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NATO UNCLASSIFIED
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DIFFICULTIES ENCOUNTERED BY WESTERN
MISSIONS IN COUNTRIES BEHIND THE
IRON CURTAIN.

Note by the Secretary

At the request of the Chairman, I circulate for the information of the Council Deputies a note by the Secretary-General of the Brussels Treaty Permanent Commission (Document: A/1111 (Final)) concerning restrictions imposed on Western Diplomatic Missions in countries behind the Iron Curtain.

(Signed) T.A.G. Charlton.

13, Belgrave Square,
LONDON, S.W.1.

SECRET

DOCUMENT NO. A/1111 (Final)

Copy No.....

27th March, 1951.

BRUSSELS TREATY PERMANENT COMMISSION

SECRETARY-GENERAL'S NOTE

Situation of Western Missions in Countries behind
the Iron Curtain.

From a study of all the information forwarded to the Secretariat concerning restrictions imposed on Western Diplomatic Missions in the countries behind the Iron Curtain, the details of which are set out in the attached Annex, it appears that the situation in the U.S.S.R. has not seriously altered since 1932, or even since 1924. It is true that in 1947 the refusal of Russian visas or delays in granting them created difficulties which only ceased when the United Kingdom and France took retaliatory measures on the same lines. Further, some diplomatic Missions in Moscow have been notified that any member of the Mission wishing to drive his own car must pass a driving test. With these two exceptions, to which must be added the very serious effects on the financial position of diplomats following the revaluation of the rouble, it must be admitted that there has been established in the U.S.S.R. a situation the severity of which was not even alleviated in favour of her allies during the war. The necessity of considering what steps might be taken to bring about an easing of these conditions, or to prevent them from getting worse, is none the less obvious.

The situation arising in the satellite countries is, however, quite new. If some of the regulations and administrative annoyances to which diplomats, like ordinary citizens, are subjected are the consequence of these countries becoming totalitarian police states, there seems to be no doubt, on the other hand, that the majority of the restrictions imposed on the activities of diplomats of the Western Powers are the result of a deliberate policy aimed at isolating them as far as possible and, in the end, making their mission ineffective.

The Missions are constantly and increasingly obstructed in carrying out their duties by:-

- closing of cultural institutions and information offices;
- systematic restriction of contacts with nationals;
- limitation of the size of the Missions (by requests for reductions, delays in granting visas, accommodation difficulties, financial difficulties arising from rates of exchange, etc.);

- threats .../

- threats and attempts at intimidation directed more particularly against subordinate staff than the diplomatic staff (lawsuits, arrests, expulsion);
- travel restrictions;
- finally, the adoption of a whole series of unfriendly and at times vexatious measures which make the maintaining of these Missions extremely difficult.

This policy takes a particularly aggressive form in Roumania, Bulgaria, Albania and Hungary. The Polish and Czech Governments show, in some ways, more moderation, and are the only governments who continue to allow the Western diplomats to travel freely throughout almost the whole of their territory.

Until very recently the Western Governments refrained from taking any action, and, except in the question of visas, it is difficult to foresee what would be the effect of any counter-measures which might be adopted. It will be interesting to see the results of the decisions taken at the beginning of the month by the United Kingdom and French Governments with regard to the Hungarian Legation, and by the French Government with regard to the Albanian, Roumanian and Bulgarian Legations - whether the situation of the Western Missions will improve, or whether a kind of status quo will be established on the present basis, or whether the final result will be a still more acute state of tension. It should be recalled in this connection that a threat by the United States Government to break off diplomatic relations did not secure the withdrawal of the accusations made by the authorities in Sofia against the Head of the United States Mission; relations were finally broken off, and Washington has therefore now no representative in Bulgaria.

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It would seem worth while extending the enquiries concerning the diplomatic Missions, the results of which are still incomplete, to the Consulates of the Western countries.

In any event the juridical aspect of the question as a whole should not be disregarded, and it would appear necessary to consider it from the point of view of international law. Finally, it would be very useful to obtain the views of the diplomatic representatives of the five Powers in the countries behind the Iron Curtain as to the desirability of joint or concerted action which might be contemplated, and the form it should take.


2, Eaton Place,
S.W. 1.

RESTRICTIONS IMPOSED ON WESTERN DIPLOMATIC
MISSIONS IN THE SOVIET UNION AND THE
SATELLITE COUNTRIES

HUNGARY

I. INTERFERENCE WITH THE SIZE OR COMPOSITION OF WESTERN MISSIONS.

a) Explicit demand

The British Diplomatic Mission has been requested to reduce its staff, and, for motives of economy, the British Government has gone some way to meet the demand.

b) Refusal of, or delay in granting, visas.

Difficulties have been encountered under this head, but they have been overcome by adopting retaliatory measures towards Hungarian diplomats, and, in the case of the United Kingdom, by reducing the size of the British Legation in Budapest.

c) Expulsion of diplomats and the arrest of local employees.

The French Government reports the expulsion within 24 hours of Commandant de Lannurien, Military Attaché (8th June, 1950) and M. Gachot, one of the auxiliary staff of the French Legation (2nd October, 1949). The British Government reports that during 1950 five members of their Legation were declared personae non gratae on wholly false grounds.

II. CLOSURE OR SUSPENSION OF INFORMATION SERVICES, BULLETINS, READING ROOMS, ETC.

The British Council has been compelled to cease its activities in Budapest.

III. FINANCIAL DIFFICULTIES.

None have been reported.

IV. TRAVEL RESTRICTIONS.

Since January, 1951, members of the Diplomatic Missions wishing to enter or leave Hungary have been obliged to obtain a special permit, in addition to the usual visa. This regulation applies to travel by road or rail. The permit is given on the day application is made. The regulation does not, however, apply to air travel.

Further .../

Further, as from 22nd January, 1951, travelling of all foreign diplomats is restricted by the Hungarian Government to a radius of 30 kms. from Budapest. A special permit is required to enter the Csepel Island which lies within this area.

V. INADEQUATE OR EXCESSIVELY EXPENSIVE ACCOMMODATION.

No information.

VI. MISCELLANEOUS ADMINISTRATIVE ANNOYANCES, SUCH AS RESTRICTIONS ON THE ISSUE OF DRIVING LICENCES, ETC.

The Belgian Government reports that the Hungarian Government does not reply to notes addressed to them.

VII. DISCRIMINATION IN APPLICATION OF RESTRICTIONS.

In principle the restrictions cover all the Diplomatic Missions, but in actual practice they appear to apply to the representatives of the Western countries only.

VIII. PENALTIES IMPOSED IN THE EVENT OF NON-OBSERVANCE OF REGULATIONS.

Up to the present no penalties seem to have been imposed. In general it is to be expected that diplomats failing to comply with the regulations will be regarded as personae non gratae and asked to leave the country.

IX. RETALIATORY MEASURES ALREADY TAKEN OR CONTEMPLATED.

a) Travel restrictions.

Travel by Hungarian diplomats and Hungarian auxiliary staff employed by the Hungarian Legation or Consulate in Paris is restricted as from 3rd February to the Départements of Seine, Seine et Oise and Seine et Marne. The North, South and West Cantons of Versailles, with the exception of the Commune of Trappe, and the Canton of Fontainebleau, in these Départements, are also to be out of bounds to them. All sections of the Western highroad may, however, be used.

Travel outside these limits can be authorised, provided that an application, stating destination, itinerary and means of travel, reaches the Ministry of Foreign Affairs at least 48 hours prior to departure.

For its part, the British Government has decided that Hungarian diplomats will not be allowed to travel more than 18 miles from London without obtaining a special permit.

In order to ensure more effective control over travelling, the Netherlands Government proposes that in future diplomats of the U.S.S.R. and the satellite countries should be granted visas for a single journey only, to be made via a specified frontier post. This would make possible a stricter control of the

travelling .../

travelling done by these officials. If the other Governments wish to adopt similar measures, the Netherlands Government considers that there should be consultation concerning the choice of frontier posts to be used, in order to ensure that the measures taken are fully effective.

b) Other retaliatory measures.

In retaliation for the ejection of the British Council from Budapest, the British Government has closed the Hungarian Institute in England, and one member of the Hungarian Legation in London was declared persona non grata during 1950 as a reprisal for the expulsion of members of the British Legation in Budapest.

BULGARIA

I. INTERFERENCE WITH THE SIZE OR COMPOSITION OF WESTERN MISSIONS.

a) Explicit demand.

The British Mission has been requested to reduce its staff and, for motives of economy, they have gone some way to meeting the demand.

b) Refusal of, or delay in granting, visas.

The British Government reports difficulties under this head, but retaliatory measures on the same lines towards Bulgarian diplomats have resulted in some improvement in the situation.

c) Expulsion of diplomats and the arrest of local employees.

No specific case has been reported, but subordinate staff appear to have been subjected to intimidation by the police.

II. CLOSURE OR SUSPENSION OF INFORMATION SERVICES, BULLETINS, READING ROOMS, ETC.

The British Council and the British Information Service in Sofia were obliged to cease functioning in 1950.

III. FINANCIAL DIFFICULTIES.

The French authorities report that the Diplomatic Services Office of the Ministry of Foreign Affairs refuses to issue to the French Legation petrol coupons at the ordinary diplomatic rate, under pretext that there is no commercial or financial agreement between the two countries. The Office moreover insists on payment in dollars for any petrol they are asked to supply.

IV. TRAVEL RESTRICTIONS.

About half the territory (frontier regions) has been out of bounds since 1st December, 1949. In order to travel in other parts of the country members of the Diplomatic Corps (with the exception

of .../

of Heads of Missions, who are exempt from this regulation) must be in possession of a letter certifying that the Ministry of Foreign Affairs has been notified of the journey contemplated and of its itinerary; but no permit is required. Subordinate staff must apply for a permit at least 48 hours in advance.

V. INADEQUATE OR EXCESSIVELY EXPENSIVE ACCOMMODATION.

The Diplomatic Services Office in Sofia, through which payments for rent and most repair bills must be made, does not hesitate to make arbitrary increases, making the sums due ten times the normal amounts of such charges.

VI. MISCELLANEOUS ADMINISTRATIVE ANNOYANCES, SUCH AS RESTRICTIONS ON THE ISSUE OF DRIVING LICENCES, ETC.

Generally speaking, reports show that all transactions are subjected to considerable administrative delay.

The French Government reports that the Diplomatic Services Office makes the engagement of house staff conditional on prior authorisation. When this authorisation is refused no reasons are given for the decision.

With regard to telephone charges, road taxes, deliveries of wood and coal, rent, electricity bills, etc., the Diplomatic Services Office merely informs the Legation of the total sums to be paid. The amounts demanded are obviously increased charges, not corresponding to the normal rates; the increase on bills for wood and coal is about 30 to 40%.

VII. DISCRIMINATION IN APPLICATION OF RESTRICTIONS.

In theory these restrictions apply to all Missions, but in actual fact they affect only the Western Missions. The requirement that petrol must be paid for in dollars applies only to the staff of the French Legation.

VIII. PENALTIES IMPOSED IN THE EVENT OF NON-OBSERVANCE OF RESTRICTIONS

No specific case has been reported, but it can be assumed that any diplomat failing to carry out the regulations would be regarded as persona non grata.

IX. RETALIATORY MEASURES ALREADY TAKEN OR CONTEMPLATED.

The Head of the Bulgarian Mission in Paris was informed on 5th February by the Quai d'Orsay that if the measures being taken by the Government in Sofia to restrict the movement of French diplomats were not withdrawn within four days, the French Government would be compelled to enforce similar measures for Bulgarian diplomats in France. These measures were put in force on 11th February. It should, however, be noted that they do not affect the Head of the Bulgarian Diplomatic Mission.

In order to ensure more effective control over travelling, the Netherlands Government proposes that in future diplomats of the

U.S.S.R. and the satellite countries should be granted visas for a single journey only, to be made via a specified frontier post. This would make possible a stricter control of the travelling done by these officials. If the other Governments wish to adopt similar measures, the Netherlands Government considers that there should be consultation concerning the choice of frontier posts to be used, in order to ensure that the measures taken are fully effective.

ROUMANIA

I. INTERFERENCE WITH THE SIZE OR COMPOSITION OF WESTERN MISSIONS.

a) Explicit demand

The British authorities fear that a request for the reduction of diplomatic staff in Bucharest may be presented very shortly by the Roumanian Government.

b) Refusal of, or delay in granting, visas.

The British authorities report difficulties in this connection. It has been possible to meet them by adopting retaliatory measures against Roumanian diplomats.

c) Expulsion of diplomats and the arrest of local employees.

The French Government reports that in October, 1950, four French nationals were brought before the military court in Bucharest and given severe sentences for espionage. In the course of the trial the French Legation was repeatedly attacked and denounced as a "nest of espionage". No member of the Legation was permitted to be present during the proceedings.

Incident which happened to Commandant Parisot, French Military Attaché (21st April, 1950): attacked with a tommy gun while he was walking in the country-side near a railway track; he was arrested and maltreated.

The French and British authorities report that the diplomatic and auxiliary staff of their Missions are under strict police surveillance. Employees are taken away from time to time and interrogated.

II. CLOSURE OR SUSPENSION OF INFORMATION SERVICES, BULLETINS, READING ROOMS, ETC.

In 1948, the Franco-Roumanian Cultural Agreement was denounced by the Roumanian authorities and the French Institute had to close its doors. The Library Reading Room, which was converted into an annex of the Legation, remained open, but was raided by the police in March, 1950. On this occasion three French officials of the Cultural Section, two of them members of the Diplomatic Corps, were arrested and molested before being released.

The British Government was obliged to close the British Information Service in Bucharest in 1950.

III. .../

II. FINANCIAL DIFFICULTIES.

Nothing to report.

IV. TRAVEL RESTRICTIONS.

Very severe travel restrictions are imposed on diplomats. The frontier areas and entire provinces are closed to them. Further restrictions were imposed in July, 1950.

V. INADEQUATE OR EXCESSIVELY EXPENSIVE ACCOMMODATION.

Diplomats are not allowed to rent villas in Snagov, 30 km. from Bucharest, the only summer resort to which they could still go without a special permit.

The French Minister's villa at Posada was occupied during the night (March, 1950), despite the lease held by him for this property. The staff of the villa were expelled. The personal effects of the Minister were not returned to him.

VI. MISCELLANEOUS ADMINISTRATIVE ANNOYANCES, SUCH AS RESTRICTIONS ON THE ISSUE OF DRIVING LICENCES, ETC.

The Belgian Government reports that the Roumanian Government does not reply to notes addressed to them.

VII. DISCRIMINATION IN APPLICATION OF RESTRICTIONS.

In principle travel restrictions apply to all diplomatic Missions, but in practice they appear to affect only the representatives of the Western countries.

VIII. PENALTIES IMPOSED IN THE EVENT OF NON-OBSERVANCE OF RESTRICTIONS.

No penalty appears to have been inflicted so far. Generally, it can be assumed that diplomats who do not comply with the regulations would be regarded as personae non gratae and asked to leave the country.

IX. RETALIATORY MEASURES ALREADY TAKEN OR CONTEMPLATED.

a) Travel restrictions.

The French Government has enforced the same measures with regard to the Roumanian Mission in Paris as were taken in the case of the Bulgarian Mission. No exception was, however, made in favour of the Head of the Roumanian Mission. These measures have been in force since 11th February.

In order to ensure more effective control over travelling, the Netherlands Government proposes that in future diplomats of the U.S.S.R. and the satellite countries should be granted visas for a single journey only, to be made via a specified frontier post.

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This would make possible a stricter control of the travelling done by these officials. If the other Governments wish to adopt similar measures, the Netherlands Government considers that there should be consultation concerning the choice of frontier posts to be used, in order to ensure that the measures taken are fully effective.

b) Other retaliatory measures.

The British Government has requested the Roumanian Diplomatic Mission to suspend its Information Services. In addition, the British Government grants to members of this Mission in London visas which are only valid for one return journey, instead of diplomatic visas valid during the whole period of the holder's appointment.

ALBANIA

INTERFERENCE WITH THE SIZE OR COMPOSITION OF WESTERN MISSIONS.

France is the only Brussels Treaty country which has maintained a diplomatic Mission in Albania.

a) Explicit demand.

Nothing to report.

b) Refusal of, or delay in granting, visas.

Nothing to report.

c) Expulsion of diplomats and the arrest of local employees.

Nothing to report.

CLOSURE OR SUSPENSION OF INFORMATION SERVICES, BULLETINS, READING ROOMS, ETC.

Nothing to report.

I. FINANCIAL DIFFICULTIES.

Nothing to report.

V. TRAVEL RESTRICTIONS.

The French Government states that the auxiliary staff of the Legation cannot leave Tirana without a special permit. The career diplomats are only allowed unrestricted travel on four main roads.

V. INADEQUATE OR EXCESSIVELY EXPENSIVE ACCOMMODATION.

Nothing to report.

VI. .../

I. MISCELLANEOUS ADMINISTRATIVE ANNOYANCES, SUCH AS RESTRICTIONS ON THE ISSUE OF DRIVING LICENCES, ETC.

The French Government reports that diplomats are under very close and continual surveillance.

I. DISCRIMINATION IN APPLICATION OF RESTRICTIONS.

The Albanian Note on travel restrictions was handed to all foreign Missions without any discrimination, but the French Minister in Albania states that the Soviet and satellite Missions are in fact allowed complete freedom.

I. PENALTIES IMPOSED IN THE EVENT OF NON-OBSERVANCE OF REGULATIONS.

Nothing to report.

I. RETALIATORY MEASURES ALREADY TAKEN OR CONTEMPLATED.

On 6th February, 1951, the Albanian representative in Paris was notified by the Quai d'Orsay that he would not be allowed to travel outside the Départements of Seine, Seine et Oise and adjoining Départements without permission.

In order to ensure more effective control over travelling, the Netherlands Government proposes that in future diplomats of the U.S.S.R. and the satellite countries should be granted visas for a single journey only, to be made via a specified frontier post. This would make possible a stricter control of the travelling done by these officials. If the other Governments wish to adopt similar measures, the Netherlands Government considers that there should be consultation concerning the choice of frontier posts to be used, in order to ensure that the measures taken are fully effective.

POLAND

I. INTERFERENCE WITH THE SIZE OR COMPOSITION OF WESTERN MISSIONS.

a) Explicit demand.

Nothing to report.

b) Refusal of, or delay in granting, visas.

The difficulties encountered by the British authorities with regard to the granting of visas were overcome by adopting retaliatory measures of the same kind; satisfactory undertakings were secured from the Polish Minister of Foreign Affairs, but recently, however, they have not been honoured, so far as reducing delays is concerned.

c) Expulsion of diplomats and the arrest of local employees.

The French Vice-Consul in Warsaw was arrested as a reprisal for expulsions of Polish nationals from France. During the many trials for espionage the staff of the French Embassy was accused of

subversive .../

subversive activities. Many French nationals were afterwards arrested and expelled; in particular Consulate employees and professors had to leave Poland in January, 1950, at very short notice.

A number of diplomatic and non-diplomatic British officials have been expelled on charges of espionage but none has been arrested.

II. CLOSURE OR SUSPENSION OF INFORMATION SERVICES, BULLETINS, READING ROOMS, ETC.

The work of the British Information Centre was so severely hampered that it had to be closed down in 1950. As a result of practical difficulties the British newspaper "Glos Angelii" was obliged to stop publication at the end of 1949. The British Council, on the other hand, continues to function, although hampered in certain respects (mainly financial).

The French Institutes in Poland were closed in 1949 and most of the professors were sent out of the country.

III. FINANCIAL DIFFICULTIES.

The revaluation of the zloty has very considerably increased the costs of the Western Diplomatic Missions. This revaluation, added to the increased cost of living, therefore means that diplomats' expenses are now three times the previous amounts. A note of protest, sent by the Missions of the Western countries to the Polish Ministry of Foreign Affairs, has had no result.

IV. TRAVEL RESTRICTIONS.

There are no travel restrictions, except in certain restricted areas of military interest, and except for occasional long delays and frustrations at traffic control points.

The aircraft of the British Air Attaché was withdrawn in 1947, permission to use it having been refused.

V. INADEQUATE OR EXCESSIVELY EXPENSIVE ACCOMMODATION.

No reports received; rents are of course affected by the revaluation of the zloty.

VI. MISCELLANEOUS ADMINISTRATIVE ANNOYANCES, SUCH AS RESTRICTIONS ON THE ISSUE OF DRIVING LICENCES, ETC.

Generally speaking, all transactions are subject to delay and complications.

II. DISCRIMINATION IN APPLICATION OF RESTRICTIONS.

A high exchange rate was in the first place adopted for economic and financial reasons and was not aimed particularly at the Western Diplomatic Missions. It is, however, certain that the U.S.S.R. enjoys some privileges in this respect.

DECLASSIFIED - PUBLIC DISCLOSURE / DÉCLASSIFIÉ - MISE EN LECTURE PUBLIQUE

I. PENALTIES IMPOSED IN THE EVENT OF NON-OBSERVANCE OF REGULATIONS.

Nothing to report.

X. RETALIATORY MEASURES ALREADY TAKEN OR CONTEMPLATED.

The British Government states that in certain cases Polish diplomats have been asked to leave the country as reprisals for the expulsion of British officials from Warsaw.

In order to ensure more effective control over travelling, the Netherlands Government proposes that in future diplomats of the U.S.S.R. and the satellite countries should be granted visas for a single journey only, to be made via a specified frontier post. This would make possible a stricter control of the travelling done by these officials. If the other Governments wish to adopt similar measures, the Netherlands Government considers that there should be consultation concerning the choice of frontier posts to be used, in order to ensure that the measures taken are fully affective.

CZECHOSLOVAKIA

INTERFERENCE WITH THE SIZE OR COMPOSITION OF WESTERN MISSIONS.

Nothing to report.

a) Explicit demand.

Nothing to report.

b) Refusal of, or delay in granting, visas.

The British authorities have met difficulties with regard to the granting of visas, by adopting corresponding retaliatory measures.

c) Expulsion of diplomats and the arrest of local employees.

The French Government reports the expulsion, at 12 hours notice, of the Military Attaché Colonel Helliott and his Assistant l'Adjudant-Chef Salabert (27th October, 1949), who were accused of espionage.

The police have on several occasions taken action against the British Embassy in Prague.

Diplomatic representatives of the United Kingdom, the Netherlands and Belgium have been incriminated in espionage trials and have subsequently been expelled. There was in particular the trial of the so-called "13 enemies" of the people (31st May to 8th June, 1950) and the trial of the Dutch national Louwers (end November, 1950), which led to the expulsion of the Belgian Military Attaché and three members of the Netherlands Legation, including the Chargé d'Affaires a.i. and the Military Attaché.

I. CLOSURE OR SUSPENSION OF INFORMATION SERVICES, BULLETINS, READING ROOMS, ETC.

The British Information Service and the British Council in Prague were obliged to close their doors in March, 1950.

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The French Institute in Prague has reduced its activities considerably; visas were refused to members of the university mission and police control of the Maison de France in Bratislava prevents Czechs from entering.

I. FINANCIAL DIFFICULTIES.

Nothing to report.

V. TRAVEL RESTRICTIONS.

No general travel restrictions have been imposed. Travel in certain areas is, however, prohibited in a sector of from 2 to 6 km. along the frontier from Jachnov to Bratislava. In addition Military Attachés are obliged to announce their proposed tours in advance to the Czechoslovak authorities, who have not always given their permission to the proposals made.

The British and French Air Attachés are no longer allowed to use their own personal planes.

V. INADEQUATE OR EXCESSIVELY EXPENSIVE ACCOMMODATION.

Nothing to report.

I. MISCELLANEOUS ADMINISTRATIVE ANNOYANCES, SUCH AS RESTRICTIONS ON THE ISSUE OF DRIVING LICENCES, ETC.

Nothing to report.

I. DISCRIMINATION IN APPLICATION OF RESTRICTIONS.

When New Year good wishes were presented at the beginning of 1951 there was discrimination in the matter of procedure against the Heads of the Diplomatic Missions of the Western countries; they were received by the Head of the Government, while the representatives of the U.S.S.R. and the satellite countries were being received by the President of the Republic.

I. PENALTIES IMPOSED IN THE EVENT OF NON-OBSERVANCE OF REGULATIONS.

Nothing to report.

X. RETALIATORY MEASURES ALREADY TAKEN OR CONTEMPLATED.

The Czech Information Service in London has been required by the British Government to suspend its work. Further, the Czech Institute in Great Britain has been closed, in retaliation for the closing of the British Information Service in Prague. On appropriate occasions, Czech diplomats and officials have been expelled from the United Kingdom in reprisal for the expulsion of British functionaries.

In .../

In order to ensure more effective control over travelling, the Netherlands Government proposes that in future diplomats of the U.S.S.R. and the satellite countries should be granted visas for a single journey only, to be made via a specified frontier post. This would make possible a stricter control of the travelling done by these officials. If the other Governments wish to adopt similar measures, the Netherlands Government considers that there should be consultation concerning the choice of frontier posts to be used, in order to ensure that the measures taken are fully effective.

U.S.S.R.

INTERFERENCE WITH THE SIZE OR COMPOSITION OF WESTERN MISSIONS.

a) Explicit demand.

Nothing to report.

b) Refusal of, or delay in granting, visas.

In 1947, certain British and French diplomats appointed to their respective Embassies in Moscow had to wait four, five and even nine months for their visas to enter the U.S.S.R. Since then a more or less normal situation has been established as a result of reprisal measures of the same kind taken by the British and French Governments.

c) Expulsion of diplomats and the arrest of local employees.

The British Government reports the arrest of a certain number of Russian women who had married British nationals, and who were working at the British Embassy in Moscow.

CLOSURE OR SUSPENSION OF INFORMATION SERVICES, BULLETINS, READING ROOMS, ETC.

The Bulletin "British Ally" was forced out of existence in 1950, as a result of intervention by the Soviet Government.

France is meeting numerous difficulties in its administration of the French Church of Saint Louis in Moscow.

FINANCIAL DIFFICULTIES.

The revaluation of the rouble has very considerably increased the cost of the diplomatic missions in this country. A note of protest was sent to the Soviet Government by the British Government, as well as by the other Western Powers.

TRAVEL RESTRICTIONS.

The prohibited areas were given in a note of 30th September, 1948 and have remained unchanged: more than half the territory, in particular the frontiers and coastal districts (with the exception of the towns of Odessa and Leningrad), the whole of Central Asia and a

large .../

large part of the municipality of Moscow. It is forbidden to stay in these areas, but transit by non-stopping trains is allowed. In Moscow itself there is no restriction of movement in the town. Of the twelve roads leading out of Moscow travel on three is absolutely prohibited beyond the municipal boundaries, four can be used up to a distance of 50 kms. and five for a distance of between 16 and 34 kms. Although travel outside these limits and in the authorised areas is not subject to express authorisation, notification must be given to the Minindiel 48 hours in advance and can only be undertaken through Intourist.

These restrictions do not seem to have been seriously increased since 1924 and it has been noticed that in certain cases travel in the free zones of the U.S.S.R. was rather easier last summer than in previous years.

V. INADEQUATE OR EXCESSIVELY EXPENSIVE ACCOMMODATION.

The British and Dutch authorities report that Burobin in Moscow demand excessive amounts for rents and impose arbitrary charges for repairs.

VI. MISCELLANEOUS ADMINISTRATIVE ANNOYANCES, SUCH AS RESTRICTIONS ON THE ISSUE OF DRIVING LICENCES, ETC.

Imports permitted to an Attaché are limited to 20,000 roubles, to 40,000 for a Counsellor and to 60,000 for an Ambassador. The Soviet authorities make the estimates and calculate the transport charges as they think fit.

Generally, business is subject to lengthy administrative delays.

The French Embassy is hampered not so much by definite restrictions but by regulations due to the police character of the régime and which, although having no legal basis, make themselves felt in certain matters of detail: control of those entering or leaving; impossibility of travelling without applying to Intourist, surveillance, etc.

It would appear that the Soviet authorities intend that the international driving licences used by diplomats driving their own cars shall no longer be recognised as valid. One year after arriving in the country diplomats holding an international licence will be required to obtain a Soviet licence for which, with two exceptions, no diplomat has so far succeeded in passing the test. These decisions have already been communicated to the British Embassy, but the French Embassy has not yet been officially informed of them.

VII. DISCRIMINATION IN APPLICATION OF RESTRICTIONS.

In theory restrictions issued in the U.S.S.R. apply to all the Diplomatic Missions, although in practice their effect may be discriminatory.

VIII. PENALTIES IMPOSED IN THE EVENT OF NON-OBSERVANCE OF REGULATIONS.

No penalties seem to have been enforced up to the present. It may be generally assumed, however, that diplomats failing to comply with the regulations would be regarded as personae non gratae and asked to leave the country.

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As far as driving licences are concerned, the Soviet authorities have so far taken no steps against members of the British Embassy holding only an international permit.

4. RETALIATORY MEASURES ALREADY TAKEN OR CONTEMPLATED.

The British authorities report that no attempt has so far been made to affect the composition of the Soviet Mission in London, except that the total number of Soviet Service Attachés has been "frozen" at 13.

On the other hand, it has been found impossible to control accommodation; but a watch is being kept on the leases of those Soviet Embassy buildings which are part of the property administered by the Commissioners of the Crown Lands.

The British Government recently decided to withhold "courtesy" diplomatic driving licences from members of the Soviet Embassy, who must pass the ordinary driving tests, although there is no intention of systematically failing to pass them.

Finally, the Foreign Office only gives members of the Soviet Embassy return visas valid for a single journey instead of diplomatic visas valid for the duration of their mission in the United Kingdom.

In order to ensure more effective control over travelling, the Netherlands Government proposes that in future diplomats of the U.S.S.R. and the satellite countries should be granted visas for a single journey only, to be made via a specified frontier post. This would make possible a stricter control of the travelling done by these officials. If the other Governments wish to adopt similar measures, the Netherlands Government considers that there should be consultation concerning the choice of frontier posts to be used, in order to ensure that the measures taken are fully effective.

CONSULAR REPRESENTATION

The United Kingdom has no consular representation in the U.S.S.R., Hungary, Roumania and Bulgaria, apart from the consular sections of H.M. Missions in those countries.

In Poland and Czechoslovakia, besides the Consular sections of H.M. Embassies, there is one consular post at Gdansk and one at Bratislava. British consular posts at Katowice, Poznan and Lodz were closed down in 1950 by Polish request, on the alleged grounds that the volume of consular work no longer justified their existence.

No difficulties have arisen as a result of the imposition of conditions for the granting of exequatur. British consular relations with Poland and Czechoslovakia are based on normal international practice and are not governed by Consular Conventions.