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Paul Lewis (1963 - 71)

My dates at CREES were 1963-66 as undergraduate, 1968-71 post grad. Am now retired, or at least not being paid a salary. Also Professor Emeritus of Politics at the Open University, and Visiting Professorial Fellow at the University of Sussex.

Memories indeed are quite a few, not all of which should be repeated. Just about the first academic session I recall was Bob Davis introducing us to the concept of totalitarianism (rather popular at the time) and emphasising that in no way should it be applied to the Soviet Union. We didn't learn too much about totalitarianism but certainly got the idea what to do with it. I would have thought the distinguished reputation of CREES and the extent of its contribution to a range of scholarship areas is extremely well established. One interesting reverberation was during a conference in Washington when the well-known (if not notorious) Hillel Ticktin referred to CREES as a nest of Stalinists and was rounded on by a bevy of distinguished American scholars who had a considerable more positive view of its status!

A highlight of my undergraduate years was the 1965 trip to Moscow and Leningrad undertaken by the more adventurous CREES members in a renovated Leyland bus (my photo of which appears above). A great trip for all which went remarkably well, with just an overheating clutch being dealt with in East Berlin.

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