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DB Memo No. 6631
28 January 1964

MEMORANDUM FOR: Chief, SR/CI

ATTENTION : Mr. ~~Duncan Stewart~~ *Stewart*

SUBJECT : Soviet Documentation Information Concerning OVIR
(Visa and Registration Section) of MVD in the
Fall of 1959 - Case 4390

REFERENCE : Your oral request for TSD/DB Support on 30
December 1963.

1. This memorandum confirms the information passed verbally to Mr. Stewart of SR/CI by Mr. Rowanko of TSD/DB on 31 December 1963. The information consisted of TSD/DB comments on questions presented by Mr. Stewart in his verbal request on 30 December 1963. The attachment includes additional information on OVIR organization, subordination, and functions as related to its control over foreigners visiting the USSR. Primary attention will be given the period (fall 1959) concerned in the request.

2. Please sign the attached original Request For TSD/DB Support Form (D-108) and return to TSD/DB.

3. If TSD comments are being considered for further distribution, it is requested that the transmitting correspondence be coordinated with this office.

4. Any questions on this matter can be referred to Messrs. Rowanko or Bugel, extension 2654, 221 West Out Building.

[Redacted Signature Box]

Chief, TSD/DB

Attachment: as stated

Distribution:

Original & 1 - Addressee w/atts.

1 - DB File, 1 - DB Chrono

1 - DI File, 1 - Case 4390

all w/atts.

DD/P/TSD/DB/1:D. Rowanko:prk

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TSD COMMENTS ON OVIR (VISA AND REGISTRATION SECTION) OF THE USSR

Your specific questions are answered below with additional information related to each question.

Question A. What is OVIR?

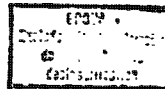
Answer - OVIR is the abbreviation for OTEDEL VIZ I REGISTRATSIY (Visa and Registration Section) which in 1959 was subordinate to the Main Administration of Militia, MVD (Ministry of Internal Affairs) on the All-Union level and to either the UM (Upravleniye Militsei) or UVD (Upravleniye Vnutrennikh Del) on Republic, Oblast or City level. The MVD was replaced by MVOO (Ministries for the Protection of Public Order) in the latter part of August and during September 1962. OVIR's primary function is the exercise of control over foreigners in the USSR. Branches of OVIR are located in most of the large cities of the Soviet Union. Some serve an entire oblast or republic rather than just a city.

Additional Information - A stay in the USSR, even of short duration requires that the visitor register with the Soviet authorities. Since the fall of 1959 and until September 1962 this registration has taken two forms, as described below.

1. Hotel Registration - Most tourists have been registered by the hotel where they spent their first night in the USSR. In many cases the first hotel registration is all that is placed in the tourist's passport regardless of the itinerary of the bearer. In a few cases subsequent hotel registrations have been added. There is no known reason for the variance in procedures. An "Intourist" representative, a member of the hotel administration or possibly an OVIR representative at hotels may handle hotel registrations and the passing on of those passports which require an OVIR extension or change. We are not sure of OVIR's role in simple hotel registrations.

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2. OVIR Registration - Travelers not having tourist visas (excepting diplomatic personnel) normally must register with OVIR, or with PFO (Passportno-registratsionnyy Otdel - Passport Registration Section) which is subordinate to the Militia on city and oblast levels and which executes OVIR functions in those areas not having an OVIR. This registration takes place in the city where the first overnight stay is made. Generally the authorized itinerary is placed in the registration cachet. In some cases the registration is handled by the traveler personally but "Intourist" and hotel authorities have assisted by passing the traveler's passport to OVIR.

Regardless of type of visa (except diplomatic) all extensions or changes must be made by OVIR. Since 1960 most visitors simply receive hotel registrations. OVIR entries are made only when extensions or changes are required.

Question B. How many OVIRs are there in Moscow?

Answer - Based on a review of validating cachet numbers, OVIR registration numbers and OVIR officer signatures it is believed that in 1959 there was only one OVIR in Moscow. It was to this office that passports collected by hotels, militia passport offices (Passportnyy Stol), PFOs and the "foreign sections" of universities, were sent or brought personally by the bearer for OVIR registrations or changes.

Additional Information - A single OVIR office also seems the case in several other areas (Cities of Leningrad and Kiev, and the Republics of Azerbaijan, Lithuania, Latvia, and Estonia). At least in one area, Tashkent, Uzbek SSR, there is evidence that three separate validating cachet numbers were in use during 1958: 118 by OVIR UM (Upravleniye Militsii) Uzbek SSR, 36 by PFO UVD Tashkent Oblast Ispolkora and 419 by PFO UM Tashkent Koreovsta.

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All OVIR registrations, extensions and changes are validated by an OVIR cachet. There were changes in the text of these cachets in 1961 and late 1962. The text changes reflected government administrative reorganizations. Each OVIR has a two or three digit number which is part of this validating cachet. The number apparently changes annually.

A review of the OVIR registration numbers in Moscow and Leningrad revealed that they are issued in numerical order, indicating a central control in these cities.

Only two different signatures appear on the approximately 50 different 1959 Moscow OVIR cachets reviewed. One of these was always preceded by the word "za" meaning "for" i.e. authorized to sign for. All OVIR registrations and changes in Moscow during 1959 are by OVIR or OVIRI, (the last letter standing for "INOSTRANITSEV" meaning for foreigners), UVD Mosgoroveta (Moscow city council). The signatures noted above appeared interchangeably on both registrations and changes. No Moscow Oblast registrations were noted.

As previously noted OVIR registration is normally accomplished at the first major city visited by the traveler, and should other cities appear on the traveler's itinerary they are entered on the registration cachet. Usually no further OVIR entries are made at the other cities (excepting additional hotel registrations in some instances) unless the traveler requests an extension or change. No deregistration entries appear in the passport upon departing the USSR.

Question C. Where are the OVIRs located in Moscow?

Answer - The location of the OVIR in Moscow is unknown.

Question D. Is an OVIR located at either of the following addresses?

1. Ogareva Ulitsa
2. Kolpachnyy pereulok #9

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Answer - No information.

Additional Information - The 1957 telephone directory and the 1958 address book for Moscow locate the following MVD organs as follows:

Glavnoye Upravleniye Militsii, MVD SSSR - ul. Ogareva, 6

Upravleniye Militsii, MVD BSMR - ul. Ogareva, 6

Upravleniye Vnutrennikh Del Ispolkoma Mosoblsobveta - ul. Belinskogo, 3

Pasportnyy Otdel UVD Ispolkoma Mosoblsobveta - Durazovskiy p., 11

Upravleniye Vnutrennikh Del Ispolkoma Mosgorsoveta - Petrovka, 38

Pasportnyy Otdel UVD Ispolkoma Mosgorsoveta - Leningradskiy Prosp., 16

PRO UVD Mosoblsopolkoma - 2-aya Mashchanskaya, 97

PRO UVD Mosgorispolkoma - Leningradskoye Sh., 22

Stol Bakhdok (Lost and Found Bureau?) UVD Mosgorispolkoma - Petrovka, 38
(for information concerning lost documents)

Question E. Is there an OVIR in Minsk?

Answer - The available information indicates that an OVIR was located in Minsk in 1955. Its validating cachet number was 309.

Question F. Does the "do plus the date" (until plus the date) in the OVIR registration placed in a foreigner's passport in Moscow mean that he must leave the country by midnight of the preceding date or on the date indicated?

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Answer - A review of a number of legal traveler documents indicates that although many people leave several days prior to or right on the day preceding the "do" date, just as many leave on the "do" date and a few even several days after. These latter instances could be due to the lack of available transportation leaving the USSR. It is TET/DB's belief that a traveler can be required to leave by midnight of the day preceding the "do" date.

Additional Information - An error similar to that mentioned in our discussion i.e. OVIR entering the wrong date in the visa extension, has been noted in the past. Whether this was intentional or simply an erroneous entry cannot be determined.

An OVIR registration is made valid for the period authorized by the visa. Thus, if the visa authorizes a 30 day stay, the OVIR registration will be good for 30 days from the date of entry into a country (not from the date of registration which may be several days later).

Question 0 - Does the following (taken from the tourist's note book) have any significance?

"VZHA - D. A. VLEEDA"

Answer - TET/DB cannot determine the significance of this note.

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REQUEST FOR TSD/DB SUPPORT		REQUESTING OFFICE CONTROL NO	DATE OF REQUEST
		DB CASE NO 4390	30 Dec 63
NAME OF REQUESTOR/ALTERNATE	ORGANIZATION AND LOCATION	EXTENSION	DUE DATE
Duncan Stewart	SR/CI Eqs Bldg	7731	31 Dec 63
REQUEST RECEIVED BY (Name)	REFERRED FOR ACTION TO SECTION S:	DATE RECEIVED	
Dan Dowanko	DB/1	30 Dec 63	
PROJECT OFFICER S:		PROJECT NAME OR CRYPTO	
Dan Dowanko			
TYPE OF SUPPORT AUTH <input type="checkbox"/> CI <input type="checkbox"/> CA <input type="checkbox"/> OTHER <input checked="" type="checkbox"/>			
Documentation Information			
REQUEST include type of items, number of items, purpose items will serve, document country, use country, etc.			
The requestor called TSD/DB/1 at approximately 1430, 30 December 1963 and asked for an oral response to the following questions:			
1. Does the "do plus the date" (until plus the date) in the OVIR (Visa and Registration Section) registration placed in a foreigner's passport in Moscow mean that he must leave the country by midnight of the preceding date or on the date indicated?			
2. What is OVIR?			
3. How many OVIR's are there in Moscow?			
4. Where are they located? Are either of the following OVIR addresses? a. Ogareva Ulitsa; b. Kolpachny pereulok #9			
5. Does the following have any significance? "VZhA-D.A. VLEEDA"			
The case involves an American tourist who visited Moscow in October 1959. His passport is not presently available. The above questions are based on a note book			
RECORD OF ACTION			
kept by the tourist. He was issued a Soviet visa in a foreign country (unspecified) valid for six (6) days after crossing the Soviet border. The Moscow OVIR registration indicated that he could stay in the country until the 22nd (do 22-ogo), presumably of October 1959. He had his visa extended, but possibly erroneously, the 22nd was once again entered as the "do" date. He was subsequently informed that he would have to leave the country by midnight of the 21st. (Somehow he managed to stay on. No details were provided).			
On arrival in Moscow (He was alone) he was met by an intourist guide who took him to a hotel. Information concerning a hotel registration was not available. Requestor did not know if the visa was a tourist visa (i.e. marked tourist).			
CONCUR WITH THE ABOVE RECORDED VERBAL REQUEST:			signature
			date:

D-108 (Jan. '63)

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