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COMMITTEE OF POLITICAL ADVISERS

RELAXATION OF TRAVEL RESTRICTIONS
IMPOSED ON MEMBERS OF EASTERN
EUROPEAN MISSIONS IN LONDON

Note by the United Kingdom Delegation

Until recently the situation in the United Kingdom as regards the notification of journeys undertaken by members of Eastern European Missions, was as follows:-

- (a) Bulgarian Legation. All members (except the Minister and his family) had to give 48 hours' notice of intended journeys exceeding 35 miles from Hyde Park Corner;
- (b) Hungarian Legation. All members had to give 24 hours' notice of intended journeys exceeding 35 miles from Hyde Park Corner;
- (c) Roumanian Legation. All members had to give 48 hours' notice of journeys exceeding 25 miles from Hyde Park Corner.

2. When restrictions were originally imposed on the movements of members of Eastern European Missions in London, they were declared to be in retaliation for restrictions which had previously been imposed upon the staffs of United Kingdom Missions in Bulgaria, Hungary and Roumania. The United Kingdom regulations have been modified from time to time in response to relaxations in the systems operated in those countries. No restrictions have ever been imposed on members of the Czechoslovak and Polish Embassies, as, apart from very small "forbidden zones", members of Her Majesty's Embassies in Czechoslovakia and Poland are able to travel freely.

3. In the second half of 1956 the three Southern countries modified their travel restrictions in the following way:-

- (i) Bulgaria reduced the area of her "forbidden zones", abolished the notification system (formerly imposed on everyone except Heads of Missions) for journeys by diplomats in the rest of the country, and reduced from 48 to 24 hours the period of notification for junior staff;
- (ii) Hungary abolished the 24-hour notification system for all journeys in the open areas, and reduced the "forbidden zone" to a narrow frontier belt;

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- (iii) Roumania reduced her "forbidden zones" to a 10-kilometre frontier strip and a number of internal areas, and introduced a 24-hour notification system for journeys in the open areas, instead of the former 48-hour permit system.

4. In view of the administrative difficulty of maintaining "forbidden zones" in the United Kingdom the British restrictions have always been less obstructive than those operated in the Eastern European countries, and have accordingly offered less scope for relaxation. Some reciprocal gesture seemed imperative, however, quite apart from the declared principle of reciprocity, if the Bulgarian and Hungarian Governments were not to retreat from their more liberal attitude, and if the Roumanian Government were to be brought to realise the advantages of abandoning their own tight controls.

5. It was decided, therefore, that as from midnight on 18th/19th April, 1957, the following arrangements should apply:-

- (a) Bulgarian Legation. Diplomatic staff are released from all restrictions, and non-diplomatic staff and their families are required to give 24 (instead of 48) hours' notice of journeys exceeding 35 miles from Hyde Park Corner;
- (b) Hungarian Legation. All members of the staff and their families are released from the obligation to notify journeys;
- (c) Roumanian Legation. As even the modified restrictions applied in Roumania are more obstructive than the United Kingdom system, all the Legation staff and their families are still required to give 48 hours' notice of intended journeys exceeding 25 miles from Hyde Park Corner.

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