Catholic group, at the latter's request, and to higher school students. Because the authorities sometimes deny permission for embassy personnel to go out and lecture, deceptive measures must be used, for example, giving a false destination and purpose of travel and then actually going elsewhere to lecture. During the first half of 1961, there were nine refusals by the West German Foreign Ministry to requests for travel for the purpose of lecturing, and at the lectures themselves there have been harassment attempts. In the local press, distortions of the Congress and open letters are eagerly printed.

Iraq

- e. It was pointed out that a Party-like attitude should be adopted toward effecting strict ruble economies in the embassies. A special commission

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was created in Iraq which studied the house-keeping activities of the embassy, noting where economies might be effected. The results of this survey enabled the embassy to use its money more economically. A theoretical conference was held, and documents relating to this meeting were sent to the Foreign Ministry. The embassy also submitted a special report on propaganda and counter-propaganda activities in Iraq based on the materials of the XXIIInd Party Congress.

The Soviet embassy official giving the report on Iraq expressed the opinion that certain of the Soviet organizations should begin to concentrate more on Eastern, African, and Asian countries than on those in the West. He pointed out that at the XXIIInd Party Congress it had been stated that the USSR must establish and expand relations with the underdeveloped and newly independent nations, adding that in these areas the USSR would realize a greater return than it has thus far received from spending large sums in and toward the West.

Indonesia

- f. It was stated that the Soviet position in this country has been rather difficult because the country has been on a war footing. In July 1961, a decree was issued forbidding the activities of friendship societies. The Soviet embassy had, therefore, to select the appropriate moments for publicizing the Congress materials. The embassy information bulletin, a weekly, was changed to a newspaper. Embassy officials frequently invited Indonesians to their apartments. Materials on the Congress were broadcast on the Indonesian radio. The ambassador gave a radio address dealing with economics, science and culture. Lectures are given by all

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embassy officials, and Soviet specialists in Indonesia - there are about 2,000 there - are also used for this purpose. In addition, the embassy recommended lecture topics in advance to Soviet delegations visiting Indonesia, with the result that the delegations would arrive with their speeches already prepared. Also, a press conference on the Congress was held in the embassy which was reported in all the Indonesian newspapers. Visual aids, exhibits, and movies are widely used. Film showings are usually accompanied by a description of the movie, of the period in which the film is set, and finally of the current conditions in the USSR. The exhibit "The USSR in Twenty Years", which lasted for over a month, included 50 large photographs and 12 colored graphs. A similar exhibit, which also included books, was held at the university, and the books were subsequently presented to the university's library.

In addition to TASS and the Indonesian-USSR society, all embassy officials are engaged in propagandizing the Congress materials. The Soviet diplomat reporting on Indonesia stated his opinion that a coordinating center should be established in Moscow for the supervision and coordination of the simultaneous publicizing of the Congress materials abroad. Other suggestions made by this official included the publication for foreign readers of such popular literature as a history of the USSR and Soviet economics; the tailoring of films for foreign audiences rather than the showing of films designed for a Soviet audience; and the improvement of the work of TASS. In this connection he pointed out that Western news agencies were supplying information to the local press 12 hours before TASS, and when the items concerned the USSR they were false and

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distorted. TASS and the embassy were unable to reply to these reports because the necessary information was never available.

Japan

- g. The Japanese-USSR friendship society gave considerable assistance in publicizing the Congress materials by arranging for the publication of the materials and by organizing lecture tours for embassy officials, including reserving auditoriums in the various cities to be visited. A special course on the USSR was organized for officials of the Japanese Ministry of Economics. Shortcomings were cited in the activities in Japan, which included the complete lack of effort on the part of the trade mission to publicize the XXIInd Party Congress materials despite the existence of a very large staff; and the difficulty encountered by the embassy in breaking into the large, authoritative Japanese newspapers. In the later situation some improvement has been made, however, because the embassy has established contact with several progressive journalists who have written articles based on material furnished by the embassy. The Soviet official reporting on Japan concluded with a request for a series of films on the USSR so that the embassy would be able to service requests for such material from a local television network.

Shortcomings in Propaganda Activities

5. Part of the general session was devoted to a discussion of the shortcomings in embassy propaganda activities, with accompanying suggestions for improvement. It was pointed out that some diplomats completely ignored the XXIInd Party Congress proceedings and related materials in discussions with local audiences. The touchstone of

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the ideological propaganda of all political officers abroad is the explanation of the decisions of the Congress, and political officers were urged to increase their activities in that field, in addition to publicizing the progress of the Soviet people toward the fulfillment of the decisions. Other shortcomings cited were the following:

6. The embassies do not supply the help needed by Soviet propaganda centers operating for foreign audiences. For example, the embassies do not monitor the audibility of Soviet radio transmissions. Fifty-four embassies do not at present supply data on radio audibility on a regular basis, and some embassies have never provided such data. It was noted that certain embassies have objected to this task, arguing that listening to radio broadcasts is not a diplomatic function. Nevertheless, it was stated, if a directive has been issued for this activity, then the embassies must comply with such an important directive.

7. Propaganda activity should not be temporary. Many embassies worked during the first half of 1962 but made no plans for publicizing the Congress materials during the second half. An example cited was that of the embassy in Greece, which planned thirty activities for the second half of 1962 but failed to include a single activity related to the Congress. The same situation existed in Cyprus.

8. The embassies fail to take local conditions and laws into account when they plan their activities. The embassy in Yemen was singled out for using poor judgment in distributing a large number of pamphlets which contained the actual Congress decisions, whereas it would have been more sensible for the embassy to have distributed copies of Kozlov's report based on the decisions.

9. Contacts between diplomats and journalists in capitalist countries are weak. Those journalists should be used as channels, and if the local press refuses to accept material directly from the embassy, then the latter

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should send the material through the local reporters. This technique has been used successfully by the embassy in India. It was pointed out that even a text which has been revised by a journalist before publication would meet requirements. Contacts with local radio and television personnel are also inadequate, and it was requested that this situation be corrected.

10. Some embassies lack the necessary discipline. It was noted that certain embassy personnel cannot accept an order from a superior without arguing its merits and discussing their own personal desires.

11. Finally, several embassies were cited as having still failed to fulfill the Ministry of Foreign Affairs order to study and submit suggestions on the improvement of relations with host governments, despite the fact that the order was issued prior to 10 December 1961.

General Cultural Relations

12. A report was given concerning the cultural relations of the Soviet Union throughout the world, and Soviet activities in this field were reviewed. The following are the highlights of this report:

13. The Soviet Union has cultural contacts with 80 countries; with 40 of these there are cultural agreements. During the past two years there has been a decrease in cultural relations with North Korea, but the Soviet Union is working to improve that situation. There is a total lack of relations with Albania. The work of the Gosconcert is to be reviewed with the aim of improving its performance, and the embassies have been asked to submit suggestions.

14. In connection with the preparation of national cadres, the principal task involves Soviet relations with the African nations. There are now about 5,000 foreigners studying in the Soviet Union, including about

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1,000 from Africa and 400 from India. A large enrollment of African students is expected for the 1962-63 school year. Their expenses are borne not only by the government but also by many social organizations, thereby increasing the number of foreign students in the Soviet Union. Patrice Lumumba University will receive the majority of African students this year. Most of the students arriving, including those from Africa, have a very poor general educational background, and frequently they must be pushed through an accelerated intermediate course of four or five years or more before they can be admitted to a higher institution. Many students arrive seriously ill, with tuberculosis, for example. There have been cases where women students have arrived five to seven months pregnant. For these reasons, the embassies, particularly those in Africa, should give careful attention to the selection of prospective students.

15. Approximately 400 Soviet specialists are due to leave for Asia and Africa to work in 1963, including teachers, physicians, and instructors from higher educational institutions. About 150 individuals have already been chosen. The difficulty lies in finding specialists having a good knowledge of the foreign language. Some African countries have requested a large number of school teachers, but when the Soviet Union suggested providing the teachers with interpreters, those countries refused to accept them.

16. Provisions are being made to send 25 professors to Bombay Polytechnic Institute, which was built by the Soviet Union. However, although the professors were to be sent according to the terms of the agreement regarding the Institute, India is now using all possible means to delay the invitation of these professors.

17. A large number of specialists are being sent to Cuba, including delegations. The principal task of these specialists is to provide practical aid to the Cubans. The Soviet Union's weakest relations are with Latin America. The volume of Soviet contacts with the capitalist

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Western nations is adequate; whereas these contacts should not be expanded, they should be more effectively exploited.

18. Concerning relations with the United States, over 2,000 individuals per country are now exchanging visits annually. The third two-year cultural exchange plan has been concluded. This relationship is more beneficial to the Soviet Union than to the United States. The Soviet government has rejected a number of United States proposals, such as the opening of a free reading room in Moscow and the unrestricted sale of American books and newspapers. Some compromises have been made on the Soviet side, however, which include tourist exchanges and the publication of the magazine Amerika. It was noted that the Soviet embassy in Washington does not provide to Soviet delegations travelling to the United States complete information on those circles with whom contact should be maintained.

19. Cultural agreements with the capitalist countries can be disadvantageous to the Soviet Union, because the terms of such agreements sometimes force it to make concessions. Cultural agreements should be drawn up in general terms, without concrete specifications.

20. Requests from the embassies are frequently not sufficiently thought through, and they almost always come to the same thing: they want the outstanding artists, such as Oistrakh, Kogan, Gilels, and the Moiseyev ensemble. The government cannot constantly relinquish these important artists to satisfy the nearly annual request of every embassy, and the embassies are urged to request the lesser known and younger artists so that other countries may come to know them as well.

21. Embassy proposals for cultural exchanges are sometimes ill-considered. For example, the embassy in France suggested that an exhibit of modern art by French Communist Party members be held in Moscow. The idea of working through the Party was good, but the artists were not. If the exhibit were to be held, the Soviet press

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would either have to criticize the art severely or quietly approve of all that bad work.

22. Suggestions for invitations to journalists are also not well considered. Journalists who are invited to the Soviet Union often do nothing but insult and slander the country in the articles written after their visits. Such writers should preferably not be invited at all.

23. Film libraries now exist in 60 countries. However, information on their activities is provided only sporadically, and suggestions for improvements are never offered.

24. The last point mentioned concerned the role of the embassies in connection with visits of Soviet delegations to the host countries. The embassies should provide information on the organization and agenda of such trips, on the material to be used, and on the results of previous visits for use in improving the activities of future delegations.

PART II - SEMINAR OF FIRST EUROPEAN SECTION

25. At the beginning of this session it was pointed out that, whereas the propagandizing of the decisions of the XXIInd Congress of the CPSU is the basic problem in the operation of Soviet embassies in Western Europe, their primary task is the fulfillment of the decisions of the Congress to develop relations with capitalist countries, and to study NATO relationships and major international political problems, including the German question. Other problems of concern to the embassies include disarmament, the liquidation of colonies, European Union, the Common Market, and Franco-German relations. Reports were then presented on the status of Soviet relations with various West European countries, which included the following information:

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Soviet-French Relations

26. France is becoming a nuclear power, and the presence of a nuclear capability may have a definite effect on her foreign policies. The creation of a Franco-German union may become a reality. France has lost colonies, but it has also preserved some of its African territories. The conclusion of the war in Algeria is changing France's position and is strengthening it in Asia and Africa. The strengthening of the Franco-German union is proceeding on the basis of the policies of both nations. The creation of this union is not, however, without conflicts. For instance, a document on the improvement of Soviet-German relations was transmitted in Moscow which was not passed to the Western powers, including the United States, and it was suspected that the West German government was playing a double game. The measures which are now being proposed by de Gaulle concerning the creation of a union are thought to be designed to gain Western Europe its own voice in NATO. Such proposals are being received sympathetically in several West European NATO countries.

Soviet-Italian Relations

27. Economic relations between the two countries have recently been greatly expanded. Kosygin's trip to Italy was organized on a rather high level by the Italians. At present, a whole series of questions is emerging, the solution to which will decide the subsequent development of relations. Cited as an example was the possibility of an official visit to Italy by Soviet government representatives. The Soviet government has already received two groups, including the president and the premier. In the interval, however, not a single official Soviet representative has visited Italy. Concurrent with this is the matter of Soviet relations with the Vatican. If a trip to Italy is organized for Brezhnev, for example, this problem will have to be

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resolved; the Vatican is so popular with the Italian people that not a single state visit to Italy occurs without a visit to the Pope. In the context of expanding and improving relations with capitalist countries, it was pointed out that great care and sensitivity must be used and that trivial details should not be neglected, because minor things can sometimes be exploited to attain a result which is of definite benefit to the Soviet government. Cited as an example of this was a request which the Soviet government received from a Cardinal asking that his elderly sister be allowed to visit Italy to see her brother before she died. The Soviet reply to the request was greatly delayed, thereby causing any propaganda advantage which the USSR might have gained to be lost.

Soviet-Swiss Relations

* 28. Relations with Switzerland have never been good, partly because of the strong attitude of hostility and distrust toward the Soviet government on the part of the Swiss government. Other negative factors in Soviet-Swiss relations include the ineffectiveness of the Swiss progressive organizations, and poor economic relations. Criticism was directed toward the very large numbers of Soviet diplomats and delegations in Switzerland, which concern themselves only with their special interests and make no attempt to contribute toward improving and normalizing relations. It was pointed out that the situation is not entirely hopeless, however, and that the opportunity does exist to improve trade relations with a country which trades with Communist China, among others.

Soviet-Benelux Relations

29. All three Benelux governments are interested in maintaining trade relations with the Soviet Union, and all three are impressed by Soviet foreign policy, which

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is directed toward supporting small countries. On the other hand, Soviet relations with The Netherlands are very poor, and the Soviet Union is interested in normalizing relations, in exchanging ambassadors, in expanding trade relations, and in increasing Soviet influence in that country. The Netherlands-USSR friendship society should be strengthened, so that it can give lectures and reports on the Soviet Union. It was noted the Dutch audiences might be more receptive to propaganda emanating through this channel than they have been to direct embassy efforts.

30. The problem of the Common Market was cited. For years, the Soviet Union tried to ignore it, making no effort to study and analyze it. However, current events make it necessary to devote more attention to the problem; matters related to the Common Market will have to be studied, and the embassies will have to make suggestions concerning action to be taken. It was noted that the Common Market is beginning to have international implications and that it should be considered a political as well as an economic matter.

Appraisal of the Work of Embassies Connected with the First European Section

31. The next topic on the agenda of this session dealt with a review of the activities of the Soviet embassies in the countries for which the First European Section is responsible. In general, the Section is satisfied with the information activities of the embassies, and the material supplied by them covers all the problems with which the Section is concerned. The discussion then centered around the shortcomings in the work of the embassies, with the following detailed criticisms and suggestions being presented:

32. Many of the materials sent to MID are nonpolitical, dealing, for example, with cultural and educational matters. Fifty percent of all materials forwarded from Italy are in

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this category. This type of reporting merely makes additional unjustified work for embassy personnel and does not provide operational information on political matters. In addition, there are delays in forwarding important information requested by Moscow. Cited as an example of this was a report received by a Soviet official in Paris from a Polish diplomat there to the effect that the French were preparing for another atomic explosion. Despite the fact this was the first report of such a test, the Soviet official submitted his information a month later, after the test had been conducted and after the Soviet Union had been caught unawares.

33. The Section has the impression that its requests are regarded by the embassies strictly as formalities to be answered, ignored, or fulfilled only after much delay. It was pointed out that such requests are based on requirements received from much higher levels in the government and that deadlines must be observed.

34. The embassies submit too little information on local political figures, neglecting to include such items as political orientation and their views toward the Soviet Union. Inadequate information is also being provided on the Common Market. The embassies have been studying the subject only in the economic context; such analyses should also include comments on the political relations of the host country with the Common Market. It was noted that a special group on the Common Market has been established within the Section, and that information is needed on such topics as the advantages or disadvantages of the Common Market to the host countries, how they are benefiting or losing, and what branches of industry might be affected, among other things.

35. The embassies generally have limited sources of information, confined mainly to the press. The embassy in France turns in the best performance in this respect, by eliciting information during conversations with local contacts. The worst situation is in Luxembourg. Private

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citizens and officials should be cultivated as sources. The embassies were also asked to submit the complete texts of official announcements and of the statements of government officials.

36. Information on the small countries is not being adequately reported. The Section has no specialists on the small nations and is therefore unable to furnish background material to the Soviet press when an embassy requests that the press react to an event. The embassies should couple such requests with the background on which to base articles.

37. Much effort is being devoted to making contacts, and during 1961 the Section received over 2,000 reports of conversations. Italy is first, in volume and range of contacts. Belgium and France are next, then, in descending order, are Switzerland, Luxembourg, and The Netherlands. Shortcomings in this work were then cited, which included the lack of initiative in conversations and in raising foreign policy questions, and the lack of propaganda on the XXIIInd Party Congress. It was noted that the contacts of a Soviet official in East Germany, for example, included not one conversation on the Congress during an entire year, although the diplomat had had innumerable opportunities to raise the subject.

38. Errors have been made in explaining the Soviet position, and this is because not all Soviet diplomats correctly understand Soviet foreign policy moves and because they are inadequately prepared. The majority of the conversations mentioned above took place at the initiative of the local contacts and not of Soviet personnel. In addition, Soviet diplomats have not been following up on information received during conversations or asking questions to make their information complete. In other cases, conversations have been conducted on strictly nonpolitical themes. An official in Switzerland, for instance, did not have one conversation on a political topic during a six-year period. It was pointed out that, despite his excuse that his concern was with scientific and technical relations, he was also an embassy official

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and, as such, is expected to share the embassy's tasks with the other staff members.

39. The lack of sustained relationships was also cited as a shortcoming. Good information can be derived only from continual contact with individuals, not from chance meetings. Embassy members tend to concentrate on their friends and diplomats from the socialist countries, and in some capitalist countries have no contact with the bourgeois political parties. There has also been a lack of tact in dealing with local contacts, leading to termination in some cases. Invitations are not reciprocated, contacts initiated by local citizens are not followed up immediately, and there is a great delay in submitting contact reports to the Section. Embassy personnel should analyze their meetings as frequently as possible, considering the quality as well as the quantity of the contacts, and should include in the analyses such things as how discussions should proceed and how officers can prepare themselves for conversations. The embassy in Italy was singled out as an example to the rest. In that installation, logs for all meetings are compiled for a weekly or ten-day period for every embassy member, and they reflect every meeting held during that period. If more than just an entry noting that a meeting was held is thought necessary, the log references the contact report dealing with the meeting. The individual logs, which are forwarded to the Section, serve two purposes: they record the number of contacts each officer has, and they indicate the range and depth of the contacts.

Production Figures of Certain Embassies

40. During a review of the volume of contacts and reports made by the various embassies, the following figures and statistics were quoted:

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France

- a. The Section received 350 memoranda of conversation from the embassy, of which 60 were from the ambassador and 90 were repeat conversations. Only three political reports were received, one on the internal political situation in France and two on the German question. Documentary materials numbered 12. There were five conversations with parliamentary members, and two with officials of political parties.

Italy

- b. The documents received were non-political, dealing with the results of a motion picture festival, the aviation and rocket industry, a philological conference, and a peace march, among other topics. Two political reports were submitted in 1962, plus 300 memoranda of conversation, 50 of the latter from the ambassador.

Belgium

- c. Four hundred conversations were reported in 1961, and 180 in 1962, the great majority of which were informative. In 1962, MID also received 14 documents. The most active contacts were those with members of parliament and of various political parties.

The Netherlands

- d. In 1961, over 100 discussions were reported, including 12 discussions with business contacts and five conversations with individuals in cultural and scientific fields. It was noted that the embassy was not exploiting its contacts in any field.

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