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# INTELLIGENCE MEMORANDUM

FRANCE, THE USSR, AND EUROPEAN SECURITY  
(DE GAULLE'S VISIT TO THE USSR)

## DIRECTORATE OF INTELLIGENCE

State Dept. review completed

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CENTRAL INTELLIGENCE AGENCY  
Directorate of Intelligence  
20 July 1966

INTELLIGENCE MEMORANDUM\*

France, the USSR, and European Security  
(De Gaulle's Visit to the USSR)

Summary

The main aim of both sides during De Gaulle's visit to the USSR from 20 June to 1 July 1966 was to encourage a pattern of bilateral rather than alliance diplomacy between Eastern and Western Europe. The extent to which they will draw others to their example remains to be seen. Western Europe's rising interest in detente is such that it may be difficult to contain it within the North Atlantic framework where the interests of all the NATO nations including the US can receive due concern. At the same time, there may also be more independent initiatives by the Eastern European states.

Moscow was careful not to rush its rapprochement with France lest it founder on areas of disagreement or be carried too far too fast. Nevertheless, the very fact of De Gaulle's visit plus the prospects for future cooperation that were held out contributed to the aura of reasonableness and responsiveness that the Soviets have tried to create around themselves.

\*Prepared by the Office of Current Intelligence and coordinated with the Office of National Estimates.

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De Gaulle probably saw the visit as a milestone in the process of detente in Europe. He was able to demonstrate that Europeans themselves could work for a European settlement, but he avoided making concessions that would have damaged his position in Western Europe.

No attempt was made to conceal continuing differences on the key issues of European security and a German settlement, although the general lines of agreement on the proper function of the UN, the South-east Asian situation, and disarmament were confirmed. The practical significance of the great number of bilateral agreements and pledges noted in the end-of-the-visit joint declaration will depend, for the most part, on the extent of their implementation.

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Atmospherics

1. The Soviets displayed exceptional public cordiality and deference toward De Gaulle. Not only was De Gaulle given frequent opportunities to make public statements, including one on Soviet television, but he was also allowed to make a visit--unprecedented for a Westerner--to the Tyuratam launch site and to observe the launch of a Cosmos satellite and an ICBM firing. In general, the Soviets turned out large crowds for both De Gaulle's public and private appearances. A French Foreign Ministry official who made the trip was impressed by the warmth and spontaneity of De Gaulle's reception, especially outside Moscow and Leningrad, and by the number of people, beyond the organized bus loads, who turned out, apparently voluntarily.

2. For the most part, De Gaulle responded in kind. He flattered the Soviet Union on its achievement and frequently referred to the historic ties between the two countries and the prospects open to them for future cooperation. Nevertheless, there were times when he appeared to disregard Soviet sensitivities with his use of "Russia" rather than the "Soviet Union" and his description of France as "a country of freedom and a Western nation." De Gaulle was surely pleased by the friendly reception and, in light of his efforts to portray NATO as of diminished importance, he may well value this demonstration of comradery as having practical significance.

Europe and the German Question

3. While some Soviet and French officials may have hoped at one time that there would be a significant breakthrough on a European settlement, it was clear even before the visit that both sides had scaled down their expectations.

4. De Gaulle considered the visit a symbol of the process of detente in Europe and a way of giving his benediction to that process. His arrival statement called for a French-Soviet effort to begin to find "ways and means" to bring about the conditions

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which would "one day" enable the great problems of Europe to be settled. The joint declaration at the end of the visit also referred to the bilateral contribution that France and the Soviet Union could make to the settlement of European problems and said that it could be "decisive." Furthermore, the declaration said that in working for the "normalization of the situation in Europe" France and the Soviet Union will strive "to draw gradually all the European countries to their efforts."

5. At the same time, the declaration took note of the differences between Paris and Moscow with the phrase that the two sides "exchanged their views" on Europe and Germany. A French Foreign Ministry official who was directly involved in formulating the declaration said that this was the only real sticking point in the negotiations over the wording of the declaration.

6. The general references to "the incipient feeling of trust in Europe" and the "gradual development of relations between all European states" apparently satisfied Moscow's interest in continuing to project an image of reasonableness and responsiveness without altering the essentials of its policy. The prospect of fruitful relations between France and the Soviet Union also served to substantiate the Soviet claim that Washington and Bonn are perpetuating the notion of a menace from the East to sustain European tensions and serve their own aggressive designs.

7. Despite almost constant private contact with De Gaulle during his 12-day visit, however, Soviet officials made no serious effort to negotiate their positions on outstanding East-West issues. This was a mark both of Moscow's recognition that De Gaulle has little to offer aside from encouraging a more general movement away from NATO and toward dealing with the USSR, and its determination to pursue the dialogue with him toward that end. The Soviets merely exchanged views with De Gaulle on major issues, and showed no inclination to bargain with him or make any concessions on well-known Soviet positions.

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8. At the very outset, General Secretary Brezhnev made clear to De Gaulle that Moscow's position on Germany was not negotiable. He stressed the well-worn doctrine that there are two German states, and he indicated that any discussions with the West on Germany would have to proceed from acceptance of that "fact." The subject of a European security conference reportedly was raised in passing, but Brezhnev did not press it. He gave the impression that the Soviets did not consider such a conference near at hand.

9. De Gaulle reportedly strongly defended German reunification and refused to consider recognition of East Germany. Given his oft-stated view that German reunification is a long-term matter, however, it is unlikely that either side extended itself on this topic. The French held that a European security conference should come at the end rather than the beginning of a detente in Europe. De Gaulle's probable awareness that other Western Europeans are not yet ready for such a development probably contributed to the ease with which this topic was dropped.

10. Although there was no breakthrough on the basic political questions of Europe, both France and the Soviet Union probably appraise the visit as having contributed to attainment of certain of their goals. Soviet press coverage was generally restrained on matters of substance, but Soviet media did suggest that the present rapport was a promising stage of a continuing process. Izvestia, for example, described the visit as "a step toward useful cooperation," but noted that "nobody expected or expects all problems to be settled at once," and that "there are still quite a few matters on which our opinions differ." The Soviet press emphasized the "good, fruitful atmosphere" created by "the mutual desire to look for ways to bring our stands closer together," and praised De Gaulle for going beyond declarations of interest in detente and taking a practical step in that direction.

11. For De Gaulle, there was not only the opportunity to reinforce the appearance of detente, but to do it while holding firm on matters of substance, particularly those of concern to West Germany. De Gaulle could thus come out of the visit

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as a European who had demonstrated he could talk to the Soviets and encourage another step in European detente without being duped into concessions that would have cost him not only in terms of the Franco-German relationship, but also in terms of France's effort to win leadership in Western Europe. The sense of movement that was an element of the visit and the agreements--yet to be implemented--that were reached as well as the demonstration of firmness particularly on Germany may well be just about what De Gaulle sought in light of his European aims.

12. De Gaulle sought to emphasize the things that could be done by the Europeans themselves. He acknowledged, however, that the US would have a role to play and thus avoided appearing to favor the complete exclusion of the US from Europe--a stance that even he probably considers premature and the other Western Europeans would find unacceptable.

#### The Forms of Bilateral Cooperation

13. To emphasize that France and the Soviet Union could together contribute to the creation of detente, the visit resulted in several agreements to extend the consultative process. The joint declaration's reference to mutual consultations on worldwide as well as bilateral problems repeats an idea included in the communiqués issued at the end of the foreign ministers' visits last year. Although the declaration itself does not mention the level or frequency of these consultations, French sources say they will probably include semiannual meetings of the foreign ministers. These apparently are not intended as formal meetings, however, and French sources indicate that the first "mutual consultation" may take place between Couve de Murville and Gromyko at the UN General Assembly this fall. The open-ended French invitation to the top Soviet leadership to visit France is the standard formulation. French sources indicate that such a visit would not occur this year but might possibly be scheduled for next year.

14. In addition to the ministerial consultations, the visit produced agreement "in principle"

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on the creation of a joint commission "to study regularly the practical questions of fulfilling the existing trade, economic, and scientific-technical agreements." The Soviets apparently attached considerable weight to these aspects of cooperation with France. The French deputy chief of mission in Moscow said that after Brezhnev alluded to the desirability of improving methods of consultation, Kosygin proposed the creation of the Franco-Soviet standing commission for promoting trade and technical relations that was announced in the declaration at the end of the visit. The Soviets were said to have expressed satisfaction with Soviet-Italian relations when stating their interest in developing relations with France. Moscow's relations with Rome have improved markedly in recent months, but essentially have been confined to the economic and technical plane.

15. According to the scientific, technical, and economic accord which was signed during the visit, the commission is charged with overseeing the exchange of scientific personnel, the organization of bilateral scientific and technical meetings, joint research projects that may have an eventual industrial application, and joint studies of modern technology and production techniques. French officials appear aware that the Soviet interest in this agreement stems from a desire to tap French skills in modernizing Soviet industrial plants. Despite the Soviet aim, however, it seems unlikely that this agreement and the commission it created will by themselves be able to overcome the economic reasons for slow growth of French-Soviet trade or the practical obstacles that have kept French-Soviet scientific exchanges sporadic.

16. Probably the most obvious attempt at status-seeking by the French was the agreement to establish a "hot-line" between the Kremlin and the Elysee. To avoid the implication that either side is primarily concerned about heading off nuclear war, however, the declaration said that it will be "used for exchanging views and transmitting messages whenever it is found necessary."

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Space Cooperation

17. The second subsidiary agreement, signed by the foreign ministers, covered French-Soviet cooperation in various space endeavors. This agreement was worked out by technicians from both countries before De Gaulle's visit [REDACTED]

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[REDACTED] its failure to specify undertakings is the result of unresolved problems on both sides. Four joint working groups will be established to work on the four substantive areas of the agreement.

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18. The most significant of these areas is "space research" where there was "agreement in principle" for the Soviet launch of a French satellite. [REDACTED] the "in principle" wording means that questions such as the timing and mission of the launch, the apportionment of costs and French access to information on the Soviet booster and ultimately to the launch site itself remain unresolved.

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19. The second area of cooperation is "space meteorology" which reportedly will concentrate on sounding rockets, radar meteorology, and balloons. The third area of cooperation is "space communication" where it is intended to continue the transmissions via the Molniya satellite. Several experimental television transmissions between France and the USSR were conducted before De Gaulle's visit. The final area of space cooperation concerns the exchange of space scientists.

Other Topics

20. De Gaulle told US Ambassador Kohler that he and the Soviet leaders had talked a lot about the US but that "the Russians talked without animosity." However, during a tour d'horizon of Soviet relations around the world, Brezhnev said Moscow's relations with the US were "frozen," and described the McNamara nuclear planning committee (but not Vietnam) as a "test" for Soviet-US relations. Moscow considers the committee a means of giving Bonn a greater nuclear role, and Brezhnev apparently meant that implementation of it would cause a further deterioration of Soviet-US relations.

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21. All available evidence indicates that Vietnam and Southeast Asia received minimal treatment during the visit. The joint declaration says only that "the situation in the Indochina peninsula evokes increasing alarm because of the aggravation of the war in Vietnam." Both governments agreed that a settlement was possible only on the basis of the 1954 Geneva Accords and that they would continue "to exchange information and compare their points of view." [redacted] there was rapid agreement on this wording and very little discussion of Vietnam or China. The general formulation on Vietnam--considerably less pregnant with implications of future joint efforts toward a settlement than earlier French-Soviet statements--reflects the awareness of both sides that a peace effort at this time holds little prospect of success.

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22. Disarmament and the United Nations received vague treatment in the joint declaration. On the former, stress was placed on the danger of nuclear proliferation and also on the need to destroy existing stockpiles. France gave no indication, however, either that it would assume its place in the Eighteen Nation Disarmament Conference or that it would press its earlier call for disarmament negotiations to be turned over to the five nuclear powers. On the UN, satisfaction was expressed with "the progress made in the sense of realizing more exactly the role which belongs to the organization in accordance with its charter" and also with the "greater financial and administrative strictness in its functioning." According to an official of the French Embassy in Moscow, both sides agreed during their private talks to support U Thant for re-election as secretary general.

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