

Soviet-Sponsored Societies of Friendship and Cultural Relations

Soviet-Sponsored Societies of Friendship and Cultural Relations

I.	Foreword	1
II.	The Friendship and Cultural Relations Societies as Soviet Propaganda Instruments	1
1.	Current Soviet Emphasis on the R Cultural Relations Program	1
2.	Role of the Friendship/Cultural Relations Societies in the Soviet Cultural Offensive	2
3.	Origin and Brief Historical Outline of the Friendship Societies	2
6.4.	Current Programs and Projects of Soviet-Sponsored Friendship/Cultural Relations Societies	7
4. 5.	Administration of Friendship/Cultural Relations Societies	4
5.6.	Financing of the Friendship Societies	6
III.	Covert Exploitation of Soviet Friendship Societies	9
7.	RIS Use of Friendship Societies in the 1930's and During World War II	9
8.	Exploitation RIS and the Friendship Societies in the Post War Period	11
9.	RIS Use of Friendship/Cultural Delegations	12
10.	Current Indications of Possible RIS Use of Friendship Societies	13
IV.	Societies of Friendship or Cultural Relations with East European Satellite Countries	16
11.	Administration and Functions of the Satellite-Sponsored Societies	16
12.	Covert Exploitation of the Societies of Friendship with East European Satellite Countries	17
	Appendix	

List of Soviet, East European, Chinese, North Korean and North Vietnamese sponsored Friendship and Cultural Relations Societies
(This list includes all societies of this nature which have been reported through 30 July 1957.)

OK
... [scribbles]

Foreword. This brief paper, ^{ad with} concerning societies of friendship and societies of cultural relations with the Soviet Union, ~~outlines~~ their purposes, and the overt and covert Soviet employment of these societies. Primarily they are propaganda outlets ~~of the Soviet Union~~ which reflect Soviet ideas on any given political, economic or military matter. ^{all} Currently the societies ^{agitation} for cessation of nuclear weapons tests, for peace and friendship between nations (on Communist terms) and for better understanding between the peoples of the Soviet Union and those of other countries. They ~~friendship societies~~ are found not only in Free World countries but also in other Communist countries where they try to bring about better relations with the Soviet Union.

~~Currently~~ ^{underway} there is an effort to make the societies appear independent from the Communist parties in order that they may reach a larger propaganda audience. ~~from the unsoundly created by Communist parties~~ Soviet and Communist control over the societies, however, is never relinquished. The Soviet All-Union Society for Cultural Relations Abroad, traditionally known by the abbreviation of its Russian title, VOKS, is the unit which has been responsible for many years for the support and guidance of these societies. In addition, there is usually a local Communist Party fraction active within the friendship society, and Communists are in some leading positions to assure ~~the~~ Soviet guidance and control.

In the second part of the study an outline ^{there is} ~~outline~~ of the use Soviet intelligence services have made of Soviet-sponsored friendship societies. The revelations ^{of} Vladimir Petrov, ^a Committee for State Security (KGB) officer who defected in Australia in 1954, concerning ^{the} exploitation of the Australia-Soviet Friendship Society are ^{highly useful} ~~valuable~~ to an understanding of Soviet use of these groups for espionage. In most cases the Soviets have a witting agent or collaborator within the leadership of the society; other members who contribute

~~SECRET~~

information or assistance usually ^{me} unaware that they are aiding a foreign intelligence service. Indications that the friendship societies are still ~~used~~ used for espionage are briefly outlined.

in this paper
A short description of societies of friendship sponsored by the other Communist countries of East Europe is included. ^{in this paper} Their propaganda functions as well as the services they provide for the satellite intelligence services are of the same nature as those carried out by the Soviet-sponsored societies, ~~for the USSR.~~ Analysis of propaganda and intelligence functions of the Chinese Communist-sponsored friendship/cultural relations societies has not been included here.

4 The Appendix ~~lists~~ lists friendship and cultural relations societies sponsored by the Soviet Union, the East European Communist countries, the Chinese Communist, North Korean and North Vietnam governments which have been reported through 31 July 1957. From the continually increasing number of Chinese-sponsored friendship and cultural relations societies, it appears that they will be used to a progressively greater extent to promote Chinese political, economic and intelligence interests abroad.

write new title
The friendship societies have sponsored hundreds of delegations of visitors to and from the Soviet Union. Since 1954 VOKS has spent ~~large~~ tremendously large sums of money for travel expenses of these delegations. Persons traveling to the Soviet Union as members of the delegations have been carefully chosen by the local VOKS representative (attached to the Soviet diplomatic installation) and by Communist leaders of the friendship society; they have been instructed concerning what ~~important~~ aspects of Soviet life they should observe and report about upon their return. Full propaganda exploitation of these projects in which the Soviets have heavily invested has thus been assured.

Documents from the Soviet Embassy in Canberra provided by Vladimir Petrov show that the Soviets have other uses for delegations visiting Moscow besides acquiring new friends. Soviet intelligence services observe the delegations closely during their stay in Moscow and send ~~the~~ reports to their field representa

tives about visitors who appear to be ~~potential recruits~~ potential recruits for intelligence work. The field representatives are instructed to check further into the backgrounds and potentialities of these people in their home countries.

Thus ~~the~~ friendship and cultural relations societies have furthered the propaganda and intelligence work of the Soviet government since the 1920's and because of the natural overt contact ~~with~~ Embassy personnel can have with such groups in places where there are Soviet diplomatic missions, it is ~~probable~~^{probable} that the Soviets will continue to exploit them to the greatest extent possible.

II. The Friendship and Cultural Relations Societies as Soviet Propaganda Instruments

Soviet Emphasis on the Cultural Relations Program. The
1. *Desire to promote pro-Soviet attitudes and ideas among intellectual,*

business, industrial and other groups in Free World countries ~~who~~ ^{which} are not usually reached by Communist Party or front organization propaganda has led to a greatly expanded ~~_____~~ cultural ~~_____~~ offensive. This is currently manifested in Free World countries by the founding of new friendship/^{or} cultural relations societies ^{and} the reactivation of others which had ~~been~~ become inactive, ^{and} by a greatly increased number of ~~the~~ friendship/^{and} cultural delegation exchanges between the Soviet Union and other countries, ^{exchanges} ~~most of these~~ ^(which ostensibly) are sponsored by the friendship/^{or} cultural relations societies ^{but} are partly or wholly subsidized by ~~the Soviet All Union Society for Cultural Relations Abroad (VOKS)~~ ^{VOKS.} ~~_____~~ ~~_____~~ ~~_____~~

~~invested in the cultural/friendship delegation exchanges, and in the subsidization of the activities of friendship or cultural relations with the Soviet Union.~~

Soviet-sponsored ~~but~~ cultural delegations have ~~_____~~ increased in number each year since 1954. In that year, for example, 84 ~~delegations~~ exchanges with West European countries were arranged under the categories of culture, peace and friendship. In 1955 the number of Soviet cultural delegation exchanges with West European countries ~~was~~ increased to 114. In 1956 a total of 475 delegations went to the Soviet Union from West European countries; this figure included groups described as cultural, tourist, professional, technical, scientific, economic, governmental, labor, sports, Communist Party and Communist front groups.)

A total of 469 Soviet delegations of all kinds traveled to West European countries in 1956. Of a total number of 1327 delegations going to ~~_____~~ ^(East European) Communist ~~_____~~ ~~_____~~ countries ~~of Europe~~ in 1956, 225 were "cultural" delegations. The exact number of these which went to the Soviet Union is not available, but it is probable that the 1955 figure of 114 was surpassed.

Target 1955
Target 1956

~~Another indication of the emphasis now placed on cultural relations~~
work is ~~The establishment of a~~ Soviet State Committee for Cultural Ties with Foreign Countries. *is another indication of the present stress placed on the cultural relations program* Although its exact responsibilities have not yet been determined, the new agency ~~will~~ *(will)* probably coordinate propaganda ~~part~~ *part* to the cultural relations program and administer some of the exchange program-- particularly that portion ~~which~~ *the* which concerns foreign official personalities. Much of its work will probably relate to Soviet relations with the Eastern European satellite countries. *Another* ~~Also~~ a task of the new State Committee will probably be to reactivate the exchange program to the ~~extensive~~ *and intensify* basis it achieved in 1955 and early 1956 prior to the wholesale cancellations of exchanges by Western travellers following the Soviet intervention in Hungary. It may ~~also~~ undertake the preparation of Soviet "cultural" publications intended for foreign distribution.

2. Role of the Friendship/Cultural Relations Societies in the Soviet Cultural

Offensive. In many ~~countries of the~~ *(countries)* Free World the societies of friendship and cultural relations with the Soviet Union are conspicuously active elements in the overall Soviet cultural offensive. This has been especially true in certain Latin American, ~~and Far Eastern~~ *other* Far Eastern countries and ~~other~~ *such* areas where ~~such~~ groups ~~of~~ *in* have been able ~~to~~ *in bringing about* influence ~~among~~ *in bringing about* among non-Communists ~~in~~ *to* bringing about more favorable attitudes towards the Soviet ~~in~~ *to* Union and ~~to~~ *to* action ~~desired~~ *desired* by the Soviets--such as, increased trade, ~~with the Soviet Union,~~ *with the Soviet Union,* establishment or re-establishment of diplomatic relations with the Soviet Union, ~~the~~ adoption of a neutralist stand on certain international issues, etc.

~~In the past~~ The friendship societies have been responsible to a large degree for effective support mustered in Western countries for the Soviet Union in a moment of need. During World War II, ~~after~~ after the attack of Nazi Germany on the Soviet Union, the ~~friendship~~ societies in Great Britain

the United States were particularly successful in drawing to their folds prominent British and American citizens, in achieving mass strength and in developing sympathy and aid for the Soviet war effort. The ^{lesson} ~~point~~ to be drawn ^{from past} ~~from the past concerning Soviet~~ ^(by the USSR) overt use of these societies is that wherever a Soviet propaganda need cannot be met adequately through the work of the foreign Communist parties or their front groups in a given area, the Soviets utilize the friendship or cultural relations societies.

3. Origin and Brief Historical Outline of the Friendship Societies

~~stated~~, The societies of friendship with the Soviet Union were originally organized as front groups of the Communist Parties, and their propaganda, like that of the Communist Parties, was at first directed ^{at} ~~against~~ labor groups. In 1927 under the leadership of an organizing committee headed by British and Russian Communists, an International Association of Friendship Societies with the Soviet Union was founded. This functioned as an international front of the Comintern and its propaganda work ~~was~~ ^(was) apparently controlled by the Agitprop Department of the Executive Committee of the ~~Com~~ Comintern. At the founding congress a lengthy resolution was passed ~~which~~ ^{was} announced the purposes of the ^(Association) ~~International~~. In brief these were: support for the policies of the Soviet government, ~~for~~ the struggle against Imperialism and for the world labor movement.

Comintern
study
page 55

^{remember} ^{page 268} ~~the~~ International Association was "an international organization expressing the sympathy and solidarity of the broad masses of the international proletariat with the first proletarian state." * ~~By 1941 the International Association had completely disappeared and many of the national societies had either been dissolved or were dormant.~~

The Soviets ^{regard} ~~them~~

* Vaksov, V., "Druz'ya Sovetskogo Soyuz'a" (Friends of the Soviet Union), Bol'shaya Sovetskaya Entsiklopediya, vol. 23, p. 526.

SECRET

From approximately 1933 when the ~~appeal of the Soviet Union and the~~
 Fascist threat to the Soviet Union ~~became~~ progressively greater, ~~attempts~~
~~were~~ made ~~in~~ varying degrees, ~~of effort~~ depending upon the specific friendship
 society involved, to dissociate these groups from the Communist Party. ^{les'} National
 sections of the International Association of Friends of the Soviet Union were
 criticized for appealing only to Communists or Communist sympathizers. Failure
 to appeal to non-Communist groups ~~led to the~~ (accompanied no doubt by lack of
 Soviet support as a result of this failure) led to the disintegration of ^{many} ~~most~~
 national sections by 1941 and the ~~complete~~ disappearance of the ~~International~~
 Secretariat ^{of the International Association.}

After the Nazi attack on the Soviet Union the ~~Soviet~~ friendship societies
 began to organize support for the Soviet war effort. Appeals were issued calling
~~for the~~ strengthening ^{of} friendship with the Soviet Union and ~~all who~~ ^{for aid in}
~~the~~ fight against Fascist aggression. Propaganda issued by the friendship societies
 avoided controversial subjects and stressed the need for close cooperation between
 the Soviet Union and its Western Allies. ~~Propaganda~~
~~spread with members~~

With the end of the war and the growth of East-West tensions, the
 propaganda work of the friendship societies ~~was~~ changed tone and direction, ^{to}
~~reflect the post-war tensions.~~ (Strong ~~and~~ criticism was made of all ~~the~~
~~Free World~~ government ^{policies} which were in opposition to those of the Soviet Union.
~~The~~ societies exposed themselves as unrelenting mouthpieces of the
 Soviet Union fiercely counter-attacking all its ~~critics~~ ^{opponents.}

4

Administration of Friendship/Cultural Relations Societies. ~~During~~

Handwritten: Until approximately
~~the Comintern period, or at least up to~~ 1941, direct responsibility for the
 administration of ~~the~~ the friendship societies ~~was~~ ^{was} assigned
 to the Secretariat of the International Association of Friendship Societies with
 the Soviet Union. The Secretariat was first located in Germany, but with the
 Nazi assumption of power and prohibition of its activity, ⁱⁿ 1933, ~~the~~ it was
 moved to ~~&~~ The Netherlands. The Secretariat drew up work plans and projects
 for the national societies (or sections) and prepared reports analyzing their
 achievements and weaknesses. ^{As in the case of some of the other Comintern}
~~international fronts~~ ^(appears to have) the Soviet affiliate of the international
 organization gradually assumed direction over the foreign ~~&~~ sections (in this
 case, societies), replacing the International Secretariat.

The All-Union Society for Cultural Relations with Foreign Countries, ~~commonly~~
~~referred to by the abbreviation of its Russian title~~ (VOKS) was created by a ~~the~~
 decree of the Soviet Council of People's Commissars on 8 August 1925 as a "public
 society". Actually it functioned as a state organization with its work, like that
 of all Soviet State institutions, closely checked by a Communist Party ~~branch~~ unit
~~which~~ within its staff. Ostensibly VOKS appeared to be the Soviet equivalent
 of the other national friendship societies which were affiliated with the Inter-
 national Association of Friendship Societies with the Soviet Union. ~~One of the~~

A stated reason for its founding ~~the~~ was to facilitate Soviet ~~the~~ access to Western
 cultural and scientific literature. A second ~~explanation for its founding~~ ^{explanation} was to

~~* See also page 84~~

Handwritten: Newyer p. 269

assure that favorable information about the Soviet Union was ~~being~~ disseminated
As early as 1927
abroad. VOKS was assigned specifically ~~to establish offices in~~ to assist the
societies of friendship with the Soviet Union located in Germany and the United
States ~~and Italy~~ because these societies ^{distributed} ~~are disseminating~~ favorable informa-
tion about the Soviet Union. It is probable that VOKS assumed direct leadership
all over the ~~friendship~~ ^{Secretariat of} societies of friendship with the Soviet Union when the Inter-
national Association of Friendship Societies with the Soviet Union was dissolved;
~~exact~~ details of this transfer of responsibility and the dissolution of the Inter-
national Association are not ~~presently~~ known. ^{several}

The reactivation of ~~many~~ of the friendship societies in 1942 and the
successful propaganda work they carried out for the Soviet Union during World War II
~~indicates~~ ^(that there was) active VOKS direction during this period.

wherever they have ^(had) diplomatic missions ^{of guidance and control}
Abroad, the Soviets have maintained ~~a~~ dual systems ~~of control over the~~
~~societies of friendship with the Soviet Union.~~ ^{the friendship} One of these ^{is} executed by
the VOKS officers or ~~Cultural Attachés~~ relations officers who are attached to
~~the~~ Soviet diplomatic establishments. The other is maintained by the local
Communist Party. Communists ~~usually~~ hold key offices in a friendship society
even though prominent non-Communists may be in other leading positions. ~~at the~~

Also, there is ^{frequently} ~~usually~~ in the friendship society, as in most Communist
front organizations, a Communist fraction. This unit, during closed meetings
held without the knowledge of other friendship society members, determines action
to be taken at general membership meetings. The fraction ^{has} ~~usually~~ ^{had} ~~been~~ ^{sometimes reported to be} under the

direction of a Mass Organization Section of the Communist Party's national
headquarters. There is ~~no~~ evidence that ~~the~~ ^{some of} fractions operating in) the
friendship societies may be under the ^{immediate} direction of the Foreign Section of the
Central Committee of the local Communist Party. Presumably the leader of a
Communist ^{Party} fraction working in a friendship/cultural relations society is in
close contact with a VOKS officer.

(now only forward which submitted in the paper)

6

⊕
With the easing of travel controls ~~which occurred~~ after 1953 and the stepping up of ^{the Soviet} cultural exchange program, VOKS seems to have had an increasingly active role in guiding the societies of friendship with the Soviet Union.

The exact role to be played by VOKS now that a Soviet State Committee for Cultural Ties with ^{Foreign Countries} ~~abroad~~ has been established, remains to be seen. It ~~seems~~ ^{seems} possible ~~throughout its existence~~ that VOKS may revert to its earlier status as simply the Soviet equivalent ~~of~~ of the foreign ~~societies~~ ^{friendship and} cultural relations societies. As such, its functions would be to receive and to entertain any unofficial (non-governmental) ~~friendship~~ ^{friendship} cultural delegations ^(sponsored) ~~sent~~ (by the ~~foreign~~ societies of friendship with the Soviet Union; to arrange for Soviet entertainers, lecturers, artists, etc., for ~~the~~ programs the foreign friendship societies ~~can~~ present and ~~can~~ benefit ~~financially~~ ^{from which they can} from admission fees ~~the normally charge~~ ^{It also} ~~of~~ ^{It} seems possible that periodicals formerly ~~like~~ prepared by VOKS may now be written and printed by the new State Committee. It is of interest to note in this regard that ^{the name of} the VOKS publication traditionally entitled, "The VOKS Bulletin" ~~was~~ was changed to "Culture and Life" in February 1957. The Chief of the new State Committee has a background of experience ^{writing} and editing ~~in~~ in the International Section of Pravda.

6. Financing ^{of the Friendship Societies} A society of friendship with the Soviet Union tries to ~~collect~~ ~~xxxxxx~~ be self-supporting to the greatest degree possible. ~~This is done by~~

I assess ~~the~~ membership dues, selling literature produced by the ~~friendship~~ society itself or supplied from Moscow. Entertainment ~~is~~ it sponsors also brings some income, especially that presented by artists, musicians, ~~sports~~ sport teams, etc., ~~In some places considerable~~ ^{Some times} fairly large amounts of money from the Soviet Union. ~~and income from xxxxxxxxxx~~ ^{however, (or effective)} are derived from the showing of Soviet films. In most cases, though, a society of friendship with the Soviet Union, ^{is} appears to be heavily financed by the Soviets-- especially those which are ~~doing~~ ^{beneficial} particularly successful/ ~~promoting~~ ^{favourable} ~~Soviet~~ ^{or in performing valuable} ~~which are~~ ^{intelligence work for the} to the Soviet Union, ^{govern-}

Soviet funds for friendship societies in most areas are received through ~~the~~ Soviet diplomatic ~~channels~~ ^{communication} channels. In some places ~~the~~ funds apparently are passed directly by the VOKS officer or Cultural Relations officer to a Communist functionary of the ~~friendship~~ ^{country} society. There is some evidence-- supplied by Communist defectors of both East European satellite and Free World areas--that funds from the Soviet Union (probably from VOKS, though possibly originating with the Foreign Section of the Central Committee of the Communist Party of the Soviet Union) are sent first to the Foreign Section of the Communist Party in the ~~area~~ ^{country} where the ~~friendship~~ society is located and then ~~is~~ transferred to a Communist functionary of the friendship society.

25X1A2g

At least one ^{friendship} society of friendship with the Soviet Union ^{located in a Free World country} was required by VOKS to submit a monthly report which included an accounting of all proceeds ~~is~~ ^{received} from entertainment ^{by} the friendship society sponsored. The report also included statistics ^{persons who attended the} concerning the number of ~~visitors to~~ ^{public gatherings} held by the friendship society and details about ~~the reactions of visitors~~

25X1A9a

society and details about their reactions.

6. Current Programs and Projects of Soviet-Sponsored Friendship/Cultural Relations Societies. Propaganda objectives of the friendship societies now are (1) furtherance of Soviet political, economic, technical and military interests and (2) promotion of friendly attitudes towards the Soviet Union. Priority targets are intellectual, political and industrial circles, although in some areas labor groups are still propaganda objectives. For example, the VOKS-supported organization in France, the France-USSR Association, sent two delegations to Moscow for May Day celebrations in 1957--one composed of persons from the professions and the other made up of factory workers.

Propaganda themes now stressed by the Soviet friendship/cultural relations societies are: (1) promote military, economic and political programs beneficial to the Communist bloc countries; (2) promote the establishment or resumption of diplomatic and trade relations with the Soviet Union; (3) promote understanding and appreciation of Soviet culture; (4) support any action which will limit or curtail the military strength or progress of the West and extol as peace measures any minor Soviet military reduction or even Soviet troop transfers. The recent appointment to the chairmanship of VOKS of Nina POPOVA, a Soviet functionary who has had much experience in the field of "peace" propaganda, may foreshadow a focusing on this theme by the friendship societies.

In some countries branches of the friendship societies are found in nearly every town of any size. Most ~~Soviet~~ societies maintain information centers, libraries or reading rooms in which are placed Soviet books and publications to promote better understanding of the Soviet people. In some areas mobile libraries have been particularly successful in this work. Lectures are presented and studies are made of various aspects of Soviet culture. The societies also hold social gatherings, sponsor exhibits and undertake other activities of similar nature which promote good will. Programs in which Soviet artists, musicians, authors and athletes frequently participate are featured. (The Soviet definition of culture includes almost everything, including athletics.)

~~SECRET~~

Many friendship societies include functional or activity sub-sections administered by their central executive committees. These are extended as desired in order to reach wider segments of the population. Activity sub-sections noted to date include the following categories: art, chess, education, films, history, law, music, science, medicine, the social sciences, the theatre, and youth. Some of the sub-sections attain large enough memberships and develop sufficient interest and support to become almost autonomous units. ~~Reorganizations of these societies in some countries are made in nearly every year.~~

At least one society is currently sponsoring a "twin city program" designed to establish relations between Soviet towns and those of the country in which the friendship society is located, on the basis of exchanges between the interested localities. The friendship societies try to assist the work of universities and other cultural institutions of both the Soviet Union and the other country concerned. A publication may be prepared by each friendship society or it may only distribute copies of Soviet publications.

In order to extend the work of the friendship societies among non-Communist groups, an effort has been made—particularly during 1956 and 1957—to disassociate them from the Communist parties. Reorganizations of the societies have occurred in some areas and non-Communists have been placed in the most prominent offices, but the Soviets—through the VOKS officers and local Communists in the society—maintain control.

~~SECRET~~

(10)

III. Covert Exploitation of Soviet Friendship Societies

The friendship and cultural relations societies offer many possibilities and assets for exploitation by the Soviet intelligence agencies. Within the leadership of the societies there is frequently a highly-trusted Communist who has access to the facilities and personnel of the society and who collaborates with Soviet intelligence (referred to hereafter as RIS) by performing any support work he is requested to do. Although he acts as a witting agent and usually has direct contact with an RIS officer under diplomatic cover, other members of the friendship society frequently collaborate unaware of the fact that they assist a foreign intelligence service.

In some areas friendship society information centers, reading rooms, libraries, club rooms, etc., have been used by RIS officers for meetings with informants. RIS officers have been able to acquire information at friendship society gatherings or have been directed to persons who could supply information.

1. RIS Use of Friendship Societies in the 1930's and During World War II.

As previously stated, one of the principal reasons for establishing VOKS was to assist the Soviet acquisition of foreign cultural and scientific literature. Also, as explained, the two friendship societies which received earliest support from VOKS were those in Germany and in the United States. The Soviets explained this aid as attributable to the fact that these societies did most to inspire good will toward the USSR. It is to be noted, however, that they were located in countries well advanced scientifically and technologically and were probably most productive in acquiring information for the relatively new Soviet industries and research centers. It is likely that some of the information acquired was of confidential nature.

In one of these societies there was a special department for forwarding technical, industrial and military information to the Soviet Union. The person

25X1A9a

in charge of the department appears to have been an agent of Soviet State Security (the service now known as the Committee for State Security). In the Soviet Union the VOKS organization was itself under close Soviet State Security supervision during this period. A careful study was made by this intelligence service of foreign scientists who supplied information through VOKS facilities. ~~Soviet State Security~~

~~The~~ Communist, who served ^{the} RIS as a witting agent, within the leadership of the friendship society, did "talent spotting", looking for persons employed in sensitive positions or in some other way well qualified to provide information of interest and performed other support services for the RIS. According to ~~former~~ persons formerly affiliated with a Communist Party or a Soviet intelligence agency, other Communists in the ~~friendship~~ friendship society sometimes wittingly performed similar services.

Assistance in setting up cover firms for RIS operations reportedly was provided by people in Communist controlled groups, including the friendship societies. Walter Krivitsky, writing of his experiences as a Soviet State Security officer assigned to procure arms and ammunition covertly for the Loyalist forces in the Spanish Civil War, described how business firms were set up in several European cities to purchase military supplies:

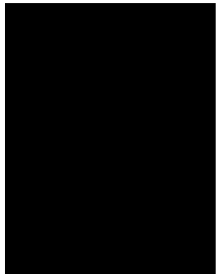
"Our first problem, therefore, was to create a new European chain of ostensibly independent concerns, in addition to our existing 'business' outposts, for the purpose of importing and exporting war materials.... Success depended upon our selecting the right men. We had such men at our disposal. Numbers of them were in the societies allied with the various Communist Party centers abroad, such as the Friends of the Soviet Union and the many "Leagues for Peace and Democracy"....

"Many were discreet, reliable, having the right contacts and capable of playing a role without betraying themselves. We supplied the capital. We furnished the offices. We guaranteed the profits. The men were not hard to find."*

* Walter Krivitsky, In Stalin's Secret Service, page 85.

During World War II a Communist *(in a West European country)* who served simultaneously as a high ranking Party officer and as an RIS collaborator requested a regional functionary of the Soviet friendship society to help him contact secret Communist Party members employed in certain government offices where sensitive work was being carried out in connection with the war effort. The regional functionary complied with the request, apparently unaware of the fact that this service was performed for the benefit of the RIS.

25X1A9a



In another case procurement of political and economic intelligence mostly of an overt character was carried out by an active VOKS-sponsored society for cultural relations in a western country. Information about political parties in the country was procured, collated and furnished to intelligence officers attached to the local Soviet Embassy. This included reporting about the parties' objectives, strength, sources of financial support and detailed biographic information about their leaders. Economic intelligence provided by the same cultural relations society included such data as kinds of industries, capacities of each and percentages of capital which were domestic or foreign. Agricultural production statistics were also provided to the Soviets by the society.

2, 8. RIS and the Friendship Societies in the Post-War Period. The most solid evidence of the support the Friendship-cultural relations societies ~~have~~ provided for RIS since World War II ~~was~~ ^{was contributed} provided by Vladimir Petrov, Soviet State Security officer who defected in Australia in April 1954. RIS ~~plans projects developing~~ utilization of the friendship society in Australia ^{included} (a) ~~involved~~ the use of the society's secretary, an ardent Communist Party member, as a witting agent ~~who would~~ ^{to} supply all possible assistance and (b) ~~enlisting~~ ^{employment} ~~of~~ rank and file members of the friendship society as unwitting sources of information and support.

~~assistance rendered~~ The unpaid secretary of the Australia-Soviet Friendship Society, Jean Ferguson, assisted ^{the} RIS in a variety of ways, arranging meetings between RIS officers and local Communist Party leaders, alerting ^{the} RIS when projected meetings with Communists would have ~~involved~~ been in jeopardy, etc. A copy of a Moscow letter which Petrov ~~took from~~ the Soviet Embassy showed ~~that~~ RIS plans for Jean Ferguson to obtain information about an Egyptian national who was believed to be residing in Melbourne, Australia.

The Australia-Soviet Friendship Society's members were to assist unwittingly in the establishment of illegal RIS networks in Australia, according to ~~the~~ ^{a directive} ~~message~~ from RIS ~~headquarters in Moscow to its representative in Canberra.~~ ^{headquarters in Moscow to its representative in Canberra.}

"The M.V.D. section must therefore instantly begin collecting the necessary data and compiling reports, without observing any fixed time limits, and send them in installments to M.V.D. Headquarters. For this work you may at your discretion use any cadre worker, recruited collaborator, and also the most reliable agents. For the collection ~~of~~ of some of the data you may also exploit official possibilities open to you (lawyers of your acquaintance, members of the Australia-Russia Society, etc., without disclosing our intentions to them)."*

~~SECRET~~

* Report of the Royal Commission on Espionage, 22 August 1955, Sydney, Australia, page 254.

14

3. RIS Use of Friendship/Cultural Delegations. The current program of Approved For Release 2000/08/27 : CIA-RDP78-00915R000800190025-6 cultural delegation exchanges serves not only to further understanding of the culture and people of the USSR but also to assist the RIS recruitment effort. Delegations visiting in the Soviet Union are under close scrutiny of the RIS, according to Vladimir Petrov, who stated that this observation served two purposes:

(1) to discover in these presumably sympathetic groups persons who on return to their own countries would be worth "study" for recruitment into active espionage or for use as unwitting informants; (2) to determine whether or not any of the visitors were counter-intelligence agents.

U
One Australian delegation, which ~~visited the Soviet Union~~ following attendance of an "International Conference for the Protection of Children" held in Vienna in April 1952, was invited to visit the Soviet Union at Soviet expense for May Day celebrations. In this delegation were a Miss Mary Ellen C. Lewis, a member of the Australian Soviet Friendship Society, and a Mr. and Mrs. Les Flood, all of whom were members of the Australian Communist Party. Concerning these three Australians, Soviet State Security headquarters sent the following message to its legal resident in Canberra:

"As Enclosure No. 1 we send you particulars concerning two members of the Australian delegation which was in Russia for the First of May festivities--Flood and Lewis. Both of them, in our opinion, could be used for the fulfilment of tasks which are provided for in the plan of work of the Australian M.V.D. section.

"Instruct Antonov to make the acquaintance of Flood and Lewis for the purpose of studying them and using them along our lines.

"Inform us concerning the results." * *

All data supplied by Soviet State Security headquarters to the Canberra Resident Agent concerning these Australian Communists were correct. The intent to use these Australians if possible for intelligence purposes is clearly shown in the ~~Memorandum~~

* Report of the Royal Commission on Espionage, 22 August 1955, Sydney, Australia, page 80.

There are indications that, at Soviet bidding, a friendship society may invite a Soviet "cultural" delegation to visit in its area at a ^{moment} ~~member~~ when the presence of a specific RIS officer is desired ~~(by RIS)~~ in the ^{locality} ~~(area)~~ for a brief period of time. In such a circumstance the RIS operative can reach the target area inconspicuously ~~as a member~~ and conveniently as a member of a visiting Soviet delegation, and can then carry out any ^{short range} ~~temporary~~ intelligence mission--~~procurement of~~ secret information, recruiting a highly-qualified agent, or providing direction ~~for~~ subversive political action, ~~as the case may require.~~

possible

4.10 Current Indications of RIS Use of Friendship Societies. Besides the

several cases ~~which have been exposed in the past~~ either through the work of a national security agency or through the defections of Soviet intelligence officers or Communist Party members, there are many indications that friendship ^{and} cultural relations societies are now being used for RIS purposes. Among these ^{indications} are the following:

25X1A2g

(1) the members of an Economic Department of a society of cultural relations with the Soviet Union in a ~~Free World~~ ^{Free World} country were requested ^{in late 1956} to obtain certain statistics for the Soviet Union. These were to include production figures of industries and businesses in the country, records and financial balances of all public utilities and banks. Members of this Department were told that the information was to be sent to the ~~USA~~ Soviet Union "in exchange for information from there". They were told to develop contacts in banks, public entities (sic), employers' associations, economic magazines, education and student centers.

25X1A9a

(2) certain Communists holding leading positions in a Soviet friendship society in a Free World ~~country~~ ^{capital city} ^{have discreet} hold ~~secret~~ midnight meetings on the premises of the society with RIS officers who are under diplomatic cover.

25X1A2g

(3) On the directing boards of ~~two~~ ^{two} societies of friendship with the Soviet Union ^{in Free World countries} which was reactivated in 1955, there is ~~a person~~ ^{two} ^{are Communists who have been} believed identical with ~~a Communist who was active during World War II~~ ^{reported in the past as active in} in covert intelligence procurement ^{for their respective Parties.} work ~~for the Central Communist Party.~~

(4) a prominent physicist who ^{is reported to have} ~~is reported to have~~ close working relations with the Soviets in the field of nuclear research is active in a Soviet friendship society of West Europe.

25X1A2g

25X1A9a

(5) On May Day, 1957, there were delegations from five West European societies of friendship with the Soviet Union visiting Moscow. Two of these delegations were headed by persons suspected of RIS connections.

[REDACTED]

(6) Members of a society of friendship with the Soviet Union who visited Moscow in 1955 were carefully instructed by ~~friendship~~ ^{friendship} society and Soviet Embassy officials concerning what they should observe in the Soviet Union. Each person was assigned specific subjects on which to concentrate and to report upon his return. One of the Soviet Embassy officers included in these instruction sessions was believed to be the local RIS representative. Besides the exploitation of this reporting for propaganda purposes, there was possibly an RIS intention to attempt to assess ^{the visitors'} ability to observe and to report. Instances where members of youth delegations visiting the Soviet Union were instructed to do similar work have also been reported.

25X1A9a

(7) In one Free World country there appears to be a concentration of members drawn from a government agency in which work of a confidential nature would normally be carried on. Although this perhaps is simply a case where one employee invites a co-worker to go along with him to a meeting or social affair sponsored by the friendship ^(or) cultural relations society, there is also the possibility that Soviet officers ~~are~~ ^{are} ~~the~~ ^{the} ~~guidance~~ ^{the} society intentionally have encouraged the recruitment of members from ~~the~~ ^{the} government agency.

(8) In several Free World countries, VOKS or Cultural Attaches who are in close contact with local friendship ^(or) cultural relations societies have been identified as RIS officers.

(9) Some societies of friendship with the Soviet Union have established units ~~called~~ ^{or bureaus for} "Bureaus for the Exchange of Science and Culture" or "Bureaus for

25X1A2g

~~the~~ ^{Free World country} Exchange of Scientific and Technical Information". One of these Bureaus in ~~the~~ ^{the} country planned to send a circular to all laboratories and libraries in ~~the~~ ^{the} country offering to perform mediation services in the exchange of scientific information from the Soviet Union, assistance in translating Russian publications into the

local language, etc. The Bureau was to deal with the Soviet Union through the local VOKS representative ~~x~~ exclusively. VOKS was to check the "reliability" of persons contributing to the exchange of cultural and scientific information

~~extensively~~ to determine whether or not Soviet data would fall into the wrong hands. As of 1955 the only scientific ^{ic} organization in the Free World area involved which was reported to have benefited from this exchange of information program was one staffed entirely by Communists.!

25X1A9a

(10) As late as 1954, Soviet State Security (actually, the Committee for State Security, KGB) still maintained a unit of its personnel within the VOKS headquarters, according to Yuri Rastvorov, former ~~State Security~~ ^(State Security) Lieutenant Colonel.

Societies of Friendship or Cultural Relations with East European Satellite Countries. In most of the East European satellite countries there have ^{been} and in most cases there are still ^{been} ~~been~~ ^{parallel to the Soviet VOKS,} specific organizations which sponsored, supported and guided societies of friendship ^{and cultural relations.} with ~~each of the East European countries.~~ In Poland, for example,

25X1A2g

it was the Committee for Foreign Cultural Cooperation (Komitet Wspolpracy ~~Kulturalnej~~ ^{which had this function,} z Zagranica, KWKZ) Like the Soviet All-Union Society for Cultural

25X1A2g

Relations with Abroad (VOKS) the principal reason for the existence of ~~this~~ ^{non-governmental or "unofficial"} the KWKZ was to arrange ~~contacts~~ ^{contacts} with agencies and societies of Free World countries.

25X1A2g

Administration and Functions of the Satellite-Sponsored Societies

The Polish KWKZ and the East German counterpart organization, the Society for Cultural Relations Abroad (Gesellschaft fuer Kulturelle Verbindungen mit dem Ausland) appear to have been administratively controlled by the respective Ministry of Foreign Affairs, but received policy direction ~~for~~ from the Central

25X1A2g

Committee of the ^{United} ~~respective~~ Communist Party. In the case of the KWKZ, direction from the Polish ^(the Polish Communist Party) Workers' Party ~~(Communist)~~ came specifically from the latter's Department of Foreign Affairs of ~~the~~ its Central Committee.

25X1A2g

According to information of November 1956 the KWKZ was to be liquidated on 1 January 1957. To date no information regarding a successor ~~organization~~ ^{organization} has been received. Little or no information ^{is known} ~~is known~~ about equivalent friendship-cultural sponsoring organizations in other East European states in spite of the fact that new societies of friendship and cultural relations with these states have appeared in several ~~of~~ Free World areas. ~~Hungarian-sponsored societies~~

25X1A2g

Exceptions ~~which have been reported~~ ^{are} ~~the~~ ^{new} societies with Hungary and Poland; no new Hungarian-sponsored friendship or cultural relations societies have been reported since the uprisings of the fall of 1956, and only one new Polish-sponsored society has been reported thus far in 1957--the Egyptian-Polish Friendship Society which appears to have been organized in Cairo in April 1957.

In general the purposes and functions of the East European sponsored friendship and cultural relations societies have been similar

to those of the societies of friendship ~~and~~ or cultural relations with the Soviet Union. Primarily they are propaganda instruments for the sponsoring East European government ~~in~~ reflecting and disseminating its ideas on any question needing support in the area where the ~~friendship~~ friendship/cultural relations societies ^{are} located. These societies have been particularly active in demanding more trade with the sponsoring country. In ~~China, for example~~ ^{some Latin American} ~~these~~ countries, for example, ^(Czech-sponsored) ~~the~~ societies of friendship or cultural relations ^{agitated to promote} ~~with Czechoslovakia~~ have ~~promoted~~ trade with Czechoslovakia.

2. ~~12.~~ Covert Exploitation of the Societies of Friendship with East European Satellite Countries. To a possibly greater extent than the societies of friendship with the Soviet Union, ^{some of} those with East European satellite countries have been exploited by intelligence services of the sponsoring satellite country. Cases are known where ~~reading rooms~~ friendship society reading rooms or information center attendants have served as intelligence agents who have ^{spotted} ~~been~~ and investigated potential agent recruits, have received information from ~~the~~ intelligence agents and ~~have~~ served as links between these agents and intelligence officials of the East European satellite government concerned. These officials were ostensibly serving as diplomatic representatives in ~~the~~ Free World countries.

see next page

As a general observation concerning intelligence work performed by ~~xxx~~
~~xxxxxxxx~~ friendship societies ~~is~~ sponsored either by the Soviet Union or by
~~a~~ East European Communist countries, it may be noted that a large part of their
effort ~~apparently~~ is directed toward the procurement of information which, in
Free World areas, is generally considered overt: statistics pertaining to
industrial ~~production~~ and agricultural production, objectives and colorings
of political groups, public opinion surveys, etc. But, in addition to ~~the~~
information obtained by these societies, which is of unclassified nature, there
is sound evidence that ~~some of the~~ certain individual members *of the societies*
are being used ~~as a means of~~ to assist in
the procurement of *classified* military and technical data.

25X1A9a